

NICOLAI HOWALT ESBEN KLEMANN PIPALUK LAKE

Migrations

photo - drawing - sculpture

16. 11. 2019 – 11. 01. 2020

. OPENING

Saturday, November 16th, 6pm-8.30pm

. ARTIST TALK & SIGNATURE

of the book *Old Tjikko* by Nicolai Howalt :

Saturday, November 16th, 5pm-6pm

Migration is a word that is omnipresent in our contemporary lives: Human migration, populations, species. But the phenomenon isn't new. Only the means have changed and the attitudes, maybe... Movement happens out of necessity, under pressure, because of a simple desire or is the result of physiological or genetic parameters. Relating to fields as diverse as botany, nuclear physics, chemistry, pedology: the phenomenon of migration is foundational to the way our world functions.

The exhibition *Migrations* brings together three artists, the photographer Nicolai Howalt, the visual artist Esben Klemann and the sculptor Pipaluk Lake - who exploit, each in their own way, the migration of matters. The series *Silver Migration* by Nicolai Howalt is a pioneer work: he creates images without takes by developing a vintage photo paper with a photosensitive emulsion, which silver ions have migrated because of oxidation. The result is spectacular. In Esben Klemann's sculptures, it's the heat and the invisible alchemy operating in the kiln that transform ultrathin stoneware grids. A similar process can be seen in Pipaluk Lake's work - her sculptures can be described as movements of matters (glass and metals) contradicted and stopped.

Migrations thus shows how a world invisible to the eye, regulated by its own rules, causes movements, whether spontaneous or born from the impact of voluntary interventions... Through the scope of the artworks, the very concrete field of the materials reveals the fundamental processes that are inherent to our existences.

NICOLAI HOWALT (born in 1970, lives and work in Denmark)

Through photography, Nicolai Howalt explores time, light, the concepts of *life* and *becoming*, materiality and immateriality. His approaches are alternately documentary, experimental and conceptual. His most recent explorations, developed according to a set of rules, have led him to capture the vital and destructive rays of the sun in *Light Break* (2015). In *Endings* (2011) he deals with life turned to dust again through pictures of human ashes. *Elements* (2016) showcased the transformative properties of primary elements of the periodic table (gold, silver, copper and iron) - by media of a photosensitive emulsion the artist transferred them on to sheets of different metals. The series *Silver migrations* (2018) is the materialization through images of the process by which expired photo paper (1962) alters. In other words, it describes the chemical evolutions caused by time and humidity. Here shades of soft and glowing greys and strong whites lead us into a world reminiscent of micro-organisms, of shapes on the verge of an inevitable subsequent migration. Only the act of developing the photosensitive sheet photo paper, Nicolai Howalt's sole intervention, has halted the evolution. **Without any shooting, can this body of works still be called photography? Or is this a variation on the readymade? Indeed, one could consider that the image lay unrevealed in the sheet and that only the will of the artist made it exist as a work of art.** In the context of digital era, the choice of the photographer, now merely a **revealer of images, constitutes a novel and captivating approach.**

background

Presented for the first time at the Galerie Maria Lund in 2015 (*Here comes the sun*) and again in 2017 (*de travers* with Esben Klemann), the work of Danish photographer Howalt has been largely exhibited in Scandinavia, Europe and the United States and has received awards by numerous prestigious institutions (*Hasselblad Foundation, Danish Arts Foundation* etc.). The Maison du Danemark, Paris, welcomed his exhibition *How to hunt* (series made with Trine Søndergaard) in 2012. In France his photographs are part of the collections of *Hermès* and the *Maison Européenne de la Photographie*.

Nicolai Howalt has published several books. The latest, *Old Tjikko* (2019) is dedicated to the oldest known living organism - a tree in Sweden - and to the instability of the photographic image. It constitutes a fascinating ensemble of texts and 96 variations of the same shot evoking the relations between Mankind, time, nature and the image.

ESBEN KLEMANN (born in 1972, lives and work in Denmark)

Playfulness and the desire to escape boredom (!) are at the center of **Esben Klemann's** work. The artist mainly works in the medium of sculpture (in all scales) - concrete, ceramics and porcelain - while maintaining a constant drawing practice. The foundation of his work is the grid, the raster. This fundamental and "neutral" structure - as he claims - can be found in nature but also as a building principle in many fields of human activity. During the firing of his ceramics, the very thin grid he has draped, supported or constrained into shape will be modified more or less. The artist is seeking surprise, a form shaped by the escape of matter.

In Esben Klemann's drawings, the grid made of thin lines resembles a huge and flexible membrane covering elements pushing it away, and stretching it as if struggling to escape from it... In other drawings, the linework lures the artist into a game of associations in order to shape imaginary machinery.

His draughtsmanship can also be found in his cast concrete sculptures. The artist takes the raw material to a very high point of sophistication and fluidity, where everything seems to ripple, crack open, like a body of masses on the move.

background

Esben Klemann has mostly exhibited in his native Denmark, in institutions (**Charlottenborg, Bornholms Kunstmuseum, Vejen Kunstmuseum, Danmarks Keramikmuseum**), in galleries and the public space. Thus he was invited by the city of **Vejen**, to install 14 concrete sculptures in the public space (*EGNSBETON*, 2013). The Galerie Maria Lund exhibited his work in the show *Terres - Copenhagen Ceramics Invites (Nouvelle vague - Palais de Tokyo-CPGA, 2013)*. The following year, *Chaotiquement vôtre* (with Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen) brought together an ensemble of his sculptures as well as a video, *Traits d'un abri (2016)* his drawings and reliefs, and in 2017 *de travers* (with Nicolai Howalt) experimented a new tensioning of the space from the respective media of both artists. Esben Klemann participated in the *Parcours Carougeois* (2015) and at the **19th edition of the Biennale internationale de céramique, Châteauroux**. His work is featured in numerous notorious collections in Denmark, such as the *Danish Arts Foundation*. The sculptor has also made several commissioned works for the Danish public space and is currently working on the creation of a monumental concrete sculpture for the Swedish state.

PIPALUK LAKE (born in 1962, lives and works in Denmark)

Pipaluk Lake has developed a unique universe where glass and metals are brought together according to methods borrowed from sewing, knitting, weaving and copperware techniques. When they go into the kiln, these "bundles of matter" are softened by heat; gravity stretches them until the artist stops the movement by removing the work from the kiln... In this way, the shape is obtained both by the artist's preparation, which can give more or less freedom to the materials, dictate them constraints and by invisible parameters that determine the "journey" in the kiln. Afterwards, Pipaluk Lake reworks the retrieved shape; sometimes turning it over to reverse its movement, cutting it, polishing it. **The coloration of the glass comes from the vapors liberated in the kiln, from the metals to which the glass is attached or from the enamels applied beforehand.**

The finished works recount the journey of the matters, in an enchanting way that recalls the sub-marine world, the awakening of spring in a world of ice and snow (*Meltwater*) - or to the mesmerizing structures of stalactites and stalagmites (*Passer*).

background

The work of Pipaluk Lake (born in 1962) has been largely recognized and rewarded (**Hempel Glaspris 1999 - Honorable Mention at the 2nd Chongju Int. Crafts Competition 2001, Korea - Silver Medal for the Kunsthåndværkerprisen af 1879**) and it is featured in numerous public collections: **V&A, London, Corning Museum of Glass, State of New York - Glasmuseum Alter Hof Herding, Germany - Boston Museum of Fine Arts - Denmark's Designmuseum Copenhagen - The Danish Arts Foundation and the New Carlsberg Foundation**. Pipaluk Lake has exhibited throughout Europe as well as in China, Korea, Canada, the United States (*Drops, 2006, Chappell Gallery, NYC*) and in Australia. In 2011 the **Glasmuseet** (Denmark) hosted an exhibition of her recent works (awarded by The Danish Arts Foundation) and in 2012 the public institution **Sophienholm** (Denmark) presented a retrospective exhibition of the artist - **Pipaluk Lake 1987-2012**. The Galerie Maria Lund has been collaborating with Pipaluk Lake since 2008. It has hosted three exhibitions of the artist (*D'ici et d'ailleurs, 2010 - Configurations, 2012 - Hasards planifiés, 2014*) and has, among other things, presented her artworks at the **KIAF** fair in Seoul (2015 and 2016).

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