

**Württem
bergischer
Kunst
verein
Stuttgart**

A Hole in the Sea

May 21 – August 21, 2016

Zbyněk Baladrán, George Brecht, Matthew Buckingham, Annalisa Cannito, Chen Chieh-jen, Tacita Dean, Barry Flanagan, Sven Johne, Quinn Latimer, Zoe Leonard, Pia Linz, Hew Locke, László Moholy-Nagy, Mehreen Murtaza, Jean Painlevé, Lisa Rave, Julia Rometti / Victor Costales, Cristian Rusu and others

READER ENGLISH



An exhibition by

Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart

Curators

Hans D. Christ, Iris Dressler

Introduction

It is as if the sea were not only the archetype of all smooth spaces but the first to undergo a gradual striation gridding it in one place ... It was at sea that smooth space was first subjugated and a model found for the laying-out and imposition of striated space, a model later put to use elsewhere.

(Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, Minneapolis, London 2005, p. 479–480)

From May 21 to August 21, 2016, the Württembergischer Kunstverein will be showing the exhibition *A Hole in the Sea*. The title pays homage to an intervention by the British conceptual artist Barry Flanagan, who in 1969 made a hole in the sea for Gerry Schum's *Fernsehgalerie* (TV Gallery). At low tide, he installed a Plexiglas cylinder in a tidal mud flat, which he then filmed from above as the tide came in. For a brief instant a hole in the sea emerged—before disappearing again in the swirling torrent of water.

Taking as a point of departure this volatile, paradoxical image—with the formal permeation of two highly elusive things like a hole and the sea, both of which represent a certain negativity, the end of something, a boundary—the exhibition is devoted to inconceivability and apparent controllability, poetics and (geo)politics of space related to sea, land, and air.

Cartography, grids, and navigation are just as relevant here as nationalism and colonialism, trade routes and piracy, migration and tourism. Probed are the geopolitical power relations that are triggered by methods of surveying, classification, and delimitation—along with the potentialities and forms of the subversion, reversal, and dissolution of these relations that have always been unstable.

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari write about those instable relations between the “striated”—meaning the charted, surveyed, and enclosed space of the sedentary, whose archetype is the land or the city—and the “smooth,” unstructured, and open space of the nomads as represented by the sea: The „ smooth space is constantly being translated, transversed into a striated space; striated space is constantly being reversed, returned to a smooth space” (*A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 474–480).

Accordingly, a latent tenuousness inheres the grids and fences of the “striated space.” So the contemporary obsession of indefatigably erecting walls only yields artificial and theatrical boundaries, which will be torn down again sooner or later. The theatricality—and at the same time the fatal deadlines—of these arbitrary boundaries and fences is perhaps most clearly mirrored in Europe's present state of crisis.

Besides the cartographic and geopolitical regimes of sea, land, and air space, the exhibition also engages with the mythical figures accompanying these regimes. The ship, here, plays a significant role. For Michel Foucault the ship—as negation of space, as place without a place, as heterotopia *par excellence*—is generally known to be not only the greatest “instrument of economic development . . .” but also, since the sixteenth century, “the greatest reserve of the imagination” (Michel Foucault, “Of Other Spaces”, in: *Diacritics* 16, Nr.1, 1986, p. 27).

The exhibition seeks out these counter-sites—the paradoxical and discontinuous spaces of holes, seas, or ships—as imaginary, utopian, political, and anarchistic sites countering the existing geopolitical spatial order. Vital here is the invention of new maps that follow the unpredictable routes of pirate ships.

Works in the Exhibition (Selection)

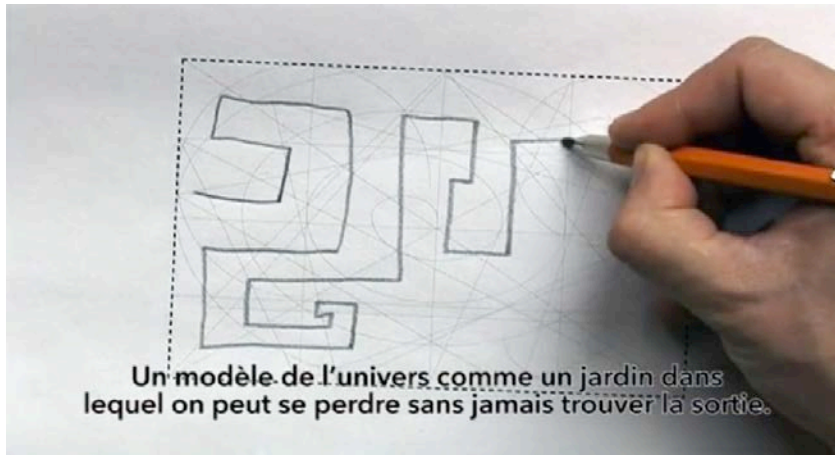
Courtesy (unless otherwise noted): the artists

// Zbyněk Baladrán

geb. 1973 in Prag, lebt in Prag

Models of the Universe, 2009

Video essay, color, sound, 2', loop



Zbyněk Baladrán uses organizational systems, such as cards, diagrams, and formulas, which refer to the ideological agendas of all-encompassing models of the world. His video essay *Models of the Universe* is set up like a sketch from memory, in which he designs an exhibition as a model of the world. He always begins with the same background image, whose logical-looking geometry (midpoint, two-dimensional planes, circular segments, diagonals, et cetera) recalls the basic parameters of Euclidean space. On top of this the artist layers flow charts, organizational charts, architectural layouts, labyrinths, organic contours, the alphabet, a map of an archaeological excavation, et cetera. These, in turn, are assigned to categories, such as society, constitution, neural networks, library, or history. Each new design replaces the one before it. Thus, the video ends with the phrase, "to be continued." In its interminability, the model of the world no longer appears as a totalitarian concept, but an endless number of variable possibilities.

// George Brecht

born 1926 in New York City, died 2008 in Cologne

Void Pebble, 1985

Pebble stone with engraved inscription "VOID," A 31/88, diameter 12–16 cm

Courtesy: Museum Ostwall at Dortmunder U, Dortmund

© George Brecht, VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2016

Photo: Jürgen Spiler, Dortmund



George Brecht—one of the early, major figures in the Fluxus movement—was lastingly influenced by Zen Buddhism, and he considered his work as a research revolving around experimentation, coincidence, and paradox. In *Void Pebble*, the single word “void,” carved into a pebble, directly contradicts the dense mass of the stone. Density and void, material and intangible, gravity and the ephemeral, signified and signifier create an insoluble conflict in which the contradictions negate each other. Yet, the word “void” has a certain weight and significance that counteracts the stone’s small size. A larger variation of this object was made for the *Sculpture Projects 87* in Münster.

// Matthew Buckingham

geb. 1963 in Nevada, lebt in New York City

Muhheakantuck: Everything Has a Name, 2003

16mm film, sound, color, 40', loop

Courtesy: the artist, Daniel Marzona, Berlin, and Murray Guy, New York



Two real-time aerial views of the Hudson River, one shot while flying north and the other while flying south, are continuously projected one after the other onto a low, floating screen in the exhibition space. The original color in the film is replaced by a strong magenta hue, denaturalizing the image. A voice recounts the brief but disastrous forty-year period when the Lenni-Lenape, the indigenous inhabitants of the lower Hudson River Valley, came into contact with the corporate entity of the Dutch West India Company. The Lenape called the river Muhheakantuck, translatable as “the river that flows

in two directions.” Are the practices of history and cartography adequate to describe such a river and its valley, and to describe it as space and place? *Muhheakantuck: Everything Has a Name* juxtaposes these two related modes of representation—historical narrative and geographic mapping—and problematizes both. (Matthew Buckingham)

// Annalisa Cannito

born 1984 in Acqui Terme

Contesting Europe Corporate Hypocrisy #2, 2015

Video collage, historical notebook (“Mare Nostrum”, Our Sea)



Contesting Europe Corporate Hypocrisy #2 is a video collage of TV news gathered on the Internet. It makes clear how racist patterns of behavior and oppression in political speeches and acts are spread with the aid of the mass media, and motivates behavior to oppose this tendency. The original document belonging to this work—a notebook from the fascist era—illustrates a situation that could date from the present time: on the back of the cover we read “Mare Nostrum” (also the title of an operation by the Italian coast guard service in 2013–14), while a dramatic sea battle is depicted on the front. (Annalisa Cannito)

Life Saver, 2015

Photo documentation of a concrete sculpture with gold paint and rope; historical postcard (“L’oro alla Patria”, Gold for the Fatherland, 1935)



Life Saver consists in a gilded life-preserver made from concrete, which hangs on the wall (here presented as a photo documentation). It highlights two references, one historical and one to the present day. The historical significance is made clear by an original postcard dating from the year 1935, mounted alongside the life-preserver: “L'oro alla patria”—Gold for the Fatherland—was a slogan of Mussolini's fascist regime, introduced after the League of Nations (the predecessor organization to the UNO) had imposed economic sanctions on Italy because of its open aggression towards Ethiopia. As a high point of the campaign, on December 18, 1935 Mussolini declared the “Giornata della fede” (which has a double meaning in Italian: Day of Hope / Day of the Wedding Ring), a highly emotional, public ceremony in which gold and valuables were donated to the regime. With respect to the present, the life-preserver points to the problems of European migration policy, to serve which the defense agency Frontex carries out military operations under the guise of humanitarian interventions in the Mediterranean. (Annalisa Cannito)

Intervention in Spaces of Amnesia #2, 2015

Video projection (*The Lion of the Desert*, director: Moustapha Akkad, 1981, 206') on photograph



Intervention in Spaces of Amnesia #2 questions forms of idolizing the memory of fascist colonial criminals in today's Italy. In August 2012, in the small village of Affile near Rome, a mausoleum was built in honor of its former citizen Rodolfo Graziani, a fascist war criminal responsible for atrocities against the anti-colonial resistance in Libya and Ethiopia. Repeated protests and action have failed to bring about the closure of this mausoleum even to the present day. This work is the outcome of a double projection where the image of the mausoleum is overlaid with the projection of the film *The Lion of the Desert* (1981) that was censored for almost thirty years in Italy. The film realized by the Syrian-American director Moustapha Akkad visualizes not only the violence and crimes of the Italian army in Libya under Graziani's leadership from 1929–1931 but also the anti-colonial resistance, which was led for several decades by resistance fighter Omar el-Mukhtar. Screening of the film in Italy was banned in 1982, one year after its release: Giulio Andreotti, the prime minister at the time, justified this ban by arguing that the film constituted an insult to the Italian army. (Annalisa Cannito)

In the Belly of Fascism and Colonialism #2, 2015

Fanzine, DIN A5, 12 pages, black-and-white photocopies



Cannito's works in this exhibition are part of an ongoing project entitled *In the Belly of Fascism and Colonialism*. The text published in this fanzine, which can be taken freely by the visitors, gives an insight on this research project. "My interest" as the artist writes, "is to analyze historical colonialism and fascism, with a particular reference to the Italian context, and their intersection with contemporary forms of coloniality and modes of fascistation ...".

// Chen Chieh-jen

born 1960 in Taiwan, lives in Taiwan

The Route, 2006

35mm film on DVD, black and white, silent, 16' 45"

Commissioned by the Liverpool Biennial



During the regime of Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s, all British ports became privatized. Private enterprises started to employ non-union workers to replace the original workers from the unions. In September 1995, the Mersey Dock and Harbor Company unexpectedly sacked twenty Liverpool dockers. In response to this, the other 400 dockers launched a strike. This movement triggered resistance to port privatization from dockers all over the world. In September 1997, two years into the strike, scabs in Liverpool loaded cargo onto a ship called the *Neptune Jade*, which was bound for the Port of Oakland in the San Francisco Bay area. After the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) conveyed the news of the *Neptune Jade*'s arrival to dock workers in Oakland, they responded in solidarity with the Liverpool dockers, setting up a picket line of their

own, and refusing to unload the ship. Afterward, dockers at the ports of Vancouver, Yokohama, and Kobe all mounted pickets to support the Liverpool dockers. Failing to unload from port to port around the world, the *Neptune Jade* eventually sailed to the Port of Kaohsiung, Taiwan, on October 17, 1997. Reportedly, the ship and its cargo were auctioned off at the Port of Kaohsiung. The dockers of Kaohsiung had never heard of the *Neptune Jade* incident. Neither had they had contact with organizations like the ILWU. In early August 2006, after learning of the *Neptune Jade* incident, the union of the Port of Kaohsiung agreed to take part in a “film action,” setting up a symbolic picket line at the harbor. The workers hope to carry on the pickets mounted by dockers all over the world and be united with them through this symbolic action aiming to confront the problem of port privatization. (Excerpt from the film *The Route*, 2006)

// Tacita Dean

born 1965 in Canterbury, lives in Los Angeles and Berlin

***The Green Ray*, 2001**

16mm film, color, silent, 2' 30", loop

Courtesy: Marian Goodman Gallery, Frith Street Gallery, London



With *The Green Ray* Tacita Dean moves toward the limitations of both immediate and media-mediated perception. The starting point is an extremely rare natural phenomenon that can only be observed in a few places on Earth and is technically difficult to record—the so-called green flash, or ray. “Green ray” describes that moment, just before the sun sinks below the ocean’s horizon, when the sun glows green for a few seconds, owing to certain light refractions.

Using a 16-mm camera, the artist tracked this phenomenon along the coast of Madagascar. Day after day, she and a few other people observed the sunset. Finally, Dean thought she had seen the green flash, which, however, proved not to be the case when they saw the video recordings by her colleagues, which captured nothing. It wasn’t until Dean developed the 16-mm film that she realized that she probably had seen the green ray. “So looking for the green ray”, as Dean writes, “became about the act of looking itself, about faith and belief in what you see. This film is a document; it has become about the very fabric, material and manufacture of film itself.

// Barry Flanagan

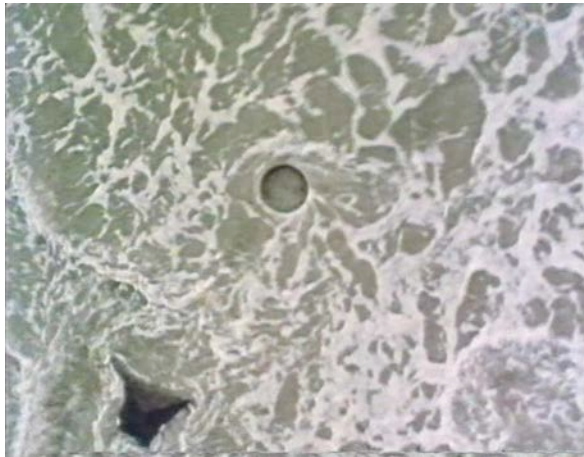
born 1941 in Wales, died 2009 in Ibiza

A Hole in the Sea, 1969

Video of a land art action in the context of Gerry Schum's *Fernsehgalerie*

(*Land Art. Fernsehhausstellung I* with Richard Long, Barry Flanagan, Dennis Oppenheim, Robert Smithson, Marinus Boezem, Jan Dibbets, and Walter de Maria)

Courtesy: Staatsgalerie Stuttgart



In 1969, the British conceptual artist Barry Flanagan made a hole in the sea for Gerry Schum's *Fernsehgalerie* (TV Gallery). At low tide, he installed a Plexiglas cylinder in a tidal mud flat, which he then filmed from above as the tide came in. For a brief instant, a hole in the sea emerged—before disappearing again in the swirling torrent of water.

// Sven Johne

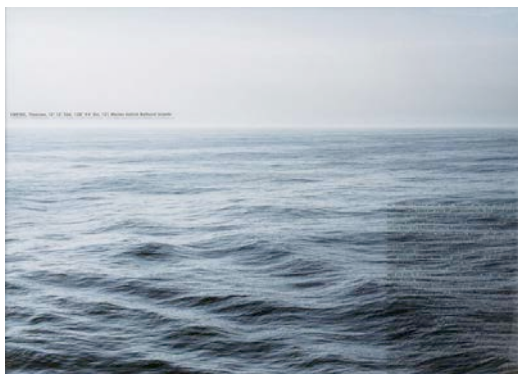
born 1976 in Bergen on Rügen Island, lives in Berlin

Ship Cancellation, 2004

Series of five color photographs, 100 x 150 cm each, framed, screenprint on glass

Courtesy: private collection, Berlin

© Sven Johne, VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2016



The series combines different photographs of oceans along with reports of maritime accidents that occurred between 1823 and 2000 in various places around the world. Texts on the glass of the frames provide—parallel to the horizon line—the names of the ships and the exact sites where they met with disaster. Each one also includes at the right part of the photograph some brief information about the type of ship, the probable cause of the accident, and an eyewitness report. On one hand, the texts read like success stories about shipbuilding, ranging from the first steamer to cross the Atlantic, to increasingly bigger container ships with greater capacities and complicated electronics. On the other, these success stories stand in stark contrast to the tales of sinking ships. It seems as if the new technic itself—due to technical failure—always leads to the catastrophe: accelerate steam-engines that overheat; unsecured cranes; containers whose weight causes problems to maneuver the ship, or electronic disturbance of sophisticated navigation system. Whether the pictures actually depict the sites where the accidents occurred remains an open-ended question, as does the issue of whether they are dealing with real or fictional narratives

// Zoe Leonard

born 1961 in Liberty, New York, lives in New York City

Photo series

August 4, frame 9, 2011–12

Silver-gelatin print, 60.3 x 23.8 cm, 1/6

August 6, frame 7, 2011–12

Silver-gelatin print, 60.3 x 85.7 cm, 1/6

August 6, frame 19, 2011–12

Silver-gelatin print, 69,5 x 49,2 cm, 1/6

August 6, frame 32, 2011–12

Silver-gelatin print, 50.8 x 72.4 cm, 1/6

December 3, frame 3, 2011–12

Silver-gelatin print, 77 x 62.8 cm, 1/6

January 27, frame 8, 2012

Silver-gelatin print, 92.7 x 75.9 cm, 1/6

February 27, frame 11, 2012

Silver-gelatin print, 34 x 48.2 cm, 1/6

February 27, frame 17, 2012

Silver-gelatin print, 27 x 19 cm, 1/6

February 27, frame 25, 2012

Silver-gelatin print, 35.3 x 24.7 cm, 1/6

All: © the artist, Courtesy: Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne



December 3, frame 3

Breaking all rules of photography, Zoe Leonard attempted to photograph the sun for this series. She pushes the limits of what can be done with a camera or can be seen with the naked eye—since it's common knowledge that it's not advisable to look directly at the sun. In each of the nearly monochromatic, white photographs, the sun is barely discernable. Some of the white dots seem to come from specks of dust, rather than this particular heavenly body. "I'm interested", as Leonard writes, "in the abstract possibilities of photography. By choosing a subject which is impossible to depict, I'm exploring a way of depicting sight, experience, and the actual process of perception."

// Pia Linz

born 1964 in Kronberg, lives in Berlin

Georgium, Fremdenhaus, 2014–15

Pencil on paper, 114 x 81 cm

Courtesy: Galerie Fahnenmann, Berlin

Schillerpromenade, 2007

Detailed study, pencil on paper, 59.4 x 42 cm

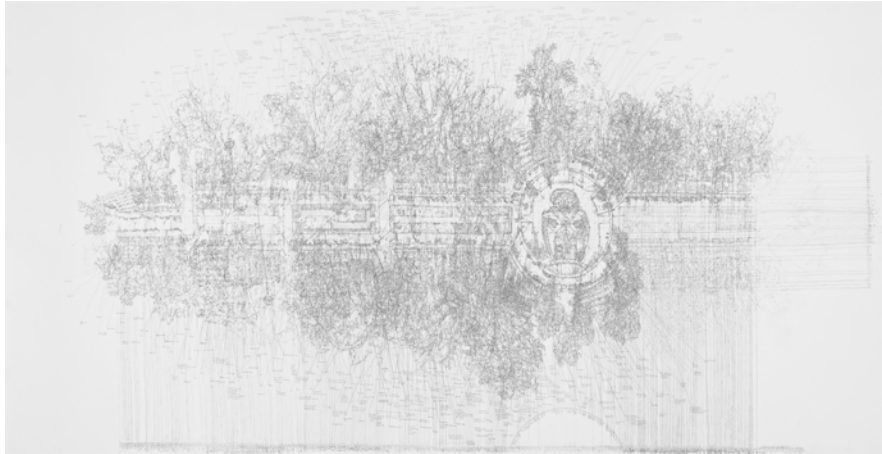
Courtesy: Dr. Glasser

Schillerpromenade, 2007–10

Pencil on paper, 140.5 x 280 cm

Courtesy: Museum Folkwang, Essen

All: © Pia Linz, VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2016



In a radical manner, Pia Linz's meticulously produced, multiperspectival environment studies deconstruct the usual order of cartography. Besides drawings that capture space in its multiple views, her works include parameters such as footstep scales or notes related to noises, situations, conversations, and other things that she has observed during the working process. The artist writes about her way of working: "First, I measure the whole territory with footsteps and work out, on large-scale paper with the aid of a developed footstep scale, an exact plan. On transportable fragments of the map, I note my observations with precision directly on the spot . . . Lastly, I transfer the detail studies into the unity of the large-scale drawing, which contains the footstep scale. While the countless pedestrian perspectives melt into a kind of bird's-eye view, the park landscape is transformed into a floating monad, which is still connected to the footstep scale only by fine lines."

// Hew Locke

born 1959 in Edinburgh, lives in London

Sea Power, 2014

Wall piece: cord, plastic beads, hot glue, dimensions variable

Commissioned by the Kochi-Muziris Biennale



Sea Power, a multipart work commissioned by the Kochi-Muziris Biennale in India, is made from cord and plastic beads glued directly onto the wall. As the artist writes: "The images are frayed and broken as if through age, patched up . . . The mythological look of the piece, like in all my work, is directly inspired by my childhood in Guyana, South America. Here, narrative folk tales are an important part of the culture. I have fused these memories with historical and contemporary references. The imagery draws on many sources, including Roman statuary, European prints of foreign trading posts, and maritime charts . . . One of the ships depicted is Vasco da Gama's ship the St. Gabriel. Vasco da Gama was a Portuguese explorer who was the first European to reach India by sea, in 1499. Da Gama's voyage was significant and opened the way for an age of global imperialism and for the Portuguese to establish a long-lasting colonial empire in Asia." The pipe smoker that stems from a view of the city of Cochin, Malabar, by Pieter van der Aa "refers to the Dutch East India Company's opium monopoly. Later, opium was grown in India by the British and traded in China—leading to the Opium Wars of the mid-19th century." (Hew Locke).

// László Moholy-Nagy

born 1895 in Bácsborsód, Hungary, died 1945 in Chicago

Impressions from the Old Marseille Harbor (Vieux Port), 1929

35mm film on DVD, black and white, silent, 9'

Courtesy: The Moholy-Nagy Foundation

© László Moholy-Nagy, VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2016



In the summer of 1929 the Hungarian painter, photographer, typographer, and theatrical set designer László Moholy-Nagy made his first film, documenting the old harbor of Marseille. The short film begins with a hole cut into a map of Marseille exactly where the city district surrounding the old harbor would otherwise be located. The montage suggests that the reality of the film replaces the spot on the abstract map. The camera observes the urban bustle: traffic, trade, work, and leisure. As early as 1900, Marseille, a place that signifies the yearning for the south, had become a setting favored by early filmmakers. Moholy-Nagy's film stands out, because it doesn't aim to portray exotic clichés, but instead links the signs and symbols of modern urban characteristics with the miseries of industrialization. One of the major emblems of Modernism, aside from automobiles and streetcars, is the cantilevered transporter bridge, the Pont Transbordeur, a monumental steel structure with a gondola, erected in 1905 and destroyed by German soldiers in the 1940s. In contrast to the images

of technological progress are photographs that focus on the filth of the poverty-stricken district and its lack of infrastructure.

// Mehreen Murtaza

born 1986 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, lives in Lahore, Pakistan

The Dubious Birth of Geography, 2012

Series of fifteen montages of historical photographs

Courtesy: the artist and Grey Noise, Dubai



Figure 2. The Second Zionist Congress in Basle, 1898. Theodor Herzl is speaking. Courtesy Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem.



Fig 10. Lake Chad, 1930

The Dubious Birth of Geography is a series of fifteen digital prints based on historical photographs that the artist found on the Internet and digitally processed. The motifs refer to geopolitical shifts, along with ethnic and religious conflicts in the Middle East and Africa— especially those that occurred in the wake of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire between 1917 and 1922—as well as the consequences of European colonialism and fascism.

The artist added foreign objects, most of which resemble fragments of landscapes, to the photographs; this lends a surreal quality to the documentary photographs. An aerial photograph from 1930 of Lake Chad—which borders the African nations of Chad, Cameroon, Niger, and Nigeria, and today represents a series of ecological problems and geo-political conflicts—has been edited so that it now features a paradoxical hole. Another photograph, taken during the second Zionist Congress in 1898, was given an early map of the world dominated by the Arabian region, which opposes today's cartographic arrangement. The globe conceals the congress's protagonist: the speaker and founder of modern Zionism Theodor Herzl.

The historical contexts behind these montages range from the late nineteenth century to the 1930s. They refer to contested territories, such as the Suez Canal, the Gaza Strip, or Jerusalem, or to events such as the massacre of Adana, where the Turkish government murdered around twenty thousand Armenians in 1909, during the period preceding the huge Armenian genocide. Figures such as Orson Welles appear, whose 1938 radio play based on H. G. Wells' famous book, *War of the Worlds* (an allusion to the colonialism of the British Empire), caused a great uproar; another figure is the Swiss paleontologist Amant Gressly, who, in the late nineteenth century, invented modern stratigraphy, a method for dating sedimentary rock that contains fossils.

Another montage refers to the creation of Tel Aviv in 1909, during the second *Aliyah* (the immigration of Jews to the Land of Palestine, resp. Israel), when it first emerged as a suburb of the

harbor city of Jaffa, named after a piece of writing by Theodor Herzl. It's based on a photograph from 1911, featuring ships waiting to land people in the harbor at Jaffa.

Another picture from the series refers to the battles over who would have hegemony over the Sinai peninsula; these were fought between British and Ottoman armed forces on the so-called Palestine Front, one of the regions of conflict during World War I. The picture is of Turkish photographers who are documenting the so-called Affair of Huj, a battle for Gaza in November 1917. The British emerged as the victors, and shortly afterward they took both Jaffa and Jerusalem.

Yet another photograph dating from 1917 alludes to the Ottoman Empire's loss of Jerusalem. As the visual commentary suggests, it proves how the Turks hoisted their flag for the last time during the religious ceremonies in Nabi Musa—one of the most important Islamic pilgrimage sites, where the grave of Moses is said to be located.

Another picture documents the 1936 arrival of the Emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie, as he enters into exile in Jerusalem (a British Mandated territory) after Mussolini annexed Ethiopia as an Italian province. There is also another picture of the Ethiopian ruler, under his royal name, Lij-a Ras Tafari Makonnen, from whence the Rastafarian movement also derived its name.

// Jean Painlevé

born 1902 in Paris, died 1989 in Paris

Hyas et sténorinques (Spider Crabs and Macropodia), 1928

35mm film on DVD, black and white, sound, 9', music: Frédéric Chopin

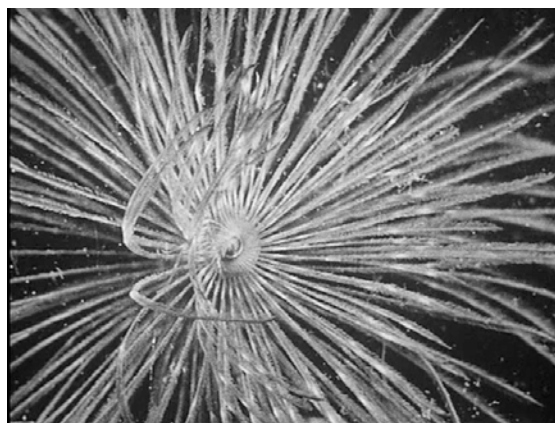
Courtesy: Les Documents Cinématographiques, Paris

Les Amours de la pieuvre (The Love Life of the Octopus), 1965

35mm film on DVD, color, sound, 13'

Direction: Jean Painlevé, Geneviève Hamon; music: Pierre Henry

Courtesy: Les Documents Cinématographiques, Paris



The French marine biologist and documentary filmmaker Jean Painlevé, who developed a technique for filming underwater in the 1920s, combined scientific and aesthetic methods in special ways. He translated his motto, *la science est fiction* ("science is fiction"), into around two hundred films, most of which were distributed as educational films, but were nonetheless strongly influenced by avant-

garde art experiments and the aesthetic vocabulary of Surrealism. His precise underwater photography is underscored by suggestive music by composers ranging from Frédéric Chopin to Louis Armstrong. Despite their pedagogical function, also time-lapse photography and voiceovers serve to dramatize and fictionalize the documentation. The bizarre creatures of the undersea world seem less like dangerous monsters than sublime creatures engaged in mysterious underwater choreography. Often, the animals are also anthropomorphized

// Lisa Rave

born 1979 in Guildford, lives in Berlin

Europium, 2014

Video, HD, 30', director: Lisa Rave, script: Lisa Rave, Erik Blinderman

© Lisa Rave, VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2016



What does the magical spiritualism of indigenous peoples have to do with the profane, everydayness of digital flat screens? And what connects Tabu shell money with European currency? Using various levels of imagery, the essay film *Europium* draws connections between Papua New Guinea's colonial past and the planned excavation of raw materials from the Bismarck Sea. The film weaves a narrative around the rare earth element europium. Named after the European continent, the material is culled from the ocean floor to ensure brilliant color images on smartphone displays and other flat screens. Of course it is also sought for its fluorescent property, which is used to guarantee the authenticity of euro banknotes. The film describes this seemingly mundane fact as a return and repetition of history, not only pointing to the complexity of human culture, its economies and systems of exchange, but also exposing the invisible ghosts of the past as they appear in the modern objects of our lives. (Philipp Kleinmichel)

// Julia Rometti & Victor Costales

J.R.: born 1975 in Nice; V.C.: born 1974 in Minsk, live in Mexico City; working together since 2007

The Savagery of the Inconstant Stones, 2013

Double slide projection, 162 slides

Courtesy: the artists and galerie Jousse Entreprise, Paris



The slide projections are portraits of crystallized volcanic rock from the province of Cotopaxi in Ecuador. The two projections are not synchronized, resulting in continuously new and different constellations of rocks. Rometti and Costales, who study the discourses of anthropology, natural science, and cultural theory, are interested in multi-perspectival approaches and “controlled ambiguity,” as the Brazilian anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro called it.

// Quinn Latimer

born 1978 in the USA, lives in Basel and Athens

A Stone for Victor and Julia (and Its Shadow), 2013

Digital Print

A poetically designed text on the work *The Savagery of the Inconstant* by Julia Rometti and Victor Costales

Stone of.
Stone of the three
happiest days of Artaud's life
spent tripping on peyote with the
Tarahumara Indians (stone of some recent drought
and stone of their running and stone of these subjects
as prey for Mexican drug runners: stone). Stone of neotropical.
Stone of botanical. Stone of palm. Stone of Morocco and stone of its
shadow and stone on light-blue paper found in a Rabat paper shop
(stone). Stone of a small anarchist flag made out of Huayruro grains. Stone
of the film of (moving) tropical plants I saw in Paris and stone of being moved
by moving images. Stone of that. Stone of houseplants in Europe that come
from these jungles of South America. Stone of colonialism and stone of revolution.
Stone of the other and of that literature (stone). Stone of your bright clandestine
organizations and stone of all organisms not considered animals. Stone of the
lover and stone of the stranger and stone of the traveler. Stone of second hand
bookstore and stone of the second hand and stone of this hand warmed by the
second stone it turns over. Stone of her philosophy. Stone of poor copy. Stone
of pamphlets and of the photocopied. Stone of the south and stone of the north.
Stone of the colonizer and stone of the guerilla and stone of the poet. Stone
of the epic (theater). Stone of the organic. Stone of geometry. Stone (stone) of
these forms. Stone of the document and stone of the torrent. Stone of this
modernism. Stone of our feminism. Stone of the rock and the hole it will
leave. Stone of this wide, green leaf. Stone of the andesitic and stone of the
volcanic. Stone of language. Stone of the rock it throws at us.
Stone of your study. Stone of your city. Stone of this your PDF
full of stones. Stone of its pleasure. Stone of the silver
projection surfaces of your desire (stone of).
Stone of biopolitics. Stone of (stone).
Stoned of psychotropics. Stone
of worlds, new or not.
Stone of.

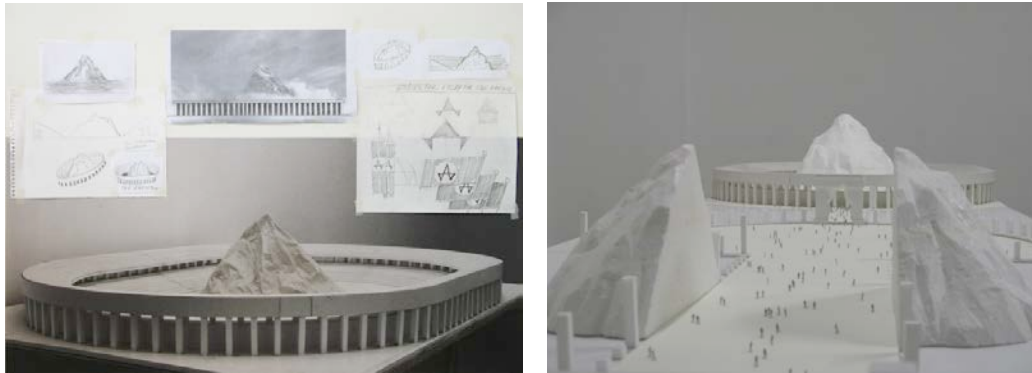
// Cristian Rusu

born 1972 in Cluj, lives in Cluj

The Alpine Project, 2007–2015

Model, series of six collages

Courtesy: Plan B, Cluj and Berlin



Cristian Rusu's *The Alpine Project* devises an open utopian urban space that connects totalitarian, imaginary, and subversive spatial concepts. "One could imagine a route through my proposed spatial design, encountering monumental gates, squares, columns, and a triumphal arch, to reach, finally the mountain's arena. The final goal is the collective admiration of the mountain (one of the symbols of sublime), which means offering the experience of the sublime for everyone. In *The Alpine Project*, I question my cultural references and research on modernism—which still acts like a global utopian project that already generated by default its projects and aesthetics, like new experimental artistic languages, political systems, visual propaganda of any kind, et cetera. The idea of utopian monumentality as such, containing zero ideology and taken out of the zeitgeist, still works as a method of reshaping both culture and nature. But reinforced with a suggestion that could spring from totalitarian aesthetics, it turns to be a more powerful way to experience the (collective) sublime." (Cristian Rusu)

A Hole in the Sea

May 21 – August 21, 2016

An exhibition by

Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart

Curators

Hans D. Christ, Iris Dressler

Opening

Friday, May 20, 2016, 7 p.m.

Artists tour

Saturday, May 21, 2016, 2 p.m.

Free guided tours

Each Sunday, 3 p.m.

Curator's tours

Wednesday, May 25, 2016, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, June 15, 2016, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, July 5, 2016, 7 p.m.

Sunday, August 21, 2016, 4:30 p.m.

Further events, see

www.wkv-stuttgart.de

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Kulturamt der Stadt Stuttgart

Hours

Tue, Thu–Sun: 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Wed: 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Entrance fess

5 Euro / 3 Euro reduced

Members of WKV: frei