



**MAUMAUS**  
Residency Programme

**Cosima von Bonin**  
**Boy at Work**  
**15.04. – 23.07.2023**

Boys, boys, all type of boys  
Black, White, Puerto Rican, Chinese boys  
Why-thai, thai-o-toy-o-thai-thai  
Rock-thai, thai-o-toy-o-thai-thai (C'mon)  
Girls, girls, get the cash  
If it's nine to five or shakin' you ass

(Missy Misdemeanor Elliot)

**20.07 | 19h** Talk by Diedrich Diederichsen

The foundations of Cosima von Bonin's work lie in of things that have a transformative quality. Like George Brecht she understands art as a poetic act and a social activity. For Brecht each object could be an event, and each event could have the character of an object. Cosima von Bonin stages her objects while holding back a lot of information about the meaning of things. Her intentions keep slipping away. But once you can let go the determination to clearly understand, and bend that urge into a more relaxed relationship with the work, you can become her companion on a journey by setting off without an ultimate destination...

(Arnold Mosselman)

It's not a kind of sense, it's a kind of sense-making, like we'll take this, we'll take this, this leads me to this, this leads me to this and then I have to figure some kind of structure for that and that's the art of it.

(Mike Kelley)

Boy wanted? Is a boy wanted? A boy like me, like you, like who? Is a man wanted? What? Who wants a boy and for what? For whom? Who needs whom? Who or what? What boy? A boy or a man or a boy and a man or what? That there is no work anymore? That there is still work? Is art is not work? Is art is a job? That art is a job even if you don't know what for? For whom or what? For how much what? That Elmo says what? That who wants to work at what? That the artist wants to live without working doing or not doing what? That what is working? That working in the art world is not working? That art what? That desire is what? That pleasure is what? That Cosima says what? That Cosima doesn't say what? Ok? Ok what? That the work speaks by itself or what? That the work doesn't speak? That the work is mute like a stuffed pig? That the one who speaks is Elmo and not Cosima or who? That also Elmo doesn't speak either, even if he speaks? That Elmo is a boy or a man or what? Who speaks? Who is silent? Who writes? Who asks for a boy? Who is a man? Who works? Would you want a boy in your life to do what? Do you need a man in your life or what? Who does whose work? Who does whose work? What is the question what? What is inappropriate why? What did Marx say what? That the work what? That desire what? That alienation what? Is Elmo going to commit suicide? What? Why? That the what doesn't matter? The why? The who? That Cosima didn't know until after? After what? What is after? After the work? After the man who is the boy after the boy? And after Elmo what? Who is Elmo? Who or what? That the idea is the work that generates the idea of what? What idea or what? What would Marx say? What would Elmo say? What would Warhol say? What would he say? That he also? That he also what? That he too is asking for a boy? That you too? That you look in the mirror for what? Not you? Not him? That he's already dead? Who? That Elmo is going to kill himself and no one will stop him? Why? That it doesn't matter because he's a doll or what? That it doesn't matter because he's art or what? That why why? That because art is art or what? That because it's work and work is what? That piggies what? That they are cute and what? That they are disgusting and what? That they mean what? Why? That Freud says what? That work is perversely polymorphous or what? And desire what? That you already have work doing

what? That you don't need work why? That what work is work that is not work or what? That art is the best work for whom? That art is less work than work even if it is a better paying job for whom and why? That art is a non alienating job? That Elmo already committed suicide and nobody cared? That art is over and nobody cared? That love what? That this is a restaurant? Do I want to work doing what? Why not? Why do I? That how much do I measure? That how much do I charge? How much do I charge? How much do I charge for doing what? For not doing what? For writing or not writing? For an applause? How much do I charge for buying? For faking a suicide or what? That it's okay to ask? Ask what? How much do they pay? How much do I charge to ask? How much does what cost ? Ask who? Am I a boy or a man or what? That pleasure what? How much is the sign requesting a boy for what? Elmo said what?

(Luis Felipe Fabre)

**Cosima von Bonin** (Mombasa, Kenya, 1962) lives and works in Cologne. Her solo and group exhibitions include: Arnolfini (Bristol), Artipelag (Sweden), 59th Venice Biennale, documenta 12 (Kassel), Kunsthaus Bregenz, MAMCO Genève, Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum (St. Louis), MoCA-Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles), MoMA-The Museum of Modern Art (New York), MuMOK (Vienna), Museum Ludwig (Cologne), Skulptur Projekte Münster 2017 and Witte de With (Rotterdam).

## List of works

### Entrance level

*Marathon, Que Le Fuck Version*, 2023, mixed media, cushion DirtyDirty Pillows by Livia von Bonin

*The Lobster*, 2023, mirror, lacquered wood

*Privato*, 2010, lacquered iron

### Upper level

*The Boy*, 2023, lacquered wood, animatronic Elmo, microphone, microphone stand, speaker

Column: *Missy Misdemeanor, Work It*, 2023, wool, cotton, linen

Window: *Britney, Work Bitch*, 2023, wool, cotton, linen

Back: *Rihanna, Work*, 2023, silk velvet, cotton, gabardine

Floor: *Mike Kelley is my Goddess*, 2023, wool, soft toys

## Lumiar Cité

Rua Tomás del Negro, 8A  
1750-105 Lisbon, Portugal  
Tel +351 21 755 15 70

[lumiar.cite@maumaus.org](mailto:lumiar.cite@maumaus.org)

[www.maumaus.org](http://www.maumaus.org)

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