

CAREY YOUNG

LAISSER LE MONDE PARLER DE LUI-MÊME

/ LET THE WORLD SPEAK FOR ITSELF

CURATOR: KEREN DETTON

LE **QU** CENTRE
D'ART CONTEMPORAIN
DE QUIMPER
IER

GUIDE #87

MAY 25 - SEPTEMBER 15, 2013

CAREY YOUNG LAISSER LE MONDE PARLER DE LUI-MÊME / LET THE WORLD SPEAK FOR ITSELF

CURATOR: KEREN DETTON

Carey Young bases her artistic practice on cross-fertilisation between disciplines like economics, law, politics and science. The tools used in these various fields – codes, languages, methods – provide the material for her performances, installations, photographs and videos. Sometimes poetic, sometimes ironic, her work requires a range of skills and expertise often far removed from the world of art. Assuming an artistic identity that adopts the mechanisms of a business, Young shapes a body of ideas critical of our globalised world in works that make visible the interconnection between economics, art, justice and politics. While working within these systems, she condemns the hold their models exert on individual experiences of the world.

For the first time in France, Le Quartier is putting forward many of the issues raised by an artist who continuously comes up with new subjects and new ways of presenting them – notably through photographic works reflecting a conceptual, experimental approach. The exhibition *Laisser le monde parler de lui-même / Let the World Speak for Itself* brings together thirteen works, some of them taking us back to the artist's beginnings: in *Everything You've Heard is Wrong*, we see her offering advice on corporate communication in a free-speech setting, while her photograph *The Desk*

combines rocket technology with a traditional educational context. These works accompany more recent ones, such as *Inventory*, which stands market codes and behavioural categories on their head.

In the exhibition as a whole, the evolution of artistic language in the context of a neoliberal economy highlights the relationships between the body and the ethical boundaries of transformation of social space. Structured according to legal and commercial procedures, these works shot through with poetry and humour reveal a fresh image temporality that takes us beyond standard representations.

Born in 1970 in Lusaka, Zambia, Carey Young lives and works in London. Holder of a Masters in Photography from the Royal College of Art in London, she has worked for various companies: a management consultancy, a Leftist economic think tank and an intellectual property consultancy. She has been included in many group exhibitions, including the Biennials in Taipei, Moscow, Tirana, Sharjah, Venice and Rennes. She is currently preparing *Legal Fictions*, a solo exhibition at the Migros Museum in Zurich, with an accompanying monograph.

With the support
of the British Council



ROOM 1

Body Techniques series

Body Techniques (after A Line in Ireland, Richard Long, 1974), 2007

Photograph (121.9 x 151.8 cm), frame (124.5 x 155.6 cm)

Body Techniques (after Dance or Exercise on the Perimeter of a Square [Square Dance], Bruce Nauman, 1967–68), 2007

Photograph. (121.9 x 142.2 cm), frame (124.5 x 145.4 cm)

Body Techniques (after Hartford Wash: Washing, Tracks, Maintenance: Outside, Mierle Laderman Ukeles, 1973), 2007

Photograph (121.9 x 139.1 cm), frame (124.5 x 143.5 cm)

Body Techniques (after Circles, Ulrich Ruckriem, 1971), 2007

Photograph (121.9 x 139.7 cm), frame (124.5 x 143.5 cm)

Body Techniques (after Sculpture II, by Kirsten Justesen, 1969), 2007

Photograph (121.9 x 142.2 cm), frame (124.5 x 154.9 cm)

Body Techniques (after Encirclement, Valie Export, 1976), 2007

Photograph (121.9 x 152.4 cm), frame (124.5 x 156.8 cm)

Body Techniques (after Lean In, Valie Export, 1976), 2007

Photograph (121.9 x 151.8 cm), frame (124.5 x 155.6 cm)

The photographs in this series explore the relationships between art, the body and globalized business, with its attendant new forms of architecture. Wearing a suit, the artist re-enacts notable performance works from the 1960s and 70s amid the futuristic, empty landscapes of enormous building projects in Dubai and Sharjah, in the United Arab Emirates. Quoting artists like Richard Long, Mierle Ukeles Laderman and Dennis

Oppenheim, whose practices often reflected a critical stance towards the museum and the art market, Carey Young interrogates the relationship between contemporary art and its presentation in an embryonic urban landscape as envisioned by the market and business. Her performances also reference Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus: for Bourdieu individual behaviour is conditioned by ambient social patterns, which means that the body, like landscape, becomes the expression of a dominant ideology.

Everything You've Heard is Wrong, 1999 Video loop (6'35)

This video of the artist's first performance was made soon after graduating from art college, and was also the first work she made in response to business subject matter. The venue she chose was Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park, London. Dressed as a successful businesswoman, but still retaining a comic vulnerability, Young offers her listeners the key to successful public speaking. Her outline of communication methods appears to mimic the style of the other, more popular orators in this famous forum of free speech, although her very presence also suggests the overthrow of the public realm by market forces.

The Desk, 1998 Photograph mounted on aluminium (38.1 x 45.7 cm)

The Desk, a photograph taken by the artist during her visit to a major university of space technology in Russia, shows a school desk set in front of a rocket engine. In a mise en scène that calls to mind Soviet propaganda, a technological dynamic associates learning with industrial performance. This image suggests an all-embracing technocratic culture in which an insignificant educational object is confronted with a potent symbol of the advance of space science.

Contracting Universe, 2010 Digital print on adhesive vinyl, bench Image courtesy NASA/JPL – Caltech/ University of Arizona

This large-scale print of a digital rendering of the surface of Mars is based on a found image created by NASA. It could be interpreted as a Modernist photograph of a sublime mountain landscape, except that, seen close up, it offers a pixelated digital effect. Like a technological vanitas, this work reveals our tendency to turn the representation of the unknown into something familiar.

ROOM 2

Redshift Series, 2010 (exposed from a slice of pallasite meteorite, formed approximately 4.6 billion years ago, at the birth of the Solar System. The artist hereby declares that with effect from 1st January 2110 copyright protection in this work shall be abandoned on a country by country basis. This global abandonment of copyright is to begin with the Prime Meridian and will proceed westerly across the globe at the rate of 1000 miles per year, as measured from the Equator)

Photographs mounted on aluminium (84.1 x 106.7 cm chaque), frames (113.7 x 136.5 x 3.8 cm)

Obtained by using translucent slivers of a meteorite to act as « negatives » within a photographic darkroom, this series of six photographic prints is in the camera-less tradition of Christian Schäd's photograms and Man Ray's rayograms.

The images are a window onto the formation of a meteorite during the birth of the solar system 4.75 billion years ago. Here vertiginous cosmic time is juxtaposed not only with the exposure time of light falling onto a photosensitive

surface, but also with the juridical time of intellectual property law: Carey Young stipulates that beginning on 1 January 2110, the copyright to these images will enter the public domain, starting at the Greenwich Meridian and moving westward at a speed of 1000 miles per year. Developed with a lawyer, this is a new form in copyright law which the artist intends to 'unfur' across the world like the tail of a comet hurtling through space.

Obsidian Contract, 2010 Vinyl text (24.8 x 19.1 cm), black mirror (69.9 x 54.6 cm)

Obsidian Contract comprises a legal text written backwards but legible as a reflection in a black mirror. Black or « obsidian » mirrors were used in witchcraft rituals, as well as by Romantic landscape painters, who used them as a viewing device. The reading of the text constitutes a kind of pact, opening up the exhibition space visible in the mirror as a new area of public space in which the visitor can indulge in activities considered illegal in public space at different times in history. With its witty adaptation of legal conventions, this work raises the issue of the gallery as an anarchistic public space. The text in the work reads as follows:

« By viewing your reflection within this black mirror for more than ten seconds, you declare and agree that the space visible to you within the mirror is common land, within which the following activities are permitted: sleeping; loitering, public access, public assembly, sexual activity; gathering firewood; the grazing of animals; taking photographs; distributing propaganda; personal expression in any form; sharing goods, tools, and information; wearing any type of clothing, or no clothing. »

Inventory, 2007

Vinyl text and ink on paper, dimensions variable / Commissioned by Jens Hoffman – Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art, Lisbon, remade for Le Quartier in 2013.

Taking her inspiration from an English chemist's attempt to calculate the price of the human body – as mentioned by Georges Bataille in his review *Acéphale* – Carey Young set about updating the calculation with the aid of two scientists, Dr John Emsley of the University of Cambridge and Dr Ilya Eigenbrot of Imperial College London. She inventoried the chemical elements of her body and calculated their market value at the time of weighing. The total of these elements is expressed as a graphic and a figure in Pounds Sterling, which also represents the sale price of the work. Each time the work is commissioned for exhibition, the artist weighs herself, on the date of the invitation, and calculations are made as to the exact value of her body on that day. Since its initial creation in 2007, the work has fluctuated significantly in value, according to the artist's weight and variations in the price of its chemical elements. This literal presentation of the body as a commodity foregrounds not only the mass cultural treatment accorded the female body, but is also intended as a satirical comment on the perceived « value » of an artist, or art itself, and the speculative character of the art market.

I am a Revolutionary, 2001

Video loop (4'08) / Commissioned by Film & Video Umbrella, in association with John Hansard Gallery, Southampton

This is a video of a performance by the artist in an empty office as she strives to perfect her enunciation of the single sentence « I am a revolutionary » – an affirmation selected by the artist from a 'self help' book for businesspeople because it suggested the

legacy of the avant garde, as well as political activism more generally. Working with a public speaking trainer whose job it is to coach company heads and politicians, the artist and her trainer appear suspended in an abject but deadpan continuum of repetition, effort and belief that change may be possible.

ROOM 3

Memento Park, 2010

HD Video (10'23) / Commissioned by Eastside Projects, Birmingham; Cornerhouse, Manchester; mima, Middlesbrough

The *Memento Park* was shot in a park in Budapest, home to a collection of statues from the Communist era. Frozen in their poses and dramatic gestures, these Socialist-Realist figures are set in the midst of the everyday life of a quiet suburb.

Memento Park raises the issue of the place of history, and the identity of the Left, within today's society. At the same time the tranquil natural setting gives these propaganda icons the strange serenity of witnesses to the dawn and dusk of an idyll.

Terminal Velocity, 2010

Adhesive vinyl text, spotlight

In this work the figure of 1,404,000 miles (approx. 2 million kilometres) per hour represents the speed of the gallery in space in relation to the expansion of the Universe since the Big Bang. Calculated by Dr Malcolm Fairbairn, an astrophysicist at Kings College London, the figure is lit by a spotlight that brings out the imperfections in the wall at the same time as it dramatises a space where future events will take place.

ROOM 4

Uncertain Contract, 2008

Video loop (14'57)

In this video an actor performs a script made up of legal terms taken from a business contract, such as « service », « parties » or « condition ». The *mise en scène* references both the white cube of the typical gallery and the white pages of the contract itself. Playing the part of a young lawyer going through his papers, the actor launches into a playful improvisation exercise that totally invalidates the legal identity of the contract by suggesting multiple interpretations of its language.

In this work the artist raises the question of the norms, conventions and laws that govern our society and condition our relationship with others. She works against the precision of law, foregrounding instead the ambiguity of language.

Missing Mass, 2010

7142 dark matter particles, perspex container (50 x 50 x 50 cm), text, plinth (100 x 50 x 50 cm)

With thanks to Dr Malcolm Fairbairn, Department of Physics, Kings College London, for the calculations.

Missing Mass is a work that gives sculptural form to 7142 particles of the hypothetical dark matter which supposedly regulates the mass of the Universe. Here the artist uses a non-observable theoretical reality to evoke the fluctuations and reliability of the world around us, in a play on quantitative changes of matter as justified by scientific explanation.

Counter Offer, 2008

Diptych, ink on paper (29.5 x 21 cm)

This diptych was created with advice from a legal team. The texts present an offer and a counter offer, each bearing a utopian theme,

and reading them sets up a legal loop in which both are withdrawn.

Lines Made by Walking, 2003,
Looped sequence of 35mm photographic transparencies / Commissioned by Beck's Futures, Institute of Contemporary Art, London

A projected slide piece consisting of a series of photographic transparencies shot at a fixed viewpoint. The piece features a performance by Carey Young : we see the artist walking forwards then backwards repeatedly within a crowd of commuters who are walking towards London's financial district. The artist follows the flow, and then walks against it, her linear path sometimes forcing others to get out of the way. Her clothing – a grey felt coat – seems to be commuter wear, whilst also referencing the felt associated with Joseph Beuys. Drawing on Richard Long's famous work *A Line Made by Walking, England* (1967) in which a repeated walking action inscribes a flattened line into grass, Carey Young's performance also inscribes a line in to the busy flow of capital and its daily rhythms. The work satirises the idea of artistic « struggle » whilst suggesting the interrelationships between the individual and the social. As a projected loop of eighty slides with no beginning or end, the slide projector's sound adds a sense of inevitability and a machinic rhythm to the work, plus a cyclical form which enhances the meaning of the piece.

LE QUARTIER, CENTRE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN DE QUIMPER

10, esplanade François Mitterrand
29000 Quimper
T : +33 (0)2 98 55 55 77
www.le-quartier.net

HOW TO FIND US

Follow the signs «Centre ville» –
the entrance is opposite the Théâtre
de Cornouaille

Accessible to people with mobility
impairments

OPENING HOURS

Tuesday–Saturday, 1 – 6 pm.
Sundays, 2 – 6 pm.

Summer hours (July 1 – September 30)

Tuesday–Saturday, 10 – 12 am. and 1 – 6 pm.
Sundays and public holidays, 2 – 6 pm.

ADMISSION

2 € (Free admission for all on Sundays)

Free admission : students (under 26),
Art Passport holders, jobseekers, people
over 65, Le Quartier subscribers

THE BOOKSHOP-CAFÉ

The bookshop is the perfect place for enjoying
a coffee and consulting a range of books
relating to the exhibitions and the current art
scene in Brittany. There are also monthly
presentations of artists' multiples and art
books for children, as well as regular writing
workshops. The café offers hot and cold
drinks, together with free WiFi access.

GUIDE #86

Contributors: Maëlle Bobet,
Keren Detton, Sylvie Doré, Anna Olszewska.
Graphic Design : Jérôme Saint-Loubert Bié
with Caroline Fabès

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Anthony Allen ; British Council, Paris ; Olivier
Cassiot ; centre d'art Passerelle, Brest ; Owen
Cole ; Paula Cooper Gallery, New York ; Élodie
Cousquer ; Olivier Droux ; Olivier Evin ; Jake
Ewert ; Gisèle Favory ; Cat Kron ; Robert Lands,
HowardKennedyFsi LLP and Jaime Stapleton ;
Gwen Le Poupon ; Flore Lohéac ; Pascal
Parmentier ; Primset, Quimper ; Hervé
Quéméré ; Samuel Ramonet ; Simon Rannou ;
Sharjah Biennial Artist in Residence Program
and London College of Communication ; Joelle
Te Paske ; The Photographers' Gallery,
Londres ; Théâtre de Cornouaille – Scène
nationale de Quimper.

PARTNERS

With the support of the city of Quimper,
the Ministry of Culture and Communication,
the Finistère department and the Brittany
Region



VILLE
DE QUIMPER

