

The Watchmen, the Liars, the Dreamers

(Concrete Erudition 3)

16 September –14 November 2010

Opening –Wednesday 15 September 2010 from 6pm to 9pm

Press guided tour from 4pm

With works from Agence, Mathieu K. Abonnenc, Jean Amblard, Eric Baudelaire, Luis Camnitzer, Julius Eastman, Mario Garcia Torres, Jean-Luc Godard, Les Groupes Medvedkine, Tamar Guimaraes, Chris Moukarbel, Walid Raad, Boris Taslitzky ...

& Monument to Transformation (Vit Havránek, Zbynek Baladrán + Vyacheslav Akhunov, Babi Badalov, Chto Delat ? (what is to be done ?), Hafiz, Lise Harlev, Ivan Moudov, Boris Ondreička, Anatoly Osmolovsky, Haegue Yang)



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The Watchmen, the Liars, the Dreamers is the third part of the “Concrete Erudition” programme devised by curator Guillaume Désanges, who has been invited to come up with a cycle of exhibitions at Le Plateau. As part and parcel of the continuity created by “The Planet of Signs” and “Prisoners of the Sun”, this exhibition in its turn questions the way in which certain contemporary artists are renewing the relationship between art and knowledge, by showing, this time around, the work of artists who are observers—watchmen of the present and of the past. Even if their activities are, on the face of it, very diversified, they all appear to derive from a documentary principle, in the broad sense of the term.

While the classic relationship between the document and reality must generally be gauged by criteria of objectivity, exhaustiveness, caution and rigour, these artists shatter these references. They thus develop alternative methods of reproduction which may use the paths of translation, reconstruction, transfer and fiction. It is not a matter of playing with and deceiving, but of affecting the other by sharing awareness and knowledge and accepting, if this is necessary, to contradict the ethical and formal rules of the scientist, the historian, and the chronicler.

Be they artists, researchers, middlemen, or jurists, their forms are subject to the necessity and urgency of a message to be got across rather than any stylistic determination. Nor is it a matter of denying the effectiveness of the form; what is involved on the contrary is the assertion of “functions” not to say missions. Echoing the idea of profound erudition, turning into hybrid forms, the exhibition thus unfolds different strategies for writing facts, which, based on practical reason and a political and militant will, sometimes end up tending towards the poetic and the lyrical.

All these artists, who are extremely diverse in terms of subjects broached, share the outcome of their research, not shrinking from creating their own documents when this is necessary, and sometimes playing on ambiguities between fiction and reality, historical objectivity and creation, archive and personal collection.

These artists, who are subject to obligatory means rather than results, operate in the end of the day like inventors and middlemen, contesting the stance of the author as demiurge. By using information sharing, inventories and intelligence as weapons, these watchmen propose indirect ways of criticizing specific situations, which they have elected to investigate. A moveable knowledge, to do with surfaces and connections, which contrasts the quality of the relationship between facts with blind expertise.

Le Plateau

Espace d'exposition
 Place Hannah Arendt
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L'Antenne

Espace pédagogique
 22 cours du 7^e art
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Le Frac Île-de-France est une initiative du Conseil régional d'Île-de-France.
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 Direction régionale des affaires culturelles d'Île-de-France et la Mairie de Paris.