

Before waiting becomes part of your life

May 14 - July 26, 2022

gb agency, Paris



Mark Geffriaud, Apostolos Georgiou, Tirdad Hashemi, Paul Heintz, David Horvitz,
Július Koller, Jirí Kovanda, Roman Ondak, Pak Sheung Chuen, and Yann Sérandour
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It all starts with a ray of light. The sun appears and rises, it peaks above us, and continues its journey to the West, disappearing from our sight as it reaches the horizon. Humanity has experienced this as mystery, miracle, and fact. Regardless, we still wait and marvel everyday at its occurrence. Our very existence starts as waiting in warmth, even before waiting becomes part of our lives.

Before Waiting Becomes Part of Your Life is an exhibition that takes its name from an eponymous work by Roman Ondak. A collective show, it explores the possibilities opened by artists, who, – mesmerised as they often are by the invisible, the intangible, the spaces in between, that which could be, but not yet is – materialise time, allowing us to contemplate, experience and transform waiting.

The sun may or may not be present in the exhibition. On a sunny day and through the work of Yann Sérandour (*Un temps nuageux avec la possibilité d'un rayon de soleil*, 2011) it may enter the underground gallery and travel across the space for about an hour, reflected from a mirror placed on a nearby window. Disappointment is a possibility, as it is for those who wait.

Throughout the exhibition rooms, the works of Mark Geffriaud seem to insist on this very fact. In the series *Une certaine douceur en prime* (2018), Geffriaud cuts out the meteorological icons used in the weather pages of international newspapers. Isolated from the predictions they once illustrated, they float in between sheets of transparent plexiglass, announcing instead that weather exists, go figure what it will actually bring, rain or shine, on any given day.

In the center of the room, Pak Sheung Chuen offers another experience, one that is repeated for one minute every twelve hours. *About the Same Level of Time #2* (2020) presents five

wall clocks tilted six degrees to the right. For a minute at 2:43, the hands of the clock line up, briefly creating a unified image, a common horizon between our sight and that of time passing. Certainty lasts less than 60 seconds.

Reality bursts into the galleries with the work of Tirdad Hashemi, who – as she often does – extirpates us from our poetic reverie with her drawings. In one, a curled up character stares to an obviously alienating object: a French grammar book, one that needs to be studied, digested, internalised in order to please the capricious bureaucracy machine of migratory control. To wait is to anguish.

At the other side of the wall, Jirí Kovanda is *Waiting for someone to call him*. On November 18, 1976, Kovanda froze time. 46 years after his ephemeral action, invisible if it were not for the single photo that documents it, Jirí is still looking at the distance, sitting behind a desk in front of a phone, waiting in black and white.

On the floor, two monitors face each other, presenting as documentation two videos that are part of Roman Ondak's large scale installation *Before Waiting Becomes Part of Your Life* (2010). In these, we see Maya, Ondak's wife, teaching their children Adam and Martin to wait. In the various situations we see in the two videos (for instance, queuing outside an empty phone booth) the reasons for waiting become meaningless, even non-existent. Instead, it is transmission that is essential. Patience is the goal. Their youngest rebels against this early formatting, resisting quizzically, comically. Breathe deeply and recognise that waiting is ahead, parents seem to warn sweetly.

On top of a carpet laid to welcome visitors, Paul Heintz' *Digicodes* (2018) is playing on a turntable. A work created during moments of deep boredom when the artist had to take a

job as a delivery man to pay the bills, Digicodes turns into music the codes used by Heintz to enter the halls of buildings around Paris. Time in between needs (to survive) and desires (to survive as an artist) is occupied by Heintz, who merges the physical spaces of waiting (the Parisian halls) with his own transformational journey.

Another artistic journey culminates for an instant in Július Koller's works. In 1969, Koller equates his name to that of a question mark (*OTAZNIK (Question Mark)*, 1969). To become, is to become a question. And so we are taken back to square one.

As if nearing the end of the show, David Horvitz is waiting to be rescued. In *How to make yourself visible for a rescue boat when you are stranded in the dark at the bottom of a cliff on a rocky coast in Hong Kong* (2012), Horvitz makes himself visible for a rescue boat when he finds himself stranded in the dark at the bottom of a cliff on a rocky coast in Hong Kong. The slides show the edge of the cliff, his back and waving arms illuminated from behind with a hard flash, his body drowned in the surrounding darkness. The slides go round and round in an endless loop, extending the waiting that is only fulfilled in this absent slide «the artist being rescued».

Occupying a corner of the gallery, as if bookending the exhibition, is a large diptych painting by Apostolos Georgiou representing one of his puzzling, ever-untitled scenes. A naked woman seems to do the dishes while two men talk, one naked, the other in a formal suit. Vulnerability meets officialness in an image that lets waiting and the notion of fulfillment float freely in an unpinned state between fact and fiction, symbolism and literality, poetry and reality.

Marisol Rodriguez
Paris, 2022



Exhibition view, *Before Waiting Becomes Part of Your Life*, gb agency, Paris, 2022



Exhibition view, Before Waiting Becomes Part of Your Life, gb agency, Paris, 2022



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Exhibition view, *Before Waiting Becomes Part of Your Life*, gb agency, Paris, 2022



Exhibition view, *Before Waiting Becomes Part of Your Life*, gb agency, Paris, 2022

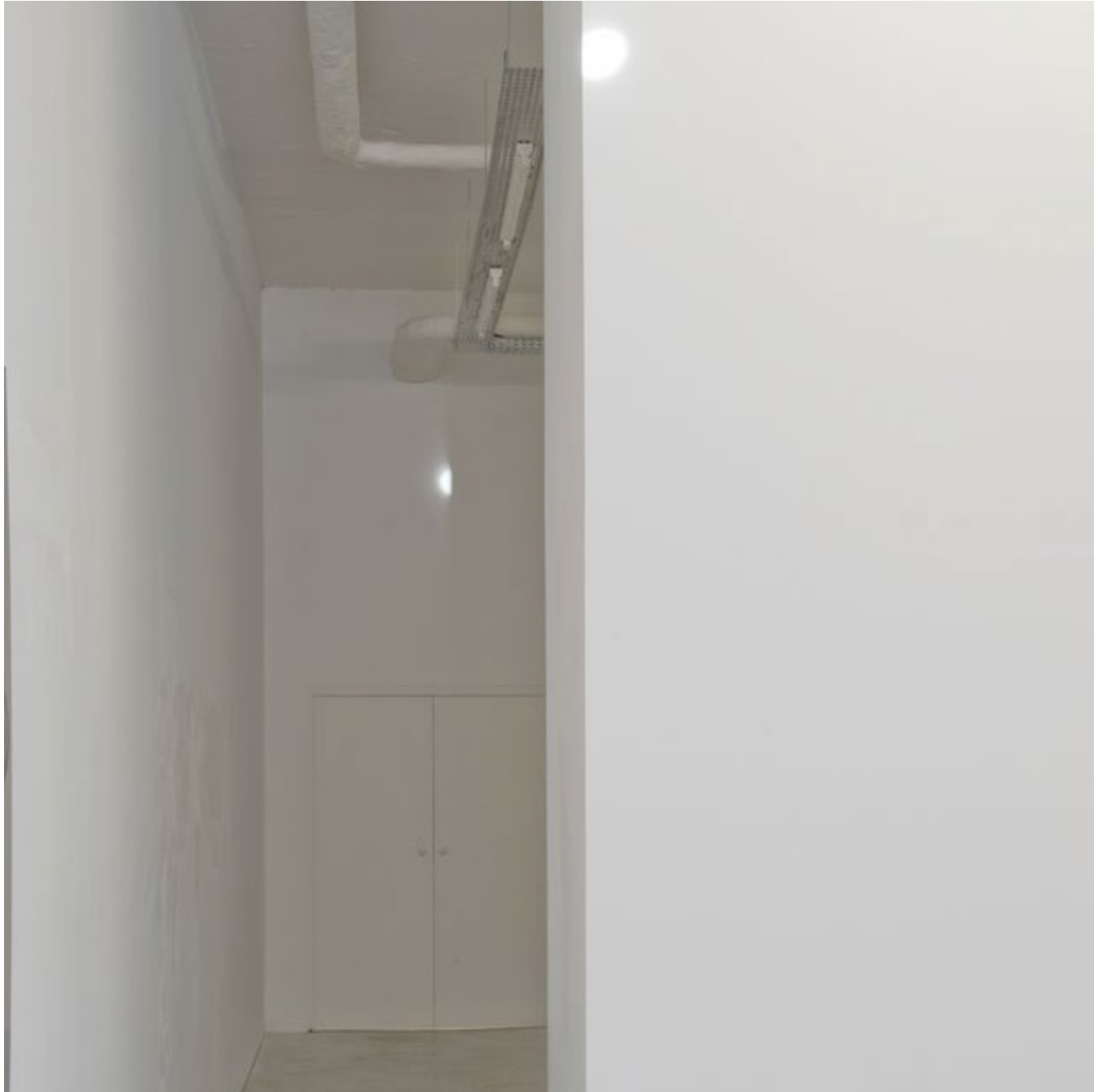


Exhibition view, Before Waiting Becomes Part of Your Life, gb agency, Paris, 2022

EXHIBITED WORKS



Apostolos Georgiou
Untitled, 2021
Acrylic on canvas, diptych
170 x 240 cm, unique



Un temps nuageux avec la possibilité d'un rayon de soleil is an installation crossing the exhibition space. Coming from a sunbeam captured from outside, the light is reflected and diverted to the back of the gallery. The atmosphere in which the space is immersed is potentially and periodically awakened by a burst of light that passes through it, like a chance event that suddenly disturbs the course of things.

Yann Sérandour

***Un temps nuageux avec la possibilité d'un rayon de soleil*, 2011**

Sunlight, mirror

5 × 7,5 × 7,5 cm

Unique



Detail

Mark Geffriaud

Une certaine douceur en prime - lundi (A certain mildness too – Monday), 2018

Collage, newspaper cutouts and acrylic glass

60 x 32,4 x 1,2 cm

Unique piece



Detail

The collages were made during the writing of 'A certain mildness too' with cutouts of the weather forecasts of the upcoming days in the newspapers Libération, The Guardian, El Pais, Süddeutsche Zeitung, Frankfurter Allgemeine, The Times and Asharq Al-Awsat. So they don't reflect how the weather was but how it was supposed to be.

Mark Geffriaud

Une certaine douceur en prime - mardi (A certain mildness too – Tuesday), 2018

Collage, newspaper cutouts and acrylic glass

15,5 x 20 x 1,2 cm

Unique



David Horvitz

How to make yourself visible for a rescue boat when you are stranded in the dark at the bottom of a cliff on a rocky coast in Hong Kong, 2012

Slides projection, 35 mm slides (20 photos), loop

Dimensions variable

Edition 1/5 (+ 2 A.P.)



Tirdad Hashemi

***Aaaaah ca fait longtemps*, 2015**

TIR/WP 39

mixed media, ballpoint pen and pastel on paper

32 x 21.5 cm

framed 44 x 34 x 1 cm

unique





Instruction:

Select and buy five round clocks (diameter at least of 30 cm, all same size). Place them side by side on the wall on the same level, but each of clock tilted six degrees to the right.

When the time hits 2:44, the hour hand and minute hand of the clocks align to become a horizontal line.

Pak Sheung Chuen

***About the Same Level of Time #2*, 2020**

Conceptual idea with five clocks of a diameter closer to 30 cm, round, and all same size

30 x 152 cm

Unique



Video stills

*The exhibition presents the work partially, as documentation



Roman Ondak

***Before Waiting Becomes Part of Your Life*, 2010**

Installation

Two-channel video projection, 24 display cases, books, catalogues. Dimensions of installation vary with size of room.*

Unique



Roman Ondak

***Before Waiting Becomes Part of Your Life*, 2010**

Installation

Two-channel video projection, 24 display cases, books, catalogues

Dimensions of installation vary with size of room

Unique

Exhibited:

Roman Ondak, Before Waiting Becomes Part of Your Life, Salzburger Kunstverein, 2010

Roman Ondak, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, 2012

Reproduced:

Roman Ondak, Guide, Mousse publishings, verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2011

BEFORE WAITING BECOMES PART OF YOUR LIFE

Although the title *Before Waiting Becomes Part of Your Life* implies that this should be about waiting, Ondak has been dealing less with the difficult-to-define “activity-less” state of waiting and more with a visual representation of it – the queue – since his first performance on this topic, entitled *Good Feelings in Good Times*. First performed in the Kölnischer Kunstverein in 2003 during a group show when Ondak hired a number of people to form a queue in different places several times a day during opening hours and then to disperse again. The calculated staging of such a paradigmatic situation of waiting in front of an art institution raises questions about the attention economy in public space, as passers-by sometimes spontaneously got in line as well, not to participate in Ondak’s performance but rather “to wait” for the event.

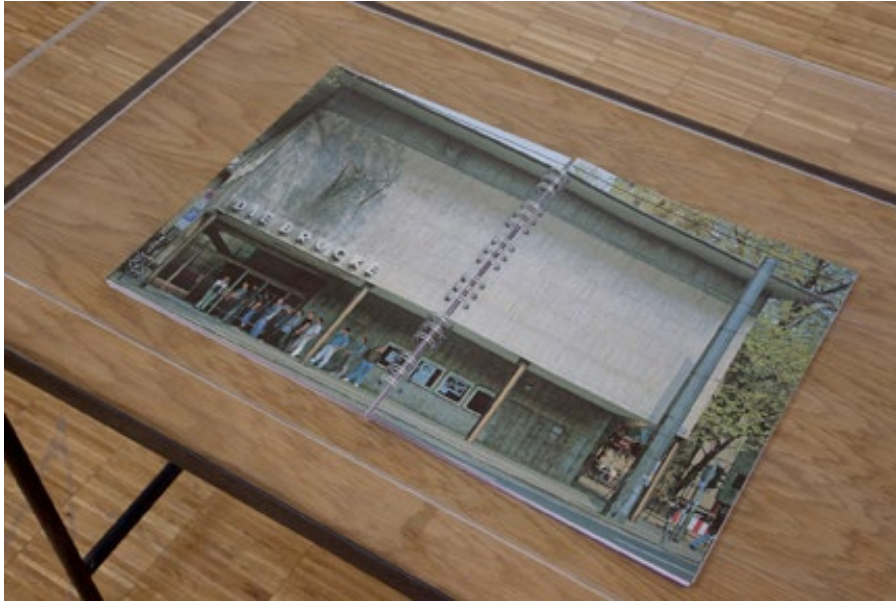
On the other hand, however, this performance also implies a shift of context in which it directs the view from outside onto the scenes inside the exhibition space and thus could be read within the framework of an institutionally critical practice.

In this installation, the artist offers a look back over a selection of reviews and articles about his work in connection with the waiting performances, and complements them with two videos in which he also includes his family.

Other prominent parts of the work are 24 hybrid vitrine pieces in which the books and catalogs with the articles are presented. In the two videos we see a younger woman with two children, the artist’s wife and sons, who might be of pre-school or elementary school age, in very unusual waiting situations: on a playground, in front of a closed entrance, in front of a small metal door...

They wait together, although the woman sometimes has to hold the children back so they don’t step out of line. It is obvious that the woman is acting as the educator or mother and should teach the children how to stand in line. Here waiting becomes a metaphor for development, for growth, and perhaps even for something in the future.

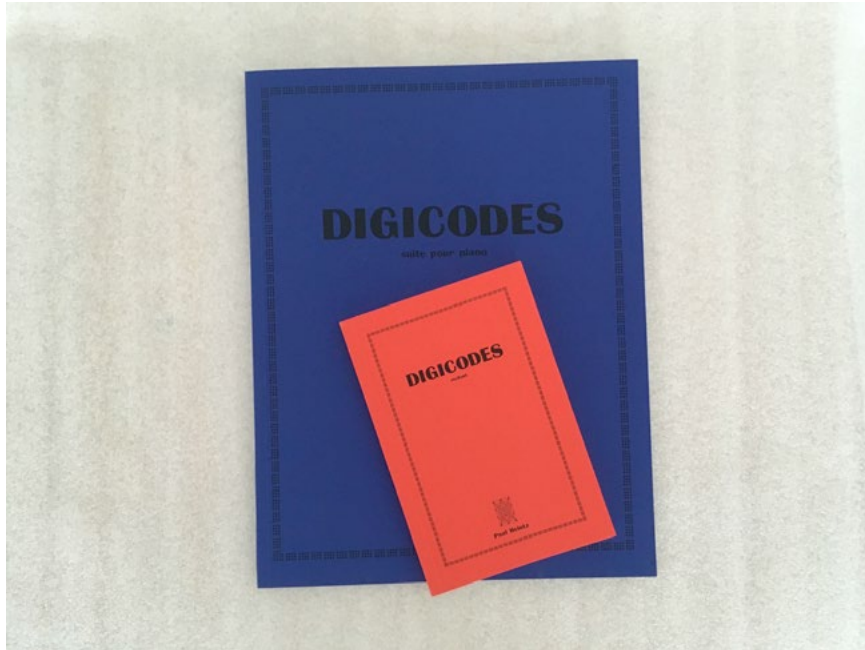
In this way the artist narrows the perspective of the queue in the videos of *Before Waiting Becomes Part of Your Life* by focusing on his personal surroundings, which emphasizes the gesture of self-reflection already presented in the vitrines.



Details

The furniture pieces, which were converted into exhibition displays, act as links between the publicness of the work conveyed by the media and the private space of the video.

They are found objects from Slovakia, as a reference to the artist's home: discarded office furniture, chairs, or shelves of a variety of origins. They were converted into table-like constructions through simple adaptations so that they could serve as display surfaces with attached cases.



Digicodes is a suite for piano composed by Paul Heintz based on a musical transfer in note hauteurs of cent digicodes from the hall d'entrée d'immeubles in Paris.

Paul Heintz

***Digicodes*, 2018**

Large blue book, small red book and yellow vinyl record

Blue book: 30 x 23 x, 7 cm

Red book: 6.5 x 11 x, 5 cm

Disc: 31 x 31 cm

Ed. 5 + 2 E.A



Paul Heintz

***Digicodes*, 2018**

Large blue book, small red book and yellow vinyl record

Blue book: 30 x 23 x, 7 cm

Red book: 6.5 x 11 x, 5 cm

Disc: 31 x 31 cm

Ed. 5 + 2 E.A

x x x

18. listopadu 1976
Praha

Čekám, až mi někdo zavolá...



The transition from Kovanda's early attempts at action-based art to a cogent conceptual approach is represented by the event Untitled from 18 November 1976. Kovanda realised it while at his workplace and it is expressed by a simple sentence: I'm waiting until someone calls me...

Even at this time Kovanda was already carefully documenting his events. Each was devoted an A4 sheet of paper on which he typed the name of the work, the year it was composed, and a more or less precise date. He sometimes provided a short description of the event.

Jiri Kovanda

XXX, *Waiting for someone to call me...*

November 18th, 1976

Staroměstské namesti, Prague

b&w photograph and typescript on paper

29.7 x 21.3 cm, framed 40 x 31 x 2.5 cm

Edition 2/3

JIK/PH 9



Detail

Une certaine douceur en prime - mercredi (A certain mildness too – wednes- day), 2018

Collage, newspaper cutouts and acrylic

50 x 75 x 1,2 cm

Unique piece



Detail

Une certaine douceur en prime - jeudi (A certain mildness too - Thursday), 2018

Collage, newspaper cutouts and acrylic

40 x 60 x 1,2 cm;

Unique



Detail

Une certaine douceur en prime - vendredi (A certain mildness too – Friday), 2018

Collage, newspaper cutouts and acrylic

45 x 30 x 1,2 cm

Unique piece



Tirdad Hashemi
***We are not from Here*, 2015**
TIR/WP 24
pastel on paper
21.5 x 32 cm
framed 34 x 44 x 1 cm
unique



Otáznik means question mark in Slovak.

From 1969, Július Koller begins to be interested in punctuation marks which are reduced to their abstract essence. The question mark becomes the symbol of the identity of the author. «I specialized in hesitation on everything, in questioning, in questions. I began to specialize in the hesitation, until I became a question mark for myself».

Július Koller
OTAZNIK (Question Mark), 1969
JUK/WP 152
stamped card, green ink
11.2 x 15.5 cm
framed 24.3 x 29.2 cm



Július Koller
***Tatranska*, 2003**
JUK/WP 92
b&w postal card transformed with felt-tip
14.5 x 20.5 cm
framed 24.5 x 29 x 2.5 cm

