

KIOSK exhibits Oracles – The life of S.F.

Practical information:

From 07. 12. 2022 – 07. 01. 2023

Artists: Apparatus 22, Laurène Buchheit, Judith Geerts, Francesca Hawker, Marnie Slater, Javier Téllez.

Curated by Koi Persyn

KIOSK x Komplot

Opening hours: everyday between 12:00 and 18:00 (closed from 24.12 until 03.01.2023)

With the support of S.M.A.K., KASK & Conservatorium, Stad Gent, Vlaamse Gemeenschap, Fédération Wallonie Bruxelles, COCOF, VGC

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Website: <https://kiosk.art/oracles>

Oracles (performances):

Judith Geerts - 07.12.22, 7 p.m.

Laurène Buchheit - 07.12.22, 8 p.m.

Marnie Slater - 14.12.22, 8 p.m.

Francesca Hawker - 21.12.22, 8 p.m.

Apparatus 22 - 07.01.23, 2 - 6 p.m.

Exhibition text – The Life of S.F. – Oracles

By Koi Persyn

I never attended an open mic night before. In fact, I never heard about such gatherings before studying at the Kunst Akademyie and getting invited to them by my fellow pupils. At first, I held back from going because the stage isn't my habitat—even more than that, it's my biggest fear. But when I broke my leg, a strange alienation of solitude and detachment arose within me. Today I decided to cope with this irrationality by crossing the threshold of stage fright. "I am new in this city", "I don't have much to lose" and "don't be such a scarey-cat" were the thoughts circling in my mind, motivating me to exit my mellow home to explore the cold, barren cityscape. The final—as yet unknown—destination was named "Delphi Lounge": a bizarre bar next to a small cinema where they only project old westerns. I was holding a couple of handwritten sonnets in my pocket, hoping that the phrases would warm my fingers before hitting the road. The slippery membrane of the frost forced me (and my crutches) to stumble all the way to the speakeasy. Most likely I would have missed the first performances by now.

"Delphi Lounge" is written in neon that emerges from the murk. I can discern a faraway folk polyphony, but I am unable to identify the musicality as Eastern or Western. After lingering a couple of minutes in front of the double door marking the entrance, I get drawn inside by distant flute tones. The notes crescendo as I open the wooden door. Long and short whistles alternate and reverberate as echoes in a hall with checkered walls. The chessboard pattern exists in friction with the arched ceiling composed of tiled zigzags and rhombuses. I count five, two, five, one, five, five, five, three seconds of vibrating air during my search for an empty table. Oddly enough, it feels like I have entered through the backstage. The walls of Delphi Lounge are filled with empty racks and haiku-like tags. There are slender tables and three-legged stools. A grim corner is crowded by a flock of loud punks. It is impossible to determine whether they are rivals or comrades. Another barfly has cancelled the dissonant noise with a pair of headphones, and I can completely comprehend why. I grab the newspaper in front of me to hide my nerves and vicarious shame behind the stack of colored paper. The document dates from two weeks ago.

"Do you know that they used to cut up corpses here?" I hear from the opposite side of my table. I look over the top of the newspaper and witness a person in black clothing who has joined me. "Wha... what

are you saying?" is the only response I can think of. The subsequent intrusive silence lends itself to an attempt to observe the badge on their garment. The flute act has finally finished, making the stillness even more pressing. The turmoil of a starting storm enters my ears.

"What is your name?" is the second question of my novel companion.

"S.F. Yours?" I respond, trying to act stoic. The corner of their mouth lifts gently before they counter: "Pythia."

I wonder if they are flirting with me. Or perhaps it is not desire that colors their grimace?

"That is an uncanny name..."

"Look who's talking!" they chuckle softly, investigating my prosthesis. "How did you end up with these crutches?"

"Well, I wi... will need an extra leg to enter this stage for the first time.... Do you want to drink something?"

"A coffee, please. I cannot doze off during your performance, right?"

I leave the table and limp to the bar. While ordering, I mumble and memorize my sonnets as an improv general rehearsal. The coffee cup bears the phrase "I am a cliché" and I feel addressed by the message. On my return to the table, I encounter vacant chairs and no sign of the enigmatic character. On the front page of the outdated journal, I decipher the handwritten sentence "your present presence will be your future lure." I finish the coffee myself. Disoriented yet driven by this cipher, I decide to mount the stage—on three legs and with as many sonnets.