

EXHIBITION
FROM 15 SEPT. TO 9 DÉC. 2018

GENIUS LOCI

WITH MELANIE BONAJO, DECTOR & DUPUY,
ERIC HATTAN, IRMA NAME, GÉRALDINE LONGUEVILLE,
LEI SAITO AND JULIAN SARTORIUS

PRESS KIT

PARC  SAINT LÉGER
CENTRE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN

Does each place have its own spirit? How does that spirit define it? To celebrate the twentieth anniversary of its opening in the former thermal park Pougues-les-Eaux, the art centre has chosen to interrogate the notion of *genius loci*. In ancient Rome the term literally meant a protective spirit, a guardian angel or natural divinity. Gradually it evolved to refer to the qualities involved in how a space is apprehended and defined. In this exhibition the Latin expression is taken as the starting point for an exploration of what, concretely and qualitatively, defines a place, and whether this allegory still contributes to the definition of its identity. The exhibition examines the relationship between the structure of an art centre, with its formal properties, and its meaning as an object related to other objects that resemble it. In other words, how is the production of an art centre influenced by its physical environment, and, in return, what is the impact of its activities on this context?

When we talk about *genius loci*, it's usually to reference the distinctive or unique character that defines a place. Nevertheless, after considering the park and the buildings of this former thermal spring that have become home to an art centre, it becomes clear that this place is a palimpsest where we can glimpse the superimposed strata of time, interventions and individualities that have shaped its identity. The past, present and future sometimes clash but end up settling into a continuity and thus produce a space of memory and duration. For the most part, the artists invited to take part in the *Genius loci* exhibition were directly inspired by the art centre's geographic, historical and architectural context.

Eric Hattan and Lei Saito focused on the site's formal structure. The former intervened directly in the building in order to reveal residual or phantom spaces. The latter took inspiration from the architecture of the grounds to propose new landscapes that are both poetic and edible, inviting visitors to experience her existential cuisine. With her contribution, Géraldine Longueville created her own gustatory experience, drawing on the art centre's natural environment. Making use of a repertory of the site's native plants, she offers visitors a libation and a soundtrack specific to this venue. While Dector & Dupuy's work also arises from the garden surrounding the art centre, they extend its proposal beyond its walls. This duo's practice is based on observing and

drawing on the urban environment. On the occasion of France's heritage open house festival and the exhibition's opening, they conceived two guided tours that allow us to see downtown Nevers and the city of Pougues-les-Eaux in a whole new light.

While the pieces by Melanie Bonajo, Irma Name and Julian Sartorius are not based on the specific context of the Parc Saint Léger, each of them, in their own way, interrogates what a spirit of place could be, and its role in creation, identity and the apprehension of context. These artists enact the relationship between the body and its surroundings, and play with the boundaries to reveal virtual spaces and memories. Their work highlights the fact that the genius loci is not the revelation of something whose existence is timeless but rather linked to the production of events. The spirit of a place is thus a creative and poetic way of observing and comprehending our surroundings while emphasising movement in space and time.

Catherine Pavlovic

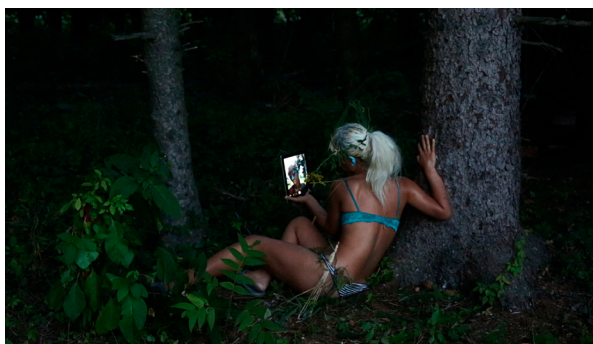
MELANIE BONAJO

Born in 1978 (NL). Lives and works in Amsterdam (NL) and New York (US).

Her work revolves around the paradox inherent to the idea of comfort, placing particular attention on such concepts as community, equality, and policies relating to the body. Through her videos, performances, and installations, her research seeks to investigate the ways in which technological advances lead to alienation. The artist examines the changing relationships people have with nature and their surrounding environment.

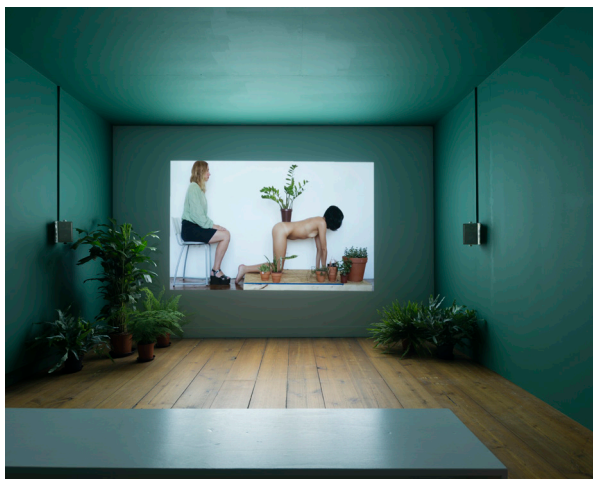
Melanie Bonajo's work has been shown internationally, in solo shows, such as « The Death of Melanie Bonajo », 2018, at Bonnefantenmuseum in Maastricht, « Single Mother Songs from the End of Nature - Night Soil Trilogy », in Frankfurt Kunstverein, Frankfurt, in 2017 or « Next Level: Melanie Bonajo - Night Soil » at FOAM, Amsterdam, in 2016, or in various group shows, amongst which Manifesta 12 in 2018, « Ten Days Six Nights » at Tate Modern, London, in 2017 or « Give me Yesterday » at the Prada Foundation, Milan, in 2016.

Melanie Bonajo is represented by Akinci Gallery, Amsterdam (NL).



Night Soil / Fake Paradise, 2014
HD one-channel colour video with sound, 33 minutes 9 seconds

Courtesy the artist & AKINCI



Night Soil / Fake Paradise, 2014
Exhibition view at De Appel, Amsterdam
HD one-channel colour video with sound, 33 minutes 9 seconds

Courtesy the artist & AKINCI

DECTOR & DUPUY

Born in 1951 and 1949. (FR)

Live and work in Angers and Paris (FR).

Dector & Dupuy work together for more than 30 years. Their work is always related to the place it's produced in. In addition to their various exhibitions and performed lectures, they have made more than 50 commented walks in different European cities. When they plan their walks, they take some authorizations, interested as much in traces of vandalism as in historical past, as much in the magnificence of urban landscapes as in a those of a covered tag on a wall or of an empty shop, as much in the life of some place's inhabitants as in the other side of the place they live in.

Their work has been frequently shown during exhibitions, lectures or organized visits. Amongst the most recent, the group show « Mosaïq », at Art3, Valence (FR), in 2018, the lecture *Deux chats dans une caisse à poisson*, at the Fondation Ricard, Paris, in 2017 or even the solo show « euple ainca » at the FRAC Poitou-Charentes in 2016.

Dector & Dupuy are represented by the Gallery Hervé Bize (Paris).



On sait la chance qu'on a, 2018
Performance, Arles
Photo: Suzanne Hetzel



©Dector & Dupuy
Trails in Nevers

ERIC HATTAN

Born in 1955. (CH)

Lives and works in Basel (CH) and Paris.

The self-educated Eric Hattan starts at the end of the 70's to produce sculptures, installations, videos and performances. Working with everyday objects of which he stops and divert the traditional use, or acting directly on the architectures of the spaces he is invited in, his works collide different dimensions and perceptions. By playing with the viewer perceptions, it questions his relation to his surrounding environment, the architecture and the urbanism.

Eric Hattan's work has regularly been shown during international solo shows, as for instance « Situer la différence », along with Sylvia Bächli at the Swiss Cultural Center, Paris, in 2017, « Habiter l'inhabituel » at the FRAC PACA, Marseille, in 2014 or even « Les poissons, selon l'arrivée du jour », at the BF15, Lyon, in 2011. Eric Hattan has also took part of various group shows, such as « 60 Years of Performative Art in Switzerland » at the Museum Tinguely, Basel, in 2017 or « Déplacement » during Art Basel 2010.

Eric Hattan works with the Galerie Hervé Bize (Nancy) and Nicolas Krupp (Basel).

– hattan.ch



None to high, 2014
Shoe, concrete, wood, clothes, chair
Variable dimensions

©Eric Hattan
Courtesy Galerie Espace pour l'art, Arles



WArmNAssKAltTrocken, 2018
Detail
Shirt, socks, potato, waters
Variable dimensions

©Nikkol Roth
Courtesy Sollbruchstelle Zürich

IRMA NAME

Born in 1987 and 1986. (FR)

Live and work in Paris.

The artistic duet Irma Name develop since 2016 a cycle of interventions entitled *Le langage de l'événement* (« the language of event »). They set scenic situations in which participants, recruited by ads, experiment discussion protocols. These interactions are conducted through forms broadly inspired by sociology, public relations or psychology. Protocols and contents obtained are then put back on the line and proposed to new interpretations, conducting to new stagings. Irma Name is interested in construction and naturalization of policy frameworks by the contemporary society and thus move collective means of act and think.

Their collective work has been shown during the solo show « Le seul possible et l'échec », Glassbox, Paris, in 2017 and *Le langage de l'événement* has been experimented in 2016 during the Printemps de Septembre, Toulouse and the « Museum On/Off », Centre Pompidou in Paris.



Le seul possible et l'échec, 2017
Participatory installation, various materials
© Isabelle Giovacchini

GÉRALDINE LONGUEVILLE

Born in 1981. (FR)

Lives and works in Paris.

Artist and curator, Géraldine Longueville mixes, in her exhibitions, various displays and means of production taking shapes either of performances, workshops, residencies or even dinners. She produces drinks and songs from various medicinal, botanical or political data. She thus explores the knowledge we have of plants, environments and territories. She transmits forgotten knowledges – orally and through visitor experience, since they are invited to drink these beverages. She regularly works with groups, at various scales, in which she sings and/or prepares these drinks.

She starts, in 2014, a collaborative art and gastronomy production workshop named Black Garlic, which have organized some dinners in various places, amongst which La Galerie, Noisy-le-Sec, in 2016-2017 or the CAC Vilnius in 2015. As part of her research about the beverage, its use and its power of transmitting, she produced some performances, drinks or poems such as *A State of Water*, Bétonsalon, Paris, and *Three States of Water* at the PAKT, Amsterdam, in 2017, *Les eaux – médiation*, CAC Brétigny in 2016-2017 or even *The Companion*, Liverpool Biennale in 2014.



Les eaux - médiation, 2016-2017
Exhibition view « Jump »,
CAC Brétigny, 2016-2017
Photo: Aurélien Mole



© Géraldine Longueville
Plants being prepared in order to produce a beverage.

LEI SAITO

Born in 1980. (JPN)

Lives and works in Paris

Lei Saito produces installations and performances. She works with daily material and especially food, about the concept of Existential Cooking. For each installation, she proposes recipes inspired by the place she's in and its history. Her works – as regards of the materials – are meant to be transformed, eaten, and it then changes the landscapes and universes she creates.

She took part of multiple group shows such as « L'amour, l'été, l'architecture », Galerie des Multiples, Paris, in 2016, « Microclimat », as part of the Nuit Blanche in 2015 or even Jeune Création in 2013, 104, Paris. Her work has also been shown in solo shows as « Volume d'oubli », at Le Grand Cordel, Rennes, 2017 and « L'histoire du début du monde jusqu'à la moitié », at the Rijlsakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam, 2011.

The works presented in the exhibition have been produced with the support of Thomas Plasschaert workshop.



Salomé, 2015
Courtesy the artist

JULIAN SARTORIUS

Born in 1982. (CH)

Lives and works in Bern. (CH)

Julian Sartorius started drumming at the age of five. In his work, he explores various materials and objects that can be used to drum, as kitchen objects, tools, toys, etc. In 2011, he records *Beat Diary*, proposing a beat for each 365 day in the year. The vinyls box set content in addition 365 pictures taken by the artist. His work is driven by experiments of sounds and music mixes.

He created the performance *Chaises musicales* with Eric Hattan, which will be programmed as part of the exhibition « Genius Loci ».

This performance has already been programmed in various important places, as Museum Jenisch, Vevey (CH), the Kolumba, Köln (D), the Kunstmuseum de Sankt-Gallen (CH) or the Moods Zürich (CH).



Eric Hattan & Julian Sartorius, *Chaises musicales*, 2015
© Max Leiß
Courtesy CCS Paris/Théâtre de Vidy, Lausanne

AROUND

SEPT. –
DEC. 2018

EXHIBITION

OPENING WEEK END

As part of the European Heritage Days, the Parc Saint Léger invites you to a week end of performances:

saturday 15 september

3pm, Nevers

WITH DECTOR & DUPUY

Performed tour
in Nevers' historical center
(Departure from Place Carnot)

**5pm, thermal park
Pougues-les-Eaux**

**OPENING
OF THE SHOW**

sunday 16 september

3:30pm, at the thermal park

WITH DECTOR & DUPUY

Performed tour
in Pougues-les-Eaux
(Departure from the Thermal Park)

5:30, at the Pavillon des Sources

WITH LEI SAITO

Culinary performance

RENDEZ-VOUS

**sundays 23 september,
21 october, 18 november
and 9 december, 4pm**

GUIDED TOUR OF THE SHOW

SCREENING

**thursday 20 september, 8pm
Cine Mazarin, Nevers**

**PICNIC AT HANGING ROCK, 1975
BY PETER WEIR**

In partnership with the ACNE

CONCERTS

**tuesday 18 september, 7pm
WITH CHAFOUIN**

In partnership with No Way Asso

**monday 5 november, 8pm
Maison de la Culture Nevers
Agglomération, Nevers**

**WITH ERIC HATTAN
& JULIAN SARTORIUS**

Chaises musicales, performance

WORKSHOPS

**saturdays 29 september,
27 october and 17 november,
4pm-6pm**

ART PRACTISING WORKSHOPS

To see the exhibition through practice.
Free, reservation required

saturday 20 october, 10am-5pm

**WRITING WORKSHOP
WITH PIERRE BASTIDE**

Free, reservation required

sunday 14 october, 3pm

**GUIDED TOUR FOR FAMILIES
A WORKSHOP AND A SNACK**

5 years and older

Free, reservation required

Exhibition from 15 september to 9 décembre 2018

Open from wednesday to sunday, 2pm-6pm and by appointment.

Free

Press: Chantal Scotton
chantal.scotton@parcsaintleger.fr

A free shuttle is organized between Paris and the venue on Sunday 6 September:
Departure: 12.30pm from Paris (Place Denfert-Rochereau)
Return: 7pm from Pougues-les-Eaux
Free, reservation required: +33 (0)3 86 90 96 60
ou with Chantal Scotton: chantal.scotton@parcsaintleger.fr

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CENTRE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN

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AGGLOMÉRATION

Le Parc Saint Léger est membre de d.c.a.,
association pour le développement des centres d'art,
et de Arts en résidence – Réseau national.