

Press release

ceramicarpet

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33 rue de la Concorde

29.04 - 5.06.2021

Opening

Thursday 29.04.2021
from 6 - 9 pm

This evocatively titled exhibition features a selection of seven artists from the Baronian Xippas gallery. Although all have different nationalities, we have chosen to bring them together because of their common desire - processing material through craftsmanship. Looking at their combined works, two media immediately jump out - ceramics and tapestry. The presentation of these works in a group exhibit gave rise to the neologism *ceramicarpet*.

Although both techniques have developed from crafting methods, their characteristics could not be more different - the smooth, shiny surface of the ceramic glaze stands in sharp contrast to the soft, woolly feel of the tapestry. This results in a dialogue of both opposition and complementarity between the works.

Whereas tapestry and ceramics have long since been confined to the domestic field and the decorative arts, they have detached themselves from this bias bit by bit, thanks to a number of contemporary artists who have continuously renewed their weaving and earthenware techniques.

On the one hand, the latest tapestries still have a certain ambivalence, holding the middle ground between image and sculpture, between scopophilia (the pleasure of possessing someone by looking at them) and tactile pleasure, but also between antique and contemporary art. On the other hand, the renewed popularity of ceramics is also linked to the unpredictable and inimitable aspects of the material as well as the surprises that emerge due to the technique used. Ceramics should have a lively appearance, a presence that marble or bronze, for example, do not have.

The artists featured here do not only work with these two techniques - most of them embarked on this type of work in addition to their usual practice. The works displayed as part of *ceramicarpet* express a return to living things and to manual work as well as an urgent need for modesty and unpretentiousness.

The works by Ry Rocklen (US) represent familiar objects, highlighting the mundane activities of daily life. His technique creates a paradoxical relationship between these everyday objects and the precious appearance he gives them. An inflatable beach ball, a TV and a slice of pizza become precious sculptures and values. Through the medium of ceramics, everyday objects gain a sense of dignity that renders them timeless.

Canadian-born Larissa Lockshin has a hand in each one of her works. She intentionally chooses materials that try and break out of their confines. Questioning the existing associations, classifications, definitions and jargon around art and painting, Lockshin highlights the object rather than the content of the image. By representing animals in nature or everyday objects such as bowling pins on her ceramics, she plunges us into a state of nonchalance, offering us a new and contemporary reading of the medium.

English artist Zoë Paul uses various techniques and timeless materials such as ceramics, bronze, textile and drawings. Her works question our relationship with tradition and craftsmanship as well as with our notions of community and the domestic space in this digital era. Her series of ceramic vases *Hospitalfield Pot* reminds us of an imbalanced collection of human body parts. They were created by stretching pieces of clay until they shattered and crumbled and then transforming these sagging shapes into human bodies. According to Paul, working with clay is like making a three-dimensional drawing, allowing us to comprehend space through our bodies.

Luxembourg native Aline Bouvy's aesthetic explorations use a variety of techniques including ceramics, based in the main on the same theme: the issue of taboos, principally in relation to the body. Her work is based on freedom and defiance of etiquette. It is not so much aimed at provocation, however, but rather the living and transgressive demonstration of desire. In the guise of kitsch and incongruity, Aline Bouvy's work shows a range of more or less obscene figures, boldly taking us from desire to repulsion. *Morphthing* (a piece of ceramic displayed in this space) is no exception to the rule.

The draped fabric embroidered with ceramic pearls is the perfect embodiment of the universe of American artist Tessa Perutz. Her works function as psychological landscapes and bear witness to a spontaneous exploration punctuated with anecdotes, hurried notes and existential reflections. Tessa Perutz' work is shaped by conceptualisation and intuitive processes, organically intertwined and mutually informative. For *ceramicarpet*, Tessa Perutz experiments with the ceramic craft she has appropriated and made her own, using an assembly of pearls to create a landscape in relief.

Armenian-born Mekhitar Garabedian's work is structured around themes like memory, identity and history, which are regarded as unsolvable dilemmas. Using a variety of media, including tapestry, a lot of his works have been inspired by his experience as an immigrant and play on the humour and poetic qualities he finds between languages, cultures and histories. They are often based on texts and examine the way in which language and linguistic structures shape our individual position in the world. Going back and forth between Armenian, Arabic, Dutch, French and English, Garabedian shows us how language plays a key role in constructing our identity. This tapestry was made in the same spirit and has been embroidered with the letters of the Armenian alphabet.

Chinese artist Wang Du deals with the incessant flow of information with which the media inundates us on a daily basis. According to him, this leads us to a state of 'post-reality', where the lines between the real world and the world created by the media are blurred. His work is not only inspired by images from the Western (mainly French and American) press or social media, they are also the main media used in his creations. This tapestry is a three-dimensional reproduction of a subscription slip taken directly from a psychology journal.

The works of these artists are based in the main on themes such as psychology, memory and everyday life. In *ceramicarpet*, objects take precedence over images - the medium used (ceramics or tapestry) is often out of sync with what it represents. By re-appropriating these media, the artists create a new, unique language, combining traditional crafting techniques and artistic innovations.

About the artists

Aline Bouvy

Aline Bouvy questions through a multidisciplinary approach to issues related to the breadth of society. She claims a certain unknown freedom in relation to the norms that unconsciously model our desires and which dictate to us what is morally and aesthetically acceptable. From this perspective she tries, not to put herself on the fringes of society, but rather to integrate these elements/residues, considered from a moral point of view as “dirty” or aesthetically “ugly”, in her creative process in order to liberate herself from any categorization.

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Aline Bouvy (b. 1974, Brussels) lives and works in Brussels. She studied at the Ecole de Recherche Graphique in Brussels and at the Jan van Eyck Academy in Maastricht. Recent solo exhibitions include *PUP*, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin (2019), *Bastinado*, Galerie Albert Baronian, Brussels (2018), *Maturity*, Loggia, Munich (2018), and *It tastes like shit, it is shit, want a toothbrush*, NICC, Brussels (2013). Recent group exhibitions include *Somewhere in Between*, Bozar Brussels (2018) and *Return to Sender*, WIELS, Brussels (2014). Press includes among others features in Metropolis M.

Mekhitar Garabedian

Deploying a variety of media such as drawing, video, photography and installations, many of Mekhitar Garabedian's works draw from his experience as an immigrant and play on the humour and poetic qualities he finds between languages, cultures and histories. Just as his personal diasporic history is layered, his work echoes with a multiplicity of references to literature, music, philosophy and visual arts.

Mekhitar Garabedian (b.1977, Aleppo) lives and works in Ghent, Belgium. He received his degree in Audiovisual arts from Sint-Lukas in Brussels and his MFA Visual Arts from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Ghent where he currently is still affiliated as a postdoctoral researcher. Garabedian's work has been presented in solo exhibitions at Bozar, Centre of Fine Arts, Brussels (2015), S.M.A.K., Ghent (2011) and KIOSK, Ghent (2010). His work has appeared in group exhibitions such as *Shaping Light* - curated by Albert Baronian, Fondation CAB, Brussels (2018), *Art and Alphabet*, Hamburger Kunsthalle (2017), *The Absent Museum*, Wiels, Brussels (2017), *Kum Kapi*, Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon (2016), *Armenity/ Hayoutioun*, National Pavilion of The Republic of Armenia, Venice Biennale (2015), *Between the Pessimism of the Intellect and the Optimism of the Will*, Thessaloniki Biennale (2015) and *Here and Elsewhere*, New Museum, New York (2014).

Larissa Lockshin

Seeking to challenge the existing associations, categorizations, definitions, and language surrounding art, Larissa Lockshin emphasizes objecthood over image content. Employing printer ink, acrylic, oil sticks, enamel, and chalk, Lockshin creates objects that reach out to the viewer and exist in the liminal space between painting and sculpture.

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Larissa Lockshin (b. 1992, Toronto) lives and works in Queens, New York. She received her BFA from Parsons the New School for Design. Her work has appeared in solo exhibition such as *Far Side of the Valley*, Galerie Albert Baronian, Brussels (2015),

Close but No Cigar, Johannes Vogt Gallery, New York (2015). Her work has appeared in group exhibitions such as #98, Museum Gallery, New York (2018 & 2017) and *Third Space / Shifting Conversations About Contemporary Art*, Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama (2017). Press includes articles on Hyperallergic and Artviewer.

Zoë Paul

Zoë Paul uses various techniques and timeless materials such as ceramics, bronze, textiles and drawing. Her work explores our relationship to tradition and craft, and to the notions of community and domestic space in the digital age. Paul also explores in her art the moment when the threshold between interior and exterior become blurred.

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Zoë Paul (b. 1987, London, UK) lives and works in Athens, Greece. After receiving her undergraduate degree at Camberwell College of Art, she completed her MA in Sculpture at the Royal College of Art, London. Past projects and exhibitions include *La Perma-Perla Kraal Emporium* (2018), a collaborative work that invites visitors to sit around a long table and make clay beads, *Equilibrists*, New Museum, New York (2016), *Solitude and Village*, an exhibition exploring social relations and indebtedness in the village, The Breeder, Athens (2016) and *Unorthodox*, Jewish Museum, New York (2015). In 2019, she had a solo exhibition at La Loge, Brussels. Currently, her work is presented at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in the context of The Modern Window, a series of site-specific installations by contemporary artists commissioned by MoMa.

Tessa Perutz

Tessa Perutz's artworks function as psychological landscapes, touring the fields and valleys of the earth as well as the inner mind. Her works are a testimony to spontaneous exploration: pinpointed with anecdotes, hasty jottings and existential ponderings. Perutz' oeuvre is shaped by processes of conceptualization and intuition, organically intertwining & informing one another.

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Tessa Perutz (b. 1988, Chicago) received her BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and now lives & works in Brussels and New York. Recent solo exhibitions include *Homme Allongé*, Ballon Rouge Club, Brussels (2020), *Jardin du Midi*, Marie-Laure Fleisch, Brussels (2019), *La Lune Lavande*, Stems Gallery, Brussels (2019), *Sans Souci* at 3-D Foundation, Verbier, Switzerland (2018), *Karma Solaire*, Pablo's Birthday, New York. (2018). Recent group exhibitions include exhibitions at The Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp (2019), Atlanta Contemporary (2017), Milk Studios, New York (2018) and Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (2017). Press includes features in Artforum, The Washington Post, Modern Painters, ArtInfo, Milk Magazine, and Hart Magazine. In addition to her studio practice, Tessa curates Massif Central; a collection of silk scarves by contemporary artists.

Ry Rocklen

Rocklen has altered the materials, in subtle but profound ways giving these objects a second life as sculpture of astonishing refinement. These compositions -poetic, slightly surreal and treading the line of the readymade – employ humble materials to engage in a formal exploration of sculptural properties. The three general criteria Rocklen has for choosing an object as a sculpture are the fact that the object was experienced habitually, that it was then abandoned and that the object is more or less

culturally universal.

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Ry Rocklen (b. 1978, Los Angeles) lives and works in Los Angeles. He studied at the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia, California. He received his BFA from the University of California and his MFA in sculpture from the University of Southern California. Recent solo exhibitions include *Condominium pancake* (with Derek Boshier), Galerie Albert Baronian, Brussels (2015). Recent group exhibitions include *L'Institut d'esthétique Dans le cadre de La Manutention*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2017), *The Arcades: Contemporary Art and Walter Benjamin*, Jewish Museum, New York (2017), *L.A. Exuberance: New Gifts by Artists and Murmurs: Recent Contemporary Acquisitions*, both at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA (2016 & 2013), *The Whitney Biennial*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2018). Press includes features in the Los Angeles Times, The Observer and Artforum.

Wang Du

Wang Du's practice involves collecting media images and appropriating them into expansive sculptures. His curiosity about the media and what he terms the 'international landscape' - advertising hoardings, newsstands overflowing with newspapers, bright multicoloured magazines and an endless flood of television – has become the main inspiration for his work. These sculptures are often overwhelming due to their immense stature and their critique on the power of mass media in contemporary society.

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Wang Du (b. 1956, People's Republic China) settled in Paris in 1990. He studied at the Canton Academy of Fine Arts in Guangdong, China. He recently showed his work at the Biennale of Dublin (2011), Tang Contemporary, Beijing (2016 & 2008), The Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2011), the Städtische Galerie, Viersen (2010) and BPS22, Charleroi (2008). His work appeared in group exhibitions at the Cuban Pavilion during the Biennale of Venice (2013), Jardins du Palais Royal, Paris (2010) and Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2006). His work is represented in collections at the Centre Pompidou in Paris, MUHKA in Anvers and UCCA Beijing among others.