

Marina Pinsky

Infinite Play

20.04-02.07.23

EN

La Loge

Kluisstraat 86 - rue de l'Ermitage
B-1050 Brussels

“Play can be said to be present when the free expression of creative energies becomes an end in itself. It is freedom for its own sake. But this also makes play in a certain sense a higher-level concept than games: play can create games, it can generate rules—in fact it inevitably does produce at least tacit ones, since sheer random playing around soon becomes boring—but therefore by definition play cannot itself be intrinsically rule-bound. This is all the more true when play becomes social.”

– *The Utopia of Rules: On Technology, Stupidity, and the Secret Joys of Bureaucracy*, David Graeber, 2015

“Once Knecht confessed to his teacher that he wished to incorporate the system of the I Ching into the Glass Bead Game. Elder Brother laughed. ‘Go ahead and try,’ he exclaimed. ‘You’ll see how it turns out. Anyone can create a pretty little bamboo garden in the world. But I doubt that the gardener would succeed in incorporating the world in his Bamboo grove.’”

– *The Glass Bead Game* by Herman Hesse (English translation, 1969 by Holt Rinehart from *Das Glasperlenspiel*)

Marina Pinsky is a singular multidisciplinary artist who examines the manner in which we can read images as material, spatial, and ideological models of the world. Her mostly sculptural works, linked to the practice of photography, engage with the paradoxes of visual representation and abstraction. By translating sometimes complex systems, her art pieces also question the social and power dynamics embedded in the architectural structures of the places that inspired them. Pinsky, who aims to bypass the traps of these organisations, goes beyond the scholarly framework of their research on time and its perception to open up liberating and playful spaces. With *Infinite Play*, she aims to level the social hierarchies built into the site's historical architecture as a masonic temple. Forgoing the symbolic languages of the building's past, the artist overlays an entirely different complex of signs, rituals and games. Echoing a quote from anthropologist David Graeber, the works in *Infinite Play* offer themselves up to reorient and shift these dynamics. Like a game rid of unspoken rules, they defy structures of identification and classification, and produce a space of sociability and pleasure.

In the unique context of the former 1930s Masonic lodge, *Infinite Play* revives the hierarchies and histories of the place. At the entrance, a set of metal sculptures with glass balls, also found on the second floor, are placed on pedestals that once furnished the lodge. The pedestals, which bear signs of use, lived various lives before being returned to their original location. The Masonic insignia (compass, column, chisel) recall the rituals for which they were used. Diverted from their original function, the pedestals as well as the works they uphold call attention to systems of representation, organisation and measurement that hijack the decor of the lodge.

After crossing the lobby, the spectator is invited to climb a few steps into the temple whose floor has been raised to the same height as the platform at the back. Here, the roles of master and apprentice imposed by the initial layout of the place are levelled. The platform is covered by collages and disjointed enlargements of Victor Horta's sketches in a nod to Brussels' architectural history. In its centre, there is a conversation pit where people can gather and sit at three round tables covered by linen cloth. These digital embroideries represent large textile calendars based on images from the archives of the International Fixed Calendar League, which are held at the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam. Two of them are 13-month calendars. In contrast to the Gregorian calendar, the International Fixed Calendar was considered by the League to be more "rational" and "more favourable for economic affairs". Largely supported by George Eastman, the founder of Kodak, the International Fixed Calendar League had lobbied Congress unsuccessfully to adopt this new division of time for general use. By laying down the image of the calendar as a tablecloth, and in the spirit of a game, the artist makes the expression "laying cards on the table" her own. The flat system is open to the subjectivity of the participants, who are invited to gather around it to discuss its meaning. Pinsky, who is interested in forms of temporal organisation and its consequences (social, economic), thus proposes another way of thinking about time in the (de)levelled temple space, or simply gives another framework to open up a conversation.

Writer Lydia Ginzburg describes it as follows:

“The course of every conversation is, in its own way, predetermined, but the springs that propel it are hidden from the participants. Subjectively they are committing an act that is almost independent of any resistance from the objective world that hangs over every deed. Conversation is an unrestrained prototype for action, which must always conform to rules. It is a distant prototype of art, which is also a special kind of reality, and people themselves create and destroy the objects that populate it.”¹

The sculptures Spektral adaptive Farbenplastik and Adaptiv-perspektive Farbenplastik (2021), which can be seen on the first floor, further explore the link between time, its mechanisation, and the photographic industry. The works, produced from the legend of an early topographical map, have each been expanded into three-dimensional forms, with each segment of the colour scale corresponding to a carefully repainted step. Oscillating between a staircase and a sloping surface, this continuity of recent sculptures in the triangle adjoining the temple in the same style as the earlier ones is completed by a bird’s-eye-view image of a road sinking into the horizon. The effect of the photograph juxtaposes the three-dimensional elevations, so that the sculpture becomes a kind of inverted object. At the beginning of the 20th century, the methods introduced by Theodor Scheimpflug and Karl Peucker had attempted to overcome the optical distortions of aerial perspectives in photography to facilitate their representation in three dimensions. In the face of the increasing development of mapping technologies, particularly for military purposes, Pinsky’s volume pieces place the viewer in a performative experience of space that defies attempts to develop an infallible tool of control. According to Nina Franz, the viewer becomes a living and thus more sensitive device for perspective correction.²

On the second floor of La Loge, viewers find steel wire sculptures in the shape of miniature Ferris wheels in continuation with the sculptures on the ground floor. In each of their twelve segments there are red, blue, and green glass beads in specific arrangements, which correspond to the probabilities of the I Ching, the ancient Chinese oracle. This reference corresponds to Hesse’s novel quoted in the preamble. In his last book, the German author, who opposes the notions of freedom and creativity in systems dictated by implicit rules, draws a metaphor of power where its logic and mechanisms are always circumscribed but never described. The other sculptures in this series take the form of various calculating machines which have been rendered dysfunctional in their construction or display. One is similar to an abacus developed for binary functions such as those used in ASCII (American Standard Code for Information Exchange). Others appear to be derived from an ancient Roman calculating tablet, or a comma-shaped abacus. These simple and playful structures open up additional perspectives on the rules governing elaborate systems of organisation.

Linked by the stylistic use of arc segments and colour codes, all of the works in Infinite Play imply new circularities, both in their physical forms as well as the movements and social situations they generate. The reorganisation of

microcosms like La Loge gives way to new combinations and reflections. It is in this spirit that Pinsky, who stretches the boundaries of micro-societies, also imagined the co-shared work for First Sight, the patronage community of La Loge. The artist divided the 13-month calendar into twelve parts and proposed a more random division of time. By disseminating the calendar segments among members of the community after the exhibition, Pinsky invites them to continue this collective and infinite game outside, always calling into question the relevance of these structures.

1. Lydia Ginzburg, *Notes from the Blockade*, from the anthology *Soviet Women Writing: 15 Short Stories*, 1972
2. Nina Franz, 'Perpendicular views', *Four Color Theorem*, Triangle Books, 2020

Marina Pinsky examines the way in which we can read images as material, spatial, and ideological models of the world. Using photography as a basis, she creates artworks in a range of media that expand lens-based ways of seeing into three dimensions, often using sculptural means. Recently, she produced “1000”, a major public commission for Brussels City Hall. The work consists of twenty bronze models placed on Belgian bluestone and powder-coated steel bases representing different districts of Brussels. Among other notable Brussels presentations, she presented Circuit for Europalia in 2021, an exhibition set in the former train museum inside Brussels–North railway station. Her work has been shown in institutions such as the Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, USA; WIELS, Brussels, Belgium; Vleeshal, Middelburg, Netherlands; SMAK, Ghent, Belgium; and Kunstverein, Düsseldorf, Germany. In 2021, Pinsky presented a solo exhibition, Undertow at Simian, Copenhagen, Denmark. Dyed Channel, a solo presentation, opened at Kunsthalle Basel in 2016. Her work was included in the 1st edition of the Riga Biennial in 2018, the 13th Biennale de Lyon in 2015, and the 2nd edition of the Hammer Museum’s biennial exhibition Made in LA in 2014. In 2018, she was also part of the residency programme at GLUCK 50 in Milan.

Born in Moscow and raised in the US, Pinsky currently lives in Berlin and works in Brussels.

Works

Entrance

Comma Abacus, 2023

Stainless Steel and Glass

31 x 36 x 33 cm

Courtesy of the artist and C L E A R I N G Brussels/NY/LA

Pebble Calculator, 2023

Stainless Steel and Glass

30 x 60 x 60 cm

Courtesy the artist and C L E A R I N G Brussels/NY/LA

Temple

Conversation Pit, 2023

Wood, stages, carpet, fabrics

Dimensions Variable

Courtesy of the artist

Thirteen Month Calendar with Zodiac, 2023

Digital embroidery on Belgian Linen with cotton applique and zippers

177 cm diameter

Courtesy of the artist

Thirteen Month Calendar with Nature's Seasons, 2023

Digital embroidery on Belgian Linen with cotton applique

177 cm diameter

Courtesy of the artist

Shadow Pyramid Calendar, 2023

Digital embroidery on Belgian Linen with cotton applique and zippers

177 cm diameter

Courtesy of the artist

Triangle

Spektral-adaptive Farbenplastik (Shadow Version)

Acrylic paint on MDF, UV Print on adhesive foil

120 x 87 x 33 cm

Courtesy the artist and C L E A R I N G Brussels/NY/LA

Adaptiv-perspektive Farbenplastik (Shadow Version)

Acrylic paint on MDF, UV Print on adhesive foil

72 x 39 x 20,5 cm

Courtesy the artist and C L E A R I N G Brussels/NY/LA

1st floor

Spektral-adaptive Farbenplastik

Acrylic paint on multiplex

120 x 87 x 33 cm

Courtesy the artist and C L E A R I N G Brussels/NY/LA

Adaptiv-perspektive Farbenplastik

Acrylic paint on MDF

72 x 39 x 20,5 cm

Courtesy the artist and C L E A R I N G Brussels/NY/LA

2nd floor

I-Ching Wheel Version 2, 2023

Stainless Steel and Glass

73 x 36 x 60 cm

Courtesy the artist and C L E A R I N G Brussels/NY/LA

I-Ching Wheel Version 3, 2023

Stainless Steel and Glass

73 x 36 x 60 cm

Courtesy the artist and C L E A R I N G Brussels/NY/LA

ASCII Abacus, 2023

Stainless Steel and Glass

62 x 81 x 19 cm

Courtesy of the artist and C L E A R I N G Brussels/NY/LA

Public programme

Marina Pinsky in conversation with curator Zoë Gray

24.05.23, 18:00

Language: English

Free entrance

Zoë Gray (UK/BE) is a senior curator at WIELS, Brussels since 2015, where her recent exhibitions include Marc Camille Chaimowicz (2023), Kasper Bosmans (2022), Shimabuku (2022).

Lawrence, Perpendicular Music (live)

Closing Weekend, July 2023

Perpendicular Music is a new series of live performances by Dial Records co-founder Peter M. Kersten aka Lawrence, that premieres at the finissage of Marina Pinsky's exhibition Infinite Play at La Loge. A variety of acoustic instruments and pre-recorded material on cassette tape intersects with computer-based audio manipulation, slowly growing sound clusters emerge into a detailed yet captivating elegy.

Practical information and other events to be announced.

Visit our website and/or our social media to follow our programme.

www.la-loge.be - Instagram : [laloge_brussels](https://www.instagram.com/laloge_brussels)

Thank you

Infinite Play would not have been possible without the engaged collaboration with the artist Marina Pinsky.

The exhibition results of a yearly commission supported by First Sight, La Loge's community of engaged individuals and organizations, thank you to its members : Almine Rech Gallery, CLEARING Gallery, Dhr. Freddy Dezeure, Galerie Greta Meert, Zeno X Gallery, Mevr. Siska Bulkens, Mevr. Ann Cesteleyn, Dhr. Louis Cesteleyn, Mevr. Catherine De Dijcker, M. Frédéric de Goldschmidt, Mme Charlotte Friling, Dhr. Frederick Gordts; M. Pierre Iserbyt & Mme Michèle Didier, M. Dimitri Jeurissen & Mme Jeanna Criscitiello, Mevr. Helena Kritis, Mme Anne Pètre & M. Christophe Steyaert, Dhr. Marc Vandecandelaere, Mme Isabella Ritter & M. Hampus Lindwall, Dhr. Bert Van Welden.

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The team of La Loge

Director and curator: Wim Waelput

Communication and curator of public programmes: Antoinette Jattiot

Intern: Sepehr Sharifzadeh

Visual identity: Antoine Begon, Boy Vereecken

Production: Léonor Gomez, Arthur Jules

Audio & vidéo: Ludo Engels

Photography: Lola Pertsowsky

Translations and proofreadings: BLURBS, Martine Wezenbeek, Lila Poimboeuf-Mahieu

First Sight ambassador: Johan Larsen

Volunteers: Alice Beilig, Jonas Halkin, Alice Nataf, Lila Poimboeuf-Mahieu, Mary Szydłowska.

Opening hours

From Thursday to Sunday

13:00 - 18:00

Free entrance.

Visit our website for more details about our programme and events.

www.la-loge.be

La Loge is a privately initiated non-profit association founded by architect Philippe Rotthier. La Loge is supported by the Flemish Government, the French Community (FWB), the Flemish Community Commission (Vlaamse Gemeenschapscommissie - VGC) and First Sight, La Loge's community of engaged individuals and organizations. La Loge receives additional support from the Municipality of Ixelles, COCOF and National Lottery of Belgium. La Loge is a member of 50° NORD-3° EST and Brussels Museums.

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