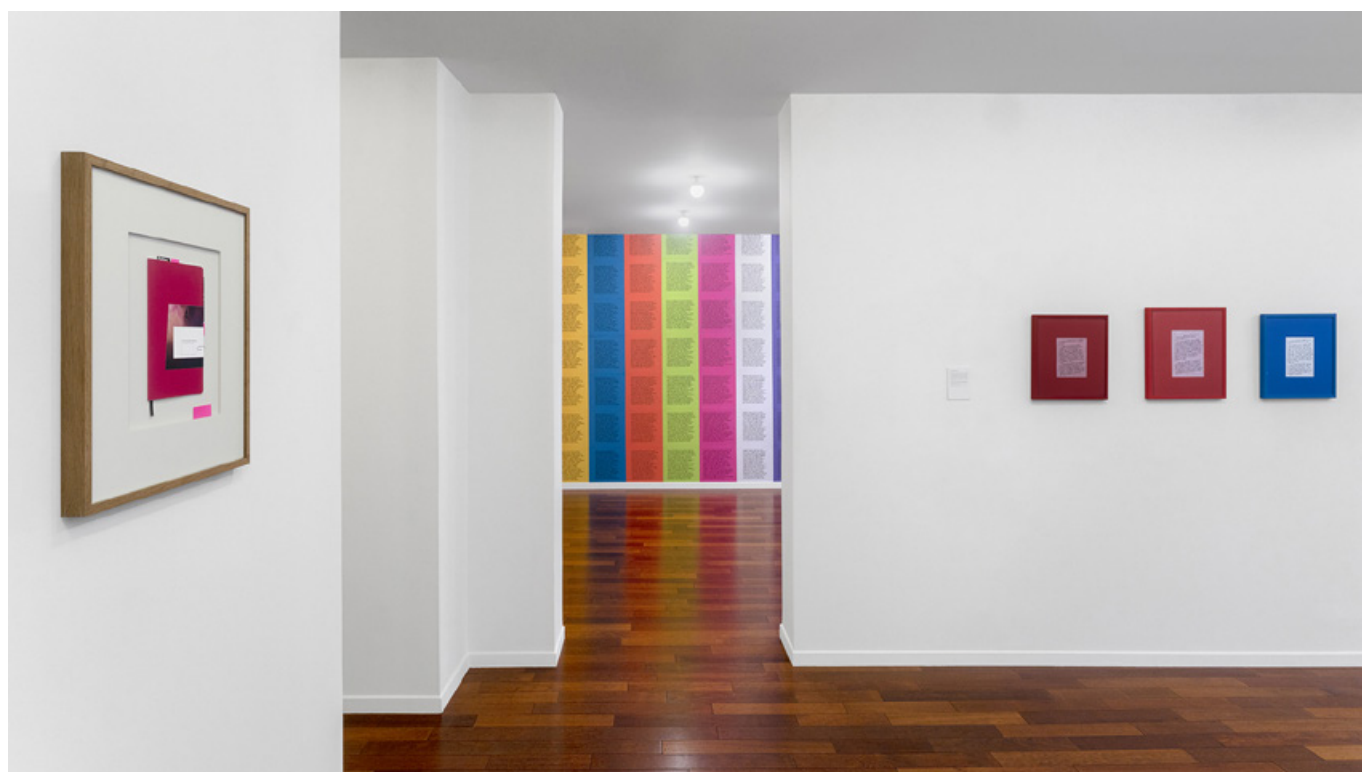

Le Pouvoir du Langage - Le Langage du Pouvoir

PRESS RELEASE

mfc-michèle didier



Opening on January 20 from 2 am to 7 pm
Exhibition from January 21 to March 12, 2022

With works by:

Alex Cecchetti

Jenny Holzer

Wesley Meuris

Antoni Muntadas

Benny Nemer

Le Pouvoir du Langage - Le Langage du Pouvoir is an exhibition about the singular relationship that the artists can have with the text, writing and language.

Beyond a fast reading, the works presented here offer above all an experience, since they borrow the form of the text, of the story, but also of the speech, of the harangue or of the prosopopeia for different purposes.

Each one of the artists maintains a distinct relationship with the language. The artists deploy a critical content proposing a statement or an invitation given to be read in epistolary form, under the form of the rhetoric or declamation, under the one of political slogans or in the form of aphorisms.

With the exceptional participation of the American artist **Jenny Holzer**, the exhibition brings together four other artists:

Alex Cecchetti

Benny Nemer

Wesley Meuris

Antoni Muntadas

Jenny Holzer has been using text and language since 1977. Following the work entitled *Truism*, the artist began *Inflammatory Essays* in 1979. The tone of the texts in this series is deliberately aggressive and provocative, influenced by Holzer's readings of political, artistic, religious, utopian manifestos, and others. Like any pronunciamiento, the voice of each *Inflammatory Essays* exhorts and espouses a strong and particular ideology and presents a range of opinions, from the extreme right to the extreme left.

Some of the *Inflammatory Essays* we present in the exhibition also borrow from the characteristic style of great federative or separatist speeches and narratives and set up a dialectic of common sense taken to the extreme. By hiding the author of the essays, Holzer allows the viewer to evaluate ideologies without regard to the personalities that propagate them. Holzer therefore invites the reader to reflect on the urgent need for social change, the possibility of manipulating the public and the conditions that accompany the revolution.

An installation entitled *Inflammatory Wall*, 1979-82 by Jenny Holzer will cover the walls of one room of the gallery. A set of **10 Inflammatory Essays* and a set of ***20 Inflammatory Essays* will also be available.

**10 Inflammatory Essays*, 1979-82

Set of 10 offset posters on coloured paper, signed on one sheet

Paper size: 43.2 x 43.2 cm each

***20 Inflammatory Essays*, 1979-82

Set of 20 offset posters on coloured paper, signed on one sheet

Paper size: 43.2 x 43.2 cm each

We also present Jenny Holzer's four elements of *Truth Before Power*. The four images that make up this work are derived from the paradigms of the artist's aesthetic and of her singular approach to public art, which she creates in the form of projections. In this work, she combines famous satires, poetry and documents from the archives of the American government. The artist reminds us how language can either expose or reinforce the dominant thinking of power.

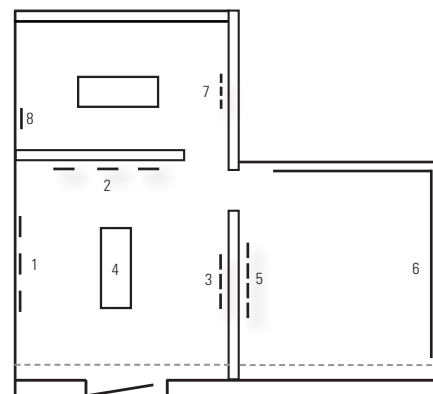
Alex Cecchetti is a poet and choreographer whose work combines sculpture, performance, painting and watercolours. His work is characterised by a particular attention to storytelling, but also to nature, trance or shamanism. His watercolours created between 2020 and 2021 are marked by plant or animal motifs and ornaments associated with poetic texts in acid and psychedelic colours, sometimes taking the form of naturalist and ecological slogans, or evoking a new age and post-hippie background.

Essentially a sculptor, **Wesley Meuris** has developed his work around the notion of container and content, specific to exhibition spaces but also to the various fields associated with the presentation of knowledge and collections (FEAK, Foundation for Exhibiting Art and Knowledge). His works generally take the form of architecture and exhibition furniture, evoking museum showcases usually empty of any content. His two-dimensional assemblages play on the same paradoxes by staging different elements of discourse and note-taking in a display case. Entitled *Notes*, these compositions bring together notebooks, business cards, flash drives, pencils and post-it notes staged in American boxes made by the artist, the contents of which are nevertheless inaccessible to the viewer.

Benny Nemer's work initially revolved around voice and speech, allows a contact with the public through works in the form of audio guides, bells, bouquets, videos etc. The works presented in the exhibition, *Love Letters transcribed*, are protocol works: the description of a personal letter written by the artist is placed in a frame and details different characteristics: motives, location, number of pages, content... The collector who acquires the work, then receives by post a letter addressed exclusively to him by the artist deploying this content to his attention, announcing a break-up or declaring his love...

A historical figure of critical art and a pioneer in the use of multimedia art, **Antoni Muntadas**, most often identified simply by his family name Muntadas, questions, ever since the mid-70's, the places of expression of power, whether it is architecture of an urban space, of a show staged by the media or by multiple forms of culture and language.

The *Close Up* series focuses on the empty spaces left in typographic bodies by the correction, censorship or modification of press articles.



List of works

1. Muntadas, *Close up - Triptico "El País"* (17 août 2009), 2009. Triptych, digital print, each 40 x 60 cm, edition of 9 + 2 AP

2. Wesley Meuris, *Conference - Unravelling the Art Market Mystery*, 2020. Notebook, paper and mixed media, 47 x 42 cm, unique

Wesley Meuris, *Notes - Nilima Minakishi Vasudha*, 2020. Notebook, paper and mixed media, 47 x 42 cm, unique

Wesley Meuris, *Notes - Hafsat Yacouba Fumnanya*, 2020. Notebook, paper and mixed media, 47 x 42 cm, unique

3. Benny Nemer, *Love letter transcribed (Toronto, 2017)*, 2017. Epistolary action, handwritten note mounted on matte board, framed. Handwritten letter, 43.5 x 37.5 cm, unique

Benny Nemer, *Love letter transcribed (Origny-le-Roux, 2021)*, 2021-2022. Epistolary action, handwritten note mounted on matte board, framed. Handwritten letter, 43.5 x 39.5 cm, unique

Benny Nemer, *Love letter transcribed (Montrouge, 2021)*, 2021-2022. Epistolary action, handwritten note mounted on matte board, framed. Handwritten letter, 47 x 40 cm, unique

4. Alex Cecchetti, *My name is joy and I am the Revolution*, 2020-2021. Watercolor on paper, each 41 x 31 cm

5. Jenny Holzer, *Inflammatory Wall*, 1979-82/2022. In-situ installation

6. Jenny Holzer, *Truth Before Power*, 1983-2004. Set of four inkjet prints, each 55.6 x 45.1 cm. Edition 24/40

7. Robert Barry, *Some things that...*, 2016. Set of three sheets in a portfolio, 28 x 21.5 x 0.6 cm. Edition of 24 + 6 AP

8. Ilona Granet, *Emily Post Street Signs (NO CAT CALLS)*, 1986-87. Enamel plate, 61 x 61 cm. Edition 13/15

Le Pouvoir du Langage - Le Langage du Pouvoir



Views of the exhibition at mfc-michèle didier
Photo Nicolas Brasseur



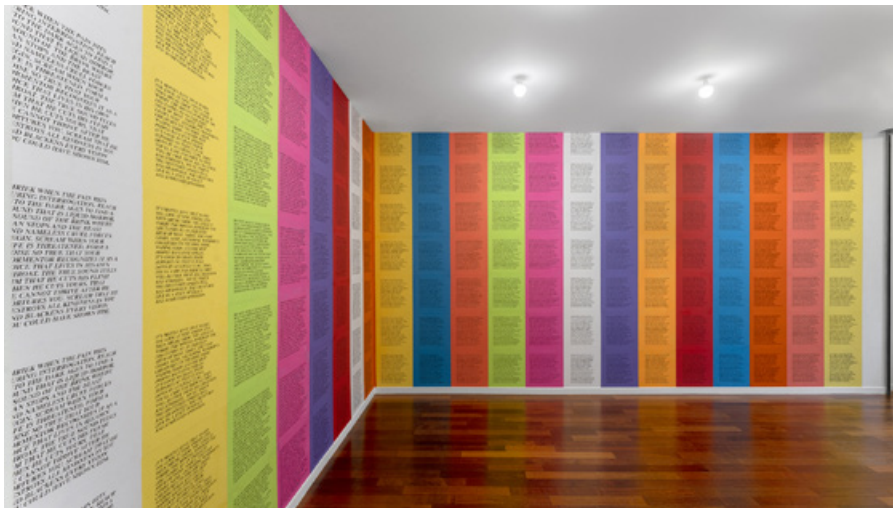
Le Pouvoir du Langage - Le Langage du Pouvoir



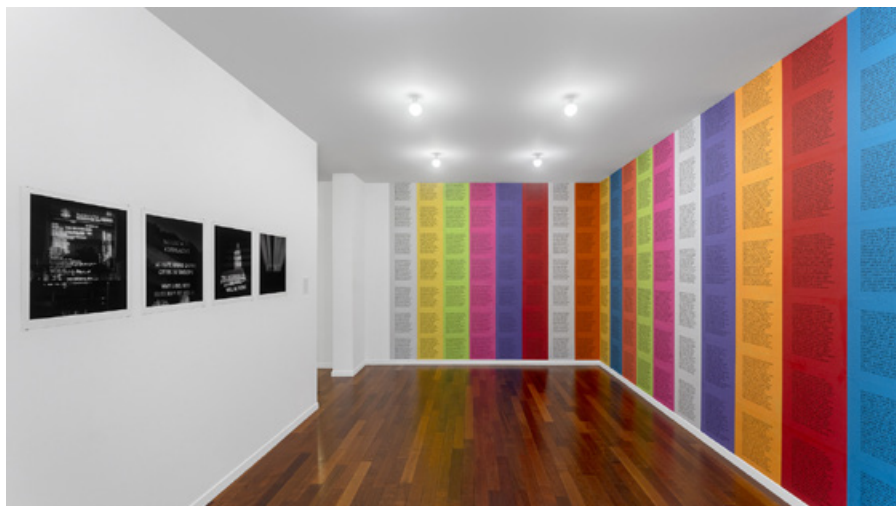
Views of the exhibition at mfc-michèle didier
Photo Nicolas Brasseur



Le Pouvoir du Langage - Le Langage du Pouvoir



Views of the exhibition at mfc-michèle didier
Photo Nicolas Brasseur





10 Inflammatory Essays

1979-82

Set of 10 offset posters on coloured paper

Signed on one sheet

Paper size: 43.2 x 43.2 cm each



20 Inflammatory Essays

1979-82

Set of 20 offset posters on coloured paper

Signed on one sheet

Paper size: 43.2 x 43.2 cm each

mfc-michèle didier

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Truth Before Power

1983-1985, 1996, 2004

Set of four Inkjet prints

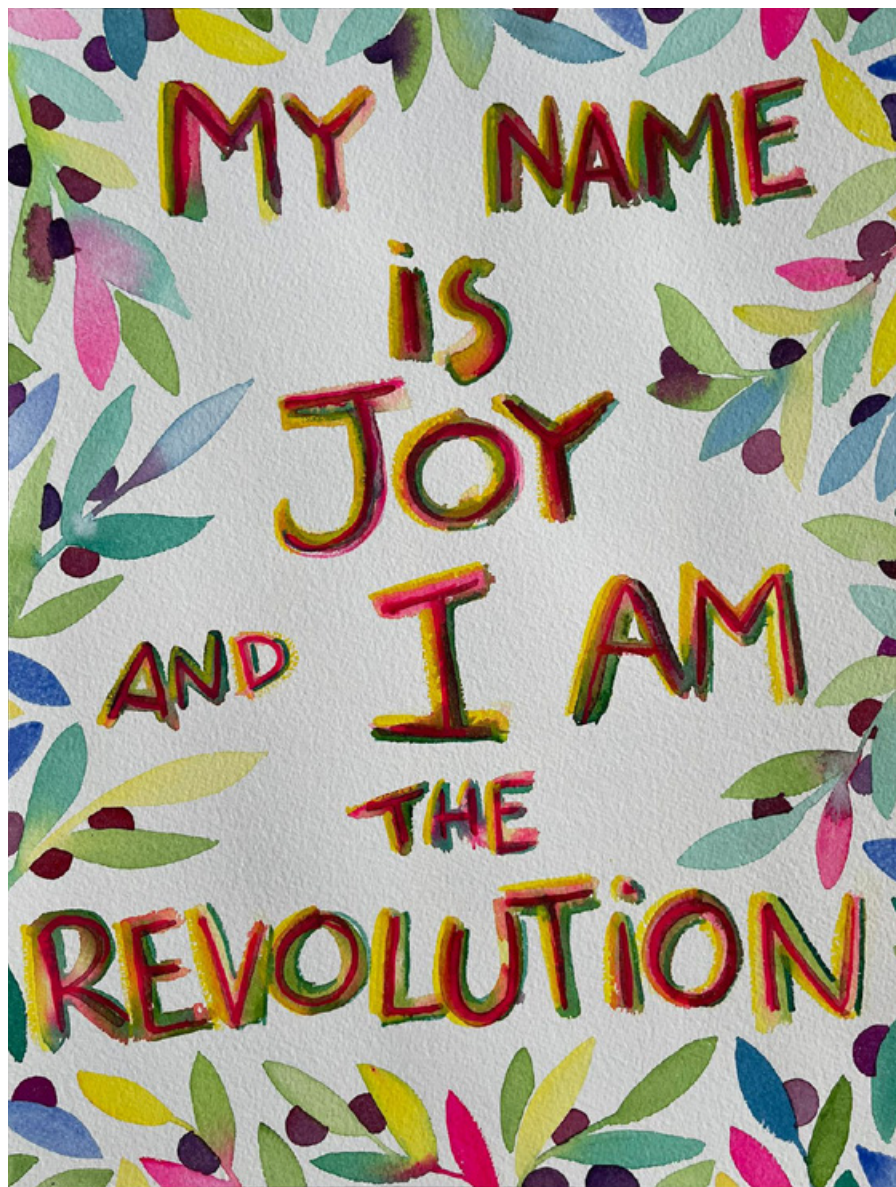
Signed and numbered on the colophon

Size of the paper: each 55.6 x 45.1 cm

Size of the image: each 50.2 x 40 cm

Edition of 40 signed and numbered copies

Edition #24/40



My name is joy and I am the Revolution

2020-2021

Watercolor on paper

41 x 31 cm

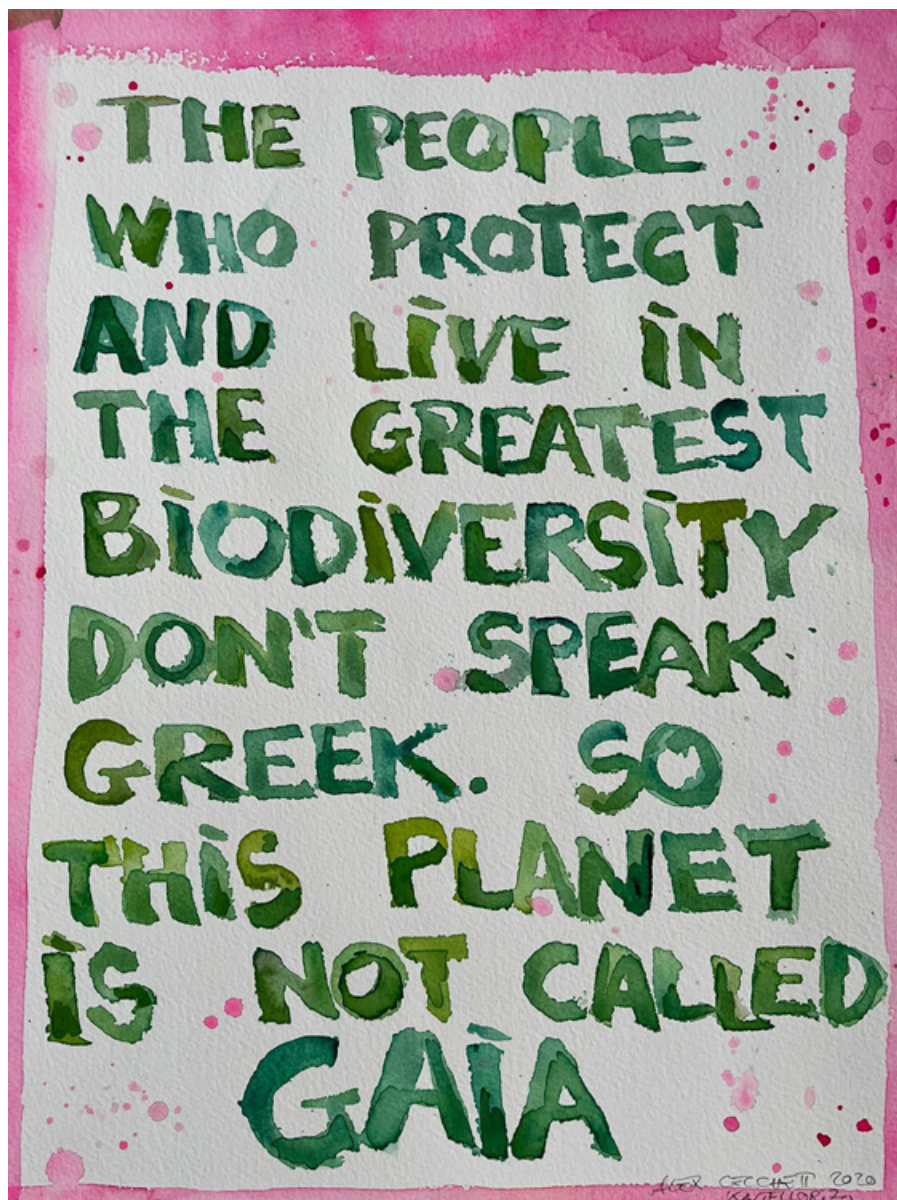


My name is joy and I am the Revolution

2020-2021

Watercolor on paper

41 x 31 cm

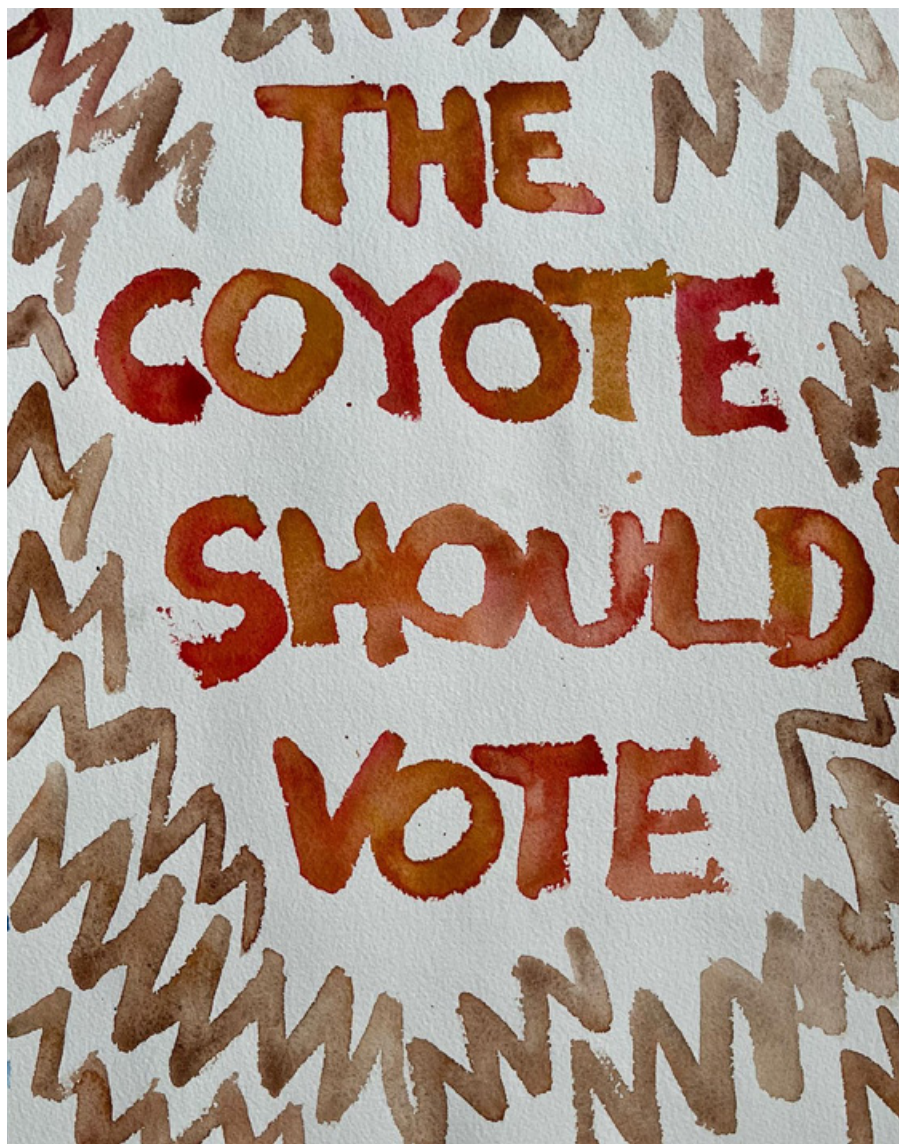


My name is joy and I am the Revolution

2020-2021

Watercolor on paper

41 x 31 cm



My name is joy and I am the Revolution

2020-2021

Watercolor on paper

41 x 31 cm



Notes - Nilima Minakishi Vasudha

2020

Notebook, paper and mixed media

47 x 42 cm

Signed, unique



Conference - Unravelling the Art Market Mystery
2020

Notebook, paper and mixed media

47 x 42 cm

Signed, unique



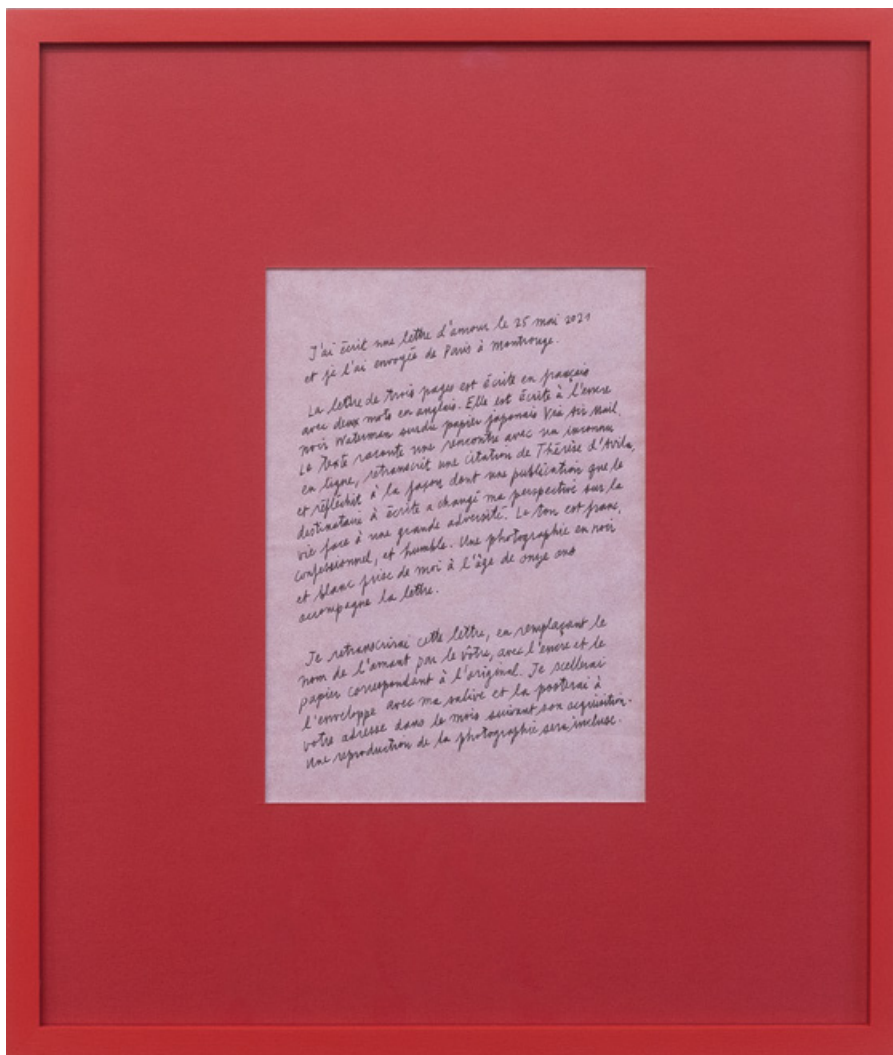
Notes - Hafsat Yacouba Fumnanya

2020

Notebook, paper and mixed media

47 x 42 cm

Signed, unique



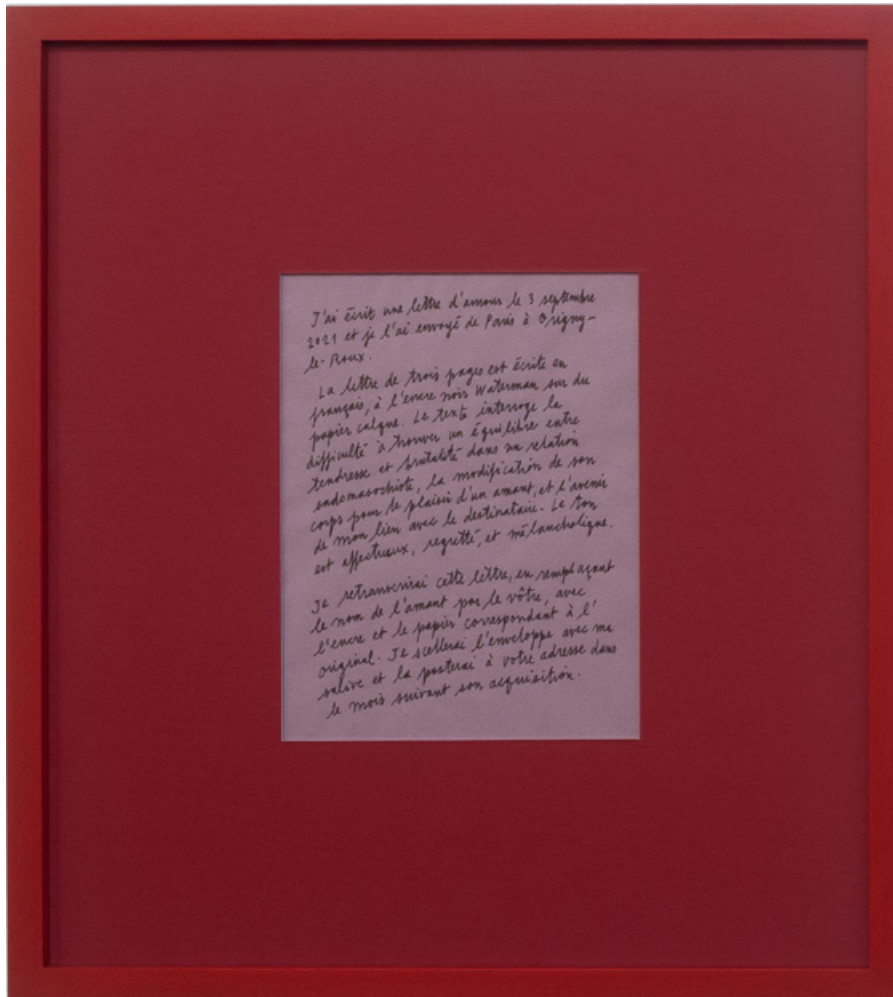
Love letter transcribed (Montrouge, 2021)

2021-2022

Epistolary action, handwritten note mounted on matte board, framed. Handwritten letter.

47 x 40 cm

Unique



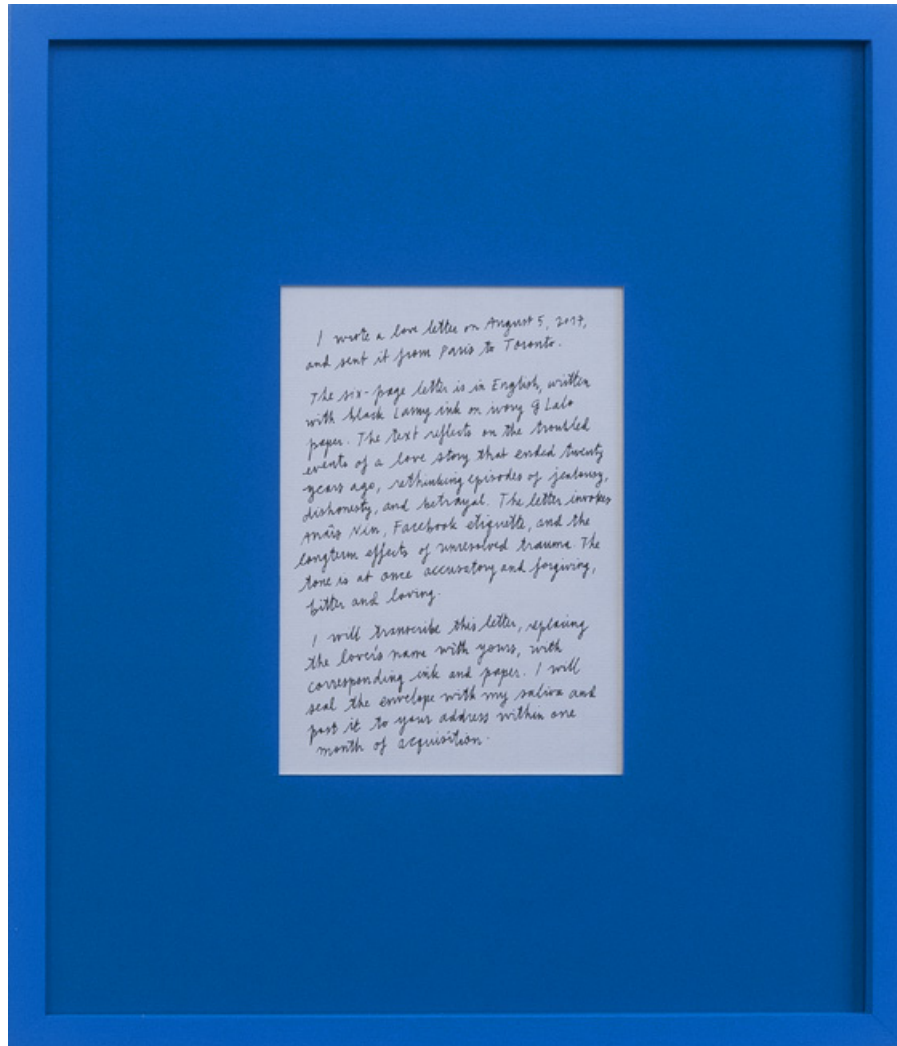
Love letter transcribed (Origny-le-Roux, 2021)

2021-2022

Epistolary action, handwritten note mounted on matte board, framed. Handwritten letter.

43.5 x 39.5 cm

Unique



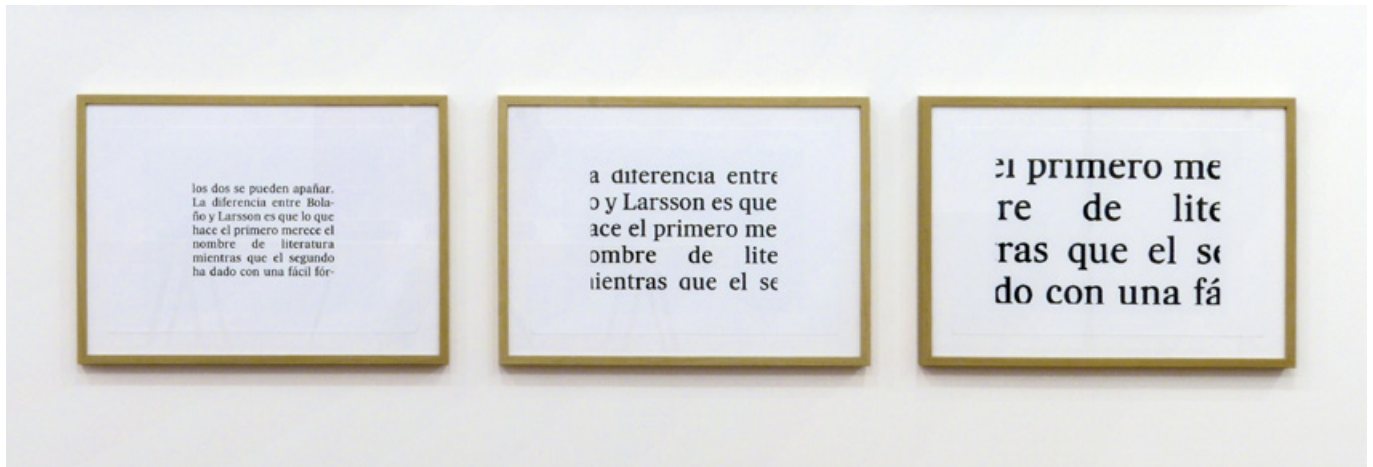
Love letter transcribed (Toronto, 2017)

2017-2022

Epistolary action, handwritten note mounted on matte board, framed. Handwritten letter.

43.5 x 37.5 cm

Unique



Close up - Triptico «Quadern - El País (September 16 2010)

2010

Digital print on paper

40 x 60 cm each

Edition of 9 + 2 AP



Close up - Tríptico «El País» (17 août 2009)

2009

Digital print on paper

40 x 60 cm each

Edition of 9 + 2 AP



Close up - Triptico «Le Monde» (10 novembre 1984)

1984

Digital print on paper

40 x 60 cm each

Edition of 9 + 2 AP

JENNY HOLZER (1950 - USA)

After studying drawing, painting, and printmaking, first at Duke University and then at the University of Chicago and Ohio University, Jenny Holzer received a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Rhode Island School of Design. After being accepted into the Whitney Museum of American Art Independent Study Program, she moved to New York in 1977 and worked as a phototypesetter at Daniel Shapiro's Old Typographer design studio. She then gave up her abstract pictorial work, which was influenced by that of Mark Rothko and Morris Louis, and started using language to question representation. For her first series, *Truisms* (1977–1979), she used advertising media or public spaces to spell out sayings in capital letters, such as 'private property created crime' and 'everyone's work is equally important'.

Inspired by American street performers, minimal and conceptual art, the discoveries of female authorship, and the body art of Yvonne Rainer, she sees herself as an agitator. Referring back to the Russian constructivists, she ascribes a utilitarian function to art and uses the media culture in which she is steeped to her own ends. Her second series, *Inflammatory Essays* (1979–1982), consists of texts inspired by political and philosophical writers (including Emma Goldman, Lenin, and Rosa Luxemburg), which were originally printed on brightly coloured paper and pasted to public walls. She has also carved texts on granite benches and sarcophagi, presented them on electronic signs, and projected them onto public buildings.

She has created memorials against racism, against the atrocities of the Second World War, or that deal with the thoughts of people about death, at the moment of the battle against the AIDS pandemic (*Laments*, Dia Art Foundation, New York, 1989). In 1990, for the Venice Biennale, she exhibited a polemical work on the ambivalent ties and fears that bind mothers and their children (*Mother and Child*), for which she was awarded the Golden Lion. By shining a light on political and social stereotypes, she attempts to incite thought about fundamental issues, using communication methods designed to reach the largest possible public. In the 1990s, she began drawing from her personal history and the intimate relationship between body and language, moving from ideological messages and aphorisms towards meditations on the human condition. In part, she has explored these themes through the words of others, incorporating the writing of renowned poets into her work and drawing on government documents to highlight the effects of U.S. military activities in Afghanistan and Iraq. A retrospective of her work was held at the Guggenheim Museum in New York in 2009.

ALEX CECCHETTI (1977-IT)

Artist, poet, choreographer: Cecchetti has developed a unique practice, difficult to classify, that could be called art of avoidance. Tactical and poetic, aesthetic and materialistic, its system produces specific situations or objects that can exist both inside and outside traditional exhibitions. It is in this double movement of representation and concealment that it is possible to inscribe his staging of invisible choreographies of hidden nudes and sleeping dancers. His work is focused in the construction of specific narratives that are experienced both mentally and physically by the audience. Two works can describe better the world in which Cecchetti plunges his audience. *Louvre* is the tour guide of the Louvre without the Louvre. The whole collection of the museum is summoned from the domain of the invisible through techniques of rhetoric, storytelling and dance. In *Walking Backwards* the spectator is accompanied literally to walk backward inside a story and to become the core of the vision. One who walks backwards does not know the nature of the images to come. The world does not come into sight smoothly, but it suddenly appears from nowhere. In the new paradigm in which the viewer plunges his life, the future is on the back and the past in the front. Unknowns are the images that appear, and intimate and full of meaning are those that leave from us, that remain still visible in the horizon. Devised and orchestrated by Alex Cecchetti, *Voices of Urgency* it is four days of panels of poetry and science hosted by Ecole de Beaux Arts in Paris, produced by FIAC and programmed during the international fair of contemporary art in Paris.

Cecchetti has exhibited his work broadly: recently in 2020 with a double solo show with artist Laure Provoust at Netwerk, Aalst and an incantation at Serpentine Galleries London. An installation of his paintings and watercolours have been shown at Castello di Rivoli, Turin (2019). Solo exhibitions include: At the gate of the music palace at Spike Island, Bristol, UK and Void, Derry, Ireland (2018). *Tamam Shud* at La Ferme du Buisson, Noisiel, France and Centre For Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw, Poland; *Cetaceans* at Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin, Italy (2017); *The Printing House of Hell* at Kunstraum, London, UK (2015); *Comrades of fear and wonder* at Contemporary Art Centre (CAC), Vilnius, Lithuania (2012). Cecchetti's performances and incantations have been presented at venues including Serpentine Galleries (2019); Palais de Tokyo, Paris and ThalieLab / Thalie Art Foundation, Bruxelles (2017); *Parades*, Palais de la Découverte, FIAC, Paris and Playground Festival, M Leuven & STUK, Leuven, Belgium (2016); Serpentine Galleries, London (2015); Serralves Foundation, Porto, (2014); South London Gallery, London, and Fondation d'Entreprise Ricard in Paris (2013); MAXXI Museum, Rome (2012).

As a writer, Alex Cecchetti has published two novels: "A society that breathes once a year", Book Works, London, 2012; and "Tamam Shud", Stenbert Press, Berlin 2017.

WESLEY MEURIS (1977-BE)

Wesley Meuris was born in 1977. He lives and works in Belgium.

Wesley Meuris designs and manufactures sculptures from generic forms, at the crossroads of architecture, design and exhibition scenography : museum showcases, zoo cages, picture rails, pedestals and pedestals, stands and platforms, archive furniture. His 1:1 scale creations often merge with the surrounding space, trapping for a moment the visitor who thinks they are replicas of existing objects. But the forms are hollow, the showcases and cages are empty, the drawers impossible to open: "My goal is not to show the content but the context and structure that exposes it," says Meuris in line with Michael Asher's conceptual adage "context as content".

But what characterizes Meuris' work is the sensitive and visual dimension of the container he makes, whose materiality and beauty rarely transforms it into a container, which fills the void it seemed to designate. Contrary to all expectation in the face of an approach that one might believe to be only conceptual, Meuris' work is characterized by the manual, even artisanal, construction of sculptures that he makes entirely himself, without borrowing existing elements: "I need to make these objects in order to be able to talk about their reality, without any intermediary". After his art studies, the artist began training as a carpenter in a prefabricated building company where he learned to master technical engineering, management strategies and industrial design. Both project manager and master builder, he is the author, technician and manufacturer of all the diagrams, technical plans and volumes used in his work, from cutting to space setting.

Wesley Meuris' work has made several important exhibitions and individual installations at the Centre Pompidou (2018), the Musée des Arts Contemporains du Grand Hornu (2017), the Kunsthalle in Vienna (2016), the Confort Moderne in Poitiers (2016), the Mu. Zee d'Oostende (2015), the Espace JeudiJeudi in Geneva (2015), the BF15 in Lyon (2014), the Kunsthalle Rotterdam (2014), the Casino du Luxembourg (2012), the SMAK in Ghent (2005), the Royal Academy in Brussels (2010), the Centre de Création De Bond in Bruges (2010), the Fresnoy in Tourcoing (2010), the MAMAC in Liège (2010), the Art & Essai Gallery in Rennes (2010).

BENNY NEMER (1973-CA)

Benny Nemer (Montréal, 1973) is a multidisciplinary artist, diarist and researcher based in Paris. His artistic work mediates emotional encounters with musical, art historical, botanical, and queer cultural material, encouraging deep listening and empathic viewing. His work is populated by audio guides, bells, bouquets, ceramic vases, enchanted forests, gay elders, gold leaf, love letters, imaginary paintings, madrigals, megaphones, mirrors, naked men, queer trees, sex-changing flowers, sign language, subtitles, and the voices of birds, boy sopranos, countertenors, and sirens. Nemer's work has been exhibited internationally, and is part of the permanent collections of the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna, the Polin Museum for the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw, Thielska Galleriet Stockholm and the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa.

In 2020 and 2021, he participates to artist's residencies programs at the Fiminco foundation and at the Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid.

MUNTADAS (1942-SP)

Antoni Muntadas was born in Barcelona in 1942. He lives and works in New York and Barcelona.

A historical figure of «critical art» and a pioneer in the use of multimedia art, Antoni Muntadas, most often identified by his simple surname Muntadas, has been questioning, since the mid-1970s, the places of expression of power, whether it be the architecture of urban space, the spectacle given by the media universe, or the multiple forms of culture.

He has taught all over the world, and conducted workshops in many universities. His approach can be linked to the post-conceptual current; he produced his major pieces from the 1980s onwards. He was one of the first artists to take a critical interest in television. He produced important pieces on this subject such as *The Board Room*, devoted to the phenomenon of American televangelism. He is interested in cultural phenomena, their codes, their rites, their hidden stakes. He has worked on the relationship between public and private space, on architecture and urbanism as a spectacle in the service of power, on space and its relationship to memory in general.

His works are the fruit of this accumulated time and knowledge. (...)

An important retrospective exhibition *Entre / Between* has recently retraced the whole career of the artist, forty years of work. The exhibition was presented at the end of 2011 at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia in Madrid, then in 2012 at the Fundação Gulbenkian in Lisbon and at the Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume in Paris and finally, in 2013, at the Vancouver Art Gallery in Vancouver.

mfc-michèle didier

mfc-michèle didier is an independent publisher established in 1987 in Brussels, who produces and publishes original works by contemporary artists, creating an extensive series of works, such as artist's books, prints, installations, multiples, etc.

Since 2011, mfc-michèle didier gallery, located 66 rue Notre-Dame de Nazareth in Paris, gives the chance to present the publisher's productions and is a place of reflection on the artistic discipline of the artist's book. At the same time, it gives the opportunity to show the importance of ephemera and published, multiplied works in contemporary art.

ARTISTS

AALLIICCEELLEES...

SAÂDANE AFIF

DENNIS ADAMS

CARL ANDRE

FIONA BANNER

ROBERT BARRY

BERNARD BAZILE

SAMUEL BIANCHINI

BLESS

MEL BOCHNER

BROGNON ROLLIN

AA BRONSON

STANLEY BROUWN

PHILIPPE CAZAL

LUDOVIC CHEMARIN©

CLAUDE CLOSKY

HANNAH COLLINS

DAVID CUNNINGHAM

CHARLES DE MEAUX

BRACO DIMITRIJEVIC

PETER DOWNSBROUGH

JEAN-BAPTISTE FARKAS

YONA FRIEDMAN

JAZON FRINGS

PAUL-ARMAND GETTE

LIAM GILICK

CARI GONZALEZ-CASANOVA

JOSEPH GRIGELY

FERENC GRÓF

THE GUERRILLA GIRLS

CARSTEN HÖLLER

PIERRE HUYGHE

IKHÉA©SERVICES - GLITCH

ON KAWARA

MATT KEEGAN

JUTTA KOETHER

LEIGH LEDARE

ALBAN LE HENRY

CHRISTIAN MARCLAY

LAURENT MARISSAL

ALLAN MCCOLLUM

MATHIEU MERCIER

ANNETTE MESSENGER

GUSTAV METZGER

JOHN MILLER

JONATHAN MONK

ROBERT MORRIS

ANTONI MUNTADAS

MAURIZIO NANNUCCI

PHILIPPE PARRENO

MICHELANGELO PISTOLETTO

HUBERT RENARD

ALLEN RUPPERSBERG

CLAUDE RUTAU

RAY SANDER

JOE SCANLAN

KLAUS SCHERÜBEL

CAROLEE SCHNEEMANN

JIM SHAW

JOSH SMITH

ROMARIC TISSERAND

UNTEL

LAWRENCE WEINER

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UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

Le Pouvoir du Langage - Le langage du Pouvoir

Opening on January 20, 2022 from 12am to 7pm

Exhibition from January 21 to March 12, 2022

ArtGenève

From March 3 to 6, 2022

Leigh Ledare

From March 24 to May 14, 2022

Saâdane Afif

The Fountain Archives [Index]

From May 27 to July 16, 2022