

ReSiDuE

21.06 – 01.09.2013

WIELS, Brussels

Artists:

Hotel Charleroi

Aleksandra Chaushova

Theo Cowley

Svenja Deininger

Laurent Dupont-Garitte

Jana Euler

Maartje Fliervoet

Martin Laborde

Wobbe Micha

Curator:

Agata Jastrzabek & Dirk Snauwaert.

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The exhibition

With an annual exhibition, WIELS wants to emphasize one of the least visible, but most important aspects, of its operation: the residency programme, established in 2008 under the coordination of Devrim Bayar, and with Willem Oorebeek and Simon Thompson as mentors. This thematic exhibition is organised based on the work produced by former artists in residency, sixty so far. This, the first edition, takes as its starting point the logic of informality, exchange and discussion, all of which are central to how the residency programme is structured.

The title *ReSiDuE* confronts the sense of being a resident, somewhere and for some time, with those artistic processes that are often compared to alchemy. The murky leftovers of chemical transformation processes are a result that escapes the notion of product. A *residue* is obtained by exempting the notion of production, a principle central to the WIELS residency, which questions artistic creation and its relation to process and production. *ReSiDuE*, moreover, is etymologically related to *residency*, whose Latin root is *resedere*, meaning to *re-sit*. Rather than showing creative practices that are economy-driven and object-oriented, this exhibition gathers works that are more adequately framed by concepts such as recycling, re-working and repeating. The selection aims to showcase artistic discourses that resist remaining predicated on sense, usefulness, productivity and positivity, discourses that, at the very least, offer a possibility to see ‘the other side’ of things. Negativity here is understood in the Bataille sense, as the double movement of ‘action’ and ‘questioning’, as a powerful creative force.

The invited artists work in different media, come from different countries and deal with a wide variety of subjects. They are at different stages of their artistic emergence. In that, they represent the overall, indefinable character of the WIELS residency programme and its refusal to be pigeonholed into a certain artist profile.

With: Hotel Charleroi (BE / FR / AT), Aleksandra Chaushova (BG), Theo Cowley (UK), Svenja Deininger (AT), Laurent Dupont-Garitte (BE), Jana Euler (DE), Maartje Fliervoet (NL), Martin Laborde (FR), Wobbe Micha (BE)

Introduction to ReSiDuE

By Agata Jastrzabek

Almost anything can be thought of as a residue, and that is both an opportunity and a threat for a title that simultaneously tries to provide a (non)conceptual framework for an exhibition. A *residue*, in natural sciences, is whatever remains after something has been removed in a process of evaporation; it is a sort of natural selection. Moreover, *residue* shares an etymological root with *residency*: *resedere*, in Latin, means to 're-sit'. A work of art could be thought of a residue, and this exhibition is a residue of many different thoughts and givens. *ReSiDuE* wants to bring attention to 'the other side' of things and, in so doing, to evoke questions, to confront the unknown and the incomprehensible. Many loose ideas led to this exhibition making and the selection of the artists; they supplied the process, and possibly the exhibition itself, with some coherency.

- Unsettling the dominant discourses based on *sense, usefulness, responsibility, productivity* and *positivity* (after Bataille).
- Unlearning some established assumptions about reality, such as that *action* belongs to the domain of knowledge and manufactured objects and *questioning* belongs to the domain of non-knowledge, the non-manufactured and the unknown.
- The exhibition is interested in this agitated *double movement* between the action and the reflective inner experience which leads to the undoing of reason. The creative potential of heterogeneous energies.
- *Negativity* is this double movement of 'action' and 'questioning'. Questioning develops action.
- The presence of *absence* (negative presence sometimes carries more meaning than positive presence), the fundamental uncertainty and the optimism inscribed in the process of waiting (*Waiting for Godot*, Beckett).
- The reoccurrence of a *bench* in Beckett's writings, as a metaphor for reflective inner experience, sitting, the moment of observation and non-action while action happens by itself. The meaning of unrealized intention and non-intended realisations.
- Looking and listening as essential elements of a creative practice.
- Hamlet's last words: 'the rest is silence' (Shakespeare). The biggest competitor of speech is a silence. Hamlet suggests the impossibility of perfect expression, the limitations of speech, and draws attention to the facts, stories and meanings borne by silence.
- Contesting the overproduction of meaning while putting emphasis on the common and ordinary.