

DIENSTGEBÄUDE Art Space Zürich
September 3 – October 1, 2016
Opening: Friday, September 2, 7 – 11 pm

JocJonJosch / Tom Huber / Artemis Potamianou

PSI

JocJonJosch: The Long Way Round

I long to be digging, digging over, as they say here.
—Samuel Beckett, letter to Georges Duthuit, January 1951

Circles often figure in JocJonJosch's practice. They form the basis of the three artists' thinking, of the imaginary voyages their sculptures invoke, and of the processes the artists endure in order to make, and then very often unmake, their work.

The collective's digging exercises are in this respect emblematic. **Dig Shovel Dig, Ardez**, which took place in 2013 in Ardez, Switzerland, involved each of the three artists digging a hole only to fill the hole of another. The recorded performance explores what it means to work together; to collaborate. It also explores the body and its limits. To watch the three artists labour is to watch bodies under some duress, bodies whose comically futile movements are determined by the logic of the circle.

Dig Shovel Dig was repeated in 2014 in Aldeburgh, a coastal town in the English county of Suffolk. The process was the same, except that in this instance, aside from a video of the performance, there is also a black and white photograph of three spades sticking out of a mound of earth. There is an unexpected sense of mournfulness to the image, one that contrasts to the previous video projection, which is more absurd. It is difficult to account for this feeling, but it may have something to do with the associations of digging: that of a buried past, perhaps, which refuses to be uncovered, or a longing for closure.

JocJonJosch's third digging work, **Ditch and Rampart**, took place in Fiesch, Switzerland, in 2015, and takes these exercises in another direction. What remains here is a photograph of a circle cut into the earth, a kind of scar or trace, recalling the land art of Richard Long or Robert Smithson. In another digging work, made in Brig in 2016, the spectator is left with a black and white photograph of a hole and mound of equal proportions, which both affirm and negate each other. And for another digging work, which took place in Martigny, also in 2016, JocJonJosch made a totem using the traditional rammed earth technique. Earth was dug up and mixed with hay and water. The mixture was then placed inside round buckets which were pressed down with feet and left to dry. The totem was constructed out of the resulting bricks and, though gradually decaying, still stands. But for the viewer the large-scale Photograph of a Totem is the only trace of the artists' labour. In this respect the work is reminiscent of JocJonJosch's larger performance works, which often employ the naked bodies of performers to form temporary structures, and where the only visual evidence left behind are photographs of the now empty spaces in which the performances took place.

A similar logic underlies two portraits that constitute a new trajectory in JocJonJosch's artistic practice. To make the portraits, each of the three members of the collective drew another member. The rules of the game did not allow for the artists to look at each other when drawing and each line had to be continuous, ending where it began. The process of making was embodied and emphatically material, each artist forced to hover over the page because of its scale, to make large sweeps with one arm and to support his body with the other. In one drawing, titled **JocJonJosch Self-Portrait**, 4th May 2016, each artist drew another artist. In the other drawing this process was repeated many times, such that the loose outline of a face was gradually transformed into a mass of charcoal lines where only extremities and orifices remain visible. In both cases the sense is of a face coming into being in the same process in which finds its dissolution.

If there is a mythical dimension to JocJonJosch's employment of circles, it is one that is tempered by the embodied nature of the process of making and the insistent materiality of the resulting trace. The logic of the works displayed in the present exhibition is circular, but it is not metaphysical. The process rarely, if ever, comes full circle. A material residue always corrupts the circle, makes a mess of its geometry. Never, to my knowledge, do the artistic processes the collective set in train result in success. Instead, to paraphrase Samuel Beckett's words, in each work the artists seem to fail better. The same might be said for the large sculptural digging tool, *Tool*, whose function can be imagined, but which nevertheless seems too fragile to perform the labour for which it is designed. To use the work would probably constitute an exercise in failure. But it is this that lends JocJonJosch's work its humanity.

Rye Dag Holmboe, September 2016

JocJonJosch

Joschi Herczeg

b. Basel, Switzerland, 1975

- 2001 - 2002
Wales,
The University of New South
Sydney, AU
MA, Photomedia
- 1999 - 2000
Staffordshire University, Stoke on
Trent, UK
BA, Hons Photography
- 1994 - 1996
Academy of Performing Arts,
Prague, CZ
Graduated in partnership with
Staffordshire University

Joc Marchington

b. London, England, 1976

- 2007 - 2008
Chelsea College of Art & Design,
London, UK
Postgraduate Diploma Motion Gra-
phics
- 2003 - 2004
on,
London College of Communicati-
on,
London, UK
Magazine & Publishing Design
- 1995 - 1998
Oxford Brookes University, Oxford,
UK
BA, Hons History of Art & Anthropol-
ogy

Jonathan Brantschen

b. Fiesch, Switzerland, 1981

- 2007 - 2008
Chelsea College of Art and Design,
London, UK
Postgraduate Diploma Motion Gra-
phics
- 2006 - 2007
Art
Central Saint Martins College of
and Design, London, UK
Fine Art (first year)
- 2001 - 2005
Ecole professionnelle des arts
contemporains, Saxon, CH
BA, Strip Cartoons / Illustration

Selected Exhibitions & Residencies

- Oct 2016
Unil Triennale, Lausanne, CH
Sculpture
- Sept 2016
Dienstgebäude, Zürich, CH
Group Show
- Jul 2016
Kunst in der Stadt (KidS), Brig, CH
Installation
- Mar 2014
Parasol Unit, London, UK
Screening and performance
- Feb 2014
Weiss Galerie, Zürich, CH
Exhibition and conversation
- Jan 2014
TINA.B & MUBE Museum,
Sao Paulo, BR
Performance
- Nov 2013
Musée d'art du Valais, Sion, CH
Prix Manor Sion 2013
- Oct 2013
Art Licks Weekend, London, UK
Rowing 'Worstward Ho!
- Oct 2012
Saatchi Gallery, London
Performance and auction of Untitled

- July 2012
Fondazione Aurelio Petroni,
Naples, IT
Residency
- May 2012
The Photographers' gallery,
London, UK
Born In 1985
- May 2012
Institute for Contemporary Arts
(ICA), London, UK
Panel discussion on JocJonJosch's
Existere performance
- Dec 2011
Peckham Hotel, London, UK
Performance and video event
- Oct 2011
TINA B. Prague Contemporary Art
Festival, Prague, CZ
Explosion photographs exhibited
- July 2011
Testbed 1, London, UK
Existere
- July 2011
Son gallery, London, UK
Existere at Son Gallery
- May 2011
Galerie Monika Wertheimer,
Basel, CH
Agreements of Collaboration
- Mar 2011
Arte laguna Prize, Venice, IT
Finalists of the International Arte
Laguna Prize
- Jan 2011
Son Gallery, London, England, UK
Exercises in Failure
- Dec 2010
Situation 1, Ferme-Asile, Sion, CH
Une exposition collective
- Oct 2010
The Anna Mahler Project space,
Spoleto, IT
The Beasts
- Aug 2010
Son gallery, London, UK
The Beasts
- July 2010
Royal Academy of Arts,
London, UK
Summer Exhibition 2010
- May 2010
Institute for Contemporary Arts
(ICA), London, UK
ICA Live Weekends
- March 2010
ChelseA space, London, UK
5th anniversary Exhibition
- Jun 2009
UK
Royal Academy of Arts, London,
Summer Exhibition 2009
- Nov 2008
Soga, Bratislava, Slovakia, SK
Language of Humour

Collections & Awards

- Oct 2013
Bernard soens and Mimi Dusselier,
Waregem, B
Collection
- Aug 2013
Caldic collection, The Hague, NL
Museum Voorlinden
- Jan 2013
Prix Manor 2013, sion, ch
- Sept 2012
Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, UK
Special Collections
- July 2012
Arts Council England, UK
Artists' International Development
Fund
- June 2012
Tate, London, UK
Special book collection

June 2012	Chelsea College of Art & Design library, London, UK <i>Special Collections</i>
Dec 2011	Kunstsammlung der F. Hoffmann-La Roche Ag, Ch
Apr 2011	Swiss Cultural Fund in Britain, Ch / UK
Mar 2011	Arte laguna, Venice, IT <i>Special Prize "TINA B"</i>
Dec 2010	Förderpreis des Kantons Wallis, Ch <i>FCD-Collection</i>
Oct 2010	The Anna Mahler international Association, Spoleto, IT
Feb 2009	Radiological institute, Basel, CH

Lecturing

Chelsea College of Art & Design, London, UK
Visiting Lecturer

London South Bank University, London, UK
Associate Lecturer

Buckinghamshire New University, Buckinghamshire, UK
Associate Lecturer

JOCJONJOSCH is kindly supported by:

