

Press Release

C⁴

Nazgol Ansarinia | Mercedes Azpilicueta | Invernomuto | Diamond Stingily
20 May – 4 September 2022

Press preview: Wednesday, 18 May 2022, 10.30am

Opening: Thursday, 19 May 2022, from 6pm

Oberlichtsäle (Skylight rooms)

C⁴ or C(to the power of)4 celebrates the energy that contemporary artists bring into the museum. In her first show at Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, Director Letizia Ragaglia unites four solo presentations by Nazgol Ansarinia (Tehran), Mercedes Azpilicueta (La Plata, Argentina), Invernomuto (Milan/Vernasca) and Diamond Stingily (Chicago), which also engage with the museum's collection. The three artists and the artist duo were invited to choose a work from the collection and integrate it into their display.

The resulting dialogue also sets the pace for the future orientation of the Kunstmuseum: 'The aim is to research and invigorate our collection on an ongoing basis; it needs dialogues, challenges and the courage to open up new perspectives. This is *C⁴*: the collection is augmented, but also contaminated, by four younger protagonists. The 'C' prompts associations with 'Contamination', 'Crossover' and 'Community', given that the artists strengthen each other even though they are very different', as Letizia Ragaglia observes.

What all the artists share is a distinct narrative manner. Opening up new perspectives on a time past, they demonstrate possible interpretations for today. Coming from different cultures, the artists explore exclusion and difference in social life, the history of subcultures, legends of the past and the transformation of urban spaces. Biographical elements and memories are interwoven in the exhibition to create a collective memory. In *C⁴* visitors can expect an interdisciplinary crossover with performance and sound in four exhibition rooms that enables vital and surprising encounters with the collection.

Exhibition room 1: Nazgol Ansarinia

Nazgol Ansarinia (*1979 in Tehran) is interested in the in-between spaces of social life, which she investigates, dismantles and questions in her artistic practice in order to put them into a new

context. Her focus in this process of deconstruction is to emphasise the relationship to current Iranian society.

The exhibition C⁴ begins with Ansarinia's *The Inverted Pool* (2019–2022), a monumental installation that plays with the experience and conception of space and is also connected to the artist's own life. While renovating her house in Tehran, Ansarinia came across an architectural plan that revealed an upside-down pool. This discovery brought back memories of her childhood, when pools were a common feature in many Iranian backyards as a way to cool off. *The Inverted Pool* is a reconstruction of this 'upside-down' pool at 50% scale. Visitors can view the inside of the pool, which has window structures on its sides, by climbing a ladder and looking in a mirror on the ceiling.

In the exhibition, Ansarinia's work engages in a dialogue with *Cellule no. 5* (1992) by ABSALON (1964–1993) from the museum's collection. The artist, who died at an early age, planned six *Cellules* – dwelling units designed for his height that 'enclose' the occupant and contain the bare essentials for existence in an extremely small space: kitchen, bathroom and a place to sleep, sparsely furnished and made of wood and plasterboard. The artist intended the *Cellules* as retreats, as places of spiritual freedom and shelter, originally wishing them to inhabit public places in Frankfurt, New York, Paris, Tel Aviv, Tokyo and Zurich.

Exhibition room 2: Mercedes Azpilicueta

Mercedes Azpilicueta (*1981 in La Plata, Argentina) describes herself as a 'dishonest researcher' who operates between literature, folklore and street culture. In her works she gives a voice to queer, feminist or marginalised figures. Often, the Amsterdam-based artist collaborates with protagonists from other disciplines – dancers, historians or craftspeople – employing techniques typically associated with women, for example sewing, embroidery or weaving. Elements of performance play a key role.

The centrepiece of her presentation is the installation *Potatoes, Riots and Other Imaginaries*, created for the Prix de Rome in 2021: a gigantic tapestry with woven images, clothing, work tools and sound. For this artwork, Azpilicueta researched the so-called 'Potato Riots' of 1917, an uprising of working-class women in Amsterdam that was caused by food shortages during the First World War.

Her interest in the lacunae of history and women shunted to the margins of society led Azpilicueta to an in-depth investigation of Austrian-Liechtenstein artist Anne Marie Jehle (1937–2000), inspiring her to create a series of works dedicated to this subject. Jehle – the Kunstmuseum holds a large number of her works – developed a complex oeuvre in the 1960s and 1970s that casts a critical spotlight on gender equality, identity and 'women's work'. This selection of Jehle's

artworks are a kind of echo of the women of Amsterdam who fought for their rights at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Exhibition room 3: Diamond Stingily

With lavish bouquets of flowers, plaits of hair, chains or doors, Diamond Stingily (*1990 in Chicago) turns the third room of C⁴ into an interdisciplinary synthesis of the arts resembling a collection of relics. Based on personal memories which she links to American social memory, the artist tackles such complex questions as loss and transience, structural racism or identity formation.

The central installation of her show at the Kunstmuseum is titled *dead Daughter* (2021): laid out on a carpet are plinths with artificial flowers, with wax and bronze imprints of her hands and feet spread out between them. Almost everything is in shades of pink. The work is based on the artist's investigation of Colette Thomas's novel *Le testament de la fille morte* (1954) about the cruelty of love, death and resurrection.

Also on show are her *Entryways* (2019), worn apartment doors accompanied by leaning baseball bats that refer to Stingily's childhood memories. Her grandmother Estelle always had a bat next to the door to fight off burglars. The show is formed of four works, the other two being the b/w video *How Did He Die* (2016) and a small photograph of the interior of a hair salon.

In search of a work from the collection, Diamond Stingily came across a baroque still life of fruit and flowers (1698) by Franz Werner von Tamm (1658–1724), who worked as a painter at the Viennese court. One of the oldest paintings in the museum's collection, in C⁴ it engages in a dialogue with contemporary art.

Exhibition room 4: Invernomuto

Simone Bertuzzi (*1983) and Simone Trabucchi, (*1982) have been collaborating as Invernomuto since 2003. Both were born in Piacenza (Italy) and live in Milan and Vernasca. The works of the Italian artist duo revolve around exposing myths and legendary places as constructed fictions. Invernomuto feature in C⁴ with three installations. The white wax grotto *Wax, Relax* (2011–2022) is a gigantic replica of the grotto of Lourdes, as can also be found in their home town, where it has become a fixture of popular culture. Over time, the soft material will cause the sculpture to change, thus questioning the rituals of such a site of pilgrimage in an interplay of light and sound. *Zion, Paesaggio* (2014) is the result of the duo's investigation of Italy's colonial history. It presents the reconstruction of a staircase-like monument erected by the Italian army during the occupation of Ethiopia that was later appropriated by the Rastafari movement. *Rimini Capitale Afro* (2021) is a trashy relic of bygone club culture. The sculpture reconstructs a yellow wall fragment of the

legendary Melody Mecca disco in Rimini during the 1980s and 1990s. Rimini is regarded as the capital of 'Afro music', with 'Afro' embodying the idea of global music.

A non-linear narrative mode runs like a red thread through Invernomuto's presentation in *C⁴*, which is framed by Pino Pascali's *Ponte levatoio* (1968) from the Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein collection. Pascali (1935–1968) was a visionary who combined irony, playfulness and myth in his work, thus creating new narratives.

Invernomuto, who also work as DJs, will play a set at the opening on 19 May, starting at 9pm.

A Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein production curated by Letizia Ragaglia.

The exhibition *C⁴* will be accompanied by an extensive publication by Mousse Publishing with essays and numerous illustrations; contributions by: Susana Vargas Cervantes, Giuseppe Garrera, Rindon Johnson, Hamed Khosravi and Letizia Ragaglia.

To mark the presentation, all four artists have been invited to create a limited edition for the Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein.

Accompanying programme: www.kunstmuseum.li

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