

CENTRE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN GENÈVE

10, rue des Vieux-Grenadiers, 1205 Genève t +41 22 329 18 42 f +41 22 329 18 86 www.centre.ch

PRESS KIT

Charlotte Moth

(*1978)

Ce qui est fragile est toujours nouveau

1.06 – 12.08.2012

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PRESS RELEASE

April 2012

Charlotte Moth

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Ce qui est fragile est toujours nouveau

1.06 – 12.08.2012

The Centre is pleased to be hosting the first major solo exhibition by Paris-based British artist CHARLOTTE MOTH, offering the chance to explore her recent work, including two new pieces.

The title of the exhibition is taken from a text written by Roland Barthes in a key period for his work – not long before his sudden death – and hints at repeated disappointments, hidden endeavours. While aspiring to the preparation of a novel (The Preparation of the Novel was the title of the course he taught), Barthes gradually turns away from literature, looking instead to poetry, in particular the haiku, as a possible alternative: beauty of the flower about to wither, "presence at the edge of absence" (Antoine Compagnon, tr. Rosalind Krauss); a perspective that also recalls the way Barthes understood photography. Between subjectivity and the truth of the moment, the haiku and photography both produce the impression – but not the certainty – "this has been"; an effect of reality. Whereas photography is compelled by its nature to show in exhaustive detail, however, the haiku uses a purged, elliptical form that lets the essence of what is meant show through; the form, the gesture alone give access to the truth.

Nestling between these two practices, the work of CHARLOTTE MOTH (*1978) radiates modest grace and benevolent curiosity for obsolete, apparently lost objects and places where time stands still. The departure point of MOTH's work, the travelogue, embarked on in 1999 focused then mainly on English seaside resorts, but has developed over the course of her travels into an extensive collection of analogue photographs that bear a close relationship with architecture, space and light. While many of these photos remain invisible, as if unfinished, others are used in installations, exhibitions, plastic works and films – projects on which other artists, theorists and critics have frequently collaborated, appropriating the images for their own interpretations and fictions. The result is processes of exchange, collages and unassuming, affectionate juxtapositions that constantly seek out "the to-ing and fro-ing of image and experience" (MOTH). For her exhibition at the Centre CHARLOTTE MOTH has invited Peter Fillingham and Falke Pisano to take part; two artists who have collaborated with her on numerous occasions and whose practices, although very different from her own, are closely related to her work.

Curator: Emilie Bujès

SAVE THE DATES:

Exhibition

Press Meeting

Opening

Arty Night

01.06 - 12.08.2012

31.05.2012 at 4pm

31.05.2012 at 6pm

12.07.2012 at 7pm

BIOGRAPHY:

Charlotte Moth was born in 1978 in Carshalton (UK) and lives in Paris since 2007. She first studied Fine Arts at UCCA – University College for the Creative Arts – Canterbury, then sculpture at the Slade School of Art in London, before completing her training at the Jan van Eyck in Maastrich. After residences at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris (2007-2008) and Serralves Foundation in Porto (2011), she is in 2012 at Fieldwork Marfa, Texas, and then Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart. Parallel to various curatorial activities and numerous collaborations, Charlotte Moth held solo shows – among others – at Araújo Porto Institute (Fundação de Serralves and SONAE), Porto, at the gallery Carlier Gebauer, Berlin, at the Musée départemental d'art contemporain in Rochechouart, at Pied-à-Terre, San Francisco, at the Lavomatic, Saint-Ouen, and at the Halle für Kunst, Lüneburg. She also participated in several group shows, including venues such as the Dallas Biennial, Cole Gallery, London, Kunsthalle Basel and the synagogue in Delme.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND HIGH RESOLUTION IMAGES:

Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève

Carole Haensler Huguet, +41 (0)22 888 30 42, presse@centre.ch

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Charlotte Moth

(*1978)

Ce qui est fragile est toujours nouveau

1.06 - 12.08.2012

3rd Floor

The Centre is pleased to be hosting the first major solo exhibition by Paris-based British artist Charlotte Moth. This project explores her recent work, including two new pieces.

INTRODUCTION

The title of the exhibition is taken from a text written by Roland Barthes in a key moment of his work – not long before his sudden death – and hints at repeated disappointments, hidden endeavours. In 1980, when he was teaching at the Collège de France, Barthes aspired to prepare a novel; indeed, “The Preparation of the Novel” was the name of the course he taught. However, he gradually turns away from literature, looking instead to poetry, in particular the haiku, as a possible alternative: beauty of the flower about to wither, “presence at the edge of absence” (Antoine Compagnon¹); a perspective that also recalls the way Barthes understood photography. Between subjectivity and the truth of the moment, the haiku and photography both produce the impression – but not the certainty – “this has been” (Barthes, “Camera Lucida”); an effect of reality. Whereas photography is compelled by its nature to show in exhaustive detail, however, the haiku uses a purged, elliptical form that lets the essence of what is meant show through; the form, the gesture alone give access to the truth.

Nestling between these two practices, between the truth of the moment, poetry and ellipsis, the work of Charlotte Moth radiates benevolent curiosity for obsolete, apparently lost objects and places where time stands still. The departure point of Moth’s work, the Travelogue, embarked on in 1999, has developed over the course of her travels into an extensive collection of analogue photographs that bear a close relationship with architecture, space and light. A collection rather than an archive; the form is fragmentary, organic, free. The choice of the analogue format is related to the artist’s attraction to light, which leaves a material impression when it touches the surface of the negative, making links to the chemical process of development itself, whereby the image slowly appears, to reveal a moment.

While many of these photos remain invisible, as if unfinished, some are used in installations, exhibitions, plastic works and films on which others frequently collaborate. Multiple perspectives and subjectivities give rise to a new degree of visibility and, unavoidably, of absence. The result is processes of exchange, collages and unassuming, affectionate juxtapositions that constantly seek out “the to-ing and fro-ing of image and experience” (Moth). These dialogues turn out to be a method of working for the artist, a mechanism that is necessary for the production of her works. They are pursued, furthermore, at different levels, directly and indirectly or abstractly. Charlotte Moth’s work is part of an existing system of references, a realm in which one is inscribed in an ongoing history.

Literature – texts – are central elements of her practice as from the beginning her thoughts are articulated through writing, which allows her to get closer to a sculptural or experiential concept. Like clay, the text that she produces or uses in her works is envisaged as a material. Again and again, it encounters architecture, uncovering affiliations other than purely formal ones, architecture being understood as spatial narration, made up of repetitions, memories. This notion recalls Barthes’ thoughts on the haiku: “(a) residue, an accretion of the real, ‘an erratic debris, a scrap of the daily fabric’ (Barthes); it emblematises, individuates, nuances the world, instead of abstracting and conceptualizing it” (Compagnon). Architecture emerges as central: a fascination for the way in which objects, places and details reveal themselves, a way of looking at its surroundings. While sculpture (Moth’s departure point) fails to account for these elements, photographs succeed in illustrating what the artist is looking for. They are then set in a sculptural structure.

¹ Antoine Compagnon, « Roland Barthes’s Novel », translated by Rosalind Krauss, in: OCTOBER, Spring 2005, Nr. 112, p. 23–34.

WORKS ON DISPLAY

MAEVE CONNOLLY (2.b) and SADIE MURDOCH (2.a) are the fruit of a collaboration between the artist and the two women, Moth having sent each of them the same selection of photographs from the Travelogue. While one receives the images and a voice recorder, the other is photographed as she looks at and comments on the photos. Left free to interpret these spaces and places however they wish, Connolly and Murdoch, respectively author/critic and artist, go on to communicate their own ways of seeing, with Moth subsequently using their approaches as the basis for two films. All the same, a certain dislocation remains, from the use of still images in the film and the creation of a discrepancy – this is particularly true for Maeve Connolly – between the voice-over, which seems palpable, and the timeless images.

Charlotte Moth has invited Peter Fillingham and Falke Pisano to take part in the exhibition at the Centre; two artists who have worked with her on many occasions, and whose practices, while different, intersect with her own work. What Pisano shares above all with Moth is a particular interest in sculpture; abstract sculpture, whether constructed by language, created on the basis of theory; imaginary sculpture, which only acquires its form as an entity in the mind of the beholder. However, Pisano associates a more widely discursive or diagrammatic artistic vocabulary with Moth's seemingly rather personal approach. In *THE BODY IN CRISIS (A) and (B)*, an ongoing series, Pisano observes the body at the very moment when it is thrown into crisis by a change in living conditions, such as, for example, the establishment of the first university hospital in France together with the complete reform of medical education in 1793, the discovery of the trauma to which World War I gave rise, or the living conditions of South Americans who moved to France in the 1970s as exiles from military dictatorships. This inquiry is, however, looking for symbolic meanings; time is represented structurally and abstractly in it, as are the questions of the repetition and the representation of history.

In *NOTING THOUGHTS (3)*, which was inspired by Raoul Hausmann's archives of the Musée Rochechouart where she was invited to exhibit, Moth sets out on a winter journey in the footsteps of the Dadaist artist on the island of Ibiza – where Hausmann lived from 1933 to 1936. The images that result from the journey, associated with other, older ones, but also, more directly, Hausmann's archives, lead to a meeting with anthropologist Alice D. Peinado. Peinado has studied notions of national identity and citizenship in the context of migratory movements, but also questions to do with insularity and settlement. "Continuous Trajectories – Broken Utopias", the text she wrote and from which Moth has taken some passages, evokes Hausmann's view of the island and its architecture – which he sees as outside of civilization, forgotten by time and progress –, but also sense of place and its ubiquity (Ibiza, like everywhere else, is made up of several different, parallel universes), as well as the symbolic way in which this sense is constructed, incarnated and finally perceived in the construction of dwellings.

For *ABSENT FORMS (5)* Moth uses a device similar to that of *NOTING THOUGHTS*; photographs of the street named after the modernist architect Robert Mallet Stevens (all of the buildings on it were constructed by him) are combined with a text written by the artist Francesco Pedraglio. A poetic fiction set to the rhythm of artist Sean Dower's percussion, and in which objects become protagonists in a timeless framework, this film evokes, through its aesthetic and its structure, the silent, often ironic films of the early 20th century. Close by, *UNTITLED (FIGTREE) (4)*, illustrates more formal investigations that are more firmly focused on the question of light and colours; finely tuned mechanisms which – like traditional photography – have latent magic effects.

SCULPTURE MADE TO BE FILMED (6) is confronted spatially by photographs of unusual objects taken in the apartment of a writer/collector (some of whose texts have been crucial artistic reference points for Moth). There can be no doubt that the sculpture is encouraging us to examine light; a recurrent element in the artist's work, and one, moreover, that recalls Le Corbusier's position: "Architecture is the masterly, magnificent and correct play of masses brought together in light". It also suggests, by its proximity to the photographs, the duration of time, the processes and, more particularly, the kinetic potentialities of objects.

This investigation is intensified in the two new films the artist has produced for the Centre. In the first one, *IN UNEXPECTED PLACES, IN UNEXPECTED LIGHTS AND COLOURS (A SCULPTURE MADE TO BE FILMED) (8)*, the light boxes are filmed in desert landscapes (in Texas), constantly in flux between the sublime and the absurd. The second film, *STUDY FOR A TRAVELOGUE IN MOTION (9)*, which includes further images recorded in Texas, also features material shot in Portugal and the south of France in 2011. This new work provides scenery, spaces, universes, architectural features, speculative histories.

An avowed interest in objects is what delicately links Peter Fillingham's practice to that of Moth. But whereas Moth is always on the lookout for unusual objects – often obsolete or devoid of function – for her collection, Fillingham seems more interested in the question of everyday things and their consumption. For *TWO/THREE FROM BEHIND (C)* Fillingham has used items bought at the plaine de Plainpalais flea market and in various food shops as props in his work. Objects – and ways they can be hijacked – together with collecting itself are among the questions addressed by the British artist's practice.

The BOOK INSTALLATION (10) seems to provide a kind of conclusion to the exhibition and also allows the Travelogue to be grasped in a more immediate and tangible form: set out on cork panels are the 56 pages of a publication – one which form is inspired by a book by Eileen Gray and Jean Badovici's about the E-1027 house – made up of unbound pages. They can be hung like traditional photographs or simply reconfigured, so refusing any crystallisation of meaning and enabling thus the status of the book to be questioned. This installation and the pages displayed confirm a sense of repetition that challenges memory, through the use of photographs, places and atmospheres in various works and in different arrangements.

BIOGRAPHIES

CHARLOTTE MOTH was born in 1978 in Carshalton (UK) and lives in Paris since 2007. She first studied Fine Arts at UCCA – University College for the Creative Arts – Canterbury then sculpture at the Slade School of Art in London, before completing her training at the Jan van Eyck Academy, Maastricht. After residences at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris (2007-2008) and Serralves Foundation in Porto (2011), she is in 2012 at Fieldwork Marfa, Texas, and then Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart. Parallel to various curatorial activities and numerous collaborations, Charlotte Moth held solo shows – among others – at Araújo Porto Institute (Fundação de Serralves and SONAE), Porto, at the gallery Carlier Gebauer, Berlin, at the Musée départemental d'art contemporain in Rochechouart, at Pied-à-Terre, San Francisco, at Lavomatic, Saint-Ouen and at the Halle für Kunst, Lüneburg. She also participated in several group shows, including venues such as the Dallas Biennial, Cole Gallery London, Kunsthalle Basel and la synagogue de Delme.

FALKE PISANO was born in 1978 in Amsterdam and lives and works in Berlin. Solo exhibitions took place at De Vleeshal, Middelburg (2012), CAC Vilnius (with Benoît Maire, 2011), Transmission Gallery, Glasgow (2010), Extra City, Antwerp (2010), Kunstverein Graz (2009) and Halle für Kunst e.V., Lüneburg (2008). Pisano participated in groups shows such as the Venice Biennial (2009) and Manifesta (2008). She performed at Museo Reina Sofia (2012), the 5th Berlin Biennale (2008) and Lisson Gallery, London (2007). In 2012, Pisano will participate in the groupshow "Beyond Imagination" at Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and the Amsterdam Pavilion of the Shanghai Biennale. The Kunstverein Köln will dedicate her a solo exhibition in 2013.

PETER FILLINGHAM was born in 1964 in Portsmouth (UK) and lives and works in the UK. He has exhibited widely in group shows and solo shows, including "The Institute of Contemporary Anxiety" at ICA, London and "Watt" at Witte de With Rotterdam in 1994; "Life / Live" at Musée D'Art Moderne, Paris, "Peeling 5" at Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, "Thoughts" at City Racing, London, "A-Z" at The Approach, London in 1996; "Stimuli" at Witte de With in 1999; "Gymnasium" at Bregenz Kunstverein in 2001; the Sharjah Biennial and "Country life" at Cell Project Space, London in 2003; "My Favourite Year, Falke and Charlotte" at Ellen de Bruijne Projects (at Dolores) in 2008 and an ongoing project for the glass cabinet; "The Outskirts" at Lavomatic, Saint Ouen, France in 2010; "Ideal Home" at Chelsea Space, London in 2011.

Curator: Emilie Bujès, Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève

ARTY NIGHT ON JULY 12, 2012 at 7 PM

PARALLEL EXHIBITIONS :

2nd Floor	COMING SOON	1.06 – 12.08.2012
4th Floor	FENÊTRE SUR LES ÉCOLES SUISSES DE CINÉMA :	
	Département Cinéma/cinéma du réel de la HEAD – Genève	15.06 – 22.07.2012
	ECAL – Lausanne	27.07 – 2.09.2012

In partnership with Pernod Ricard Swiss and Le Courrier

With the kind support of



CHARLOTTE MOTH

1. "Images for Maeve Connolly and Sadie Murdoch", 2010

24 b/w framed analogue photographs
98,5 x 90,5 cm

2.a "Sadie Murdoch", 2010

Digital photo film, b/w, sound, 11'

2.b "Maeve Connolly", 2010

Digital photo film, b/w, sound, 13'

3. "Noting Thoughts", 2011

7 tables, 1,2 x 2 x 0,9 m

Welded stell frames, 12 mm sheet plywood,
5 mm sheet glass, assorted colored Lee filters
Images A5, A4, A3 mounted on folded
aluminium sheets 3 mm thickness.

Text (used in fragmented form in installation)

Alice D. Peinado "Continuous Trajectories -
Broken Utopias"

4. "Untitled (Figtree)", 2008

b/w digital print, 63 x 43 cm

Slide projector with interval timer, 81 individually
colored slides with Lee filters

5. "The Absent Forms", 2010

Video, b/w, sound, 10'

Text Francesco Pedraglio, sound Sean Dower

6. "Sculpture made to be filmed", 2012

6 wooden light boxes, each 99 x 71 x 32 cm, 286
colored bulbs

7. "To see the things amongst which we live"

2012, b/w, analogue photographs, 40 x 58 cm

8. "In unexpected places, in unexpected lights

and colours (a sculpture made to be filmed)"

2012, 16 mm film transferred to video, b/w
silent, 3'

9. "Study for a Travelogue in motion", 2012

16 mm film transferred to video, color, silent, 6'

10. "Book Installation

- Visit of Villa E.1027, Roquebrune-Cap-Martin,
France, Spring 2011

Display in Villa of journal - E.1027 Eileen Gray,
Jean Badovici

Maison en Bord de Mer, L'Architecture
Vivante' 1929

- Proximity - Proposition at Lavomatic,
Saint-Oeun, France, 2011

- Studies for a 16 mm colour film, 2011

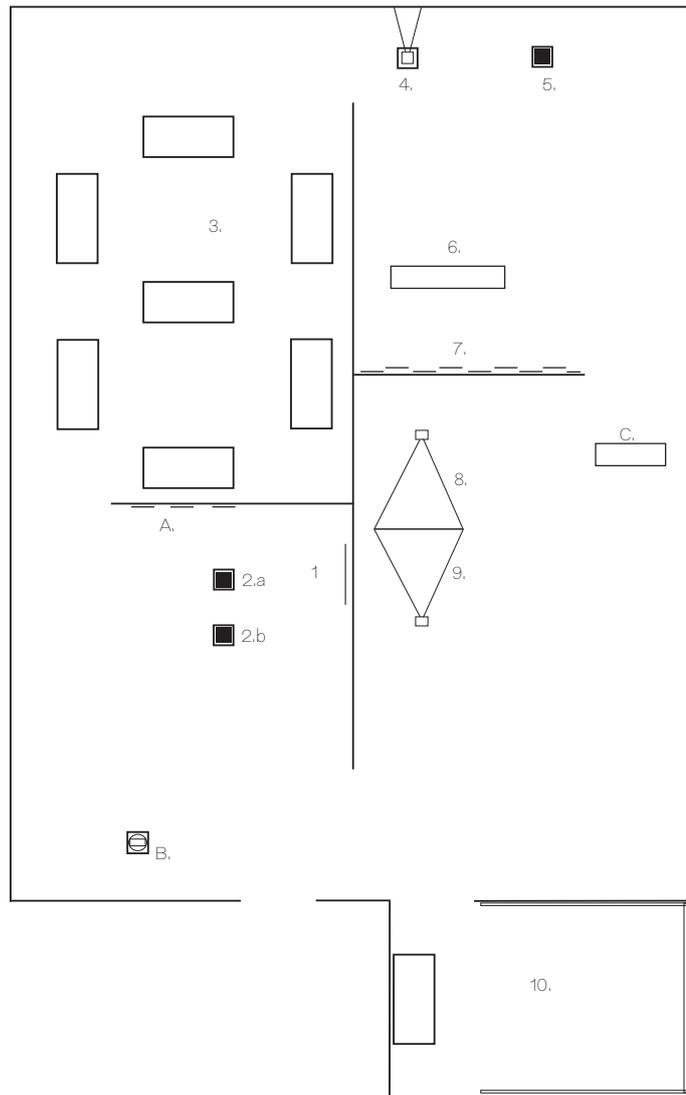
- Light studies - Objects, 2011

- Light studies - Architecture, 2011

- Travelogue 1999 - 2011"

2011, 56 pages presented on a cork alining

All works : courtesy the artist and Marcelle Alix



FALKE PISANO

"The Body in Crisis"

A. - "Structure 1: Distance (Obstacles)"

- "Structure 2: Repetition (Not Representation)"

- "Structure 3: Representation (Ongoing Event)"

2011, 3 framed digital prints, 50 x 70 cm

B. "Structure 2: Repetition (not Representation) 1974"

2012, wood, paint, paper, metal, leather, 62 x 62 x 22 cm

All works: courtesy the artist, Ellen de Bruijne Projects,
Amsterdam; Hollybush Gardens, London; Balice Hertling,
Paris

PETER FILLINGHAM

C. "two/three from behind", 2012

Mixed material, dimensions variable

Courtesy the artist