

Reclaiming Places 01.05–03.07.21 EN

La Loge

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

With works by Marwa Arsanios, Marjolijn Dijkman, Laura Huertas Millán, Joar Nango, Otobong Nkanga

Reclaiming places tells the story of a changing world, and voices indigenous peoples' intention to inhabit spaces that surround them and reclaim the materials they are made of. The exhibition translates the story told by the public programme *A Common Breath* (10.03–03.04.21) into a new presentation, thus giving us the opportunity to follow up on some of the programme's artistic collaborations, while starting new ones. The works presented here are bound by joint environmental concerns. They also explore not only the notion of inhabiting the land, but also how we exploit and possess it. *Reclaiming Places* showcases architecture as a practice allowing for the building of necessary relationships between places and beings, whether human, nonhuman or interspecies.

Upon entering the exhibition, **Otobong Nkanga's** landscape collages shown in two photographs transport the viewer to a remembered environment, situated somewhere between an imaginary world and a new reality. Traditional architecture, proudly placed like a trophy and surrounded by overflowing nature, speaks volumes on how colonialism has impacted humans and nature. Meanwhile, a schematic islet and the way it has been cut out question the representation of arbitrarily divided land.

Our environment is a vessel for human artefacts, and within it architecture indicates not only our lifestyles but also reveals forms of exploitation. In his work, Sámi-Norwegian artist **Joar Nango** explores these spaces, and how they interact with colonial heritage and indigenous identities. The text- and image-based piece shown at La Loge, entitled *The Indigenuity Manifesto* (a portmanteau of indigenous and ingenuity) announces that history and the present moment could be reappropriated in an improvised and unsteady manner. The creative approach Nango takes in his film posits traditional knowledge and craft as practices of resistance and self-determination. Vernacular architecture has proven the virtues of certain materials and autonomous inventiveness, paving the way for a non-appropriationist transformation of the environment.

Kris Kimpe's platform, originally designed as a film set for recording live streams, remains at the centre of La Loge's temple. It now acts as a meeting point and recalls La Loge's previous exhibition and the issues raised during the public programme of March 2021. The chequered structure provides a space for document resources and thought, a common space where views are shared and activated concerning the environment, exploitation, the dismantling of hierarchisation, and indigenous relationships with architecture.

On the stage in the temple, **Marjolijn Dijkman's** film-installation also has a strong stance, acting as a guiding compass or observatory looking out onto the world. *Navigating Polarities* explores the layering of history and the relationships between navigation and colonialism. The work conflates scales of the infinitely small to the unthinkably big, and confuses distinctions between north and south, earth and sky. In her visual essay, the artist examines how the natural magnetic forces which guided geographic expeditions and astrophysics have continued to impact our vision of the world and the way we appropriate it. Dijkman's installation upends western binary divisions and invites us to explore instability, thus questioning Earth's appropriation by humankind.

Following on from *Who's Afraid of Ideology 1 & 2* (which was shown as part of *A Common Breath*), *Micro Resistencias* investigates the systemic war fought by multinational corporations against one of life's originating elements: seeds. Filmed in Tolima, Colombia's coffee-producing region, this last chapter in **Marwa Arsanios'** trilogy combines different stories of women fighting to preserve the ancestral knowledge of indigenous communities and their agricultural independence. A series of drawings is shown alongside the film wherein seeds are represented in their fertile abundance. Using visual metaphors, seeds are life, and earth is considered to be the architecture or house that hosts such life. Earth welcomes and protects life; it allows and encourages the relationships necessary for living entities to exist and grow.

Aequador, a film oscillating between reality, allegory, and fiction by **Laura Huertas Millán** is screened on the last floor of La Loge. Virtually-rendered abandoned modernist constructions sit on the banks of the Amazon river, casting an image of a dystopian world. The jungle hosts faded utopias from

colonial times as well as the leftovers of coexistence. The artist highlights the differences and contrasts between human presence and virtual architecture. All that is left after such conflict is the overarching presence of nature as an essential space for coexistence and reconstruction. Nature constitutes an eternal—and perhaps utopian—architecture, housing living organisms and providing a possibility to resist the grasp of fiction.

Biographies

Marwa Arsanios (b. 1978) is a Lebanese artist, filmmaker and researcher who addresses contemporary politico-social questions from the Middle East within a historical perspective, with a particular focus on gender relations, urbanism, and industrialisation. She approaches research collaboratively and seeks to work across disciplines. Her work takes the form of archival installations, texts, films, and performances. Her recent projects have more specifically taken into consideration issues of ecology, feminism, social organisation, nation-building, war, and economic struggle. Her work has been shown in international contexts such as the Kunsthalle Wien (AT); Beirut Art Center (LB); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (US), and Witte de With, Rotterdam (NL).

Marjolijn Dijkman (b. 1978) is a Dutch, Brussels-based artist and co-founder of Enough Room for Space. Her works can be seen as a form of science fiction; partly based on facts and research but often brought into the realm of fiction, abstraction and speculation. Enough Room for Space initiates long-term experimental research projects, challenging the barriers between different disciplines (artistic, scientific, or activist). Solo exhibitions were presented at Cincinnati Contemporary Art Center [CAC] (US); HIAP (FI); OSL Contemporary (NO); NOME (DE); Munch Museum (NO); Fig. 2 (UK); West Space (AU); IKON Gallery & Spike Island (UK); Berkeley Art Museum (US). Recent group shows include: Les Parallèles du Sud, Manifesta 13 (FR); 4th Screen City Biennale (NO); 6th Lubumbashi Biennale (DRC); 1st Fiskars Biennale (FI).

Laura Huertas Millán (b. 1983) is a French-Colombian filmmaker and visual artist, whose practice stands at the intersection between cinema, contemporary art, and research. Entwining ethnography, ecology, fiction, and historical enquiries, Laura Huertas Millán's moving image work engages with strategies of survival, resistance, and resilience against violence. Sensuous and immersive, her films propose embodied and emotional experiences where aesthetics and politics are indissociable. She holds a practice-based PhD on Ethnographic Fictions, developed between PSL University [SACRe program] and the Sensory Ethnography Lab [Harvard University] (US). In the art field, her latest solo exhibitions were held at the MASP Sao Paulo (BR); Maison des Arts de Malakoff (FR), and Medellín's Modern Art Museum (CO). Her films have also been exhibited and screened in art institutions: Centre Pompidou, Paris (FR); Jeu de Paume, Paris (FR); Guggenheim Museum, New York (US), Times Art, Berlin (DE), and biennials such as Liverpool (UK), FRONT Triennial, Cleveland (US), Videobrasil, São Paulo (BR), Videonale, Bonn (DE).

Kris Kimpe is a Belgian architect and scenographer who in 2001 founded a collective of architects specialised in the conception of artists' studios and exhibitions, and the exhibiting of art in public spaces. He has collaborated with artists including Orla Barry, Koenraad Dedobbeleer, Nico Dockx, Jan Kempenaers, Aglaia Konrad, Willem Oorebeek, and Ana Torfs.

Joar Nango (b. 1979) is a Sámi-Norwegian artist and architect. His identity as Sámi, an indigenous people of Northern Europe, is central to his artistic and architectural practice. At the intersection of architecture, design and art, Nango's practice explores issues of indigenous identity through the contradictions of contemporary architecture and the built environment. Joar Nango is particularly concerned with the concept of nomadism and the creative simplicity and sustainable knowledge that exists in the informal building environments of the North. He also is one of the co-founders of a collective of architects, FFB, whose work focuses on nomadic structures and subversive interventions in urban contexts. His work was featured at Bergen Kunsthall, Bergen (NO), Western Front, Vancouver (CA), Museum Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt (DE), Documenta 14, Kassel (DE).

Otobong Nkanga (b. 1974) is a Nigerian-born artist based in Antwerp. Nkanga's work raises questions about the social and topographical relationship with our everyday environment. Considering the notion of land as a place of non-belonging, Nkanga brings an alternative meaning to ideas of identity. She points to the complexities inherent in natural resources and their potential values to give rise to narratives and stories connected to the land. Through her vision of "land" as a geological and discursive structure, based on the systems and procedures by which raw materials are extracted, processed and disseminated, she investigates the links that intersect minerals, material culture and the construction of desire with the redistribution of power and knowledge. Her most recent solo exhibitions took place at Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin (DE), Tate St. Ives (UK), ar/ge kunst, Bolzano (IT), MCA Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (US), The Tanks at Tate Modern, London (UK).

Works

Lobby

Otobong Nkanga, *Shaping Memory*, 2012
Lambda print, colour, black & white AP
Each 120 x 90 cm
Courtesy of the artist

Temple

Joar Nango, *The Indigenuity Manifesto*, 2015
Video : 34 :08 min, Colour, no sound
Courtesy of the artist

Kris Kimpe, Installation, 2021
Wood, paint. 4m x 5,5m

Marjolijn Dijkman, *Navigating Polarities*, 2018
Wood, polyester, text.
Video, 24:02 min, HD, Stereo
Collection Vlaamse Gemeenschap - Mu.ZEE, Oostende

Triangle

Marwa Arsanios, *Untitled*, 2020
9 drawings, pencil on paper
28,5 x 30 cm
Unique pieces
Courtesy of the artist and mor charpentier Paris

Basement

Marwa Arsanios, *Who is afraid of ideology ? Part III - Micro Resistencias*, 2020
Video, 31:16 min, Colour, stereosound
Original version : english and spanish
Subtitles : english
Script : Marwa Arsanios. Camera : Juma Hamdo
Editing : Katrin Ebersohn. Sound : Katrin Ebersohn
Courtesy of the artist and mor charpentier Paris

Second Floor

Laura Huertas Millan, *Aequador*, 2012
Video, 19:42 min, Colour HD, stereosound
Subtitles : English
Produced by Le Fresnoy, Studio national des arts contemporains
Courtesy of the artist

Thank you

Reclaiming Places would not have been possible without the engaged collaboration with the participants Marwa Arsanios, Marjolijn Dijkman, Kris Kimpe, Laura Huertas Millán, Joar Nango, Otobong Nkanga, as well as Mu.ZEE Oostende and the kind assistance of Wim van Dongen (studio Otobong Nkanga), Yundi Wang (studio Laura Huertas Millán) and mor charpentier Paris.

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The team of La Loge

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Volunteers: Damir Draganić, Antoine Guitou, Nele Möller, Lila Poimboeuf-Mahieu

Opening hours

Thursday to Saturday

12:00 to 18:00

Free entrance on reservation. You can book your time slot via our website. Information about La Loge's safety measures against Covid-19 is on our website.

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

La Loge is a privately initiated non-profit association founded by architect Philippe Rotthier. La Loge is supported by Philippe Rotthier Foundation, the Flemish Government, 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 and the French Community (FWB).

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