

# ERIC BAUDELAIRE & MATHIEU KLEYEBE ABONNENC

## L'ŒIL SE NOIE

04.04.2014 - 15.06.2014

### ENGLISH

The exhibition *L'œil se noie* is the result of a dialogue between the two French artists Eric Baudelaire (1973, Salt Lake City; currently based in Paris) and Mathieu Kleyebe Abonnenc (1977, French Guiana; currently based in Metz). Their work stems from a shared fascination for the gaps and fissures that make up stories and histories, as well as the challenges and promises they hold.

At the heart of both their practices lies a desire to highlight the tensions between what has been, what seems to be, and what could have been; to pick up the traces of forgotten and unresolved issues and divert them towards uncertain destinations. One strategy to avoid dead-end circuits consists in rewiring the connections between one sense and another, between one time and another. Eric Baudelaire's *Chanson d'Automne* (2009), for instance, consists of an assemblage of clippings from *The Wall Street Journal* dated September 2008 that reveals a poetry of resistance within the fracture lines of a dysfunctional economic order. In the film work *Ça va, ça va, on continue* (2012), Mathieu Abonnenc, in turn, uses his research into former Portuguese colonies and the various ways in which they have attained independence as a case study into the impact of the production of images on liberation movements. He thus highlights the complications implicit in commemorating, representing and voicing distant histories of anti-colonial revolt and revolutionary insurrection.

As one of the pieces in the show suggests, *L'œil se noie* deals with 'unfinished business.' Sometimes quite literally so, as in the case of Baudelaire's *The Makes* (2009), based on a number of Michelangelo Antonioni's unrealized scenarios, or in Abonnenc's work about Sarah Maldoror's lost film *Guns for Banta* (1970) about the struggle for independence in Guinea and Cape Verde.

In KIOSK's side room, Abonnenc's artistic search for the blind spot of *Guns for Banta* is materialized. Maldoror's original film reels were seized by the Algerian army that had also commissioned her film, and as of yet they have not been returned nor identified. In the slideshow *Foreword to Guns for Banta* (2011), Abonnenc has crystallized what remains of this 'living document' – i.e., a series of archival pieces and Maldoror's fragmentary notes and memories distilled from interviews with the artist. At KIOSK, the work gets an additional second chapter with the publication of *Cinéma chez les balantes* (2014). The booklet includes a translated reissue of a number of pieces written by Suzanne Lipinska for *Africasia* magazine in June-July 1970, while she accompanied the liberation army of Guinea-Bissau and Maldoror who was then working on *Guns for Banta*. The work as a whole thus becomes a retrospective foreword to an absent film, a subjective reflection upon the afterlife of the militant image. The revolutionary action and the creation of the militant image are studied here through the eyes of the militant, the filmmaker, and the photographer. With the juxtaposition of the mutual relations between these three agents, the archival footage, the text, and the voice-over, Abonnenc evokes a plural interpretation of truth and reality.

Baudelaire's *The Makes* is presented at KIOSK as a vitrine and a film, 'remakes' of films that were never made in the first place. Alongside notes towards unrealized film scenarios written by Michelangelo Antonioni (as they were published in *That Bowling Alley on the Tiber*), we see a series of found monochrome Japanese film stills from the sixties and seventies. Antonioni's unmade scenarios instill these orphaned photographs with a new life, placing them within a new narrative framework, and producing a new cinematographic experience in the present. Possible interpretations of these *Makes* are suggested by French film critic Philippe Azoury who plays the part of 'the critic' in the film.

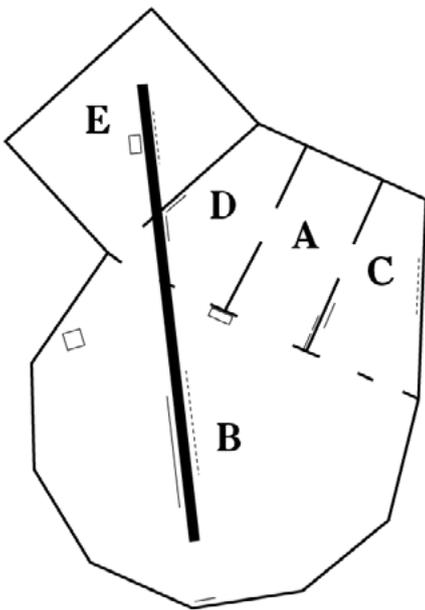
At odds with all laments of the 'death of the image' and the 'end of history', the works in this exhibition display a renewed faith in the hidden potential of the present.

**KIOSK**

The exhibition *L'œil se noie* is organized in conjunction with *The Fire Next Time*, a two day programme of interventions and screenings dealing with the militant image and its resonances in contemporary cinema (03.04.2014-04.04.2014, KASK – School of Arts Ghent).

*The Fire Next Time* is part of Stoffel Debuysere's research project *Figures of Dissent* at KASK-School of Arts, and is organized in the context of *The Uses of Art – The Legacy of 1848 and 1989*, a project initiated by the museum confederation L'Internationale with the support of the culture programme of the European Commission. More information: [www.thefirenexttime.be](http://www.thefirenexttime.be).

With the support of the Culture Department of the French Embassy in Brussels.  
Thanks to the lenders: the artists, FRAC Languedoc-Roussillon and Galerie Greta Meert.



Exhibited works  
(clockwise)

ROOM A (entrance)

Mathieu Kleyebe Abonnenc & Clément Rodzielski  
*Sans Titre (Sambizanga)*  
2012  
2 posters  
Courtesy of the artists, Marcelle Alix & Chantal Crousel

ROOM B (hemicycle)

Mathieu Kleyebe Abonnenc  
*Cinéma chez les balantes*  
2014  
Publication, 56 pages

Mathieu Kleyebe Abonnenc  
*Ca va, ça va, on continue*  
(‘It is ok, it is ok, we go on’)  
2012/2013  
HD film  
31’  
Courtesy of the artist & Marcelle Alix  
Produced by Serralves Foundation, Porto, F.N.A.G.P, Paris & the Cornerhouse Manchester

Eric Baudelaire  
*Refusons le monde de ceux qui ont*  
(‘Let us refuse the world of those who’)  
2010  
C-print  
Courtesy of the artist

Eric Baudelaire  
*Ante-Memorial*  
2011  
Correspondence  
Courtesy of the artist

Eric Baudelaire  
*[sic]*  
2009  
SD video  
15’  
Courtesy of Galerie Greta Meert

ROOM C

Eric Baudelaire  
*The Makes*  
2009  
HD video  
26’  
Courtesy of the artist

Eric Baudelaire  
*The Makes (Don't Try To Find Me)*  
2009  
Found Japanese film stills, page torn from *That Bowling Alley on the Tiber* by Michelangelo Antonioni, plexi, steel and fluorescent tubing  
Courtesy Galerie Greta Meert

ROOM D

Eric Baudelaire  
*Chanson d'Automne*  
2009  
Grease pencil on Sept 2008 Wall Street Journal pages  
Courtesy Galerie Greta Meert

ROOM E

Eric Baudelaire  
*Everything is Political (I)*  
2010  
39 books  
39 sound recordings of the final sentences of each book  
Courtesy of the artist

Mathieu Kleyebe Abonnenc  
*Foreword to Guns for Banta*  
2011  
Synchronized slideshow, sound  
25' 40''  
Collection FRAC Languedoc-Roussillon