

KÜNSTLERHAUS BETHANIEN

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Berlin, 5th April 2017

Dear Colleagues,

We are pleased to invite you to the opening of the following exhibitions:

KASPER AKHØJ
Welcome (To The Teknival)

CÉLINE BURNAND
Saints and Lovers

SHUBIGI RAO
Written in the Margins

LYNDAL WALKER
Changing Room

WU CHUAN-LUN
Schäferhund

Joint opening: THURSDAY, 13TH APRIL 2017, FROM 7 PM
Showroom at Kottbusser Straße 10

Exhibitions: 14TH APRIL – 7TH MAY 2017
Tuesday – Sunday, 14 – 19h

ATELIERS UND BÜROS: Kohlfurter Straße 41-43 · 10999 Berlin · SCHAURAUM: Kottbusser Straße 10

TEL: +49 (0)30 616 903 0 · FAX: +49 (0)30 616 903 30 · info@bethanien.de · www.bethanien.de

RECHTSFORM: Künstlerhaus Bethanien GmbH · SITZ: Berlin · AG Charlottenburg

GESCHÄFTSFÜHRUNG: Christoph Tannert · Andrea Boche · HANDELSREGISTER: HRG 8089

KÜNSTLERHAUS BETHANIEN

P R E S S R E L E A S E

KASPER AKHØJ

Kasper Akhøj's work is focused on the media of photography, film and sculpture. For his exhibition at Künstlerhaus Bethanien he presents a selection of photographs from his work *WELCOME (TO THE TEKNIVAL)*. The work consists of some 200 photographs in total, taken between 2008 and 2017 during the ongoing restoration of "E.1027, Maison en Bord de Mer". They are based on a portfolio of photographs by Eileen Gray and Jean Badovici, first published in a special issue of the journal *L'Architecture Vivante* from 1929, the year their villa in Roquebrune-Cap-Martin on the Côte d'Azur first stood finished.

The villa, which is immersed in a convoluted history of repossession, unclarified ownership and partial vandalism by Le Corbusier, has been under reconstruction since 2007.

Since then Kasper Akhøj has visited five times. Each time the villa was documented according to the perspective and composition of the photographs that Eileen Gray had conceived for the pages of *L'Architecture Vivante* in 1929. But when the photographs are exhibited the same perspective is never shown more than once, even though the photographs are not all from the same visit. By doing this, he indirectly forms an uncertain and indefinite narrative around the body of a house that has been subject to restoration work lasting almost a decade.

KASPER AKHØJ *1976, works and lives between Denmark and Brazil. He studied at the Städelschule in Frankfurt, and in 2009 he was a fellow at the Whitney Independent Study Program in New York. Later in 2017, *WELCOME (TO THE TEKNIVAL)* will be shown in its entirety as part of a solo exhibition at NMNM - Nouveau Musée National De Monaco. He currently has solo exhibitions at The Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, and at the Baltimore Museum of Art, both in collaboration with Tamar Guimaraes. Kasper Akhøj is a grantee of the **Danish Arts Foundation** and is a guest at Künstlerhaus Bethanien.

CÉLINE BURNAND

Céline Burnand's practice spans over drawing, film and performance. Her work investigates analogies between different times, places and personas in history. Departing from a protestant family heritage, she turns to other cultural groups in search of their visual legacy. She is especially intrigued by the relationship between emotion and culture and the way it shapes mythologies and rituals.

In the exhibition *Saints and Lovers* at Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Céline Burnand presents works based on her recent research on snake handling in Egypt.

The exhibition explores the parallel relationships between the practices of the *Rifâ'iyya* (one of the main Sufi orders in Egypt, whose name is associated with snake handling) and the secular aspects of everyday life. The work unfolds around the idea of love and contemplation, which is central in the relationship to the divine in Islamic mysticism. Rather than developing a linear narrative, the installation offers fragments of an experience through film, sound, fabric and drawings. | www.celineburnand.com

CÉLINE BURNAND *1987 in Lausanne, Switzerland, lives and works between Berlin and Cairo. She is one of the founding members of the Collectif RATS in Vevey, Switzerland (<http://ratscollectif.ch/>). Céline Burnand is currently participating in the International Studio Programme as a grantee of **Pro Helvetia**.

SHUBIGI RAO

Artist and writer Shubigi Rao's interests range from archaeology, neuroscience and science history, natural history, scholarship and exploration, to language, libraries, and historical acts of cultural genocide. She collects the detritus of our civilisations, whether objects/garbage, or discredited and unfashionable knowledge and ideas, preferring the subtle and the suggestion, relying on wordplay and humour to explore the tenuous line between existence and extinction, be it human, cultural, species-specific or ideological.

KÜNSTLERHAUS BETHANIEN

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Her immersive and tongue-in-cheek books, artworks and installations employ puns and wordplay, from creating archaeological archives of garbage, writing 'How To' manuals for building a nation and a culture from scratch, to pseudo-museum environments referencing the nature of collecting, the mechanisms of knowledge accumulation, storage, and destruction. She works in decade-long stretches on linked ideas, with her books and artwork from 2003 to 2013 being made under her male nom de plume, **S. Raoul**.

In her current ten-year project *Pulp: A Short Biography of the Banished Book* (2013-2023), she is working on a film, writing five books, and making ink works, about the history of book destruction, censorship, and other forms of repression, as well as the book as activism and resistance. This involves visiting public and private collections, libraries and archives globally, collecting fragments, anecdotes, buried secrets, and piecing together a composite of the conjoined literary and violent trajectories of our species.

For *Written in the Margins*, Shubigi is exhibiting, for the first time, material from her ongoing *Pulp* project, concentrating mostly on research and work made during her residency at Künstlerhaus Bethanien. From browse-able short, unedited film clips selected from hundreds of hours of interviews filmed during her travels, to photographs and texts (including the first book from the project), as well as an inked 'guide-map' to the project, the space suggests a reading room within the precincts of the gallery.

The **catalogue** to accompany the exhibition will be available here in early May, and is supported by National Arts Council Singapore.

Rao will be giving a **talk with Lyndal Walker on 19 April, 19.00** in the exhibition space. (Doors close 19.15)

SHUBIGI RAO *1975 in Bombay, India, has lived in Singapore since 2002, where she obtained her BFA and MFA First Class from Lasalle College of the Arts. Selected **solo exhibitions** incl.: *Useful Fictions* (Grey Project, Singapore, 2013), *The Retrospectacle of S. Raoul* (Earl Lu Gallery, Singapore, 2013).

Selected group exhibitions incl.: 10th Taipei Biennial, 3rd Pune Biennial, 2nd Singapore Biennale, *Dear Painter* (Sundaram Tagore Gallery, Singapore, 2015), *Urban:ness* (DUCTAC, Dubai, 2015), Still Building (Bandung Indonesia, 2012), Found and Lost (Osage Gallery, Singapore, 2009), Singapore Art Show (Singapore Art Museum, 2007), Second Dance Song (Institute of Contemporary Art Singapore, 2006), New Contemporaries (Earl Lu Gallery Singapore 2005).

Her **books** incl.: *Pulp: A Short Biography of the Banished Book*, Vol. I of V (2016), *History's Malcontents: The Life and Times of S. Raoul* (2013), *Useful Fictions* (2013), *No Cover No Colour* (three pseudo-art history books, 2006), *Bastardising Biography* (2005), and a number of limited edition artist books.

Shubigi Rao is a grantee of **National Arts Council Singapore** and is a guest at Künstlerhaus Bethanien | www.shubigi.com

LYNDAL WALKER

For many years Walker's photographs and installations have explored fashion and states of undress in order to contemplate identity, emotional states and the nature of time. Her portraits of both men and women dressing and undressing have challenged gender roles and power dynamics between model and photographer. She is interested in the role of photographs in our lives and through her series *Silk Cut* brought the digital phenomena of the 'dick pic' back into the realm of touch by printing images of erect penises onto luxurious silk scarves that are designed to be worn.

Changing Room extends her interests onto paravent screens, which are associated with fashion and undress and imply privacy and transformation. The images that appear on Walker's screens refer to themes presented in paintings from the 18th, 19th and 20th Centuries. Time is represented uncovering truth but the standard personifications of an old man and young woman are revised in Walker's images. The work is situated firmly in the contemporary world where the nature of truth has become increasingly slippery. Concerns such as the censorship and shaming of female bodies on social media and the exposure of corruption and abuse by our patriarchal institutions are brought into this critique of enlightenment imagery.

Walker also continues her interests in the ambiguous nature of mirrors, which are associated with glamour and

KÜNSTLERHAUS BETHANIEN

P R E S S R E L E A S E

vanity, but also with truth and objective observation. In this installation the images are reflected and fragmented by mirrors but so are the bodies of the audience as they walk amongst the paravent screens. | www.lyndalwalker.com

LYNDAL WALKER *1973 in Melbourne, lives in Berlin. Walker's photographs and installations have been exhibited at galleries including Hangmen Projects, Stockholm, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, The National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Modern Culture, New York and La Panaderia, Mexico City. *Art Forum*, *Art & Text*, *Beaux Arts Magazine* and numerous Australian newspapers and magazines have published and reviewed her work.

Lyndal Walker is a grantee of the **Australia Council for the Arts** and is a guest at Künstlerhaus Bethanien.

WU CHUAN-LUN

Wu Chuan-Lun's artistic research focuses on the border areas between nature and the various manifestations of contemporary civilization. He works with many media, but above all with found objects, photography and computer graphics. The artist has demonstrated a repeated interest in observing animals from the perspective of human and political endeavours alien to nature. During his time in Berlin he has been investigating the history of the German Shepherd Dog: probably one of the best-known dog breeds in the world, acknowledged for the longest time, German Shepherd Dogs have been employed as sheep dogs, guard dogs and as rescue dogs, but since the First World War they have been used increasingly by the military as well. Wu researched into the prevalence of the breed world-wide, as people have begun to breed them in many countries due to their suitability – whereby the different nations have always attempted to have their breeds recognized as a breeding standard under their own names. In the context of his meticulous research, Wu discovered many surprising and curious facts about the ideological and political marketing of the breed. In the exhibition *Schäferhund* Wu has gathered documents and artefacts concerning various aspects of the subject in a space-consuming installation: he shows pencil drawings of Shepherd Dogs in many variations, with their names corresponding to national creeds, behind acrylic glass tinted in the colours of the respective national flags – but according to the colour perception of a dog, which cannot see red. On the basis of a collection of ceramic sculptures and coin banks in the form of German Shepherd Dogs from the Taiwanese region Yingge – where ceramics have been produced since time immemorial – he reveals efforts to sell the local product by means of the culturally successful model of the German Shepherd Dog rather than the existing local breed of sheep dog. The ceramic money boxes experienced particular hype in the 1960s due to the TV series *Lassie*.

In his work, Wu shows the animal as an emblem and a symbol in the context of politics, history and the search for cultural identity; in his installation he develops a perspective that follows the museum model in order to question the logics of such symbols. At the same time, the work can be linked back to his continuing interest in a not-yet-defined status in our society between nature and civilization. | www.wuchuanlun.com

WU CHUAN LUN *1985, lives and works in Tainan, Taiwan. He completed his artistic training at Tung Hai University (Fine Art) and the Graduate Institute of Plastic Arts, TNNUA (MA). Exhibitions (selection): *You Will Not Be Wasted*, NHCUE Art Space, Hsinchu, Taiwan (2015), *Cabinet of Rendering*, Art Taipei – MIT: Young Artist Discovery, Taipei, Taiwan (2013); *Cre8tive Report*, OCI Museum, Seoul, South Korea (2017); *Animals and Us*, Digital Art Center, Taipei, Taiwan (2016); *As Small As the Universe*, Galerie Nichido Taipei, Taiwan (2016); *Life between Delight and Discomfort*, Gwangju Museum of Art, Gwangju, South Korea (2016).

Wu Chuan-Lu is receiving a grant from the **Ministry of Culture, R.O.C. (Taiwan)** and the **Taipei Representative Office in the Federal Republic of Germany** in the context of our International Studio Programme.