

VOYAGE

Christian Philipp Müller
12.3.2020 – 18.4.2020

Opening 12 March, 6 - 9 pm
With an artist talk by CPM, 6.30 pm

LONGTANG
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Monday to Friday
10 am to 3 pm
and by appointment

We are pleased to announce VOYAGE, a solo exhibition by Christian Philipp Müller (CPM). VOYAGE includes a suite of existing works central to CPM's body of work, as well new pieces addressing and questioning the relationship between art and service.

Christian Philipp Müller is part of the founding generation of so-called Institutional Critique and is recognized for his precise analytical and aesthetic practice. The context he is invited to work within and himself, CPM the artist, usually function as starting points for his work and usually unfold in site-specific, collaborative and interdisciplinary projects.

For his exhibition at LONGTANG, CPM decided to loan all of his artworks held in one specific collection, to challenge the authority of ownership, influence, decision making and furthermore how surplus value is generated in contemporary art. The collection in question is the Zurich-based Ringier collection with which CPM has an intertwined, 30-year-long history: A trained typographer CPM, worked for the Ringier publishing house as a graphic designer in the 80s, in the 90's Ringier AG's owner Michael Ringier purchased several of CPM's work amongst other «Almost Adjusted to the New Background» (1993) from the artist's at the time New York gallery American Fine Arts, Co.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the publication of «Bon Voyage», the 1999 annual report conceived by CPM for the Ringier company, an initiative started in 1997 by collector Michael Ringier and former collection curator Beatrix Ruf, where an artist is invited each year to re-interpret the official company report, not least to strengthen the double helix relationship between the company and art, and to communicate this affinity to the company's employees. This report, for which CPM traveled the globe in 1999, visiting nine countries in which Ringier was and is active as a printer to conceive a subjective travel journal, acts as the point of departure for VOYAGE.

Former Ringier collection curator Beatrix Ruf, the initiator of the annual report publication as artist book series, remembers in an e-mail from earlier this year to CPM: «Your annual report for the 1999 financial year was certainly the one, of all the reports produced from 1998 to the present day, that has been most closely and intensively «interwoven» into the actual work of the company. I remember very well that you created a lot of confusion with your approach as an «embedded journalist». At the time of publication you knew an infinite number of details from the many different countries and offices of the company worldwide. And emotions about identities were also triggered by the many photos: it was hotly debated whether one felt adequately represented with your photos. Later, you placed a showcase filled with tourist souvenirs from the various countries in the company's headquarters on Dufourstrasse in Zurich, which stimulated discussions among the employees and visitors alike for a long time. So all in all, your report has done everything that one can expect from this carte blanche to artists for the annual reports: There was a close connection to the company's activities and a close collaboration with its employees. And most importantly, a real work was created by the invited artist.»

CPM hoists «Bon Voyage» on LONGTANG's hitherto idle flagpole. The white flag refers to reputable Swiss typography with the typeface Helvetica and the colors CMYK, and the three colored «O's» are reminiscent of Switzerland's second-largest media company's logo. Small details mark and question the autonomy of artistic practice.

The collaboration with CPM on VOYAGE started with LONGTANG's interest in exhibiting the work «Illegal Border Crossing» (1993) for two obvious reasons: LONGTANG's Pavillon is located close to a refugee center run by the city of Zurich and the criminalization of illegalized border crossings into the EU were peaking, just as they are again now. CPM's work seems very relevant to LONGTANG, not only because border policies are currently explicitly showing their violent side and allowing populists to profit from historical oblivion. Working with CPM as an artist who crosses, questions and points out borders is essential to LONGTANG, which operates on disciplinary and systematic intersections.

Christian Philipp Müller was born in 1957 in Switzerland, represented Austria along with Gerwald Rockenschaub and Andrea Fraser at the 45th Biennale di Venezia. He participated in documenta X (1997) and documenta 13 (2012). In 2007, the Kunstmuseum Basel staged a large scale retrospective of his work. CPM was awarded the Prix Meret Oppenheim in 2016.

Upcoming Kitchen Talk series, on Thursdays 6pm:

Chen Shen (Curator, White Space Gallery, Beijing), 26 March

Prof. Dr. Philipp Ursprung (ETH Zurich) 2 April

Andrea Lucia Brun (Founder of the Think Tank Büro Brun, Basel), 9 April

VOYAGE is kindly supported by:



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Ringier | Collection

