

## **A Tongue Becomes Yours**

25 September – 4 December 2022 CC Ter Dilft in Bornem, Belgium

With Henry Andersen, Kaoutar Chaqchaq, Millie Rose Dobree, Eva Giolo, Felix Kindermann, Oratile Papi Konopi, Ketty La Rocca, Clara-Lane Lens, Miriam Laura Leonardi, Lorenza Longhi, Ayla Mrabet, Jurgen Ots, Josse Pyl, Ghita Skali, Oussama Tabti, Kelly Tissot, Nora Turato.

Curated by Fabian Flückiger

The group exhibition ***A Tongue Becomes Yours*** brings artists together who negotiate the potentials and restrictions of language. Language enables us to recognize the world around us and to act within it. During socialisation, language is bound to a particular culture and is full of codes. Geographical and social origins are reflected in expressions and accents. The values of the family nucleus and political power structures equally mould the use of language. At the same time, language is something that can be shaped and makes it possible to strive for a new identity as a society or as an individual.

The works presented at CC Ter Dilft deal with language in terms of institutions, media, history, geography, fictional use, and non-verbality. They treat language as an instrument of appropriating and constructing the world. In the early years of our life, our influence on language, which shapes reality, is minimal. When children begin to interact with their social environment, they experience an immediate reaction to the words they utter. This opens a limitless realm of appropriating reality and fiction that fills with dreams and fears, joy and disappointment. By way of this access to the world, a physical and intellectual identity grows that is infused with familial, cultural, and political influences.

As children come of age, they acquire an awareness of the factors influencing their own identity. Frictions with the self, the familial nucleus, society around us, or the state are all part of the way the self forms. In this process, it becomes clear that there is no such thing as a neutral language. Language exists in a political system that controls life processes. These life processes have been thoroughly formed by the economy, but until now ecological aspects have only played a minimal role in structuring them.

Language defines habitats and life conditions by way of political processes. These formative structures establish power relations that always simultaneously create relationships of exclusion. We currently find ourselves in a debate on patriarchal, colonial, and capitalist structures and the linked inequalities relating to gender and social background.

These still prevalent inequalities are reproduced in media processes. In this way, every medium reveals its own cultural and technological history with a specific field of impact. This phenomenon of the interweaving of language, medium, and social structures is addressed in the exhibition by the historical work of Ketty La Rocca and runs as a theme throughout the entire exhibition. With *In principio erat* (In the

Beginning Was), La Rocca criticized the reproduction of patriarchal Catholic language culture in the Italian media of the 1960s and 1970s.

The diverse media in the exhibition result in various narratives specific to the different media. The aesthetics and idioms of print, photography, film, sculpture, performance, painting, or *objet trouvé* are closely linked to technological conditions of production and reception and reveal differing dramaturgies. The represented communication fragments consist of words, sentences, plots, scripts, signs, gestures, and bodies and address various sensory organs.

In its reflection about language and media, the exhibition oscillates between imposed and appropriated language.