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#### **BORROWED SPACE AND REGULAR FEATURES**

MARC NAGTZAAM WITH JOCHEN LEMPert, GILDA MANTILLA & RAIMOND CHAVES, KAREL MARTENS, MATT MULLICAN AND RUTH WOLF-REHFELDT

Opening: Friday, 14 February, 18:00 to 21:00 h.

Exhibition dates: 15.02 > 19.03.2020. Tuesday to Friday, 11:00 to 19:00 h. Saturday 11:00 to 15:00 h.

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*Borrowed Space and Regular Features* is an exhibition curated by dutch artist Marc Nagtzaam in a presentation of his own work with works by Jochen Lempert, Gilda Mantilla and Raimond Chaves, Karel Martens, Matt Mullican and Ruth Wolf-Rehfeldt. The idea of the show comes from an artist book by Nagtzaam, *Regular Features* (Roma Publications, 2019), that compiles all his text drawings made between 1992 and 2019 with contributions by other artists (Lempert, Martens and Wolf-Rehfeldt among them) that are inserted throughout the book pages. The other part of the show's title, *Borrowed Space*, also refers to a work by Nagtzaam which is, in a way, the central point of the exhibition. The show proposes a presentation of works dealing with texts, graphics, signs, in which the notion of writing is approached.

*Borrowed space* (2017-2019) is a set of 24 drawings by Marc Nagtzaam where he depicts a series of drawn compositions, borrowed from existing book covers, posters, and paintings. One sheet of one of Nagtzaam's *Regular Features* series of text drawings is also shown as well as another work, his recent risoprint *The Approach*. As it is typical in Nagtzaam's work, the words, the dots, the forms or the lines on them come from an archive that he uses all the time to select different elements from for each new project. Nagtzaam's work is a combination of control and randomness, somewhere in between thought and emotion. As he states: "in my work I try to create the impression of an open space where nothing is fixed and where the meaning of the work remains open".

Jochen Lempert's photograph *Untitled (Zoophonie 2)* was taken in Brazil while he was preparing work on the legacy of XIX's century adventurer and inventor Hercule Florence, who, among many other remarkable achievements, pioneered in recording animal sounds. The picture shows the surface of a leaf with a few holes that let the light go through. The repetitive structure of the image seems indicative of a written code and can be seen as a sound score written by nature. A set of colourful letterpress monoprints by renowned graphic designer Karel Martens (\*1939) contrasts with the black and whiteness of most of the other works in the show. These are Martens' best known works and they consist of unique prints, overprinted on found administrative cards. Martens chooses to print on things that already have a past life and a formal order. He sees the typewriting and tabular typography on the found cards as being a form of concrete poetry that is already there and that inspires him to print on top of them. The works produce surprising and complex visual effects, where control and sensuality coexist in the same visual plane. Martens' intuitive decisions about form, color, and typography merge with an incredible degree of innate practice and knowledge.

The works *Platillo volante* (Flying saucer) and *Abstract (platillo volante)* by Gilda Mantilla & Raimond Chaves, a set of four prints and a sculpture, deal with the deconstruction of one found image taken from a pool of material that they obtained from the Amazonian libraries in the Peruvian city of Iquitos. The operation was to strip the images of their concrete anchors, proceeding to synthesize, reduce and scrap them. Rather than focusing reality on the graphic and material support, they use abstraction to displace it. In these works, the pattern comes from a more misleading yet equally pertinent field: crosswords and puzzles collected from newspapers in Iquitos. Perhaps the allusion to a flying saucer is just a subterfuge used by the artists to dismantle their own alien and estranged condition.

A selection of German artist Ruth Wolf-Rehfeldt's (\*1932) *Typewritings* drawings from the mid 1970's are presented in our show. These works on paper were made on her Erika typewriter, and were often produced using carbon copy paper in order to reproduce copies of the original sample. Some of this original-carbon copy combinations are on view. The works show Wolf-Rehfeldt's interest in semiotics and concrete poetry at the beginning of her artistic production. They can be seen as intricate studies of sign systems, conceptual art and innovative combinations of language, symbols and visual forms. There is also an interesting relationship between textile and text that seems relevant when thinking about these layered, intersecting compositions that somehow weave words into textured patterns across a flat page.

Matt Mullican's set of 12 drawings are an extraordinary example of spontaneous or automatic writing. This specific set was made by the artist in 2015, in a hotel room in Barcelona, while he was preparing for an interview-performance that was presented at the Fundació Suñol, produced by ProjecteSD. The artist used this automated way of writings words and numbers to immerse himself in a soft trance. The set is an excellent document of an introspective process, it has a performative element and a compelling rawness that contrasts with all the other works in the show. Another way to use language, not to convey meaning or knowledge but to induce concentration and a special state of the mind.

Either through words or undifferentiated signs, the idea of nonverbal writing seems to emerge in *Borrowed Space and Regular Features*. A kind of writing that remains in silence, incomprehensible. Writing that becomes image, or just a manifestation of being in the absolute without form.

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For additional documentation, artist's full CV and/or images, please contact: Silvia Dauder, [sd@projectesd.com](mailto:sd@projectesd.com); Núria Gurina [nd@projectesd.com](mailto:nd@projectesd.com)

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