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*Some Borrowed Time*

Gerry Bibby, Tomaso De Luca, Davide Stucchi, Nicole Wermers  
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The traveling salesman W enters the hotel. You can tell that both of them have become outdated. There is not much time left. W has big plans, at least that's what his upwardly tilted chest is supposed to suggest. The marble floor of the lobby has also been polished up for one last time. The crooked teeth of the old grand piano chatter yellowish and black; important negotiations are no longer conducted here. W is here to close one, perhaps his last, important deal. Import Export. He doesn't want his partner to notice that he needs the money as urgently as this plaster needs a new coat of paint. His partner is also more of a lover than a business kind, but the other shareholders don't need to know that. His own footsteps echo as W runs his hands over the wooden tables on his way to the bar. He had been a good carpenter before the money lured him with the houses. He would rather say that he was lured into the houses. Too many beautiful nooks and angles, dark corners that called him into dirty business. What remains are the remnants of bureaucratic entrepreneurship and brittle skin, in which the splinters of his dubious past remain. One more deal, then he leaves. It's his own decision. He has set the traps for himself. If only all negotiations were as easy as those with oneself. W almost trips over something lying vaguely on the floor. He tries to brace himself against the bar, but only catches a blue dust jacket that has been stretched across the entire bar. Along with the alcoholic inventory, he falls on his face. The tables look much bigger from down here. Everything seems so cramped, there's no room anywhere. „It's all full of traps!“ he croaks. W starts to sweat. He pulls at his tie, almost undoing his fly at the same time. If only it weren't for the enormous female figure lolling on the abandoned serving trolley. Doesn't anyone work here? She looks directly at him, menacingly. Where is the business, er, love partner when you need one? His first reflex is to bury his face childishly into her breasts. No, we'd rather not, W and the woman think at the same moment. Ashamed, W looks down. He pulls himself through the sticky puddles with his hands, wraps himself in a cocoon of blue net and waits.

Text: Nadja Abt, November 2023

Welcome.

Last spring Gerry Bibby opened an almost Public Sculpture exhibition titled *Lobby* at an art locale called Klosterruine administered by the City of Berlin. A few of its counterparts you'll find here: A collage used for the exhibition's invitation; cut-outs of tables acquired through a series of exchanges with both some of the City's administrations & cultural institutions in direct proximity to the locale alongside slightly commercial enterprises; & another collage made from other 'borrowed' remnants. Gerry got to know Juliane Bischoff in the midst of the Corona virus better. Our meetings were a salve after he began as a Prof. at the Academy in Munich in 2020. Some time later she curated *Lobby*.

Munich & Berlin-based Gerry Bibby (b. 1977 in Melbourne/Naarm) is the author of the novel *The Drumhead* (Sternberg Press, 2014) and has been a contributing editor of Berlin magazine *Starship*. He & Nicole are colleagues at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Munich. Exhibitions include Klosterruine, Berlin, Germany (2023); Busan Biennale, South Korea (2020); Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain, & *Maskulinitaeten* at Kölnischer Kunstverein, Germany, both (2019).

I know I'm talking about 'him' in the 3rd person here, but his body's not working very well & the material world's screaming stubbornness right now—listening to David Wojnarowicz—feels analogous to his own physical drama, & hence, an insistent sculpture exhibition occurred to him as appropriate. Besides, a little distance from the 'self' (together!) might help us assess how to be in such intensities.

If you can afford & want to take some time, listen to the first 5mins of *David Wojnarowicz — Cross Country 1: Thoughts* on youtube. The biggest work I ever exhibited was installed as memorial to him at Klosterruine & these blue-ish *footnote* works are dedication to him.

Thanks everybody (the artists & people working at/for the gallery included) so much for coming.

Tomaso de Luca has been setting traps in Europe for about 18 months now: Rome, Venice, Berlin, Lofoten. We might expect this behaviour to pose a threat here, yet his occupying & inhabitation of "[...] beautiful nooks and angles, dark corners [...]" as Nadja has named them, in some way contradicts this feeling. They definitely lie in wait, but with which posture? When nothing else seems to make a dent in the brutalities of economies that stare us in the face, better find the gaps in which to exercise some responsive & probably accidental desires.

These sculptures' fragilities & menace need you.

Tomaso De Luca (b. 1988 in Verona) lives and works in Berlin. His work has been featured in LIAF – Lofoten Biennial, Norway (2022), Pori Art Museum, Finland (2021), MAXXI, Rome (2020), Quadriennale di Roma (2020), CAC, Vilnius (2015), Künstlerhaus Bremen (2014). In 2021 he won the second edition of the Maxxi Bvlgari Prize.

Davide Stucchi's activities as an artist wilfully displace apparently ordinary material encounters with things. These shifts happen with ever so delicate a thought, as if his north Italian Arte Povera forebears have been caressed rather than demonstrably addressed. Here you find some of his coldly intimate mode of attention given to feet; those body parts that should support a figure in a room & allow it to move over there & say hello to someone else. Something is always getting in the way though, & it happens over & over again & in multiple, yet he welcomes us by momentarily relieving us of the burdens of the figure. Stacking & organising containers for absent rather than solid use-less feet, he uses the persistence of the figure's traces to offer it the possibility of a musicality that pays attention to that which contains us.

Davide Stucchi (b. 1988) lives and works in Milan. Recent solo exhibitions include Martina Simeti, Milan, Italy (2021); Deborah Schamoni (2020); Sundogs, Paris, France (2019); Gregor Staiger Zurich, Switzerland (2019). His work has been featured in group exhibitions at Palazzo Ducale, Genova, Italy (2023); MACRO, Rome, Italy (2020); Kunstverein Düsseldorf, Germany (2017).

It could be imagined—or is it remembered Nicole?—that Walter Benjamin's *Arcades Project* had terrazzo floors for its foundation. It becomes increasingly pretty clear that most aesthetically maligning ghosts of even the near past; including Walter B, are constantly in a process of being evacuated from their placenesses in a neo-liberal reproductive assault on thinking & being. One responsive option could be to just lie down, to refuse the astonishingly persistent burdens of maintaining such a status quo by assigning so much low & unpaid labour to women.

Perhaps read Silvia Lebovici's *Caliban & the Witch* as a companion to one of Nicole Wermers' *Reclining Females* relaxedly 'borrowing' space..... & time.

Nicole Wermers (b. 1971 in Emsdetten) lives and works in London. She is a professor of Sculpture at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Munich. In 2015, Wermers was nominated for the Turner Prize.

Recent solo exhibitions include Herald St, London, United Kingdom (2022); Kunsthaus Glauris, Switzerland (2022); Kunstverein in Hamburg, Germany (2018). Wermers has created site-specific sculptures for Cambridge University (2018), Tate Britain (2013), and Camden Arts Centre (2006).

W is the figure Nadja Abt has inhabited for our exhibition. It might be you, W, but Nadja herself has been very present in this nexus of our colliding here. For some of us she has been more present, but her text speaks with a knowledge of being in these rooms, as well as many others that all of us have also been in. She is an artist who explores the possibilities of behaving through not only text, but through performance, painting, sculpture & collage.

Nadja Abt (b. Vladimirovich, 1984) is an artist and writer in Berlin. From 2015 till 2018 she lived in São Paulo, Brazil, from 2018 till 2020 she worked as an editor for Texte zur Kunst in Berlin. Her texts have been published in frieze, Texte zur Kunst, PROVENCE, Starship Magazine, among others. Recent exhibitions and performances include Kunstverein Dortmund (solo show, 2023); Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2023); n.b.k., Berlin (2023); Freeport, Porto (solo show, 2021); HUA International, Beijing (2021); KW-Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2021); Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin (2019).

Text: Gerry Bibby