



this is a political (painting)

Kajsa Dahlberg, A K Dolven, VALIE EXPORT, Claire Fontaine and Alexandra Pirici

October 20, 2016 – February 26, 2017

Formal Opening October 20, 5pm, in the presence of H. M. Queen Sonja and the artists

Public Opening and inauguration party October 20, 7 – 12pm

Opening programme Oct 20 – 23. See below.

Kunsthall Trondheim are proud to inaugurate our new permanent space with the exhibition *this is a political (painting)*, presenting work by Kajsa Dahlberg (Sweden), A K Dolven (Norway), VALIE EXPORT (Austria), Claire Fontaine (France) and Alexandra Pirici (Romania).

The exhibition takes its title from A K Dolven's work *this is a political painting* (2013). The artist has filled the surface of the painting with her fingerprints in a long repetitive pattern – lines of red marks, as a text without language. The prints are fading out when the red ink wears off the finger, still the movement insistently continues, as if the body persists to remind of its existence. The trace of the hand's work expresses endurance, tenderness and the sensibility of the fingertip. From another point of view, the finger print is also one of the main identifiers of personal and national identity, and as such it is found at the core of the current migration issues – it proves our rights as citizens, or not.

A K Dolven's work speaks about the body – its place and conditions in society, the identity it carries, its relation to work and how language, or the lack of it, sets the boundaries for its potentials. The body is the place where the individual meets the society and has to negotiate its existence – therefore the body is political as is A K Dolven's painting and the other works in the exhibition.

Claire Fontaine presents their largest instalment so far of their neon work series *Foreigners Everywhere*. While consisting of a seemingly simple sentence its connotations are ambiguous. It refers to all of us being foreigners in most places, with the exception of a very limited part of the world. With the mobility that comes with contemporary life this condition is increasingly a common part of everyday life. We float in and out of being foreign and we choose or are forced to be at home in the foreign. Close to this state are the more profound or existential feelings of foreignness and alienation in a society that for every day becomes more complicated and harder to appreciate. On a political level the sentence can be read as referring to the fact that a growing number of individuals today have to re-identify as migrants or refugees, and that there are in fact more foreigners present. Present as individuals, identities and bodies. For the exhibition *Foreigners Everywhere* has been translated into the fifteen most spoken languages in Trondheim – including the local minority language South Sami – one of the languages spoken by the indigenous people of Sápmi – the Sami territory that stretches over the northern parts of the Scandinavian countries and into Russia.

VALIE EXPORT's series *Body Configurations* (1972 – 82) and *Body Sign Action* (1970) are emblematic images of the female body's relation to society. Since the 1960s VALIE EXPORT has formed one of the most consistent critical oeuvres within contemporary art, constantly scrutinizing the societal structures from a feminist and conceptual viewpoint. Her practice is often based in the use of her own body as in the series of performative photography *Body Configurations*, in which the body is inscribed into the architecture of the city or in the landscape. If the structure of our society can be read as a kind of language to which the body and the individual has to submit, the body in its turn also forms a kind of sign or language that shapes the structure into which it is inserted, thus VALIE EXPORT's work is never a mere description of subjugation – it always proposes negotiation or resistance. In *Body Sign Actions* she literally uses her own body as the field for political negotiation. The artist tattoos a suspender on her thigh, an image of female submission and seduction. Through appropriation and renegotiation of a generally accepted image of femininity and sexuality, *Body Sign Action* proposes a different and more active definition.

In the film *Reach, Grasp, Move, Position, Apply Force* (2015) Kajsa Dahlberg revisits the early history of film and film's appliance in experiments and research on the systemized movement of the working human body. The quest for the most efficient use of the hand and the body forms its own scientific system, Methods -Time Measurement (MTM). It aims to find the standard time in which a certain task should be completed by the worker. The method which was developed during the 1940s are constantly being refined and excels in today's time controlled labour – in Amazon warehouses, Apple manufacturers in China, and smaller-scale service industries such as freelance translating and parcel delivery – all commercial operations which the art world and art production heavily rely on, with no exception for the production of Kajsa Dahlberg's film. In times when the notion of work are in flux and new ways of working, which we maybe cannot imagine yet, are being developed, it might be important to remember how much of highly developed human achievements still depend on the human body's capacity to reach, grasp, move, position, and apply force. Interesting enough, the only kind of work that is not measurable, in MTM's terms, is that which is based on creativity. The efficiency of art practice cannot be measured.

The changed condition of work within our post industrial society forms the ground for Alexandra Pirici's *Monument to Work*. The work builds on interviews and research on movements performed by industrial workers through their working life. These movements, choreographed by the artist, will be enacted by a group of people, forming a living monument, in the exhibition space. The first edition of *Monument to Work* took place in Gothenburg, Sweden, a coastal town which – like Trondheim – has seen the traditional industry, shipbuilding industry and ports falling into disuse and docksides being transformed into living areas. Today, Trondheim is one of Norway's most important sites for technological development and as such at the centre of the transformation of work and working life. *Monument to Work* reminds us of this transition and of the work that was a fundamental condition for the evolvement of modernity, and the building of welfare states such as Norway. The working body in Pirici's monument is however not being glorified, what we encounter is the human body in movement, a movement which is constant, ongoing and without narrative. Neither is the monument nostalgic – as much as being a reminder of the past it can be seen as a reminder of the fact that regardless of whether work in the future will be physical or immaterial, we will still rely on the body. The ongoing action lifts the movements of work, in their normal and every day quality, into a new context.

Curated by: Helena Holmberg

Alexandra Piricis' work is produced in collaboration with DansiT, Trondheim. It will be presented on selected dates, please check the web site for more info.

A K Dolven's work *Skrapa komager* (2016) was done in collaboration with Rune Johansen.

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Image above: VALIE EXPORT: stillbilde fra *BODY TAPE* (1970). © Kontakt. Die Kunstsammlung der Erste Group und ERSTE Stiftung

OPENING PROGRAMME

THURSDAY OCTOBER 20

Free entrance

- 5 – 6.30pm Formal opening, invited guests only
- 7 – 8pm Public opening of exhibition *this is a political (painting)*
Performance Alexandra Pirici
- 8 – 12pm Inauguration party: Captain Credible, DJs and Klubb Saltkråkan

FRIDAY OCTOBER 21

Free entrance

- 4 – 9pm Art conversations
- 4pm Kajsa Dahlberg in conversation with Mike Sperlinger
- 5pm Claire Fontaine in conversation with Giovanna Zapperi
- 6pm Performance A K Dolven
- 6.30pm A K Dolven in conversation with Helena Holmberg
- 7.30pm VALIE EXPORT in conversation with Yilmaz Dziewior
- 8 – 10pm Performance Alexandra Pirici
- 9 – 12pm Late night at Kunsthall Trondheim, the bar is open

SATURDAY OCTOBER 22

Free entrance

- 12 – 4pm Kids' opening party
Cake, balloons and workshops with ReMida and our designteam Yokoland
- 4 – 8 pm Open to public. The bar is open.

SUNDAY OCTOBER 23

- 12 – 6pm Guided tours in the exhibition
- 1 – 3pm Performance, Alexandra Pirici

Additional programmes during the exhibition period will be announced later. Follow the updates and get more information about all programmes on our web page www.kunsthalltrondheim.no and on Facebook.

SHORT BIOS

Kajsa Dahlberg (b. 1973, Sweden) works and lives in Oslo, Norway. Dahlberg's artistic practice offers an investigation in how the ideologies of community occur in images and language, and how these are constructed and mediated in relation to questions of political representation, history and identity. Recent exhibitions include shows at Galleri Riis, Stockholm, Sweden (2016), Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp, Belgium (2015) and Alhóndiga Bilbao, Spain (2014).

A K Dolven (b. 1953, Norway) lives and works in Lofoten, Norway and London, UK. Dolven works in a variety of media – painting, installation, film and sound – and at the core of her practice is the theme of interpersonal relations and interactions. Recent exhibitions include shows at Kunsthall Svalbard, OSL Contemporary (2016) and IKON Gallery, Birmingham (2015).

VALIE EXPORT (b. 1940, Austria) has through her earlier actions gained an iconic position within feminist art and performance art. In these actions EXPORT challenged the way power structures, through media, controlled and influenced the female body and image. Recent exhibitions include shows at Hessel Museum of Art, Bard College, New York, MACBA, Barcelona, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK (2016) and MoMA, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2015).

Claire Fontaine (founded 2004, Paris, France) sees herself as a “readymade artist”, and works with neon, video, sculpture, painting and text. The ongoing interrogation of political and aesthetic norms of the art world informs her artistic practice. Recent exhibitions include The Jewish Museum, New York (2014), Manifesta 9, Limburg (2012), Witte de With Rotterdam, Netherland (2008) and Tate Modern, London (2007).

Alexandra Pirici (b. 1982, Bucharest, Romania) has a background in choreography, and works across different mediums as visual art, music and film. Together with the artist Manuel Pelmus, Pirici presented Romania at the 55th edition of the Venice Biennale in 2013 with the work *An Immaterial Retrospective of the Venice Biennale*. Pirici contributed with sculptural interventions and projects for Manifesta 10 in 2014. Her works has been presented for example at Centre Pompidou, Paris (2014) and GfZK Leipzig, Germany (2013) and Hebbel am Ufer, Berlin, Germany (2012).

Yilmaz Dziewior has since 2015 been the director of the Museum Ludwig in Cologne, Germany, and was previous director of Kunsthaus Bregenz. In 2015 Dziewior curated the Austrian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. Dziewior has on a regularly basis written for Artforum, Camera Austria and Texte zur Kunst, and has edited over fifty books and catalogues. His work is distinguished by a dedicated interest in social issues, especially in the exploration of identity-political and cultural attributions.

Helena Holmberg is the director of Kunsthall Trondheim. Holmberg was earlier curator for Index – The Swedish Contemporary Art Foundation, Stockholm, Sweden. Holmberg was also the leader of Xpoxeptember – a biennale for photographic and moving image. Other projects include: *A Complicated Relation* (Index and Kalmar Konstmuseum 2011), *Manon de Boer: Encounters* (Kalmar Konstmuseum 2013, publication by Van Abbemuseum, OEI and Index, 2013). Holmberg has been responsible for establishing Kunsthall Trondheim since 2013.

Mike Sperlinger is currently Professor of Writing and Theory at the Oslo Academy of Art. Before that, he was Assistant Director of LUX, a London-based agency for artists working with moving image, from 2001 – 2013. He written for magazines and journals including Frieze, Texte zur Kunst, Art Monthly, Radical Philosophy and Afterall, as well as numerous exhibition catalogues, and is the editor of several books.

Giovanna Zapperi is a Paris-based art historian who received her doctorate from the École des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS) in Paris. Zapperi examines the interrelation of art criticism, visual culture and feminism. She has published numerous studies in anthologies, exhibition catalogues, and reviews in France and abroad, which includes for example *Les Cahiers du MNAM*, *Histoire de l’ Art*, *Perspective*, *Oxford Art Journal*, *Art History*, *Kritische Berichte*, *Parachute* and *Feminist Review*. In 2010, Zapperi became a faculty member of the École Nationale Supérieure d’ Art in Bourges, France, where she teaches the history and theory of contemporary art.

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Open Tuesday – Saturday 12 – 8pm, Sunday 12 – 6pm

www.kunsthalltrondheim.no