

MONKEY LIFE

Staehli & Thornton

“Monkey Life”
Nina Staehli and Alejandro Thornton
Buenos Aires / Luzern
Dicember 2015

MONKEY LIFE

An art project by
Nina Staehli and Alejandro Thornton



International Monkey Business

Monkey Business (1931)

The Marx Brothers sneak onto a ship from Europe to America as stowaways. While they're busy hiding from the crew, they get mixed up in a conflict between rival gangsters Big Joe Helton and Alky Briggs. Groucho and Zeppo are supposed to help Briggs rid himself of Helton while Harpo and Chico are enlisted as Helton's bodyguards. After the ship arrives in New York, Helton throws a party for his daughter Mary. Outside on the terrace, Briggs explains to Groucho his plan to blackmail Helton by kidnapping Mary. But, while on board, Zeppo fell in love with Mary and Groucho tried to get with Briggs's wife Lucille. In the end the brothers manage to set Mary free. (Source: Wikipedia)

Art is, in the broadest sense, an indeterminate amount of confusion. Academics and laymen then extrapolate from it questions, meanings or functions for all levels of society. And this happens with such an unwavering matter-of-factness and self-confidence that art – according to this romanticized view – comes across to the confused audience as a clear-cut concept on the horizon.

Put into a different context, the International Monkey Business exhibition can also be seen as persiflage. Contemporary artists are economically savvy and trained to fit into the capitalist value system because the little money is only to be made in complete assimilation.

In this sense, the artist knowingly turns himself into the monkey or dancing bear of a standardized society. Indeed, the antenna of art makers and the art system, have gotten so nuanced and sophisticated that the paying mainstream's needs, trends and innovations are justly and gallantly turned into works of art. And so the merry-go-round of art stars and starlets keeps on spinning cheerfully while edgy, evocative and abrasive art – which could help us better understand this world – falls by the wayside.

The International Monkey Business exhibition offers viewers a thoughtful and ironic view of these issues, negotiating the value of art in a system replete with marketing, promotions and glamour.

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Alejandro Thornton and Nina Staehli

International Monkey Business is a continuation of the collaboration between Nina Staehli and Alejandro Thornton that began during their time at the Artist-in-Residence program of the Kansas City Artist Coalition (USA) in 2014.



Curators at work
Lambda print, 80x120cm.
2015



Curators in Lucerne
Lambda print, 80x120cm.
2015



Monkey life

Lambda print, 80x120cm.
2015



The yellow truck
Lambda print, 80x120cm.
2015



Monkey life 2

Lambda print, 80x120cm.

2015



Monkey life 3
Lambda print, 80x120cm.
2015



Lives and works in Lucerne and Berlin.

Residences:

Artist in residence, Kansas City Artists Coalition, USA. - 2014
Artist in residence, ORF III, Vienna – 2013
Studio stay, Foundry Sitterwerk, St.Gallen - 2011

Awards (seletion):

FLEX residency USA, awarded by the Canton of Zug
Cultural Award of the City of Cham
ORF III
Erna & Curt Burgauer Stiftung
Swiss Institute for Art and Research
MIGROS Kulturprozent
Ernst Goehner Foundation
Georges & Jenny Bloch Foundation

Last Solo Shows:

“Glory Land”, Heidmann Art Salon, Kansas City - 2015
“Glory Land”, gallery Isabelle Gabrijel, Berlin - 2015
“Gloria’s & touching heroes”, Cecilia Trachsler gallery, Zurich - 2113
“Head Download” Kunsthalle Luzern - 2013
“Procession”, galleria studio 44, Genoa - 2011
“Ruby Dean and The White Silence”, gallery Billing, Zug - 2011

Last Collective Shows:

Did your dreams come from a dark place?, Kreuzberg Pavillon, Berlin
IMAGO MUNDI, Fondazione Cini, Venice
Arte per L'Arte, Museo di Sant'Agostino, Genoa
VOEGELE Cultural Center, “Heller Wahnsinn”, Pfaeffikon, Switzerland
YESTERDAY-TOMORROW, gallery Weiertal, Winterthur
Segrete – Tracce di Memoria, Palazzo Ducale, Genoa
Art Festival Kunstpause, installation “Culture Clash”, Zug
EXSTASI, Studios ID, Berlin
Animations, art space Sihlquai 55, Zurich
“ViaZug” – Haus Zentrum of the City of Zug
“A nos amours” - gallery kh15, Berlin

Last public interventions & performances:

“Casa Paradiso“, Zurich - 2015
“TearHead“, 21C Museum, Bentonville, Arkansas/USA - 2014
“The Holy Pig of Berlin in Basle“, Open Church Elisabethen, Basel – 2014
2013 30 minutes television experimental art film and performance, ORF III, Vienna - 2013
“The Last Supper“, Substitut– space for contemporary art from Switzerland, Berlin - 2012

Lives and works in Buenos Aires.

Residences:

- 2015 - Kosmos Kultur Foundation (Berlin-Lucerna, Switzerland).
- 2014 - Kansas City Artist Residency at KCAC (Kansas City, USA).
- 2013 - Artist in Residency International Program, Ace Foundation (Buenos Aires).

Awards (seletion):

- 2013 - First Price for Videoart, Bahia Blanca National Biennial.
- Third Prize National Award for Painting, Uade Art Institute. Bs. As.
- 2012 - SiTA National Award for Public Space Interventions, Tucumán.
- 2010 - Engrav Mention, LV Salón Municipal Manuel Belgrano, Museo Sivori, Bs. As.

Last Solo/Duo Shows:

- 2014 - "I wirt / I draw", Charno Gallery, Kansas City.
- 2013 - "Overwritten", Mock galleria, Bs. As.
- 2012 - A Series, Olavarria Art Museum, Olavarria
- 2011 - "Unthinkable", Pabellón4 arte contemporáneo, Bs. As.
- 2010 - "Befote the words", Angel Guido Art Project, Bs. As.
- 2009 - "Hi", Matthei gallery, Santiago de Chile

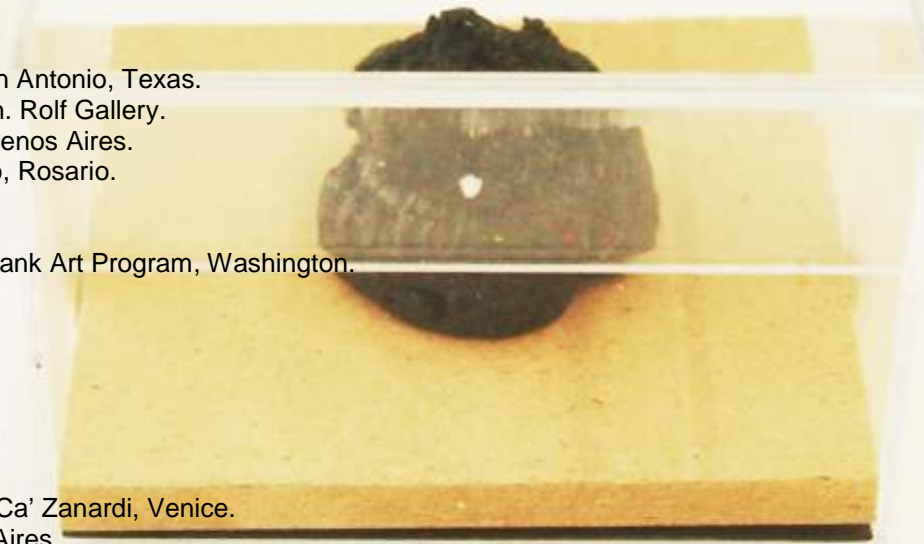
Last Collective Shows:

- PDF: poetry in different formats, MACBA.
- Emergentes, Young Artist from Latin-America, Haus Collective, San Antonio, Texas.
- "Hidden look", Hirsch / Brodsky / Valansi / Rivas/ Olivera / Thornton. Rolf Gallery.
- Fase 6.0, Meeting between Art & Technologies, C.C. Recoleta, Buenos Aires.
- "Epistolary" Dialogue with the collection, Museo Castagnino+Macro, Rosario.
- "5 visual poets", Pasaje 17 Gallery, Bs. As.
- Central Bank National Award. C.C. Borges.
- "About Change" Artist form Latin América and Caribe, The World Bank Art Program, Washington.
- Rioplataense Award for Visual Arts, OSDE Foundation.
- Iberoamerican Award Aerolíneas Argentinas Foundation.
- Palermo University Award, National Museum of Fine Arts.
- Award of the National Academy of Fine Arts.

Video-art Festivals :

- 2015 - Fonland Festival (Lisboa, Portugal)
- 2014 - Hidden Rooms, International Festival of Video Art Palazzo, Ca' Zanardi, Venice.
- 2014 - VideoBardo, V International Video Poetry Festival, Buenos Aires.
- 2014 - Play Festival, The Video Art Week. Litoral University. Corrientes.
- 2014 - Pixeles of Identity, International Festival for Video & Performance, Haber Gallery, Buenos Aires.
- 2014 - Morphos II, International Video-Art Festival, Venice.
- 2013 - Bahia (In) Sonora, International Sound & Video Art Festival, Bahia Blanca.
- 2012 - Cineminuto Festival, C.C. Recoleta, Buenos Aires.

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Staehli & Thornton
International Monkey Business Art Tour
Buenos Aires - Lucerne - Berlin - Kansas City

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stiftung

