

Crisis. Against appearances

Mark Geffriaud, Ion Grigorescu, Tom Johnson, Jan Kopp, Molleindustria, Vacca

04.12.08 > 24.01.09

Opening: 04.12.08, 20h

àngels barcelona c. Pintor Fortuny, 27 | tues > sat: 12 > 14h ; 17 > 20:30 h.

+ espai 2 c. dels Àngels, 16 | tues > sat : 17 > 20 h.

Crisis. Against appearances, addresses the fundamental proposals of our gallery project. Departing from a certain skepticism, the selected works are based on practices that criticize artistic mediums, the representation of reality and the languages which, from the art world and the media, codify our society. The art object thus takes on a double role as both a social product integrated into a productive medium, such as the arts, and a platform for criticizing these productions.

Strategically using the ambiguity of images and sounds, the works question structural systems such as the control of the imaginary, information and environmental sound, the use and production of violence, the rigidity of certain categories, the control of knowledge or the excess of external stimuli. The exhibition invites the observer to construct dialogues among the artists, as well as between the artists and the mediums they work in.



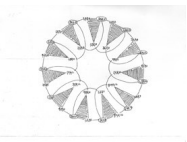
Mark Geffriaud | *Herbarium* | Slide projector and pages framed in Plexiglas.

Herbarium is a reflection on the institutionalization of culture and the task of cataloguing knowledge. Using what could be considered a paradigmatic example of an archiving task: the herbarium, the spectator's attention is directed towards the illuminated reverse of the pages. In this manner, it emphasizes what selection processes and hierarchies devalue: all those *things* that disappear for lacking institutional worth. A compartmentalized vision of culture is juxtaposed with the artistic intention to achieve the dissolution of the borders between categories.



Ion Grigorescu | *The work or the labour* | Color photographs, 100 x 75 cm.

The artist presents a series of photographs that reflect on the place occupied by both the artist and his work in the social fabric. Making us doubt whether they are self-portraits or simulacra, the scenes present a creative gesture that may be mistaken for the work conditions of a laborer. This work is the result of a way of understanding what it means to be an artist: "not for talent but for the pleasure in the act of integrating oneself into an ideology or usurping it."¹



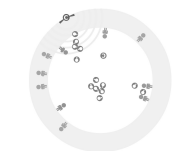
Tom Johnson | *Study to become "twelve"* | 8 drawings on paper, 35 x 50 cm.

A minimalist composer, Johnson works with simple formulas, limited scales and reduced material sounds. The particularity of his composing is found in the use of sequences based on logical series, frequently employing permutations or mathematical sequences. His drawings abandon the linearity of the pentagram in favor of a spatial disposition of sound. These mathematical scores correspond to previous studies for composition and give us access to the logical systems that sustain Johnson's music.



Jan Kopp | *Parabole* | Polyesterene and plaster. 400 x 600 cm.

Parabole is a hybrid that emerges from the architectural form of an amphitheater, whose movement evokes the structure of a parabolic antenna. The form refers to two objects—one archaic and one contemporary—that are used for the transmission of information, whether visual or imaginary. In this manner, the work sets metaphor on the capture of information. With a sculpture that not is a sculpture but a cadaver (a structure that is more provisional than solid), the artist presents himself as a "bricoleur"², or handyman, and solicits the spectator to complete the empty structure as well as the temporal chain of disuse and dysfunction of an apparently unfinished object.



Molleindustria | *The free culture game* | Videogame in Flash. Projector and wireless mouse.

The free culture game is a game about the conflict between free culture and copyright, portraying a critical vision of the of the videogame format. The goal of the game is to create and defend the circulation of knowledge. Obliging the player to distribute knowledge before it is absorbed by copyright, the game not only questions up to what point it is possible to claim authorship of ideas but also alludes to those ideas that become the dominion of the market, in order to reactivate them using knowledge.



Vacca | *F. & F. en F drama (romàntic)* | 3-channel sound installation.

Vacca's sound installation presents fragmented sounds which we can never access completely, given that it is impossible to listen to them all at once. Among the diverse sound sequences (all in the key of F), fragments from F. Schubert and F. Chopin make appearances. This act parodies postmodern appropriation with an atypical romantic content that does not fit into the spectacle of the cultural scene.

¹ Ion Grigorescu, 2008

² French term used to refer to a handyman.

BIO

Mark Geffriaud (Vitry Sur Seine, France, 1977). Lives and works in Paris.

Geffriaud's works allude to the compartmentalized and arbitrary nature of institutional processes and cultural transmission. His pieces borrow elements from such entities but their particular dynamic provokes cognitive processes that subvert them. The misunderstanding, the shuffle, the lucid, the super-position, these tropes are the critical tools that the artist deposits in the hands of the observer, championing a more lax understanding regarding the association of knowledge. Geffriaud has had individual shows at the gallery GB agency and the Palais de Tokyo in Paris. He has shown in group exhibitions such as the Lyon Biennial (France) or in the center of contemporary art Nicolaj in Copenhagen (Denmark).

Ion Grigorescu (Bucharest, Romania, 1945). Lives and works in Bucharest.

Grigorescu is one of the most important Romanian artists. Since 1967, employing formats like photography, video, and performance, he has addressed themes such as sexuality, the body, labor, and politics, using time as a transformative element. In addition, the category *artist* has been the object of the same scrutiny as part of an auto-biographical process, which has led Grigorescu to assume a dialectical role within the systems that govern reality. Grigorescu has had individual shows in the JGM Galerie in Paris (France), in the Salzburger Kunstverein in Switzerland, and the National Museum of Contemporary Art of Bucharest, among others. He participated in the latest Documenta in Kassel, as well as in multiple group exhibitions in spaces such as the National Gallery of Art of Warsaw, MUMOK, Vienna, or the GfZK, Leipzig.

Tom Johnson (Colorado, USA, 1939). Lives and works in Paris.

Some of Johnson's musical compositions include the operas *The Four Note Opera* (1972) and *Riemannoper* (1988). Some of his most widely interpreted non-operatic works include *Bedtime Stories*, *Rational Melodies*, *Music and Questions*, *Counting Duets*, *Tango*, *Narayana's Cows*, and *Falling: a very difficult piece for solo string bass*. His most extensive composition, *Bonhoeffer Oratorium*, a two hour piece for orchestra and soloists, with text by the German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, was awarded the Maastrich prize in 1966 and has been performed in Berlin and New York. Johnson has also written radio pieces such as *J'entends un chœur* (commissioned by Radio France for the Italian Prize, 1993), *Music and Questions* and *Die Melodiemaschinen*. His most recent projects are compositions for solo instrumentalists, such as *Combinations for String Quartet*, presented in Berlin for the MärzMusic Festival in 2004.

Jan Kopp (Frankfurt, Germany, 1970). Lives and works Paris.

Jan Kopp's work infiltrates the social machinery, the gears of meaning production, to uncover and to question the assimilation of the symbolic. Contrasting images created with borrowed or inherited material and appealing to their connotations, Kopp tries to revise and invert their meanings. Recently he has had individual shows in the la Galerie Misonneuve (Paris), Martos Gallery (New York) and the FRAC Alsace (France). His work has also been shown in group exhibitions in such institutions as: PS1 (New York), the Moscow Biennial, the Museum of Contemporary Art of Guangzhou (China), Shedhalle (Zurich), Kunsthalle Tirol (Austria) or the ICC (Tokyo).

Molleindustria (artists, designers and programmers collective founded in 2004 in Milan)

Their videogame approximations focus on the socio-political implications of the medium and engage cyber activists, "net-art" and both the habitual and critical and detracting players of videogames. The collective has chosen to use the internet as a platform in order to avoid mass distribution channels. Using simple but incisive formulas, they aim to establish a point of departure for the development of critical games. Since their inception, their work has addressed such themes as: labor conditions, identity and sexual stereotypes, religion and collective memory. Their work has been shown in multiple exhibitions and workshops in: LABoral (Gijón), La Casa Encendida (Madrid), Centre d'Art La Panera (Lléida), CCCB (Barcelona), Museum of Contemporary Art Vojvodina, Novi Sad (Serbia), Centre Pompidou (Paris) and The Israeli center for Digital Art (Israel), among other institutions.

Vacca. Lives and works Barcelona.

Vacca's work explores the different aspects of art based on sound elements. Since 1990 he has developed an artistic practice that approaches the communicative potential of sound and its processual dimension. His works bestow a special importance on reality, on the quotidian experience and on background noise, in line with his militancy for the emancipation of art from the attractive or from essential intentions. Vacca has shown his projects in solo shows, or in collaboration with other artists, in various spaces such as the MACBA, La Capella, Centre d'Art Santa Mònica, the Fundació "La Caixa" or the Teatre Lliure (Barcelona); Espai Guinovart de Agramunt (Lleida); el Palau Ducal Dels Borja (Gandia); MNCARS or the gallery Helga de Alvear (Madrid) and the gallery Play (Berlin). Some of the artists with whom he has collaborated include Pep Durán, Carlos Pazos or Javier Peñafiel.