

Silberkuppe Under One Umbrella



Anonymous, Phyllida Barlow, Dirk Bell, Juliette Blightman, Kaucyila Brooke, Etienne Descloux PE-P, Janette Laverrière, Christian Philipp Müller, Shahryar Nashat, Kirsten Pieroth

MARCH 5 – APRIL 7, 2010 KUNSTHALLEN

WHAT IS SILBERKUPPE?

In the course of two years Silberkuppe has become one of Berlin's most outstanding independent spaces for contemporary art. The micro-space occupying just 25 square metres in what was formerly a concierge's office, is run by Dominic Eichler and Michel Ziegler, who since May 2008 under the name Silberkuppe, have hosted a succession of lectures, exhibitions, presentations, film screenings, concerts and performances. Silberkuppe works with an international range of visual artists and other actors on the cultural scene. Their projects often have wide scope, crossing the boundaries between generations, artistic media and modes of expression. Silberkuppe's approach to the field of art is all about challenging established forms of presentation and mediation as well as exhibition conventions. Against the background of the widespread enthusiasm for Silberkuppe's activities and their approach to the field of art, Eichler and Ziegler were invited by four European art institutions to mount projects outside Berlin. For Silberkuppe this has led to a defacto 'European tour' that culminates with the major group exhibition *Under One Umbrella* at Bergen Kunsthall. In the last year, through three very different exhibitions at Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden (7 x 14: *Silberkuppe takes the wa-*

ters, 2009), Hayward Gallery Project Space (*Rooms without Walls*, 2009) and Museum für Gegenwartskunst Basel (*Old Ideas*, 2010), Silberkuppe has had the opportunity to implement projects with dozens of artists. Their curatorial intention was to examine what they see as some key concerns in contemporary art, for instance: the terms, conditions and methods of both art and context production; the use of reference and historical sources; conceptions and various strategies of engagement with the viewer; conventions of exhibition making including display formats, timing and modes of mediation; and the relationship between what are sometimes presented as contrary strands such as 'conceptual', 'formal', 'material' 'political' based approaches to art making. Typically Silberkuppe's exhibitions distinguish themselves through the artistic, discursive and aesthetic heterogeneity they allow.

UNDER ONE UMBRELLA

The exhibition *Under One Umbrella* brings together works by artists, an architect and a designer, some of which were made possible as a result of Silberkuppe's institutional excursions and others which were especially produced or selected for this exhibition. The title of the exhibition acknowledges a certain amount of playful ab-

surdity involved in gathering many different cultural producers and their works under one umbrella. Imagining the closely interwoven social space under the umbrella as a metaphor for a contextual model and space for the production of informal discourse, is one of the subplots to the exhibition. The exhibition opens in the midst and in a sense behind the scenes of the sculptural installation *SPLIT* (2010) by British sculptor **Phyllida Barlow**. For Barlow the two large components of the work - a stack of four bolsters and a free standing painted grid frame are 'all inside and all outside' respectively. The work of Barlow - a renown art educator and an artist's artist - has drawn on vernacular form and colour from building sites and the streets of London since the 1960s. The marks on her frame are systematic rather than loaded gestures. The brush strokes indicate 'work' and function to simply cover all the timber joints and fastenings. Barlow's camouflage painting on an irregular grid demonstrates her conviction that 'if you hide a structure you make it obvious'.

The series of rooms to the left and right of the Kunsthall offer alternative and various spaces and paths with two possible endings. To the immediate left is a suite of works by **Kirsten Pieroth**, which draws on documentation and anecdotes relating to Italian inventor

Guglielmo Marconi's (1874-1937) experiments with wireless communication in the 1890s. Pieroth's work adds playful twists on both the historical record and the tradition of conceptual art within which she works. The 'document' is no longer a reliable record, her models are also humorous mini-sculptures and two ends of a sofa transmit electric static to each other bridging the distance between them. Pieroth's continuing interest in inventors and their studios also makes her works as an analogy about artists – how they work and their creative process which might be full of stops and starts, setbacks and periods of rest or inaction. The idea of communication tools is picked up in the useable seating platform based on designs from the 1950s and 1960s by designer **Janette Laverrière** in the main space. This piece has accompanied Silberkuppe in the last three institutional exhibitions and for them represents a utopian social space where viewers are brought eye to eye on one level. It also functions as a viewing oasis and delineates a conceptual space for informal discourse.

Nearby a tent, the *Kunsthütte* (2009/10) by **Etienne Descloux PEP** is another proposal for a possible form for an art and dialogue space. Silberkuppe commissioned the architect to design an idealized freestanding space for a multi-disciplinary and multi-media project room for contemporary art. His proposal was for a freestanding metal tent. In the exhibition it represents an autonomous space within the institutional space and is used for daily screenings of video doc-

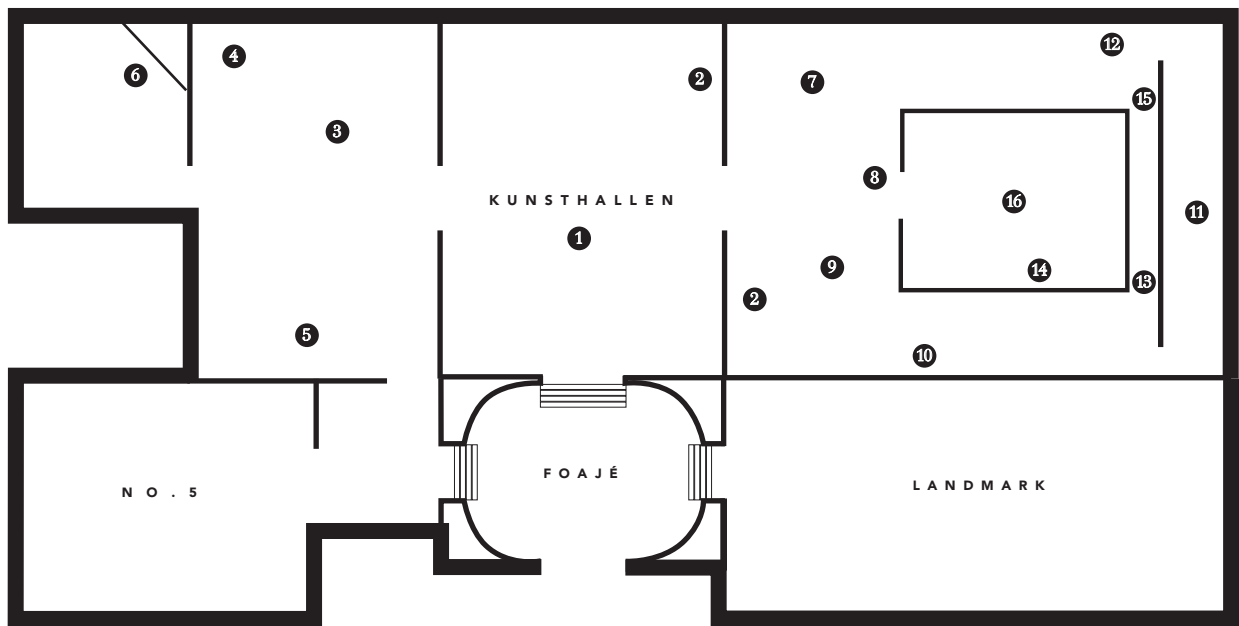
umentation of lectures, talks and performances mounted by Silberkuppe over the last 2 years. Continuing and expanding the various overlapping and superimposed notions of 'space' in the exhibition are three works: **Kaucyila Brooke's** drawing simply listing names of former lesbian bars in San Diego. For more than two decades Brooke's work as an artist, activist, writer and project initiator has dealt openly with lesbian identity and experience. **Christian Philipp Müller's** work *Untitled* (1993/2005) documents the artist walking illegally across the borders of Austria to its neighboring nations. These crossings were made as a part of the piece *Green Border* for the Austrian pavilion at the 1993 Venice Biennial. For that year's biennial Müller was invited together with Andrea Fraser as non-Austrian artists to take part in the national pavilion. Müller's contribution continued this opening up of institutional and national borders, by following Austria's green borders, and crossing over to neighboring countries, both in the east and the west. Also in the main space is an instruction piece by **Anonymous**. Her wall text invites the viewer to render themselves radically vulnerable.

At either ends or extremes of the exhibition are alternative proposals about relationship to art, artist biographies and mental journeys. To the far left is **Shahryar Nashat's** video *Today* (2010). This work was commissioned for the Silberkuppe exhibition 'Old Ideas' in the Museum für Gegenwartskunst Basel and was shot with the installation staff in the storage

and in the conservation department's photographic studio of the Museum. The main 'protagonists' of the two part film are sculptures by a once widely known Swiss sculptor Karl Geiser (1898 – 1957) which are usually never shown. The work is a musing on the status of art in a collection but not on display, transition and photographic reproduction. At the other end behind a wall in a space which is nearly exactly the same size and shape as Silberkuppe's rooms in Berlin is **Juliette Blightman's** video installation. The video documents a recent family visit to the Getty Museum in Los Angeles and a view of a 19th Century painting through a cloud. Her installation requires the use of old furniture in the host institution's inventory and invites single viewers to spend the last hour of each day of the exhibition with the work. Nearby **Dirk Bell's** ensemble of three works above the tent - a sign of love - and inside the tent - a paired *on and off* pulsing light and a painting behind the screen demarcate an imaginary space beyond architecture.

For the exhibition at Bergen Kunsthall a catalogue will be produced together with Sternberg Press. This publication will include a photographic 'report' from Silberkuppe's last two years of activities as well as artist texts and project descriptions.

Documentation in the *Kunsthütte*: Phyllida Barlow talks to Sarah McCrory, basso, Gerry Bibby, Dr. Julia Savage, Matthew Lutz-Kinoy, Motherland, Nicolas Siepen and Tara Herbst.



- 1**
Phyllida Barlow
SPLIT (2010) two parts:
Untitled (Bolsters, 2010)
 polystyrene, cement
 240 x 140 cm
Untitled (Frame, 2010)
 wood, paint, 460cm x 300 cm
 Courtesy: the artist
- 2**
Phyllida Barlow
Untitled (Blob, yellow 2010)
 polystyrene, plaster, paint,
 92 x 38 cm
Untitled (Blob, grey 2010)
 polystyrene, plaster, paint,
 92 x 38 cm
 Courtesy: the artist
- 3**
Kirsten Pieroth
**Antenna System for the First
 Transatlantic Transmission
 in 1901** (2009)
 macaroni, earth, string, 3 tables a
 100 x 70 cm
 Courtesy: the artist
 and Klosterfelde, Berlin
- 4**
Kirsten Pieroth
**Marconi's Early Experiments
 in Communicating** (2009)
 vinyl wall lettering,
 6 prints á 52 x 35 cm
 Courtesy: the artist and
 Klosterfelde, Berlin
- 5**
Kirsten Pieroth
Telegraphy (2009)
 wood, wire, radio, 410 x 80 cm
 Courtesy: the artist and
 Klosterfelde, Berlin

- 6**
Shahryar Nashat
Today (2010)
 High definition video, 6'10''
 Courtesy: the artist
- 7**
Christian Philipp Müller
Untitled (1993/2005)
 c-print, 27 x 40,5 cm,
 + DVD "2562 km", 9 min, looped
 Courtesy: Georg Kargl
 Fine Arts, Vienna
- 8**
Etienne Descloix PE-P
Kunsthütte (Art hut, 2009/2010)
 cloth, wood, 500 x 510 x 355 cm
 Courtesy: the architect.
- 9**
Janette Laverrière
**Untitled seating and
 table platform based on
 designs and drawings
 produced between 1937
 and 1968** (2009)
 wood, cushions,
 285 x 340 cm
 Courtesy: the designer
- 10**
Kaucyila Brooke
**Bar Names (Naughty)
 from The Boy Mechanic/
 San Francisco** (2007)
 Ink on paper
 110 x 80 cm
 Courtesy: Galerie
 Andreas Huber, Vienna

- 11**
Juliette Blightman
under one umbrella (2010)
 VHS tape, 5 min 10 sec
 table and chair from the
 institutional inventory, pot plant,
 80 x 100 x 78 cm
 Courtesy: Hotel, London
- 12**
Anonymous
**in a big empty grey space
 stand in the rain wearing
 only a blindfold** (2010)
 instruction vinyl wall lettering,
 dimensions variable
- 13**
Dirk Bell
evolove (2007)
 steel, 40 x 40 cm
 Courtesy: the artist.
- 14**
Dirk Bell
Light (onend off) (2010)
 mixed media, lamp, dimensions
 variable
 Courtesy: the artist
- 15**
Dirk Bell
Planet 1 (2010)
 mixed media on canvas, 50 x 40 cm
 Courtesy: the artist.
- 16**
Daily video screening
 For schedules and details see
 Video Event Tent programme.

Luke Fowler

Pilgrimage From Scattered Points



MARCH 5 – APRIL 7, 2010 NO.5

Scottish Luke Fowler is one of the most talked-about young British artists of recent years. His films are documentaries which at the same time express an experimental attitude to the film medium in a continuation of the avant-garde film tradition of the 1960s and 1970s.

Fowler's films often portray historical cultural figures who operate on the extreme periphery of established society. The subject is usually a type of outsider figure with radical ambitions to challenge existing society. *Pilgrimage from Scattered Points* (2006), perhaps Fowler's best known film portrait, deals with the British composer and activist Cornelius Cardew (1936-1981). The film follows the development of the composer's ground-breaking project the Scratch Orchestra as well as its total break-down and final collapse. The Scratch Orchestra consisted of both professional musicians and amateurs – anyone from students to farmers and office-workers could par-

ticipate. The orchestra challenged all the established conventions, and distanced itself both from the use of traditional notation and from the concert hall as the arena of music, in favour of public places like railway stations or shopping centres.

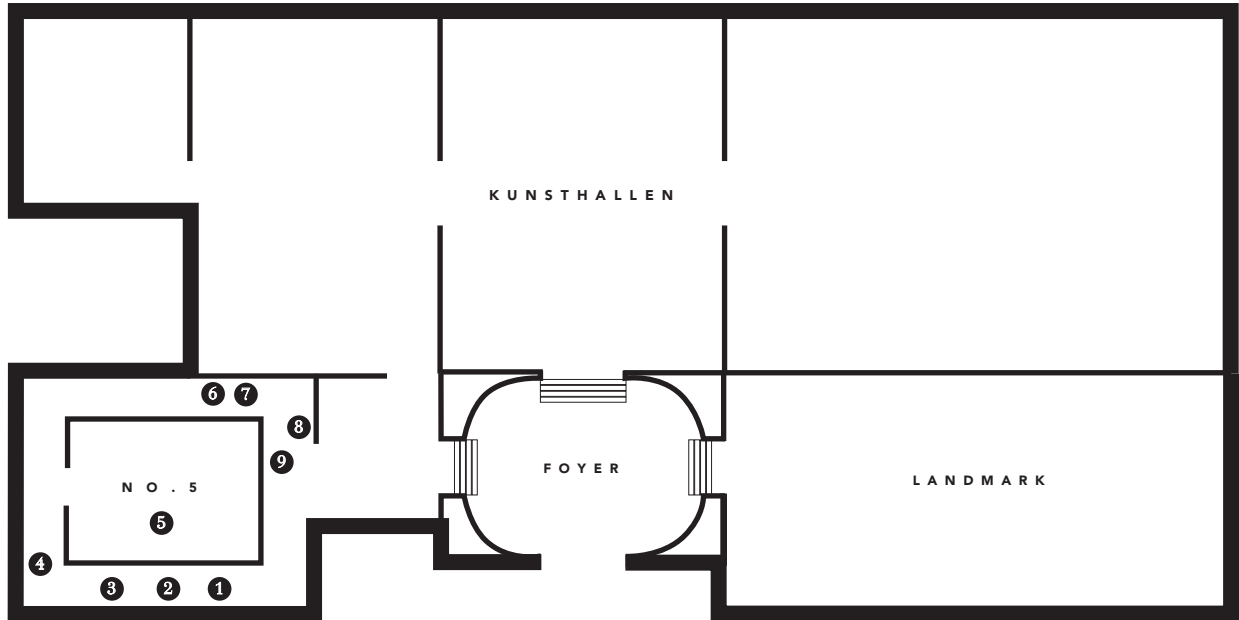
The Scratch Orchestra was a social experiment that ended in a rupture where the members split into two different fractions. The film sheds light on that internal struggle, during which Cardew himself became a convinced Maoist. For Cardew music was a tool for studying man's ability to cooperate and a way of investigating how we as a society can tolerate the unacceptable. Fowler's portrait films also have a political motivation and show, through a close reading of historical figures, how alternative ways of thinking are possible.

Luke Fowler (b. 1978) lives and works in Glasgow. He has had solo exhibitions at among other venues the Serpentine Gallery (London), Kunsthalle

Zürich, Extra City (Antwerp) and The Modern Institute (Glasgow). He has participated in a long succession of group exhibitions and film festivals all over the world.

The exhibition has been produced by Bergen Kunsthall in collaboration with Borealis.

The exhibition is part of the annual collaboration between Bergen Kunsthall and the Borealis festival. This year's festival touches on "the Utopian" as one of its themes. Fowler's exhibition documents just such an Utopian moment and how it constantly exists as a fragile experiment in danger of shattering in the clash with the structures of the greater society. Bergen Kunsthall and Borealis will follow up the exhibition with a further focus on Cornelius Cardew, with a special concert and a lecture by John Tilbury, pianist and author of the biography *Cornelius Cardew: A Life Unfinished* (2008).



1

Luke Fowler
Digital reprint of a photograph by Alec Hill; (Michael Chant and Carole Fine holding Horace Cardew on beach in Cornwall. Village halls tour, 1970). 2006
 C-Print
 62.5x87.4x3 cm, 24.6x34.4x1.2 ins
 Unlimited Edition
 ed.MAIN CARD/100+1 ap

2

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Digital reprint of a photograph by Alec Hill; (Dave Jackman playing drums at side of river. North East tour, 1971). 2006
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4

Luke Fowler
Scratch Orchestra Collage No.2 2006
 Collage, framed
 122x87x4.7 cm, 48x34.3x1.9 ins
 TMI-FOWLL-00019

5

Luke Fowler
Pilgrimage from Scattered Points, 2006
 DVD, colour and b7w,
 sound, 45 mins,
 Edition/5 + 2
 ap photo: Ruth Clark

6

Luke Fowler
Digital reprint of a photograph by Alec Hill; (John Tilbury (left), Chris Hobbs (background), Carole Fine (drumming), Bryn Harris (pink roll neck). Playing outside Euston Station, 1970). 2006
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9

Luke Fowler
Scratch Orchestra collage No. 1 2006
 Offset print
 59x77 cm, 23.2x30.3 ins
 Exhibition
 Serpentine, London 07/05/09-14/06/09
 TMI-FOWLL-00008

All works Courtesy of the artist and The Modern Institute/Toby Webster Ltd Glasgow

Luke Fowler

Pilgrimage From Scattered Points



5. MARS – 7. APRIL 2010 NO.5

Skotske Luke Fowler er blant de mest omtalte unge britiske kunstnerne de siste årene. Filmene hans er dokumentarfilmer som samtidig uttrykker en eksperimentell holdning til filmmediet i en forlengelse av 60- og 70-tallets avantgardefilmtradisjon.

Fowlers filmer portretterer ofte historiske kulturelle figurer som opererer i et marginalt ytterpunkt på utsiden av det etablerte. De portretterte er oftest en type outsiderfigurer med radikale ambisjoner om å utfordre det bestående samfunnet. *Pilgrimage from Scattered Points* (2006), Fowlers kanskje mest kjente filmportrett, tar for seg den britiske komponisten og aktivisten Cornelius Cardew (1936-1981). Filmen følger utviklingen av komponistens banebrytende prosjekt Scratch Orchestra, og dets totale kollaps og sammenbrudd. Scratch Orchestra besto av både profesjonelle musikere og amatører – hvor alt fra studenter til bønder og kontorarbeidere kunne del-

ta. Orkesteret utfordret alle etablerte konvensjoner, og fjernet seg fra både bruk av tradisjonell notasjon og fra konsertsalen som musikkens arena, til fordel for offentlige steder som togstasjoner eller shoppingsentre.

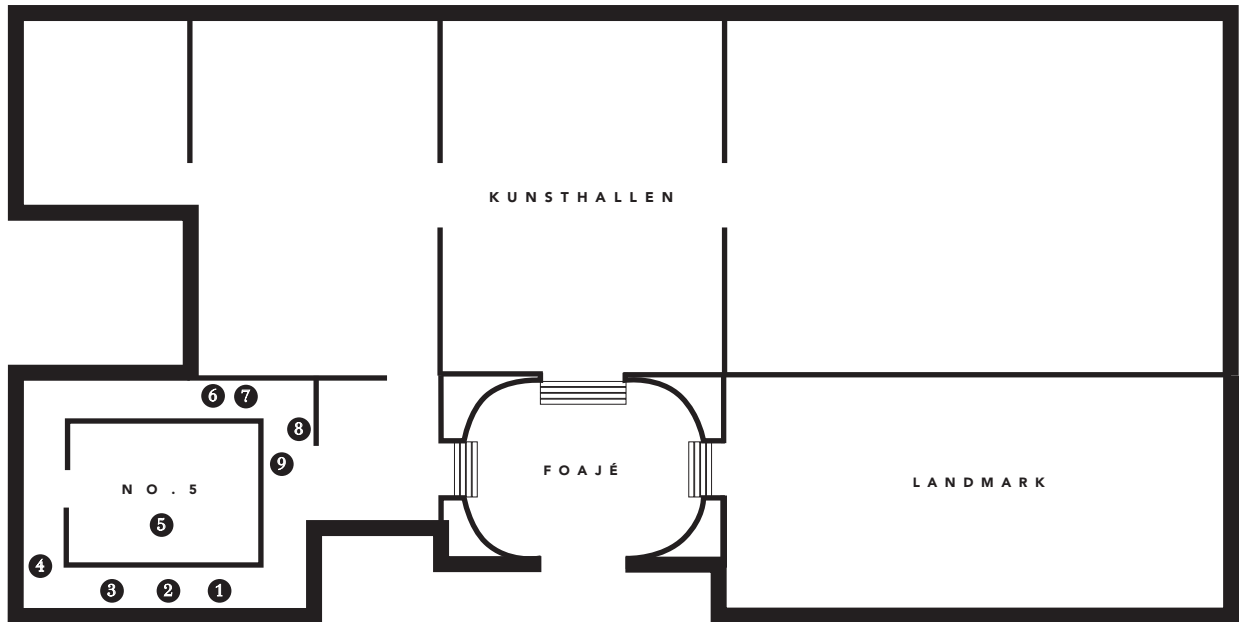
Scratch Orchestra var et sosialt eksperiment som endte i et brudd hvor medlemmene ble delt i to ulike fraksjoner. Filmen belyser denne interne kampen, der Cardew selv ble en overbevist Maoist. For Cardew var musikken et redskap til å studere menneskers evne til samarbeid og en måte å undersøke hvordan vi som samfunn kan tåle det uakseptable. Fowlers portrettfilmer har også en politisk motivasjon og viser gjennom en nærlesning av historiske figurer hvordan alternative tenkemåter er mulig.

Luke Fowler (f. 1978) bor og arbeider i Glasgow. Han har hatt separatutstillinger ved blant annet Serpentine Gallery (London), Kunsthalle Zürich,

Extra City (Antwerp) og The Modern Institute (Glasgow). Han har deltatt ved en lang rekke gruppeutstillinger og filmfestivaler verden over. Utstillingen er produsert av Bergen Kunsthall i samarbeid med Borealis.

Utstillingen er del av det årlige samarbeidet mellom Bergen Kunsthall og Borealisfestivalen.

Årets festival har «det utopiske» som et overordnet tema. Fowlers utstilling dokumenterer nettopp et utopisk øyeblikk, og hvordan det hele tiden eksisterer som et skjørt eksperiment som hele tiden står i fare for å bryte i møte med storsamfunnets strukturer. Bergen Kunsthall og Borealis vil i forlengelse av utstillingen sette ytterligere fokus på Cornelius Cardew med en egen konsert, og et foredrag av John Tilbury, pianist og forfatter av biografien *Cornelius Cardew: A Life Unfinished* (2008).



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