

ZOON IN A ZOOT-SUIT

Solo-exhibition by Aditya Mandayam

Within the European Capital of Culture 2014 project "*Waiting for... (Archeology of an Idea)*"

kim? Contemporary Art Centre

Opening: February 7th

Let us bend light!

What is a lens?

- A lens is anything that bends light.

What bends light?

All sorts of glass, plastic, feldspar, translucent and transparent objects bend light.

Gravity also bends light. This means anything with mass is a lens.

You are a lens. I am a lens. Every object around you is a lens. We all are lenses.

The effect is invisible at the human scale, of course. But at the galactic or cosmic level, gravitational lensing effects become nontrivial, even useful to the human species.

Adorno once described the world as a place of distortions, and to make sense of it requires looking at it through a distorted lens - what we recognize are distortions of distortions. We need to mutilate images in order to see the mutilations, so to speak. To those of us in the age of the computer, this seems obvious.

"*Zoon in a Zoot-Suit*" is a plate of various objects proposed to deal very much with one's own perception. The movement from the male gaze and the phallic gesture, sweetmeats, smells, and moving images leaves us alone, facing various shades of yellow: a blanket, curcuma-dyed, brass, piss, velour *furoshiki*, pickled radish and rock sugar, agar- agar, jackfruit, yellow paper and chalk, euros, paper from old books, deep fried canvas, raw linen in chickpea batter, deep-fried in mustard oil..

It has become a sort of unifying principle of 'Zoon' - a zoological individual (Ancient Greek ζῷον - zōion, "animal"): the colour of old books, the colour of Lucifer, the colour of piss and phosphorus, the colour of the coward. 'Lucifer' literally means 'the bringer of light'; for the artist born on a Sunday and named after it ('Aditya' in Sanskrit means 'The Sun'), the connotations of the devil feels like embedded like in a certain cohesive framework.

"*Free of metaphor and myth, he grinds a stubborn crystal: the infinite map of the One who is all His stars*", wrote Borges in 1960s. In the sonnet he refers specifically to Spinoza's work - polishing crystal lenses as well as his vast crystal philosophy of the Universe - his *Ethics*.

All in all "*Zoon in a Zoot-Suit*" reflects upon concepts of Truth, God, The Natural World, Law, Virtue, Freedom, Reason, Happiness, and Sadness. It's curious and critical outlook resonates with certain speechlessness when it faces Spinoza's unifying metaphysics and rational thinking. There evolves a definite tension in our current reasoning, which leads us rather to another belief - that meta-things hide exactly where irrational thought takes place.

Aditya Mandayam is a travel and lifestyle writer from the Near East. He has performed under the names “*Yayati Papita, That Palpitating Talapati*”, “*Popobobo Oddodood*”, and most recently, “*Ekko Lokkwa*”. Recent and upcoming shows include “*The Pink Spy*” at *MHKA*, Antwerp, “*MAKEDO DOMAKE*” at the *Galerie van Gelder*, Amsterdam, “*Lizzard Lounge*” at the National Museum of Art, Harare, Zimbabwe, and “*Fusifform Gyru*” at the *Lisson Gallery*, London. Mandayam was an artist-in-residence at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts 2012/2013, and at *Kiosko*, Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia in 2011. See cixa.org for more.

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The exhibition will be on view until March 16th, 2014.

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Opening hours:
Mon: closed
Tue.: 12:00 – 20:00
Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun: 12.00 – 18.00

3.00 EUR
Students, senior citizens: 1.50 EUR
Free on Tuesdays