

# OBJECT MANIPULATING ECONOMY / ECONOMY MANIPULATING OBJECT

curated by Aman Sandhu & Swapnaa Tamhane

augustfroehls.tumblr.com

Friedrichstraße 19,  
41061 Mönchengladbach  
29.01.2015 - 15.02.2015  
Geöffnet an Samstagen und Sonntagen  
12 Uhr - 16 Uhr  
Vernissage: 28.01.2015, 19 Uhr

Performances:  
David Bernstein: 19.30, 20:00, & 20.30 Uhr  
Harkeerat Mangat: 21 Uhr

with thanks to  
Herr Georg  
Walendy

KULTURBÜRO  
MÖNCHENGLADBACH 

## For consideration –

In-between spaces have always been a considered part of our conversation. I don't think we have fully articulated why this is but it could have something to do with being of a diaspora back-ground. Both of us born in Canada and both raised by parents who are immigrants – instilled in us a certain sense of being here and there but also neither here nor there – this has left us with a particular framing of what a 'place' is. In the days leading to relocation to Mönchengladbach, we made a desperate drive north of Toronto towards the picturesque landscape that Canada is best known for in an attempt not to miss something that was not prior largely relevant to us. Arriving in Germany (also known for its picturesque landscape) we found ourselves in a position mirroring our own parents immigration to Canada from India – new land, new faces, new language. The last new thing – language – has provided us with a lens of this new place. Because Deutsche is not our first or second or third language this apparent obstacle manifested into a rare freedom to engage our other senses as substitutes. This considered – we encountered a shop window that we would ritualistically return to, transfixed by the phantasmagoric arrangement of clothing in the display windows – somehow we knew this would be another in-between space.

– Aman Sandhu & Swapnaa Tamhane, 2015

## ARTISTS & DESCRIPTION OF WORKS

SOYA ARAKAWA (b. 1984 Hamamatsu-shi, lives and works in Krefeld)

Ten thousand leaves and a big fish (2015). Woodcut prints and ceramic objects

The lady of August Fröhls, the father of original Japanese philosophy and I: the stories of these three persons are mixed up, but the differences of these experiences generate a feeling of something incompatible and this becomes the basis for my poems stimulating abstract imagination. Near the shelf with various ceramic objects, is a text in black-and-white – it is a poem translated (for the first time) from Japanese to German – selected from an ancient book that includes a collection of poems written by thousands of people, some kings, some unknown villagers. The title 'Ten thousand leaves' is an incorrect translation: actually, in Japanese, the title is 'Ten thousand poems', but one of the characters also means 'leaf'. From this gap between the right translation and the wrong, I gained a big imagination and a possibility for a new poem.

The father of the original Japanese philosophy was from a certain city, and did not make a book with his writings fast enough to spread it to younger generations. At that time, to publish a book, a woodcut would have had to have been made. The son of the philosopher did this work – working long into the night accompanied by candlelight. He became blind. I had a chance to see the original woodblock of this book, and became drawn into this history, with how the handmade and progress in culture are directly related.

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Arakawa works in sculpture, drawing, painting and performance. His works often play with ideas of cultural appropriation, fiction and self-mythology. He is currently a student in the Klasse Rita McBride at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf.

DAVID BERNSTEIN (b. 1988 San Antonio, lives and works in Amsterdam)

The chair on its side, (sculpture 2012, drawing 2010)

The performance tells the autobiographical story of an obsession with the position of a chair on its side. Combining thoughts on abstraction, animism, and mysticism, the story prompts a new imagination for what a chair position could mean.

Rieškutės and Starting the Fire (2013)

"Rieškutės" is the word in Lithuanian for when you put your hands together to make a bowl. This is represented by the negative space in the chair sculpture. When recently exhibited, the work was accidentally placed upside down. This was a very exciting mistake, so I decided that if the work is upside down, the title of the work changes to "Starting the Fire" as the hands are now in a position of covering, as you would do when lighting a cigarette in the wind or whispering a secret message. As Oscar Tuazon asks, "why can't a thing be two things?" This work has now become what he calls a "transsexual thing". It contains two works in one object, which are simply determined by the position.

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Bernstein performs, writes, and makes objects. He explores thinging (a reciprocal process of thinking, making things, thinking through things, and using things as lenses to look at other things). He often works in collaboration with Jurgis Paškevičius and Géraldine Geffriaud as the collaborative pun jugedamos. Bernstein writes stories, poems, and press releases. Sometimes his writings and objects meet, they sit in the living room and talk to one another, finding a cozy way to tell a good story.

JESSICA GISPERT (b. 1984 Miami, lives and works in Düsseldorf)

Poolside (2014)

Donuts, pool water, play-dough / Plastic Slinkies wiggle glitter / Corner-store banalities bounce on pedestals / Exoticise the everyday object

I am presenting work which attempts to create effective patterns provoked by the digestion of my physical daily life, as well as my digital daily life. I am interested in the cognitive conventionality these objects provide as part of our environment (our nature). These highly consumable objects are catalyst to consumptive satisfaction. I re-adapt the natural state of these materials to explore forms that activate human attraction.

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Gispert was born in 1984 in Miami, Florida. She received her BFA in mixed-media in 2007 from Florida International University, followed by her MFA in 2011 at New York University Steinhardt. She currently lives and works between New York and Düsseldorf. Gispert has participated in international exhibitions and projects at Chelsea Museum in New York City, Museo de Arte Moderno in Guatemala City, Museum Abteiberg in Mönchengladbach, and Bonner Kunstverein in Germany.

ELMAR HERMANN (b. 1978 Neuwied, lives and works in Düsseldorf)

I have worked for many years as a language trainer and noted the growing need for my role due to the growing number of foreigners arriving in Germany. When this exhibition was introduced to me, I thought of language as an 'object' manipulated by 'economy'. Does a general optimism/wealthiness/success generate specific language skills/vocabulary/grammar/mirror neurons? This question is linked to the sepia-coloured wallpaper with illustrations showing the glory days of Mönchengladbach in the late 19th-Century when people then could afford to buy stylish pajamas at a store like August Fröhls. This link is not necessarily true but it works metaphorically for me. There are two prints on the existing wallpapers in one back room and one print on a sculpture by Kristina Stoyanova to be seen in the store front window.

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Hermann's artistic practice is deeply identified by artistic & linguistic concepts as basic elements of human civilization. Aspects of collaboration and education play an important role in his creative process. Hermann finished his studies at Düsseldorf Kunstakademie and also holds a master in Linguistics from Düsseldorf University. During the last decade Hermann's work was part of solo and group shows including Villa Romana, Florence, polistar, Istanbul, ISCP New York City, Goethe Institut Mumbai and Kunstverein Düsseldorf. Upcoming shows at vice versa, Berlin, and SSZ Sued Cologne. He is part of the artists collaborative NÜANS which has recently published „Hayy-A self taught musical“ with revolver, Berlin.

**HARKEERAT MANGAT (b. 1990 Toronto, lives and works in Vancouver & Düsseldorf)**

**The Foley Artists (2015). 8 minutes**

Foley, the reproduction of sound effects which are added to film to enhance audio quality, is a process typically reserved for a film's post-production phase. In the film installation, *The Foley Artists (2015)*, the process of foley itself is reproduced in the role of the actors during production as well as in live performance during the screening of the film. The rules of the film's fictional world are established early on in the work, when viewers see several foley artists in the film prepare and discuss plans to create live foley for two actors. After an artist questions the absurdity of creating foley for actors in the same room they are to act in, another explains that the actors are both schizophrenic: "sometimes they see things that aren't real and sometimes they don't see real things. Don't touch them." Upon the actors' arrival, the camera switches from each perspective of the performing foley artists as well as the perspective of the actors - a camera view in which we see no artists. At the peak of the actors' drama, one artist arrives late, disrupting the scene and triggering a conflict amongst all characters in the film. During a free-for-all, rumble-type fight, the film provides a glimpse of two new foley artists, outside the room of action performing foley for every character introduced so far. The film finishes with a scene of the entire cast grouped around a table, reciting lines from scripts, performing dialogue for the foley artists who had been producing the foley in sync for the entire film thus far in rooms surrounding the viewer live during the film's screening. The film, shot in the same rooms the live foley artists perform in during its screening, produces an effect wherein viewers watch action on screen, while hearing and imagining the same action occurring in surrounding rooms. The experience of the film goes beyond an immersion into the images on screen to a spatial awareness of the happenings around the viewer during its screening. The fictional world that surrounds actors in the film proceeds to surround the viewer watching the film, placing him/her in the midst of a flattened film production and presentation experience.

Harkeerat Mangat is a filmmaker and Dhrupad vocalist from Vancouver, Canada. He is currently based in Düsseldorf where he is continuing his art education at the Kunstakademie under Professor Christopher Williams and periodically lives in India to further his musical training under the close tutelage of Pt. Uday Bha-walkar. Mangat's understanding of the formal structures and improvisational systems associated with Indian Classical Music function as a reference point when responding to the dialogue proposed by his professors and the conversations of his peers in his film and installation work. He has performed and exhibited work at venues such as the Vancouver Pacific Cinematheque, Contemporary Art Gallery Vancouver, Canada and the Institute of Contemporary Art London, UK.

**RAJNI PERERA (b. 1985 Colombo, lives and works in Toronto)**

**UNNAMED Series: Drop2, Launch Window (2015). Acryl-Gouache on Paper  
Positive Forms 1 through 4 (2015). Acryl-Gouache on Polymer Clay**

The small body of work consisting of Drop, Drop2 and Launch Window investigates a realm of objecthood resulting from fabricating forms in space in response to the concept of fictional depictions of space travel. For this unnamed series the shape of the cone, as well as the semi-cone 'drop' shape, is explored for its special physicality, which implies a projectile trajectory which could either be arriving or departing, while at the same time maintaining a sort of 'gravitational base' on the picture plane. The small polymer clay sculptures 1 through 4 (interchangeable) are a further exploration of said shapes as positive forms that would otherwise be ephemeral, or defined, instead of by substance, by fields of force, exhaust, or a wake of energy resulting from the coming or going of an object in space.

A Sri-Lankan born artist whose work floats between Western and Immigrant culture and a East-West dialogue of ideas that concern immigrant identity issues (being an immigrant), female sexuality (being a woman), and science fiction and fantasy (being someone who enjoys science fiction and the dreams behind the genres). Currently cross-translating between the visual languages of Rajput and Mughal styles of miniaturist art, Blaxploitation, and the images produced by the Hubble Deep Field Telescope, the work becomes a record of impossible discoveries and mythical creations. Perera studied at OCAD University, Toronto, and has exhibited in Toronto, Houston, and Mumbai.

**TITRE PROVISOIRE (Cathleen Schuster (b. 1977) & Marcel Dickhage (b. 1977), live and work in Berlin)**

**You may also like (2015). Slide shows with objects proposed by algorithms, several digital picture frames**

"You may also like" is the answer to a question that no one has asked. A saleswoman is holding up a top whilst searching for other things, and proposing, and searching, and learning my taste, apparently. She is invisible and I can only imagine the sound of her voice. She is a programmed algorithm, and just as real as a former textile store in Mönchengladbach, which is soon to be demolished. In an installation with the same title, we are referring to situations of local stores that have a hard time around fast economies and anonymous online trade. The installation consists of a few digital picture frames. Each of the frames has a slide show of objects that algorithms on shopping websites suggested: "You may also like", as if they would replace the saleswoman in the store. The objects refer to the former textile shop, to objects that fit 1:1 in the digital picture frame, as well as to objects of our subjective desire.

**Money and trade considered (2013-2014). Film, 25 min / Loop-Installation**

Re-enactment of a detail in the history of finance with fourteen actors and a self-built stage made with wood and printed paper. Based on John Law and his writings on the historical representations of the Mississippi Bubble, some sequences of the Mississippi Bubble were re-enacted and filmed, while connected to current affairs.

Schuster & Dickhage have been working together since 2001. Their works engage with the contemporary environment, evolve in dialogues and could be termed as critical shaping. Their research focuses on the relations between text and image with a conceptual approach, to reflect on the different dimensions of visibilities and speak-abilities in correlation with political, aesthetic, social or site-specific contexts. In 2013/14 they attended the Jan van Eyck Academie Maastricht and the post-gradual fellowship at Künstlerhaus Büchsenhausen Innsbruck. Recently, they could show their works at Berlinische Galerie (Berlin), Kunstpavillion Innsbruck, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf and Crash Pad / KW / 8th Berlin Biennale.

**NEP SIDHU [BLACK CONSTELLATION] (b. 1978, London, lives and works in Toronto)**

**Ceremonial Work-Wear for Paradise Sportif (7- Y) (2014). French Terry, Bamboo Mesh, Cotton Twill, Poly Cotton, Silk  
Ceremonial Work-Wear for Paradise Sportif (7- X), (2014). Cotton, Bamboo Mesh, Hmong Embroidery, Cotton Twill, Poly Cotton, Silk**

This work-wear is made with the appropriate "worker body" in mind, the body as it should be: free to produce what it likes, when it likes. With this understanding, the economy and its objects are the agreeable expressions of the producer's body, a body that is entirely in control of what it does. When a non-creative and controlled economy's objects are the only output of a free body, the body becomes a deformed vessel and stunted slave of that economy and of those objects. Labor becomes estranged, and the very body and mind of the worker pays a grave price. Disconnected labour divides man from his own body, from his spiritual being, his human being.

Sidhu is interested in the way that memory, social landscape and stylistic interpretation can give way to myth, identity, and truth. His primary reference points are sound, language, architecture, and adornment. He is a member of Black Constellation, which recently exhibited at The Frye Museum of Seattle's show 'Your Feast Has Ended', and just completed the artwork for the new Shabazz Palaces album, 'Lese Majesty'. Nep is also the founder of the non-commercial clothing line Paradise Sportif, "a contemporary understanding towards adornment and garments for the protection and enhancement of modern day ceremony."

**KRISTINA STOYANOVA (lives and works in Düsseldorf)**

**Square weight (2015). styrofoam, MiniMouse figures  
HEIMBS & Dallmayr to go (2015). Coffee cups, cardboard pipes  
Unspecific Shapes (2015). Cardboard boxes, cardboard pipe, variation**

Kristina Stoyanova work ranges from videoart to installations, drawings and photography. Main themes in her works are language and communication, misunderstanding, as well as gender cliches, social-cultural stereotypes, architecture and art.

Stoyanova studied at SUNY for her MFA after studying with Rita McBride and Peter Doig at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. She has previously received project grants from Kunststiftung NRW, and was a Fulbright Scholar (2009-2011). She has exhibited her works in the videofestival Varna, Bulgaria, ISE Cultural Foundation, NY, Lespien Art Foundation, Düsseldorf, Museum of Contemporary Art, Toulouse, amongst many other video art festivals. Stoyanova is the current NEW Stipendium holder in Mönchengladbach.

**ARJAN STOCKHAUSEN (b. 1992 Alfter, lives and works in Cologne)**

**New Bee (2012-15). Australian root-wood, epoxy-resin, mirror glass**

Youth is a mode. It's an attitude. Think Kevin Spacey's pot-smoking muscle hunk breakdown in 'American Beauty'. That's a Boomer model of how it's done. Regression to a state before the suit and the tie sucked all the life out of you and made you into a corporate drone. Everything fell apart for Spacey's character because he did it all wrong. Being in YOUTH MODE isn't about perpetually reliving yourself at a younger age, it's about being youthfully present at any given age. Youth isn't a process, aging is. In YOUTH MODE, you are infinite.

Stockhausen's artistic approach could be loosely described as a form of romantic conceptualism, its centered on current issues of sexuality, identity and body. Frequently incorporating a range of mediums, his works are based on a multifaceted investigation into the realm of physical and mental states in terms of their constitutive interdependency with the effects of social-cultural paradigms. In addition to methods of subjective introspection, his work is also characterized by an occasionally ironic, occasionally playful incorporation of everyday and pop-cultural phenomenon as well as a critical examination of art historical reference points and the specific potentials of mediums. Stockhausen is currently a student in the Klasse Rita McBride and Keren Cytter at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf.

**JARET VADERA (b. 1976 Toronto, lives and works in Brooklyn)**

**FIG. 156. - Method of Removing a Foreign Body from the Cornea (Surgeon Standing in Front of the Patient) (2015)  
Xerox paper**

FIG. 156. - Method of Removing a Foreign Body from the Cornea (Surgeon Standing in Front of the Patient) is from the Diseases of the Eye series. This series uses illustrations from a medical manual originally printed in 1900 as the basis of each collage.

Vadera is an artist and cultural producer working between New York, Toronto, and India. Through his interdisciplinary practice, Vadera explores the poetics of translation, and the politics of vision. His paintings, prints, photographs, videos, and installations have been exhibited and screened at a number of venues including: the Queens Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum, Films Division of India, Thomas Erben, Tilton Gallery, Paved Art + New Media, P.P.O.W., Triple Candie, and Project 88, Mumbai.