

Oh that I had a thousand tongues is a group exhibition that emerges from language, but diverges from its immediate association with communicability by analyzing and breaking with the processes of its construction.

Within various though similarly constructed political and social landscapes, throughout (art) history, images and concepts have been constantly created to follow direct—or fictional—narrative traces and signs. The question could be, how can a quest for a new language be initiated that breaks loose from the constraints set by predominant forms of society? This could happen involuntarily, as a “slip of the tongue” so the English saying goes, causing a rupture in the usual course of things. This could materialize from a creative field where the act of disorganizing language provokes separations and gaps that compels art to speak another language. If contemporary art aspires to anything, it is to turn the rules of the game around so as to free itself from the permanences as - signed to meaning. It might attempt to grasp the one in the many of intentions attached to words, separating out the different voices speaking, so as to reflect on the social/political implications of different tongues possibly graduating to one becoming the other.

The artists in the exhibition focus very directly on the voice as opinion openly expressed. They refer to the methods through which peoples’ voices are manifested—as they bring forward their histories and memories—in an effort to connect to new or uncertain environments and ever changing conditions. These factors seem even more pertinent in remote locations like an island where the many particularities of a place and its time become its specific carrier, where its pasts are embedded in singular details appearing in the present, prompting translation to both admit the subjective and court the sensitive.

The exhibition acknowledges the potential of the contradictory and the incomplete in a story, of (mis)translation and (mis)interpretation as a rich source the artists mine. The more voices speaking over a time, about an event, a feeling, the richer and fuller history becomes. The more narratives, possibilities, or other truths that are unearthed and given voice the more uncontrollable the story becomes, inviting yet unknown qualities to flourish.

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