

# Badischer Kunstverein

Atrium

## **Elke Marhöfer & Mikhail Lylov**

### **Quantum Attentiveness**

19.05.–20.08.2017

Opening: Thur, 18 May, 7pm

The collaborative exhibition by Elke Marhöfer and Mikhail Lylov at Badischer Kunstverein revolves around two current films as well as a number of space-structuring objects that reflect Marhöfer's and Lylov's interest in the interplay between human and nonhuman protagonists.

The title of the exhibition, *Quantum Attentiveness* alludes to the artists' interest in the philosophical, ethical, and political implications of an evolving concept of ecology. Ecology, once understood as a study of "relations between organisms", became a key term to think the world in relational terms. It does not merely convey a general sense of relationality, but has indefinitely proliferated linked variations: ecology of thought, visual environments, media, forests and practices, of time and self.

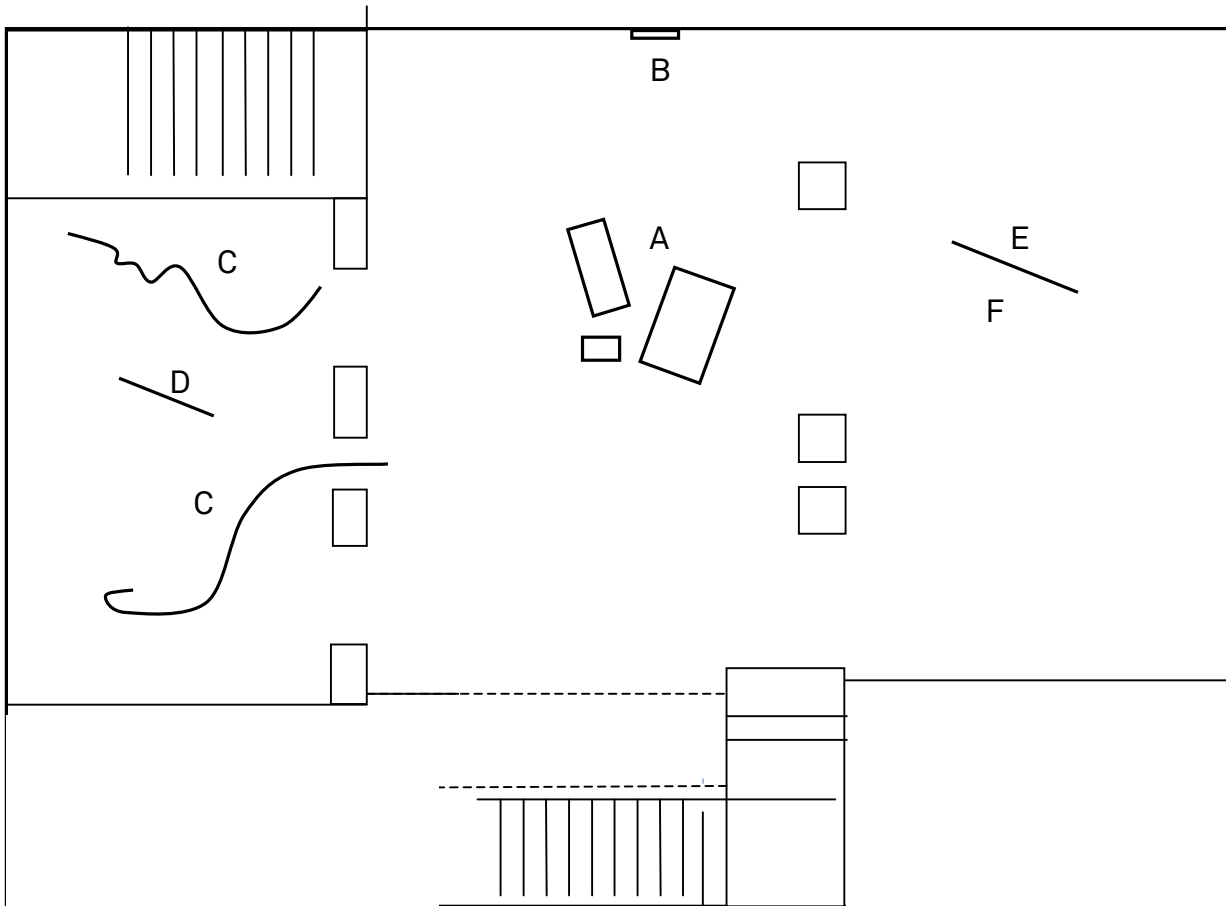
Because ecological thinking brings about an acute awareness of connectedness, it also generates an ethical and political challenge of exposure to the possibilities of unexpected relations, unpredictable filiations and spontaneous alliances. It seems that the awareness of uncertainty and inevitability of being-in-relation offers two possible ethics: one of control, environmental computation and advanced causalities and another of strange couplings, cuts and jumps. With this exhibition Lylov and Marhöfer are trying to embrace aesthetics offered by the latter tendency while being critically aware of the former.

The title *Quantum Attentiveness* is a queer unpacking of Karen Barad's "diffractive methodology". Quantum in this context refers to the non-reducible difference between terms of a relation. Hence

the exhibition renders quantum as an aesthetic category, a way of seeing and showing a relation through difference. Paraphrasing Barad: a diffractive methodology is a method of attentively and carefully noticing differences while recognizing that there is an ethics, which is not predicated on externality, but rather entanglement. Entanglement, Lylov and Marhöfer comprehend as a back and forth movement between interior and exterior, between artwork and perceiver, but also between plants, animals, environments and humans. With this exhibition the artists want to direct attention towards the creative powers and practices of plants, animals, matters and environments.

Curated by Anja Casser

# FLOOR PLAN



## Elke Marhöfer & Mikhail Lylov

- A** Atrium  
***Some plants emit sharp crystals when gnawed by animals, others perfume to make friends***  
***And***  
***A peacock`s tail might attract females, yet it is anything but helpful for individual or species survival***, 2017  
 Installation, various ceramics, dimension variable. Feathers from collection of Gudrun Marhöfer.
- Right Cabinet
- E** ***Shino Sticks: magical measures***, 2017  
 Slide projection, 1 min. 20 sec.
- B** ***Daikon***, 2017  
 Photograph, 22 x 15 cm
- Left Cabinet
- C** ***Wall Cloud***, 2017  
 Installation, cheesecloth, wool, steel, dimension variable
- D** ***Shape Shifting*** , 2015  
 16mm film transferred to HD, color & sound, 18 min. 26 sec., JPN
- F** ***Nobody knows when it was made and why***, 2012-15  
 16mm Film, black & white, no sound, 10 min. 22 sec., DE/GB

## ***Shape Shifting*, 2015**

Granting culture to nonhumans, *Shape Shifting* outlines a cartography of a landscape found in many parts of Asia, which in Japan is called satoyama—space between village and mountain. ‘Satoyama’ signifies the diffusions between ‘wild’ and ‘designed’ and can be understood as a membrane arranged through exchanges and encounters between humans and nonhumans. The basis for satoyama’s productivity in agriculture and forestry is based on an increase of biodiversity. The more collaborations between species and cycles of materials are created—the more stable ecosystem and films can be formed. ‘Satoyama’ is a concept that refers to an assemblage of transformations appearing on the plane of a landscape. It highlights the symbiotic relation of nonhuman and human life forms and thus undermines human economic and technological activity as the main formative principle. If human activities are no longer in the foreground, but comparable to and in association with the activities of nonhuman animals, the separations of nature and culture, object and subject, earth and history become interchangeable.

Two questions became of particular importance to us: how are natural processes of material transformation entangled in the conditions of production (which are both historical and natural)? And the second: how to perceive the culture and history of nonhuman participants such as animals and plants, but also of generic elements like water, wind, fire, paddy fields, chemical elements, and electricity?

With help and support of:

Katsue Fukamachi, Hiroyuki Yoshioka, Ayumi Ogino, Tomoyo Adachi, Sninichi Mori, Satoshi Asakura, Kent Hadlock, Naoki Shiomi, Kazuma Higashida, Mamoru Daido, Shinichi Aoki, Susumu Nakanishi, Horie Ryohei, Palais de Tokyo, University of Gothenburg Akademin Valand.

***Nobody knows, when it was made and why*, 2012-15**

*Nobody knows, when it was made and why*, is about the Mnemosyne Atlas by Aby Warburg. Warburg (1866-1929) was an art historian and cultural scholar. His pictorial atlas (named after the Greek goddess of memory) consists of a wooden framework with a wide variety of panels displaying images and photographs with a reference to Antiquity. The aim was to illustrate how Antiquity has lived on in different cultures. The atlas was a constantly evolving project. It could be adapted to particular needs – Warburg used it for lectures – and ultimately contained about 1500–2000 pictures.

The film focuses on the open character of the Mnemosyne Atlas, and this is reflected in the choice of motifs: above all, we see pictures from Iran, Iraq, Syria and other Middle Eastern countries which these days are overshadowed by Greece when reference is made to Antiquity. Warburg draws no distinction between the northern and southern hemispheres or between the Ancient and Modern eras. He manages largely without captions or attributions and treats pictures from wideranging contexts equally. This means that his work is still relevant today and can be permanently updated to suit viewers and interpretations.

Text: Anne Bitterwolf

With help and support of:

Eva Schmidt, Jiyoung Lee, Ines Rüttinger, Katrin Mayer, Fredrik Svensk, Carolina Soares, Bryndís Snæbjörnsdóttir, Claudia Wedepohl, Eckart Marchand, the Warburg Institute London, Museum für Gegenwartskunst Siegen, University of Gothenburg Valand Akademie

## **Wall Cloud, 2017**

Elaborating on the concept of a fold, Lylov and Marhöfer developed the installation *Wall Cloud* for their film *Shape Shifting*. In the installation two curtains, or the protagonists *Cheesecloth* and *Wool*, obliterate the differences between their own structures, the shapes of the filmed landscapes, and the infrastructure of the exhibition space. Infinitely multiplying insides and outsides on their topological surface, the foldings of *Wall Cloud* provide a diagram of the Japanese satoyama landscape, created by the incessant interfolding of a village ethos into a mountain ethos and vice versa.

With help and support of Mona Kuschel and Peco Kawashima

## ***Shino Sticks: magical measures*, 2017**

Among the panels of *Mnemosyne Atlas* there are a few depicting objects and images originating from archaic divination practices. Such objects possess their own logic and testify to historical conceptions of cosmos. Clay livers and diagrams of celestial animals explain how eternal elements of the universe are responsible for contingency of an individual fate. Not unlike the archaic practices, modern sciences also upheld unity of universe through a system of references and constants, such as speed of light  $c$ , gravitational constant  $G$  and other. Even though image-like representation (*celestial lion*) was succeeded by scientific expression of quantity ( $G$ ), discourses of modern science reinvented their own romanticism. This found its expression in inclinations of modern sciences to the Oneness, ranging from a search for a universal unit of measurement to an engagement with the mystical unity of the Laws of Nature.

***Some plants emit sharp crystals when gnawed by animals, others perfume to make friends***

***And***

***A peacock's tail might attract females, yet it is anything but helpful for individual or species survival***, 2017

Understanding the transversal interactions, or interspecies co-evolutionary dances of nature as an invitation to actively participate, with the installation the artists seek for relations in the strange combinations of palm trees and grasses, fishes and teapots, bowls and swans, magic stones and joineries. They come up with the hypothesis that there is a sympathy and leap between organic and inorganic, energetic and formal, manifested and virtual, a continuous creation of forms and affects.

With help and support of:

Gama no Shima, Higashiyama Youth Action Center

**Elke Marhöfer** (\*1967 in Baracoa, CUB) and **Mikhail Lylov** (\*1989 in Voronezh, RUS) have been working, conducting research and collaborated on a variety of projects ranging from films to texts and books for a number of years. Their individual as well as their collaborative works have been shown at exhibitions and screened at film festivals in Europe and Asia.

All work in courtesy of the artists.

## ACCOMPANYING PROGRAMME

Friday, May 19, 6pm

### **Artist Talk with Elke Marhöfer & Mikhail Lylov**

Moderated by Didem Yazici (In English)

Join the artists Elke Marhöfer and Mikhail Lylov for a conversation on the development of their solo presentation *Quantum Attentiveness*, moderated by Didem Yazici. The conversation will begin with artists' film making and research-based practices, focusing on the two films that are in the exhibition and will be followed by their installation practice including materials such as curtains, clay objects and photographs. Marhöfer and Lylov will also talk about their approach in the evolving concept of ecology as well as the art practices of other-than-humanbeings, such as animals, plants and environments.

Tuesday, June 27, 5 – 11pm

### **Film screening / Bar / Discussion / Music**

Otto Preminger, *Tell Me That You Love Me, Junie Moon*, 1970, 112'

Peter Ott, *Atelier*, 2012, 42'

Conversation with Michael Dreyer & Anja Casser with guest Peter Ott

There will be a talk with Michael Dreyer, Anja Casser, and guests after Otto Preminger's film which is connected to the topics of aid and self-aid. It is followed by the screening of *Atelier*. Michael Dreyer is the subject of this film that deals with conventions about the figure of the artist. The screening will be rounded off by a musical interlude.

## GUIDED TOURS

Friday, 19 May, 5pm (In English)

Wednesday, 26 July, 6pm

Wednesday, 16 August, 6pm

Curator's tour with Anja Casser

Groups on request: [fuehrung@badischer-kunstverein.de](mailto:fuehrung@badischer-kunstverein.de)

### **Opening times of the exhibition:**

Tue to Fr 11am—7pm, Sat/Sun and holidays 11am—5pm

Closed on Mondays

**Address:** Badischer Kunstverein, Waldstraße 3, 76133 Karlsruhe

[www.badischer-kunstverein.de](http://www.badischer-kunstverein.de)