

CARLOS/ISHIKAWA

KORAKRIT ARUNANONDCHAI & ALEX GVOJIC SONGS FOR LIVING

14 April – 15 May

Private View: Wednesday 13 April 6–8pm

Fire and heat provide modes of explanation in the most varied domains, because they have been for us the occasion for unforgettable memories, for simple and decisive personal experiences. Fire is thus a privileged phenomenon which can explain anything. If all that changes slowly may be explained by life, all that changes quickly is explained by fire. Fire is the ultra-living element. It is intimate and it is universal. It lives in our heart. It lives in the sky. It rises from the depths of the substance and offers itself with the warmth of love. Or it can back down into the substance and hide there, latent and pent-up, like hate and vengeance. Among all phenomena, it is really the only one to which there can be so definitely attributed the opposing values of good and evil. It shines in Paradise. It burns in Hell. It is gentleness and torture. It is cookery and it is apocalypse. It is a pleasure for the good child sitting prudently by the hearth; yet it punishes any disobedience when the child wishes to play too close to its flames. It is well-being and it is respect. It is a tutelary and a terrible divinity, both good and bad. It can contradict itself; thus it is one of the principles of universal explanation.

— Excerpt from *The Psychoanalysis of Fire* by Gaston Bachelard

Songs for living provides excerpts from Simone Weil's *Gravity and Grace*, Édouard Glissant's *Sun of Consciousness*, and *On Prayer*, a poem by the Polish-American poet, Czesław Miłosz. From separate times and places these writers survived under oppressive regimes with the provocation of their art. What they had in common was that they fought for a spiritual clarity amidst the forcefulness of symbolic communions. It is from this space of holding onto the uncertain, which allowed them to refuse. Instead of speaking directly to their rulers, they found ways to make songs, using the discards left over from the struggles of power.

I am not saying we are powerless. I am no longer interested in power. I am asking, who is it that we pray to? Are these prayers meant to unite us with our legitimate rulers or do they only take us somewhere further away?

*You ask me how to pray to someone who is not.
All I know is that prayer constructs a velvet bridge
And walking it we are aloft, as on a springboard,
Above landscapes the color of ripe gold
Transformed by a magic stopping of the sun.
That bridge leads to the shore of Reversal
Where everything is just the opposite and the word 'is'
Unveils a meaning we hardly envisioned.
Notice: I say we; there, every one, separately,
Feels compassion for others entangled in the flesh
And knows that if there is no other shore
We will walk that aerial bridge all the same.*

— *On Prayer* by Czesław Miłosz

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Credits

Korakrit Arunanondchai and Alex Gvojc

Songs for living, 2021

HD single-channel video, color, sound. 20:51 min

Co-commissioned by Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst and Kunstverein in Hamburg with support from FACT, Liverpool

Production

Koh Tao:

Camera Operator: Andres Gutierrez Fiskeseth, Korakrit Arunanondchai, Cyrus James Khan

Talent: child-Warin, ghosts-Senay Zahir, Asia, Taw, Joy, Sha Prad

Production Manager: Turan Zahir, Pookie Supaya, Sirada Chaumthong

Location Supported by: New Heaven Diving School

New York:

Bonfire:

Movement Direction: Monica Mirabile

Performers: Jack Meriwether, Joy Norton, Kate Williams, Maxi Canyon, Amanda Wallace, Ellery Burton, Sadie Carnot, Margot Roo Ells, Erika McCarthy, James Adelman, Bryant Kennedy

Tai-Chi Dancers: Albert Chan, Yee Lai Gong, Irene H Lee, Jie Ming Dong, Sun Choi Tsang, Yun Ho Poon, Kam Lei, Zenia de la Cruz, Richard Chin, Wai Wah Ho, Margaret Yuen, Sue Seto

Unicycle Delivery Riders: Melanie Flores, Sofya Yuditskaya, Timothy Villaluz, Veronica H Generoso

Crew/Post

Producer & Camera B: Rory Mulhere

Producer & Art Department: Cherisse Gray

Lighting: Michael Potvin

Location Manager: Todd Faulkner

Production: Zanze Addington-White

Production Assistant & Art Department: Alden Louke, Alison Peery, Emma McMillian, Meghan Smith

Production Assistant: Violet Flux, Elias Riviera

Location Manager: Arba Hall, Dylan Golden

Color & Post Production: Ben Federman

Sound

Storyteller: Zsela

Composition and Mixing: Aaron David Ross

Score: Aaron David Ross

Music: "Coral like bones" originally composed by Mikey Hart and Zsela

Drums: Brian Chippendale

Guitar: Mythless

Writing: Diane Severin Nguyen, Cherisse Elizaga Gray