

LISSON GALLERY

Finestre Sull'Arte
06 October 2025

Finestre sull'Arte

Quantum visions and electric dreams in two exhibitions at OGR Turin

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Categories: **Exhibitions / Disclaimer**

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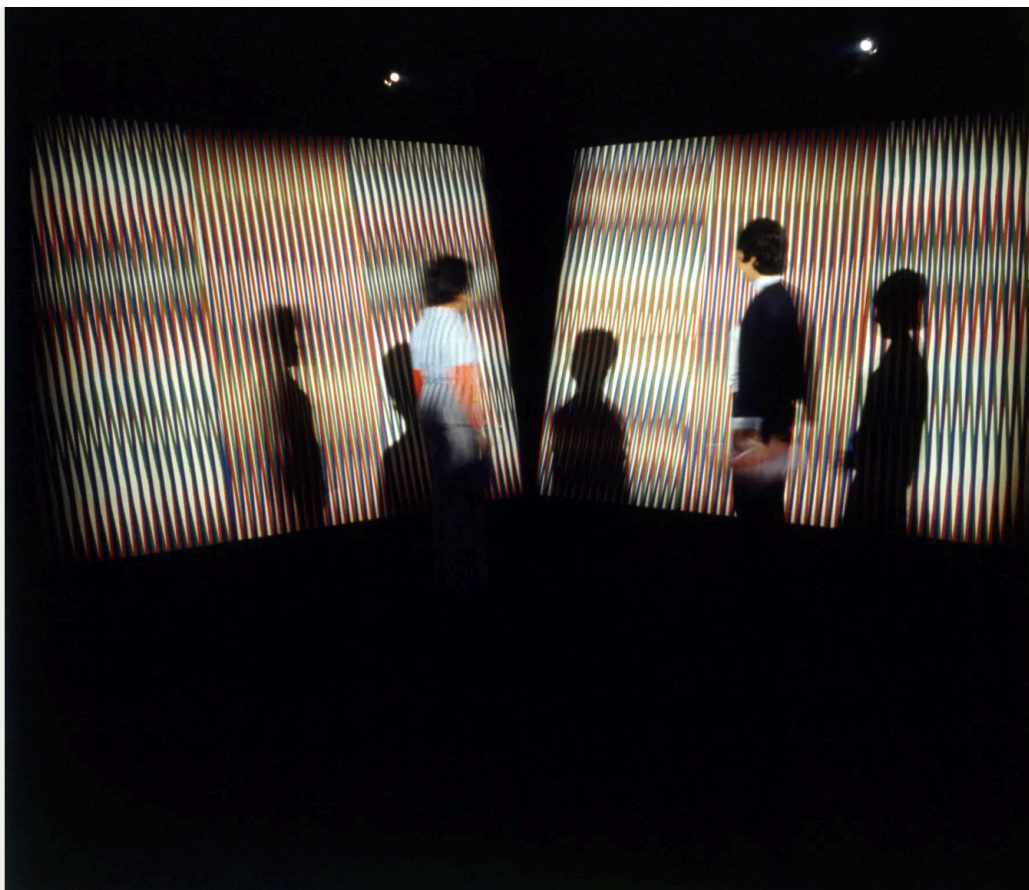
From October 31, 2025 to May 10, 2026, OGR Turin will host two international exhibitions exploring the relationship between art and technology, from quantum computing to pre-Internet visual experiments.

Turin is preparing to host an exhibition season dedicated to the dialogue between **art and technology** with two new international exhibitions that will occupy the **spaces of OGR, the cultural hub of the CRT Foundation**. From October 31, 2025 to May 10, 2026, the public will be able to visit **Laure Prouvost**'s *WE FELT A STAR DYING* and *ELECTRIC DREAMS*. [📍 Art & Technology Before the Internet](#), two projects that investigate the relationship between artistic research and scientific innovation.

WE FELT A STAR DYING, commissioned by **LAS Art Foundation** and co-commissioned by OGR, brings to Turin the work of French artist Laure Prouvost, first presented in February 2025 in the spaces of Kraftwerk in Berlin. The installation, curated by **Carly Whitefield** for LAS and **Samuele Piazza** for OGR, arrives in Binario 1 in a new configuration that dialogues with the historic architecture of the former railway workshop. The project stems from a collaboration with philosopher Tobias Rees and Hartmut Neven, founder of **Google Quantum AI**, and proposes a multisensory experience that integrates images, sounds and scents to explore the potential of quantum computing and emerging technologies. In parallel, in Track 2, lands *ELECTRIC DREAMS. Art & Technology Before the Internet*, organized by **Tate Modern** and OGR Torino and curated by **Val Ravaglia** and **Samuele Piazza**. The exhibition traces more than forty years of artistic experimentation located at the crossroads of visual art and technology, before the spread of the Internet on a global scale. The exhibition highlights how artists have adopted tools developed in military or industrial settings to redefine collective imaginaries, stimulate critical thinking and anticipate cultural transformations related to technological innovation.



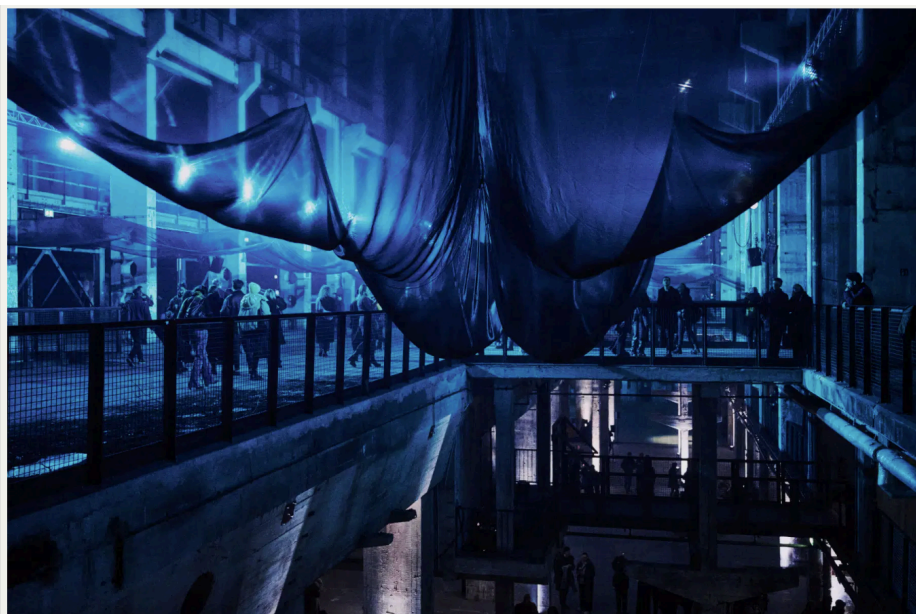
Laure Prouvost, *WE FELT A STAR DYING*. Installation view at Kraftwerk Berlin (2025). Commissioned by LAS Art Foundation and co-commissioned by OGR Torino. © 2025 Laure Prouvost. Photo: Andrea Rossetti © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2025



Carlos Cruz-Diez, *Ambiente Cromointerferente* (1974; dedicated application, video projection; Caracas) Photo: Atelier Cruz-Diez Paris/Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Sofía Imber y Sala Cadafe, Caracas, Venezuela © Estate of Carlos Cruz-Diez. Allrights reserved 2025 /Bridgeman Images

Both exhibitions present complementary approaches to the relationship between creativity and technology, tracing an arc from the **pioneering experiments of the second half of the 20th century** to contemporary research on quantum computing and artificial intelligence. In this sense, the program confirms OGR's role as a center of interdisciplinary production and experimentation, capable of bringing artists, scientists and international institutions into dialogue. The autumn season at OGR Turin aims to stimulate reflection on how advanced technologies transform the perception of the world and influence contemporary artistic language. *WE FELT A STAR DYING* offers an investigation into the possibilities of quantum computing, with a sensory approach that blends visual art, sound and scents, while *ELECTRICDREAMS* provides an understanding of the historical roots of technology applied to art, showing tools and practices developed before the digital age and global connectivity.

With *WE FELT A STAR DYING* and *ELECTRIC DREAMS*, the OGR Turin thus consolidates its mission as an interdisciplinary center, capable of analyzing technological changes and their cultural fallout. The exhibition invites reflection on the connections between contemporary art and technological innovation, highlighting how artistic creativity can dialogue with science and advanced research to explore new ways of representing and interpreting reality.



Laure Prouvost, *WE FELT A STAR DYING*. Opening to the public at Kraftwerk Berlin (2025). Commissioned by LAS Art Foundation and co-commissioned by OGR Turin. © 2025 Laure Prouvost. Photo: Milena Wegner © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2025



Quantum visions and electric dreams in two exhibitions at OGR Turin

Artnet News
14 April 2025

artnet

Art & Exhibitions

Will Quantum Computing Lead to the Next Renaissance in Art?

A new show and program at LAS by Laure Prouvost has me hoping so.

by **Kate Brown** • April 14, 2025



It's surprising that, even though quantum theory is now officially over 100 years old, so few people truly understand it. That's not a failing of the public—it's just that quantum mechanics demands a kind of mental flexibility we don't often use.

To accept that particles can be entangled across vast distances, or that matter can exist in multiple states at once, all that challenges the classical sense of reality that we've grown accustomed to: that things are one way, or they're another. Quantum theory insists: they can be both.

And yet, as the filmmaker Chris Marker once said, “Rarely has reality needed so much to be imagined.” Doesn’t that feel especially true today?

In this, Laure Prouvost has given me some faith. After stepping out from the near-total darkness of her exhibition “We Felt a Star Dying,” commissioned by LAS Art Foundation, shown in the cavernous Kraftwerk Berlin, I felt I had glimpsed something in her oscillating installation: a possibility of a new artistic era, one accelerated and liberated by quantum computing and its theory. While so much of contemporary art has been whittled down into digestible bites—something easily tidied into a press release or sales pitch—here was a work that resisted categorization, one that seemed to bloom in ambiguity.



Laure Prouvost, WE FELT A STAR DYING 2025. Installation view at Kraftwerk Berlin. Commissioned by LAS Art Foundation and co-commissioned by OGR Torino. © 2025 Laure Prouvost. Photo: Andrea Rossetti © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2025

Prouvost is known for sowing a bit of mischief into her projects, which suits the unpredictable nature of quantum technology well. The French conceptual artist, who some have called an artist-cum-trickster, has tried to fold time and space before; she told everyone she was digging a tunnel between the British and French pavilions when she represented France in 2019. Prouvost has played with the notion of new forms of intelligence—several projects incorporate octopuses, works that encompassed her fascination with the creature’s embodied intellect and otherworldliness.

While artificial intelligence is well-known by now as a new material for artists, quantum computing qubits, the fundamental units of a quantum computer, are an exciting and lesser-known tool that can alter and expand work in manifold ways. Quantum computers process information using qubits, units that can exist in a state of both 0 and 1 simultaneously (called *superposition*), and which can be connected over long distances (*entanglement*). These are a good match for Prouvost, who uses them as a creative sparring partner.

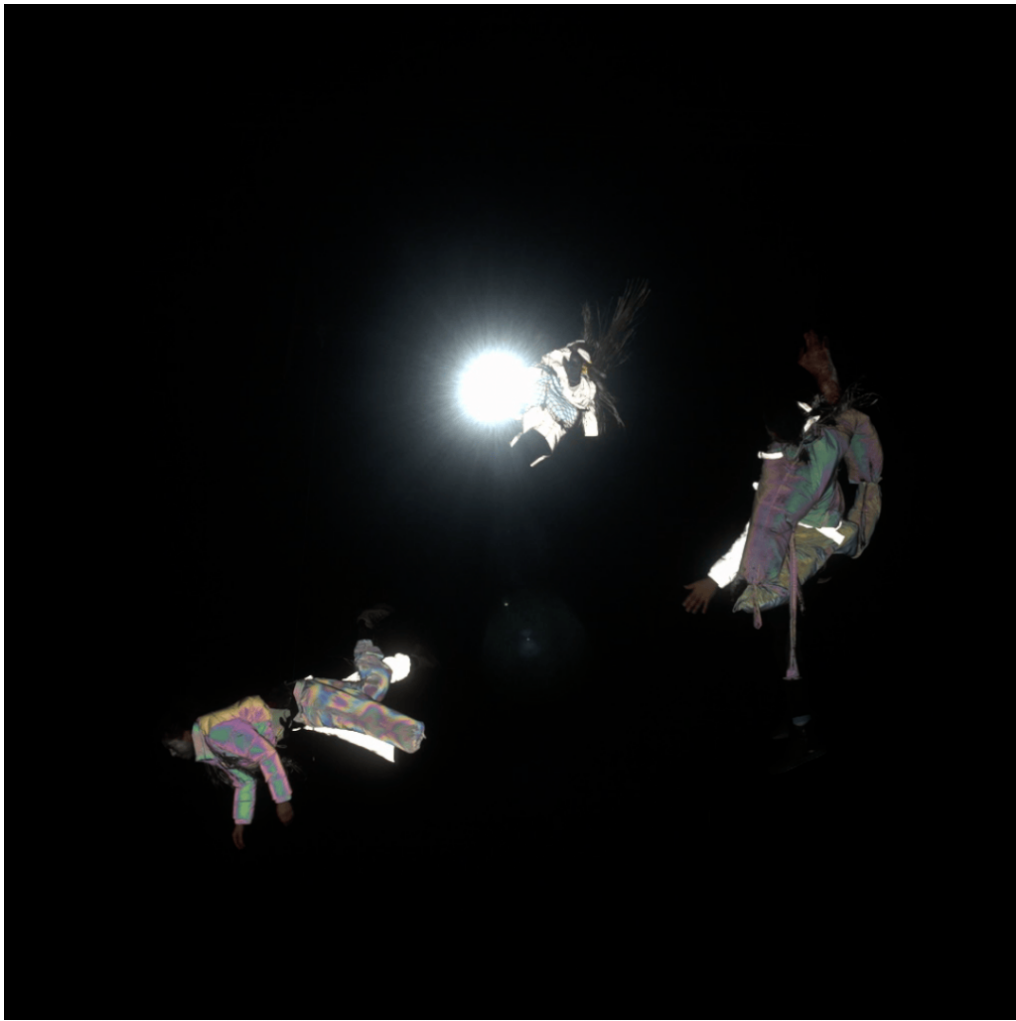
Before you see her new multipart work, which manifests as an ever-changing iridescent cascading fabric installation, swelling and sinking against the concrete parameters of Kraftwerk, you hear it. It sounds like it is breathing. What was one of the final touches is one of its most crucial in bringing vitality to the installation, which can best be described simultaneously as a machine, an environment, and a creature.



Laure Prouvost, WE FELT A STAR DYING 2025. Installation view at Kraftwerk Berlin. Commissioned by LAS Art Foundation and co-commissioned by OGR Torino. © 2025 Laure Prouvost. Photo: Andrea Rossetti © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2025

At the central “brain” of this installation is a film, which you lie down on a soft pillow-like half womb and gaze up at. Technically speaking, what you see is what Prouvost calls a “Newtonian film” recording that was fed into a quantum computer, which introduced indeterminate variations to the edit and its imagery.

This makes the film less fixed—a quality that feels aligned with the ways good art should behave, at least in my view. *We Felt a Star Dying* is fluid, shifting, resistant to a singular interpretation, or even viewing. As viewers lie down they watch mitochondria kiss, a cat walks across the camera lens, though another time it is a bird. Worms move about in soil, and limbs of dancers replicate, twist, merge, and tremble as if they were turned into light and shot through a kaleidoscope. I went twice; it was never quite the same. Patterns emerge that appear like thermal maps. The quantum warps are most basically described as visual effects, but the edits and chronology of the film itself are also warped, as is the coordination of the kinetic installation around you. Prouvost’s own voice is what seems most continuous. A delicate and melodic French accent guides us towards the ideas of everything being everything, and everything being quantum.



Laure Prouvost, *We Felt a Star Dying*, 2025, video still. Commissioned by LAS Art Foundation and co-commissioned by OGR Torino. © 2025 Laure Prouvost. © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2025

But this is a work that does not simply draw from quantum theory or attempt to explain its science—it reawakens artistic questions about perception, instability, and interpretation instead. Prouvost’s installation, developed in collaboration with philosopher Tobias Rees and Hartmut Neven (head of Google’s Quantum A.I. lab), is technically ambitious, but more importantly it is deeply sensorial. It disarms you the right amount so that you can *feel* the idea, not rationally understand it (though LAS does have an extensive learning center for that). With “We Felt a Star Dying,” it is not about harnessing a quantum computer or knowing how it works and what it can do (though that is also an effect)—it’s about trying to push viewers to feel the boundaries being redrawn.

The musician John Cage, cited by Prouvost’s audio and visual team as an influence, named a process called “chance operations,” a way to feed

natural randomness into the artistic process so as to surrender control, to resensitize both the artist and viewer. Quantum mechanics and computing, with its inherent refusal of binaries and a needed embrace of uncertainty and speculation, feels like an echo of that same impulse. It offers a way out of the overly legible, the tidily framed, over-marketed condition much of contemporary art finds itself in.



Laure Prouvost, *We Felt a Star Dying*, 2025, video still. Commissioned by LAS Art Foundation and co-commissioned by OGR Torino. © 2025 Laure Prouvost. © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2025

The exhibition of Prouvost launches LAS's Sensing Quatum program, which will include further installations, a symposium, and a sound lab across this year and in 2026. Unlike A.I., which, if it follows the input rules, produces mimetic results, quantum computing systems produce an ambiguous outcome. These curious systems offer a way to reintroduce strangeness, intuition, and uncertainty into artistic function of art is to imitate nature in her manner of operation." In other

words, art should reflect the chaos, unpredictability, and multiplicity of the universe itself.

And while access to quantum computing is still limited—there are only about a hundred worldwide, adding to the monumentality of this show—the conceptual shift they represent is here. Even without physical machines, artists are working with the metaphors and symbolisms they offer. What could art look like if it fully embraced that? If we could build as second nature the notion that nothing is ever just one thing; that everything is not an “and/or” dichotomy, but a “both and” widening of a viewpoint. To truly feel that everything is connected. Imagine reality—and society—with this kind of spirit at hand. There is something to be excited about.



Kate Brown

Senior Editor

Freize

25 February 2025

FRIEZE

Will Quantum Computing Change Art?

In Berlin, Laure Prouvost joins the small group of artists and institutions engaging with this emerging field



A large sheet of sheer, black fabric hangs from the ceiling of Kraftwerk, a former power station turned arts space in Berlin. Sections extend across the vast, industrial space, rippling like the trailing tendrils of a jellyfish, seeming to both conduct and respond to other elements in the space. Whether it's the breathy soundscape punctuated by sudden bursts of noise or the delicate, meteor-like sculptures suspended from the ceiling that shiver as they are raised and lowered, everything feels in sync – an orchestra of disparate forms bound together by invisible forces.

This is 'WE FELT A STAR DYING', a new large-scale exhibition by Brussels-based artist Laure Prouvost that opened last week. Created after two years of research with philosopher Tobias Rees and Google's Quantum Artificial Intelligence Lab founder Hartmut Neven, the work explores concepts from quantum physics, a branch of science that describes how particles behave at the smallest scales, often in ways that defy classical logic. '[The project] isn't just about experimenting with new technology; it's about shifting our perspective,' says Bettina Kames, founder of LAS Art Foundation, the Berlin-based organization who commissioned 'WE FELT A STAR DYING' to launch their new *Sensing Quantum* programme.

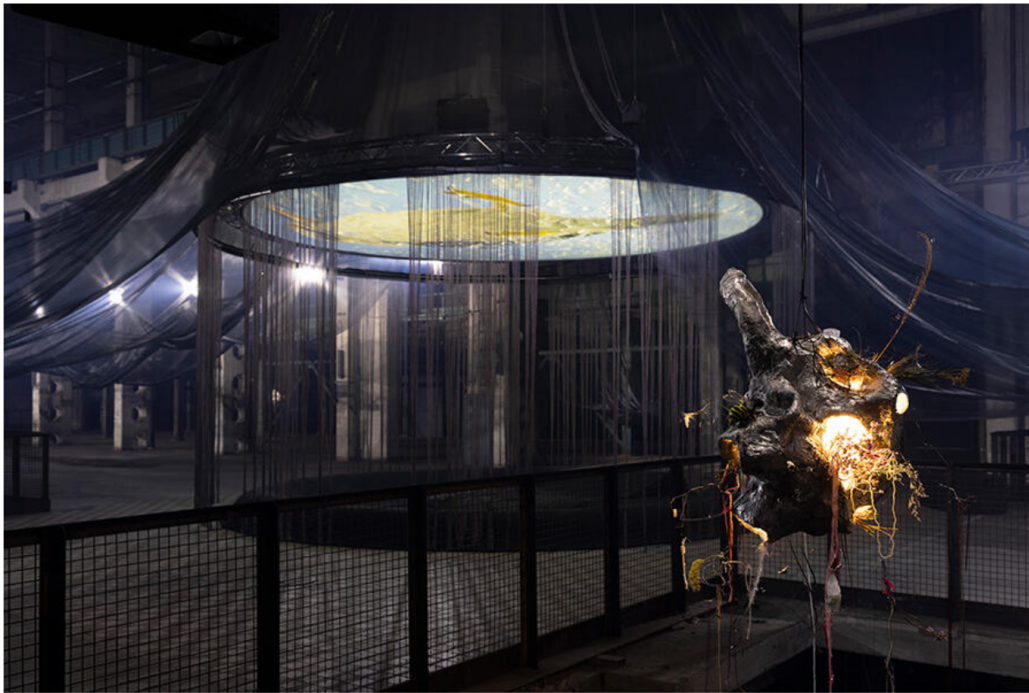


Laure Prouvost, *WE FELT A STAR DYING*, 2025, film still. Courtesy: the artist, LAS Art Foundation and OGR Torino

The theory of quantum entanglement – where two or more entities intermingle and become deeply connected, regardless of the distance between them – seems to be one of the key inspirations behind the exhibition, and its central film in particular. Shown on a circular screen beneath the lengths of suspended fabric, Prouvost’s film features close-up footage of everything from bird’s feet to concrete particles. In a voiceover, the artist recites poetic phrases in a seductive whisper; ‘we are we’ is a repeated refrain. At the press preview, Prouvost described how quantum theories can promote empathy and unity, imploring visitors to ‘experience this show as a we’ and ‘forget yourself, become the earth, become the concrete, become the column.’

‘WE FELT A STAR DYING’ coincides with the centennial celebrations of quantum physics, which are being marked by a U.N.-declared international year. It feels incredibly timely given the rapid advancements in quantum computing, in which quantum bits (qubits) – Prouvost playfully renames them ‘cute bits’ in her show, reimagining them as kinetic sculptures – are used to perform calculations at extraordinary speeds. ‘While the digital computers we use every day process information step by step, quantum computers process it all at once,’ explains Libby Heaney, a London-based artist with a doctorate in quantum physics who has collaborated extensively with LAS [on previous projects](#). Quantum computers differ from AI models as they

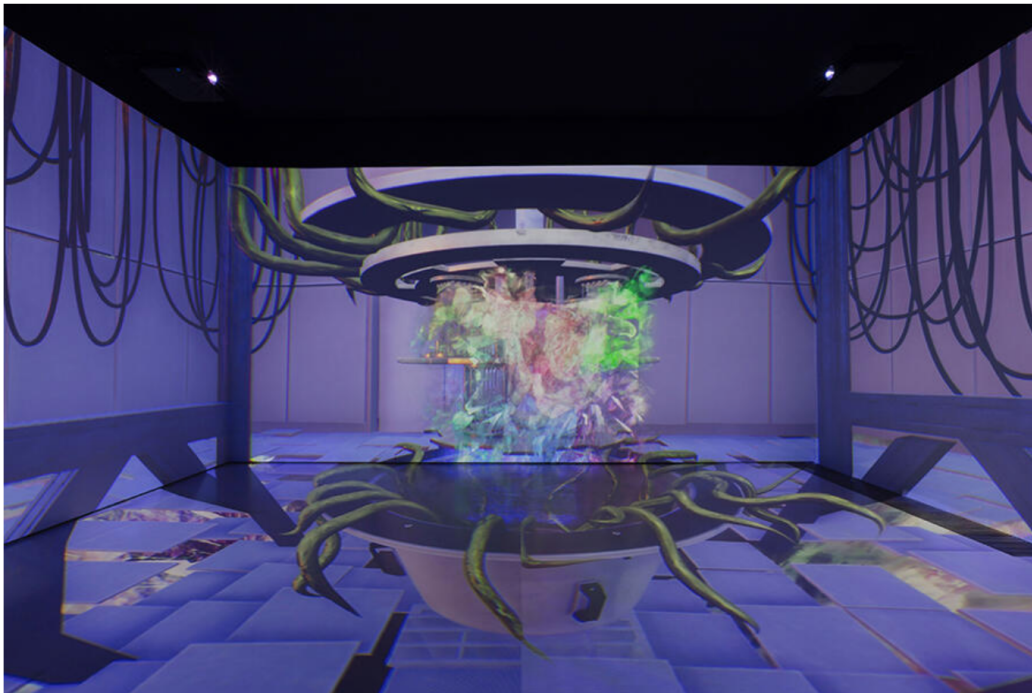
can imagine new futures and possibilities, rather than simply copying the past after being trained on existing data. ‘In some ways, they’re closer to us,’ adds Prouvost. ‘They have their own agency and aren’t as easily controlled.’



Laure Prouvost, 'WE FELT A STAR DYING', 2025, exhibition view. Courtesy: the artist, LAS Art Foundation, Berlin, and OGR Torino; photograph: Andrea Rossetti

While Prouvost worked with data from a quantum computer on the film for 'WE FELT A STAR DYING', using it to reimagine the order and aesthetic of her footage, it doesn't look like quantum computers will become regular tools for artists any time soon. Still in development, they're unreliable and highly sensitive to environmental changes like temperature fluctuations. 'They can even feel when a star dies,' Prouvost told me, hinting at the meaning behind her show's title. Heaney adds that while it's a myth that they're hard to access – IBM has had quantum computers available online since 2019 – artists struggle to know 'what to do with one unless [they] have training in quantum or [they're] so mathematically gifted that [they're] able to teach [themselves].'

That's not to say quantum science won't have a significant impact on the creative industries. Concepts like superposition – the idea that an entity can exist in two states at once – which is often used to evidence the existence of the multiverse, are particularly popular among artists and filmmakers. 'Every time something happens, the universe branches into two,' explains Heaney. 'There's an almost infinite number of universes where everything that could happen, happens.' She herself created *Heartbreak and Magic* in 2024, a VR experience at Somerset House shaped by the comfort she took in quantum physics after the tragic death of her sister. 'Science says that she should still exist in some parallel universe,' Heaney says.



Libby Heaney, *Ent-*, 2022, exhibition view. Courtesy: the artist and LAS Art Foundation, Berlin

Despite the exciting potential for creative exploration, the rapid development of quantum computing raises significant ethical concerns. '[Quantum computers] will be owned by the most powerful tech companies and governments in the world,' says Heaney. 'The ability to simulate and copy reality will be much deeper than ever before.' There are ecological concerns too, as quantum computing uses limited rare earth minerals, and Prouvost points to security risks: quantum computers could break passwords and locks at unprecedented speeds. In December, Google announced their Willow chip, capable of performing in five minutes a calculation that would take any other supercomputer over 10 septillion years' Kames explains, 'and no one really knows what China is doing.'

For these reasons, regulation is necessary for quantum technology just as it is for AI. While 'in terms of pure tech development [of quantum], the US and China are leading the way,' Kames believes that Europe has the opportunity to spearhead these ethical discussions – especially if it leverages its rich and diverse cultural sector to drive meaningful conversations. 'We strongly believe this technology will be disruptive,' she says. 'It will change the world. It's urgent to bring this discourse into society.' That's exactly what 'WE FELT A STAR DYING' sets out to do, challenging us not only to engage with burgeoning technology, but also to think deeply about the world we want to create with it.

Laure Prouvost's 'WE FELT A STAR DYING' is on view at Kraftwerk, Berlin, until 4 May

LISSON GALLERY

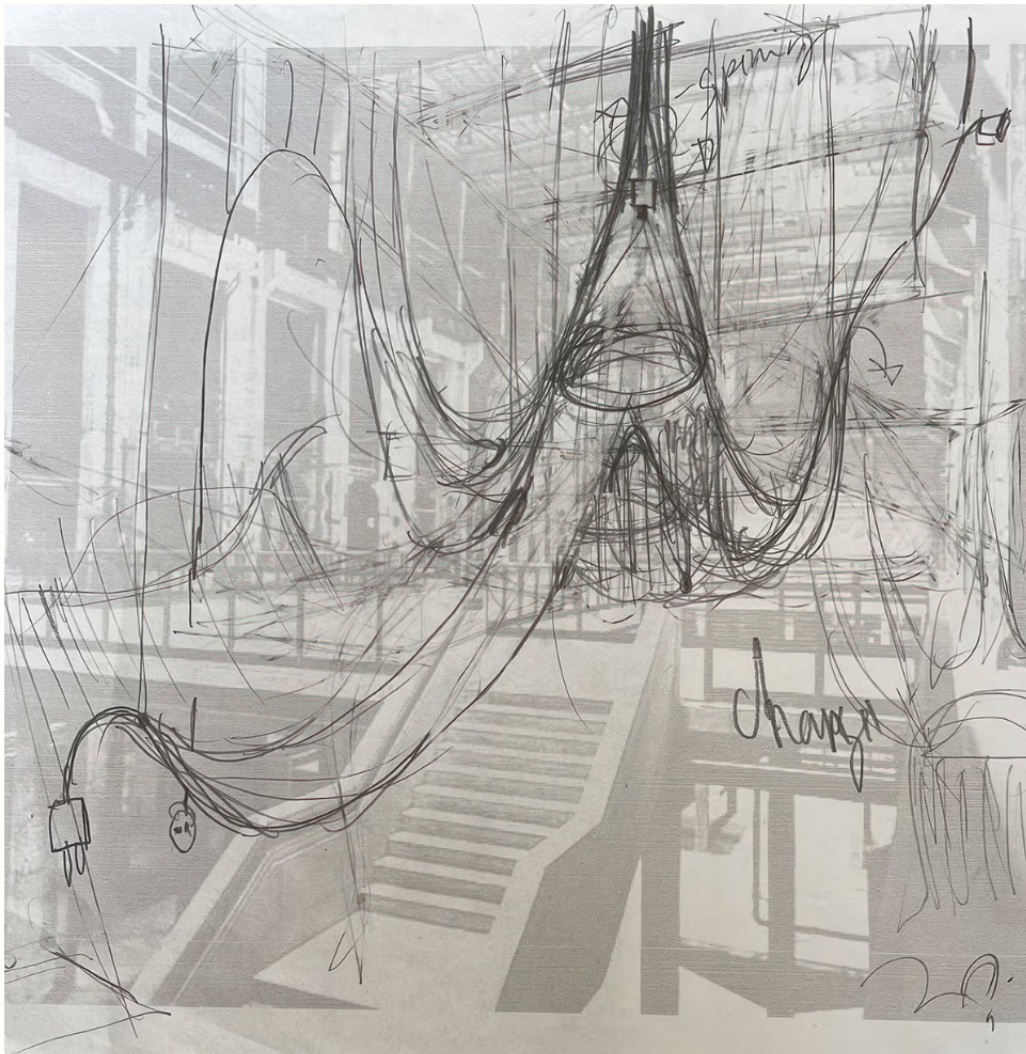
The Art Newspaper
21 February 2025



THE ART NEWSPAPER

A quantum era is coming. What does this mean for art?

New technology will support artists as they produce enquiring new work



Laure Prouvost's working sketch for *We Felt a Star Dying*, a plant-like installation inspired by her collaboration with the Google Quantum AI team and the philosopher Tobias Rees
Courtesy of the artist and the LAS Foundation

On a sunny day in Santa Barbara, I first set my eyes on the coldest place in the universe. A suspended tangle of wires and metal plates shrouds a small square of aluminium. Shut away from heat, light and the most distant cosmic noise, the palm-sized square runs at 0.1 Kelvin—a superconductive environment, cooler than deep space. This is a quantum processor, and at these temperatures quantum physics is best harnessed to enable unimaginable feats of computing.

But I am not an engineer or a scientist. I run LAS Art Foundation, a non-profit organisation based in Berlin. So, what am I doing at the lab of Google Quantum AI?

I am meeting with Hartmut Neven, a scientist, and Tobias Rees, a philosopher. Together, we are reflecting on this emergent and extraordinary technology. It is predicted to far outpace all known computers. But when? And what does this mean, not just for science or AI or politics, but also for philosophy, for society, for culture? This meeting was around five years ago, and since then LAS Art Foundation has endeavoured to answer these questions.

I see advancements in science as probing the depths of reality in the way that artists also do. I believe in artists' ability to think through our ever-evolving world, and so support them to produce enquiring new work on critical topics of the present.

Libby Heaney, a former post-doctoral researcher in quantum physics, was the first artist with whom LAS Art Foundation produced a quantum-related commission in 2022. Heaney's profound understanding of the science and philosophy of quantum computing informed a captivating body of work, *Ent-*, which went on to win the Lumen Prize for immersive art, the Falling Walls Art-Science Prize and an S+T+ARTS Prize Nomination.

We began our first conversations with the artist Laure Prouvost in 2020. Known for her exploration of kinship and migration and her playful, sensory approach, Prouvost has a long-standing interest in scientific concepts, dating from her time working for John Latham. Latham welcomed artists and scientists to do research together at Flat Time House and referred to his own work in quantum mechanical terms. Together, Prouvost, Neven, Rees and LAS began a series of exchanges, which led to the forthcoming project *WE FELT A STAR DYING*—Prouvost's major new commission with LAS Art Foundation, opening at Kraftwerk Berlin on 21 February.

To make this work, Prouvost had unprecedented access to a quantum computer at Google and a specially developed quantum AI model. Her work represents unique patterns of "noise" or tiny fluctuations within the computer, and throws light on the innate sensitivity and instability of these systems—even a star dying in distant space can destabilise it. Together with these experiments, Prouvost forges a general enquiry into the topic of quantum, through sculpture, video, sound and scent, in the vast space of Kraftwerk Berlin.

Those who follow the technology know that quantum computers are not yet commercially applicable. The interference that the delicate quantum system encounters makes it unstable or simply too error-prone. Prouvost's experiments and investigations with LAS amount to rare access. But when is this technology going to be publicly available? And what would it mean for art practitioners?

In December 2024, in the science journal *Nature*, Neven and his team announced a major leap forward in quantum error correction, which represents steady progress towards their goal of stabilising this technology. Scalable, usable technology in five or so years seems more realistic than ever. Indeed, the UN declared 2025 the International Year of Quantum Science and Technology, raising awareness of the potential breakthrough and marking a century since the field of quantum mechanics was established.

Supercomputing power

For artists, this technology opens new creative possibilities—the beginning of a new medium. Its potential uses stretch beyond our current imagination. It also brings quantum principles into large-scale applications, centring the counter-intuitive nature of reality at the micro scale. This begins a wider-scale shift in how we understand the world. We hope Prouvost's large-scale new exhibition will bring some of these ideas to a broad audience, ignite conversation, and open up the imaginative and technical possibilities for artists. A quantum era is coming: what will it mean for you?

LISSON GALLERY

The World of Interiors
21 October 2024

THE WORLD OF INTERIORS

EXPLORE

BODY LANGUAGE

Laure Prouvost's corpus is certainly corporeal. As a visit to her studio in Brussels quickly makes clear, the French installation artist's symbolic system is heavy on parts both human and animal, often fantastically disembodied or spliced. Breasts and octopus tentacles play starring roles, but, the main mythos behind her idiom is altogether stranger than even these anatomical props might imply...

By Hannah Keegan

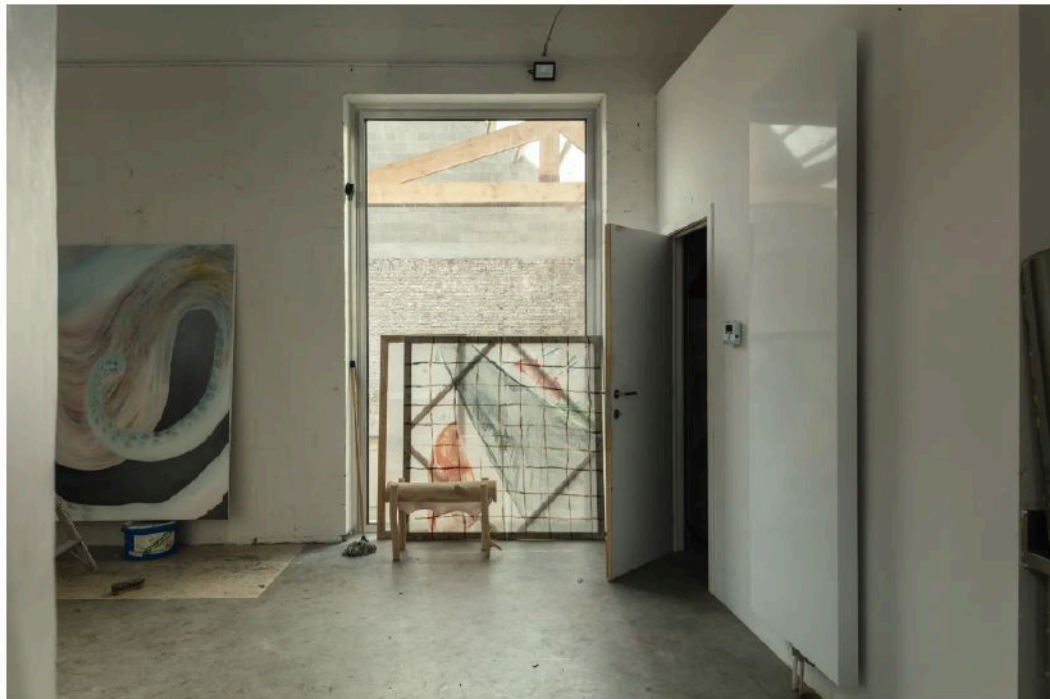
Photography by Oskar Proctor



A pair of papier-mâché breasts, created for the show 'Grand Dad's Visitor Center', hangs over the main room of Laure Prouvost's studio. The table bears a number of other artistic souvenirs, among them a milk bottle like the one clutched by her 2019 octopus sculpture 'The Means', which has two breasts in lieu of a head, and a crow harking back to the glass birds she brought to Oslo's National Museum

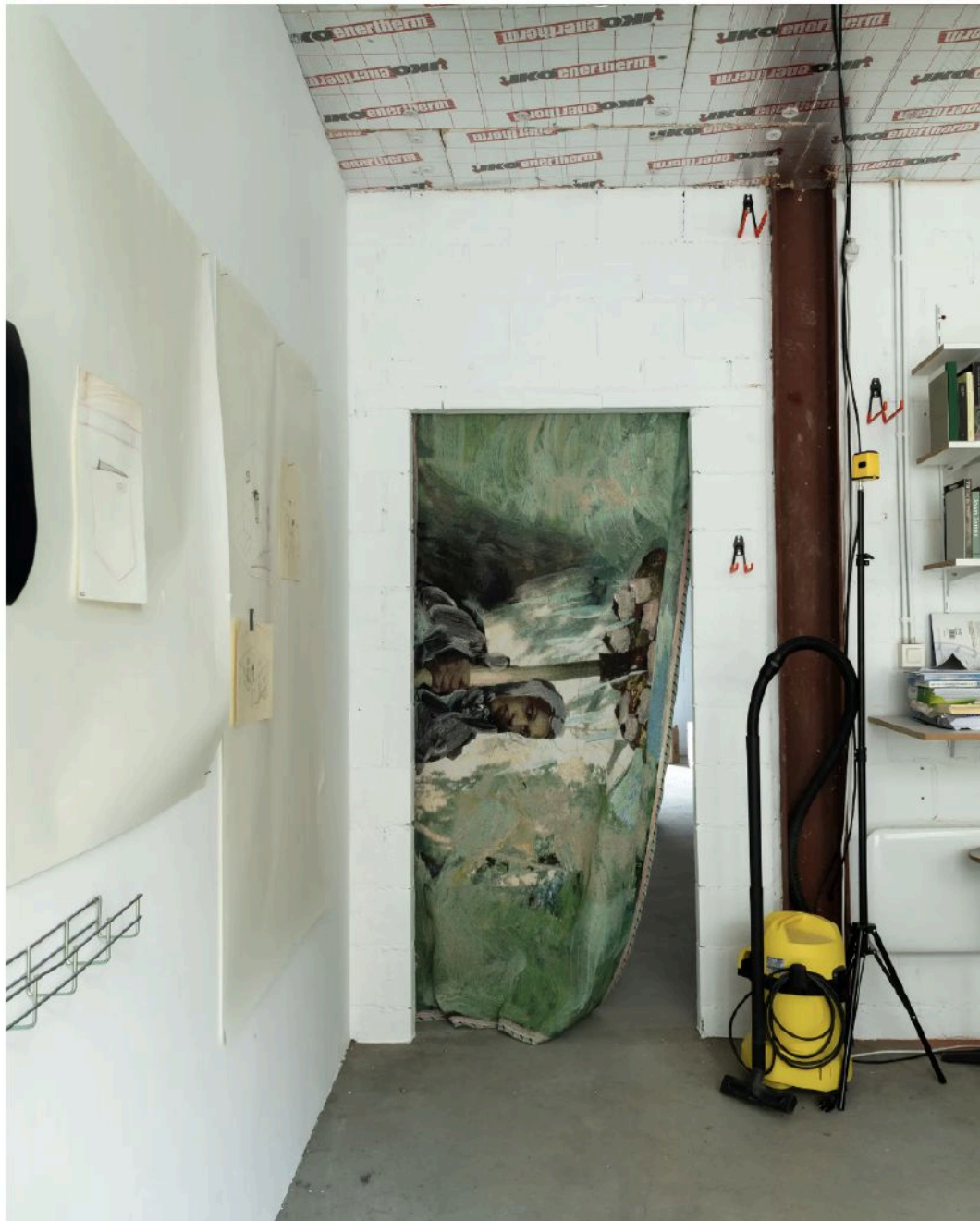
Look up in the main room of French artist Laure Prouvost's Brussels studio and you will see a large pair of breasts. 'They're my grandmother's,' she says of the papier-mâché installation that dominates a good portion of the ceiling. 'She made it to cover up my granddad's conceptual work and to make it more joyous and feminine. To say: we're here, we're staying.' Originally this piece hung in Milan's Pirelli Hangar Bicocca as part of a 2016 exhibition entitled *Grand Dad's Visitor Center*; now, eight years later, here it is, 'welcoming you', as she says, into her studio and aptly introducing a corpus so fantastical and unsettling that it can disorientate its viewers.

The first thing to know is that the grandparents in question are fictional. Secondly, it is not unusual for Prouvost to weave an elaborate web of half-truths around each new creation worlds she continues to inhabit long after an exhibition is over. To outsiders, this may seem bizarre and confusing; for Prouvost, it is essential creative fuel. Today, we're talking over a video call, where she plays with her hair and smiles, amused, as she recalls each fictitious nugget. You get the sense that reality doesn't really interest her. Prouvost has been based in the studio she's calling me from since 2022, when her four-year-long quest to turn two industrial structures into a live/work space for herself, her partner and their two children finally reached its conclusion. 'The buildings are located in Molenbeek, an area to the west of central Brussels, home to a large number of similar places that are increasingly being repurposed by people looking to take advantage of the space,' explains Tom Finch, co-founder of Morales Finch, the architectural practice Prouvost worked with on the project.



A wood sculpture that has sprouted Murano glass udder is flanked by 'The Octopus Body- Feeling the World', the latest in a line of octopean oil paintings

'The place is split into two parts – the main house and the atelier – and was executed broadly to plan with the typical tweaks and revisions one might expect to make as a family home takes shape, including a few playful decorative additions,' says Finch. One of these is a tiny door at the front of the house – so tiny, in fact, that have to crouch to walk you through it. I like the idea that you have to change your mental space to enter [the room]: it's like going deeper into your subconscious,' Prouvost explains.



'Pink Vapper on the Horizon', a 2020 tapestry by the artist, doubles as a door curtain

Small spaces are a theme in her work, too her 2013 piece *After After* involved a small, blacked-out room lit up sporadically by flickering strobe lights; more recently, her 2022 Seoul show *Deep Travel Ink* invited visitors to squat and enter through a miniature door to view the installation *Uncle's Travel Agency Franchise*.

'I mean, it's usually completely illegal. My studio is somewhere I can do it because it's not a public space - it's always difficult in an exhibition,' she says. The design of the building's exterior, a grand, slanting 'm' shape that rises up from the roof in a curvy mass of blush pink, is another playful touch. 'I thought of the façade almost like a Hollywood studio. I wanted to create an image of what could be on the inside and for them to be completely different, and to play on that. The shape is like two breasts or clouds or whatever you want to see, really - it could be a mosque.'

Prouvost first came into the public eye when she won the Turner Prize in 2013 for her installation *Wantee*, which featured a rotting cabin in the woods from which she told the story of her fictional grandfather's battle to maintain his reputation and his subsequent disappearance down a tunnel he'd built under the house. As she rose to accept the award, the presenter surprised her with her new-born baby, whom she notably declined to hold: 'It was a moment where it was about my work,' she would explain later on. Since, Prouvost has built up an arsenal of motifs, characters and sleights of hand associated with her corpus the grandparents, breasts (obviously), maternity, octopuses and their slippery tentacles, teabags (and pots), birds, fish, raspberries and deliberate mistranslations – all of which are littered across the studio, itself akin to a big white box.



The tentacular theme continues at the artist's snaking resin table-where much of her work gets don- with a spray of tendrils mounted on metal rods. The seated figure's mask is from Prouvost's film/installation 'Deep See Blue Surrounding You'

In the main room, a long resin table curves its way through the space like a tentacle; this is where Prouvost tends to work with her studio staff. 'It's 15 metres long and is the shape of an octopus's arm it was left over from a show,' she says. 'It's often the leftovers that I'm stuck with, the things no-one wants. Really, I love when I'm working on something that's a big production and the studio gets completely crazy in preparation, so when all those things go, I feel a bit empty. But the space is very malleable and constantly changing.' As she talks, there is a painting – a pair of breasts against a dark background with the line 'Looking at you looking at us' printed underneath – propped up on the wall behind her that will soon be swept off to be exhibited. 'It's from a series of 30 paintings where my grandmother was improving on my grandad's black, monochromatic style,' she says. 'She's constantly reappropriating history and making it hers.'

Many of the choices in the space are utilitarian. I ask about the shade of green she plumped for in the bathroom, for example, wondering if it had any links to the ecological themes of her more recent work. 'No, it was the cheapest,' she says with a shrug. 'It's not intentional, I wanted the space to feel rough.' Interestingly, though, this means what I'm seeing is merely a snapshot of Prouvost's creative intentions here, which are ever-evolving: how the space appears now may not be how it looks in a month. 'It's like a factory, I just have the things I need,' she adds.



A figure with a football for a head makes itself at home on the sofa, while the dangling produce comes from 'Stong Sorry Vegetables', a video piece

In this sense, to read too much into Prouvost's chosen décor and interrogate how it represents or informs her work would be beside the point. 'It's just a canvas. The [real] studio is the people outside in their gardens, the parks, or going slowly out for a drink at the end of the day,' she says, smiling and looking towards the door, 'disappearing into the tentacles of the city'.

Apollo
26 February 2024

APOLLO

THE INTERNATIONAL ART MAGAZINE

Sensory overload – an interview with Laure Prouvost

Isabella Smith

26 FEBRUARY 2024



Laure Prouvost (b. 1978), pictured with her models for *Swallow* (work in progress; 2013). Photo: © Giorgio Benni; courtesy Lisson Gallery

Laure Prouvost has two modes of conducting interviews. One is to offer straight answers. The other is to recount fantastical stories about, say, her fictional grandmother's fondness for naked skydiving. For better or worse, I get the former approach: I don't know whether to be disappointed or relieved.

We're sitting in the cafe of the De Pont Museum of Contemporary Art in Tilburg, the Netherlands, where Prouvost is installing her exhibition 'In The Mist Of It All, Above Front Tears' (until 18 August). When I ask about the show, I get a small taste of that surreality: 'It's just me standing on top of a French van singing to the cars and the modernist architecture of Tilburg.' There could not be a greater contrast between De Pont's cool, industrial white cube and Prouvost's gloriously messy, inchoate work, which ranges across installation, sculpture and video.

Here, the visitor will enter through ‘a valley of the mess of human production’, walking past a pool of petrol – ‘consumerism spilling out, the leaking world we’ve created’ – then into a billowing cloud created by a smoke machine, where ‘the ceiling will melt down to the floor and birds are hanging around’. There will be sculptures of fish-bird hybrids and a large tent where you can ‘nest’, as she has it, in a pile of beanbags, the shadows of mobiles moving dream-like on the fabric ceiling.



Installation view of Laure Prouvost: *Above Front Tears Oui Float* at the Nasjonalmuseet, Oslo, in 2022. Photo: David Levene; courtesy Lisson Gallery; © Laure Prouvost

Elsewhere, manmade and natural objects have been boded together to make hanging composite sculptures that fill several rooms: an ear of wheat conjoined with an iPhone charger; feathers spilling from a cassette tape; a teaspoon sprouting a leaf from its handle. Prouvost gathered this detritus in Molenbeek, the Brussels suburb where the French-born artist lives and works. There is a new focus on the natural world emerging in her practice: at Frieze London last year, Prouvost launched OUI GROW, a charitable initiative that aims to bring more plants to deprived parts of inner-city Brussels.

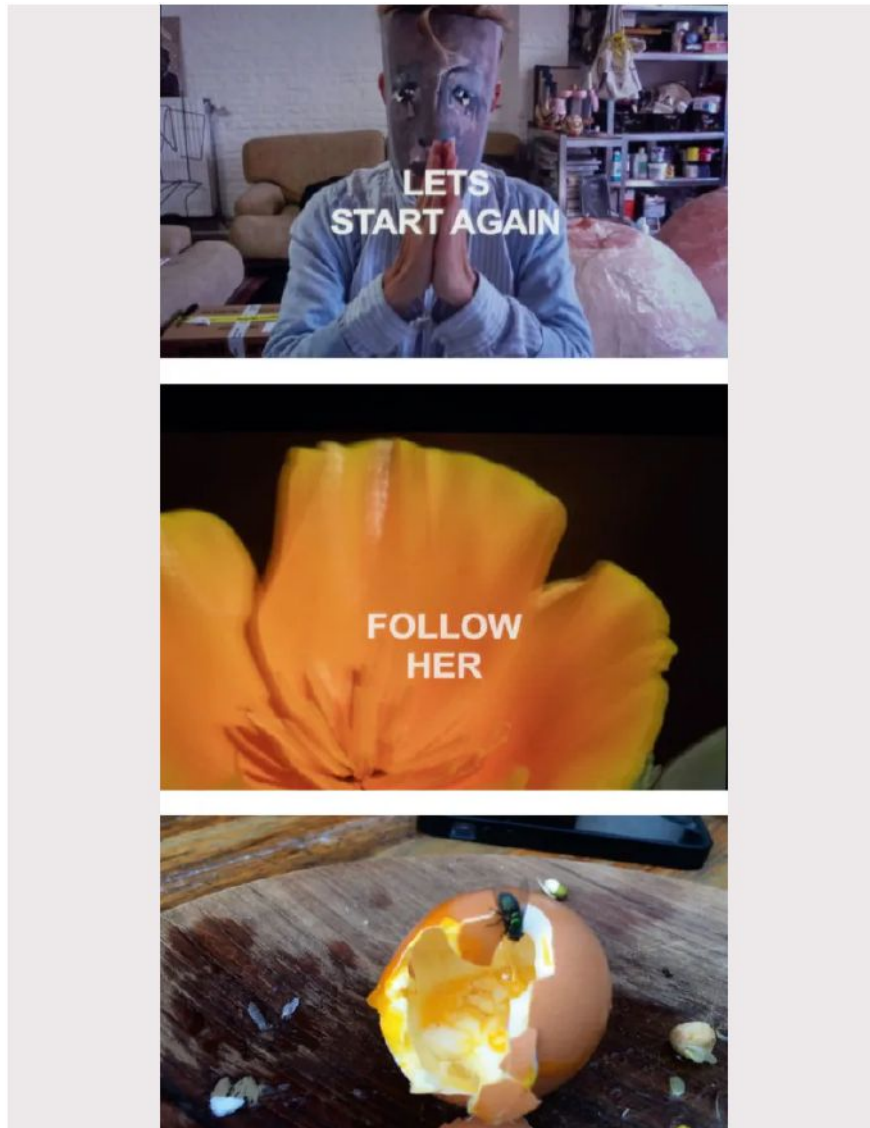
This nurturing impulse – to foster green spaces or to create places the museum-weary can rest – is a marked tendency in her recent work. Visitors to her website are greeted by a video of the artist whispering reassuring platitudes: ‘I will take care of you, you beautiful thing’; ‘I will hold you straight, make sure you’re in the best place, in the right temperature, next to the right people around, the right pieces around you.’ Though Prouvost is in part poking fun at the veneration of art (she tells me this video is ‘full of bullshit’), I found myself soothed by the hypnotic, ASMR-like qualities of the piece. Her hushed, heavily accented tones float across the mind, as much like thought as speech.

Language – its creation, its uses and its failures – is a subject of ongoing fascination for the polyglot artist. Born in 1978 in Lille, she moved to London as a teenager to study, first at Central Saint Martins and then at Goldsmiths. In her early twenties Prouvost became an assistant to the conceptual artist John Latham, a man she describes as ‘an eccentric grandfather to me’.

Latham's work often questioned language and structures of knowledge. In 1966, he invited a group of his students to dinner, to 'eat' a copy of Clement Greenberg's *Art and Culture*, bottling the masticated remnants. There's something of a familial relationship between Prouvost's and Latham's work, with a shared habit of reshaping texts.

Prouvost relishes word play, punning across languages in the titles of artworks, in their content or in the names of her shows. Take her most recent exhibition 'Oma-je' at Remai Modern in Saskatoon, which celebrated the artists she considers her forebears, including Latham, Louise Bourgeois, Agnès Varda and Niki de Saint Phalle. That title, 'Oma-je', combines the Dutch word for 'grandmother' (*oma*), the French for 'I' (*je*) and the shared Anglo-French 'homage'.

Though Prouvost shares the preoccupation with language common to Latham's generation of conceptualists, her approach is lighter at heart. A book accompanying her 2019 exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp titled *AM-BIG-YOU-US LEGSICON* (get it?) is a glossary of Prouvost's preoccupations: there are entries on boobs, bums, digging, dreams, love, petrol and performance, among others. On language, she writes: 'Hard to use well [...] Helps communication between humans but also misunderstanding.' On misunderstanding: 'Feels muddy, opens doors to the imagination.'



Stills from *DIT LEARN* (2017), Laure Prouvost. Courtesy Lisson Gallery; © Laure Prouvost

Her film *DIT LEARN* (2017) – its name a riff on the French *dit* ('said') and the English prefix *de-*, to undo – feels like a fast-paced language game. The artist plays the part of a teacher, instructing viewers on correct and incorrect terminology. White text on a black ground states: 'YOU NEED TO LEARN AND REMEMBER THE MEANING OF THINGS.' A fence post being hammered means 'no' and an iguana means 'yes'; a tangerine means both 'love', according to the on-screen text, and 'press the button', according to her voiceover. The sequence becomes faster, more frenetic, impossible to ingest.

Prouvost reprised this work in 2020 with the exhibition 'Re-dit-en-un-in-learning CENTER', in which Lisson Gallery in London became a mock educational facility, aping the structures that surround formalised learning. (When I ask about the education of her own children, I'm unsurprised to hear that they attend alternative schools.) The films and the exhibition 'were really about unlearning, playing a kind of a game of reinventing ways of perception', she says. 'The exhibition was during Covid times – I wanted us to de-learn to re-learn, to re-imagine the future.'

Her next film took a step further back into childhood development, regressing from the linguistic to the preverbal. *Four For See Beauties* (2022) was filmed in a sauna in Finland, which was traditionally the place where Finnish women would give birth. A group of naked young women stroke Prouvost's own baby, crooning semi-nonsensical messages of love and care. They are interspersed and overlaid with footage of sea life – passing fish, the waving arms of starfish, an octopus; everything fleshy, nurturing, intimate. It is a sense-picture of tender infancy.



Stills from *Four For See Beauties* (2022), Laure Prouvost. Courtesy Lisson Gallery; © Laure Prouvost

‘The focus was to almost delete language [...] to go into the depth of the subconscious. The hands are like animals, just feeling,’ she says. ‘Now in the show here [at Tilburg] it’s much more connected to animal life [...] how to have empathy with other beings. It’s from de-learning, to pre-language, to becoming other.’

For Prouvost, the bridge between the worlds of language and of bodies is the octopus. Her *Legsicon* defines ‘Octopus (feminine; noun)’ as a creature that ‘Feels through its leg (brain in the leg)’ and as ‘Brain on the plate’. The cephalopod recurs throughout her work, whether in real, dead form – as in *Four For See Beauties*, in which a soft corpse is made to caress every surface it touches – or in imaginative hybrid sculptures. In *The Scrawling Octopus* (2022), she riffs on the octopus’s capacity for making ink, a material with obvious writerly connotations: the glass limbs of a harried-looking octopus are tangled among a scribble of chargers, lamps and smartphones. Another glass sculpture, *This Means* (2019), sees the octopus in maternal mood, its face a pink pair of breasts, its limbs comically proffering snacks, a nailbrush and a bottle.

For Prouvost, the octopus is both a uniquely embodied intellect – famously, most of an octopus’s neurons are in its arms – and a symbol for the primordial stuff of life. ‘I call her “she”, but in French it’s *un pieuvre* [masculine]. She’s so malleable. I think of that ability to transform as a very feminine quality,’ she says. ‘The octopus is in all of us,’ Prouvost told the press during a video tour of her commission for the French pavilion at the 2019 Venice Biennale. ‘For me it’s the beginning of humanity, it’s the beginning of the world and its subconscious. We all have her, but in our belly.’

There’s also the mind-boggling fact that the octopus tastes – as well as thinks – with its eight limbs. Prouvost tells me: ‘I struggle with the idea of the authority of sight. Why not smell, or touch or licking? From early in my life, I wanted all my senses to have equal power.’



Landed Here To See You With All Our Very Breasts (2023), Laure Prouvost. Courtesy Lisson Gallery; © Laure Prouvost

For Venice, she littered a watery blue floor with flotsam and jetsam – shells, seaweed, mobile phones, CDs, nets – alongside an octopus and other marine creatures, hand-made in glass by the maestros of Murano. In an accompanying film, *Deep See Blue Surrounding You* (2019), a merry band of dancers, musicians and magicians journeying from Paris to Venice describe their group as ‘an octopus’. Beneath the gallery was a tunnel, dug between the neighbouring French and British pavilions in a symbolic act of reconciliation.

Digging is another of Prouvost’s fixations. In 2013, she won the Turner Prize against stiff odds, ahead of Tino Sehgal, David Shrigley and Lynette Yiadom-Boakye. The winning work was *Wantee*: a film and installation commissioned by Grizedale Arts and the Tate for a Kurt Schwitters retrospective at Tate Britain. Prouvost created a grimy shack in the Lake District, which she filled with the furniture and knick-knacks that she imagined her fictional grandfather, a friend of Schwitters and an obsessive digger of tunnels, would have in his soil-speckled home. The story: that this art-world Wally has been lost down one of his own holes.

As a metaphor *Wantee* was not especially subtle, but its irreverence clearly struck a chord. Prouvost has that rarest of qualities in an artist: she can be properly, laughout-loud funny. In *Grandma’s Dream*, the film that formed part of *Wantee*, she wistfully intones: ‘In Grandma’s dream, Grandpa would finally admit that he loves painting bottoms – he’s just interested in painting bottoms, and not conceptual art.’ As off-the-cuff silly as it seems, there are theoretical underpinnings to all this: Freud, the grandfather of psychoanalysis, used metaphors of digging and excavation extensively in his writing. Like the archaeologist in search of artefacts, the psychoanalyst must dig through layer after layer of the patient’s psyche to reach the deepest treasure. Prouvost, though, is more likely to discuss the Mole Man of Hackney, who hit the headlines in 2006 when a court ordered an end to 40 years of burrowing under the homes of his neighbours, than she is to overtly refer to Freud.

Breasts appear throughout the artist’s work to a degree that would have given the great man cause to pull a little harder on his cigar. Prouvost’s boobs – she prefers that term – are alternately sensual, sexy, caring, enveloping and comical. In her *Legsicon*, she describes them drily: ‘Change with time, often painted by Grandad.’ There’s no mention anywhere, either in her work or in our conversation, of the writings of Melanie Klein and her object relations theory, though critics have certainly picked up on the connection.

Klein’s idea is of ‘the good breast’: how the earliest objects an infant interacts with will shape their development. As I watch Prouvost suckling her baby daughter in *Four For See Beauties* or look into the goggling nipple-eyes of her octopus mother in *This Means*, my thoughts range widely – from Klein to that Twitter meme parodying the writing of female characters by male authors: ‘She breasted boobily down the stairs.’ That her work provokes both thoughts simultaneously, the highbrow and the (extremely) low, is entirely characteristic. Entering Prouvost’s world can feel both like listening to a giddy toddler and to a drunken wit; alternately petulant, playful and profound.

As we wander through the ordered mess of cables, packing crates and artworks that will become her next exhibition, I ask her what her children make of her work, boobs and all. ‘They’ve had enough [...] they’re a bit embarrassed,’ she tells me, laughing. It doesn’t sound like she minds too much. Whatever direction Prouvost goes in next, it’s impossible to imagine the artist losing this teasing combination of thoughtfulness and absurdity.

‘In the Mist Of It All, Above Front Tears’ is at the De Pont Museum, Tilburg, until 18 August.

APOLLO

THE INTERNATIONAL ART MAGAZINE

APOLLO AWARDS 2023

Artist of the Year

Laure Prouvost

The French artist's works in video, sound, installation and performance all demonstrate an interest in slippages of meaning and miscommunication – but this year has proved again that her art speaks clearly around the world. Prouvost was the artist chosen to inaugurate a series of commissions for the vast Light Hall at the redeveloped Nasjonalmuseet in Oslo; the result, 'Above Front Tears Oui Float', was an immersive landscape populated by dreamlike sculptures and films. Prouvost has also presented solo exhibitions in Vienna, Houston, New York and, for her largest North American show to date, at Remai Modern in Saskatoon.



Laure Prouvost. Photo: Annar Björgli; courtesy National Museum, Oslo

LISSON GALLERY

Vogue Scandinavia
7 November 2022



CULTURE

This is the latest must-see exhibition in Oslo's National Museum

By Josefin Forsberg
November 7, 2022



Norway's National Museum opened the doors to its Laure Prouvost exhibition to much fanfare. *Vogue Scandinavia's* Editor-in-Chief reports back from the inauguration

"It was spectacular." A simple yet all-encompassing statement made by our editor in chief Martina Bonnier upon her return from Norway's capital, where she attended the opening of recently reopened Nasjonalmuseets (The National Museum's) latest exhibition exploring the world of French artist LauProuvost. "It was the first time I went to the new national museum, and it is impressive," Bonnier said of the experience. "Especially since it's not every day a city builds a vast new art museum."

Known for her captivating installations with film, sound, performance, sculpture, textile and text, Prouvost's work indeed triggers the senses. In her work, the line between fiction and reality is erased as she incorporates characteristics of Dadaism and Surrealism, allowing for lawlessness and a sense of the irrational to permeate her work.



With an impressive pedigree, having won multiple prestigious awards spanning MaxMara's Art Prize for Women in 2011 and the Turner Prize in 2013, not to mention representing France at the Venice Biennale in 2019, she is the first artist to create a site-specific installation in the Light Hall as part of The Fredriksen Commissions.

'Above Front Tears Oui Float' is an immersive installation containing film, sound, performance, sculptures, textile and text, blurring the boundaries between fiction and reality. In it, Prouvost explores how global warming has left its mark on our world. The collection takes nature, environmental challenges and the pandemic seriously but communicates with warmth and absurd humour.



Walking through a dark tunnel, the artist invited us to a barren rocky landscape blanketed in fog. Finally, we find ourselves above the clouds where sculptures weightlessly float like birds soaring in the sky. As if we're transported to another dimension, the melted ceiling offers a glimpse into the unknown. In one area, the floor rises, while in another, it lowers us into a soft surface. In Prouvost's monumental video works, we encounter the recurring figure of Grand Ma, who launches herself into grand flight.

Set in the Light Hall, the immersive experience treats visitors to a magical yet unsettling encounter. The new Light Hall is an architectural addition in collaboration between The National Museum and sisters Kathrine and Cecilie Fredriksen, who helms the The Fredriksen Commission – an exhibition series that invites established, international artists to create a work or an installation especially for the Light Hall and to explore the possibilities of this unique space. This vision for the new exhibition hall marks the destination as an awe-inspiring visit, the space just as impactful as the art it houses.



Appealing to our senses and emotions with gravity, light and colour and toying with our understanding of direction, the pulsating light, sparkling imaginative glass sculptures and fountains bring light, colour and life to a threatened world. The ample space lays the foundations for Laure Prouvost, the artist taking full advantage of its mighty size to create a world of contrasts.

LISSON GALLERY

NRK

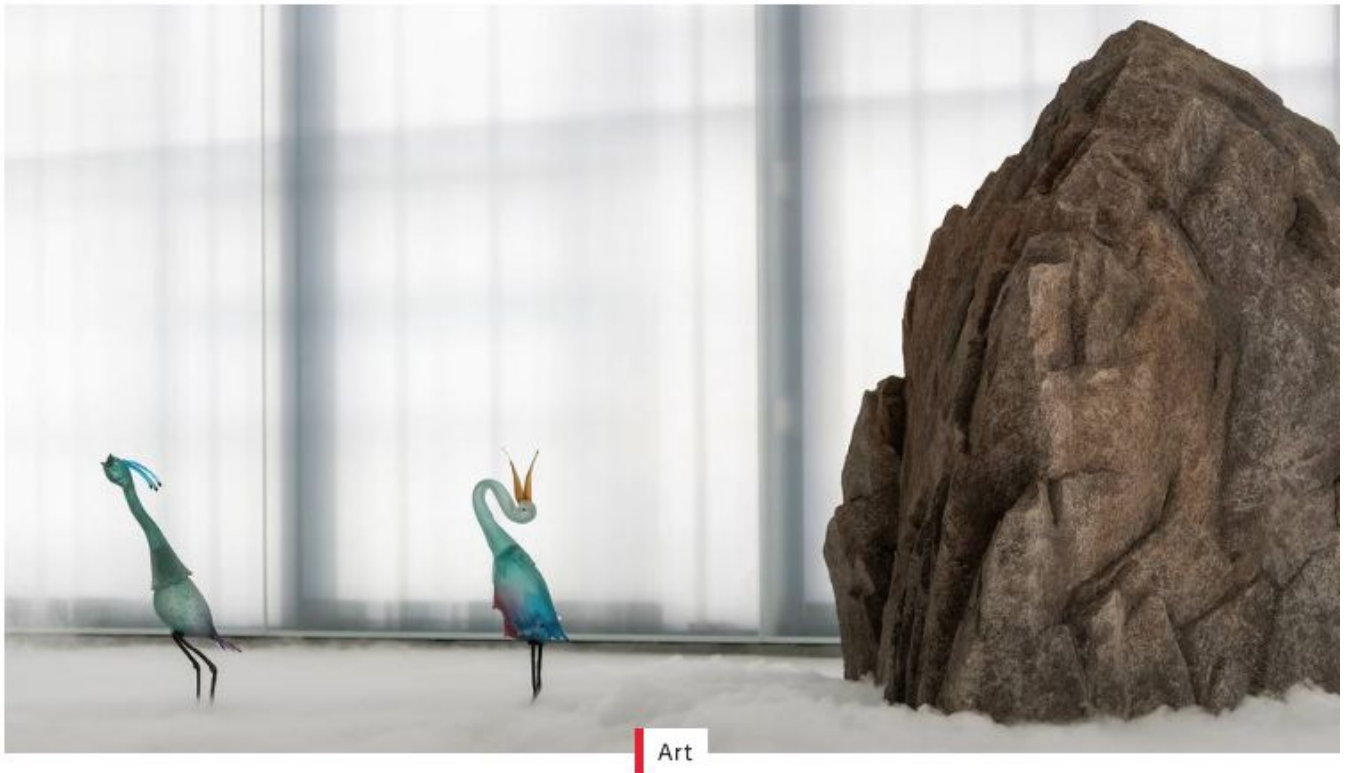
8 November 2022

NRK

REVIEW

Like a fascinating dream

Rarely have I experienced an art project so full of weird, funny and enigmatic details.



«Laure Prouvost. Above Front Tears Oui Float»

Lyshallen, National Museum, Oslo
5 November 2022–12. February 2023

In the spectacular experiential work "Above Front Tears Oui Float" which is now on display in the National Museum, the French artist invites the public into a dream-like foggy reality.

Laure Prouvost is a highly recognized artist and , among other things, represented France at the Venice Biennale in 2019.

She is the first artist to be given the opportunity to create a project that fills the entire large hall of light in the new National Museum.

And here she really hasn't let the opportunity pass her by.

She has created a work in which she stitches together dreams, mythologies, art historical references and harsh realities.

A recurring theme in the exhibition is global warming and climate change, but unlike much climate art, the work is not characterized by gloomy pessimism.

On the contrary, it is loaded with life-affirming humour, warmth and sensuality.



GIGANIPS: The exhibition is full of strange figures that resemble giant trinkets.

PHOTO: ANNAR BJØRGLI / © LAURE PROUVOST/BONO, 2022

Oil spills and flying women

The large hall of light's two departments are connected by two different tunnel constructions.

The first is a clean-cut architectural structure that brings us into a dimly lit hall. Here we see a reality of plastic rubbish, powerful oil pipes and birds caught in oil spills.

In the middle of a mirror-like pond that is supposed to look like oil, a fountain with a very beige-pink bird with a shiny orange-yellow beak gapes at the sky.



DYSTERT: The first thing that meets us are large oil pipes and a lot of mess.
PHOTO: THE NATIONAL MUSEUM/ANNAR BJØRGLI © LAURE PROUVOST/BONO



Perhaps it is an image of hope, like a bird Phoenix rising from the ashes.

Behind this fountain we can see a film on a giant curved screen, where an elderly lady with bird wings flies jubilantly through the air.

The soundtrack consists of singing and whispering and strengthens the unreal feeling that characterizes the entire installation.



FLYING GRANDMOTHER: For many years, Prouvost's artistry has revolved around grandparents. This time it is about the grandmother's free flight through the air with palm fronds as bird wings.

PHOTO: ALEX KACHKAEV / COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

Dark caves and nudity

Furthermore, we are led into a powerful textile installation, where we can lie down in a pile of cushions and look up at an image flicker of textile motifs in a kind of digital tissue. This is mixed with film projections dancing over the textile.

Birds chirping and low voices mix with the soundtrack outside in the hall. It is wonderful to lie inside the dark cave surrounded by soft sounds and floating images.



POWERFUL: From "Laure Prouvost. Above Front Tears Oui Float".

PHOTO: ANNAR BJØRGLI

I have to pull myself together to get up and go out.

Above stones and mounds of earth in the darkened landscape outside hang some strange baskets, where straw, branches and flowers stick out like antennae or tentacles.

It takes some time before I understand that I can put my head up in such a basket and see the exhibition through VR glasses.

Suddenly the room is populated by naked women. A very pregnant girl with heavy breasts comes right up to me and whispers something I don't understand.

I rush back to physical reality.



CAVE IN THE MOUNTAIN: From a dark tunnel you go through a cave and into a hall bathed in a milky light.

PHOTO: ANNAR BJØRGLI / ANNAR BJØRGLI

A picture of hope

A new tunnel now leads me into the light. This tunnel is more like a cave in the mountain.

As my eyes gradually get used to the darkness inside, I see that the "stone formations" in the tunnel form everything from fish creatures to female breasts and male genitalia.

From the walls hang pointed Allen keys that you can use to scratch a thought or a name into the porous wall.

The hall we now enter is bathed in a milky light as if in a theatrical, paradisiacal dream. Mighty boulders rise out of a damp mist that floats along the floor.



PINK SCULPTURE: The exhibition is full of wonderful, beautiful and surreal elements.

PHOTO: ANNAR BJØRGLI / © LAURE PROUVOST/BONO, 2022

In the same way as in the second hall, a huge canvas forms the center of the installation. There is also a fountain in front here. This time there are two pastel colored fish creatures spitting water into each other's mouths.

The puddle on the floor is now clear and should perhaps look like rainwater with floating branches and leaves.

An ostrich-like bird bends its neck all the way down to the surface of the water. Above us is a mighty dome of textile filled with light and dancing shadows.



FISH BREATH: Pastel colored fish creatures that spit water.
PHOTO: ANNAR BJØRGLI / © LAURE PROUVOST/BONO, 2022

I lie down in the middle of the ceiling, on something that looks like soft rock, but which turns out to be textile.

Here I can look up at a wealth of small mobile sculptures made of twigs, leaves, objects, cellophane, plastic and metal that move with a tinkling, tinkling sound.

Harmful to children?

Even before the press screening and opening, Laure Prouvost's exhibition has made headlines.

It is about the three smoke machines that create a low-lying cloud cover of water and oil in parts of the exhibition.



SMOKE CARPET: A moist mist made of oil and water floats along the floor in the bright part of the exhibition.

PHOTO: ANNAR BJØRGLI / © LAURE PROUVOST/BONO, 2022

"Not good for children", [claims the Asthma and Allergy Association](#) .

If that's true, that's an incredible shame. In terms of experience, this is an exhibition that is particularly suitable for children and young people:

The exhibition is jam-packed with weird, funny and strange things.

Here you don't need to know anything in advance; it's just a matter of surrendering to this strong, sensual experience.

It is simply difficult to leave the exhibition, because it is so wonderful to be there.

LAURE PROUVOST'S INAUGURAL COMMISSION FOR LIGHT HALL IN NORWAY'S NATIONAL MUSEUM UNVEILED

By [Mark Westall](#) • 4 November 2022
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Laure Prouvost. Above Front Tears Oui Float. The National Museum (Nasjonalmuseet), Oslo, Norway. Photograph by David Levene 3/11/22

The first site-specific installation for the Light Hall in Norway's new National Museum has been unveiled by [Laure Prouvost](#), winner of the 2013 [Turner Prize](#).



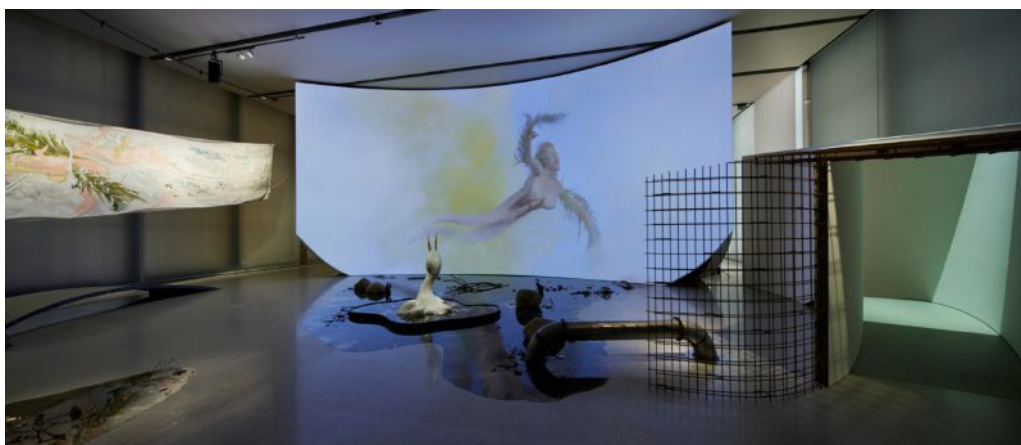
Laure Prouvost. *Above Front Tears Oui Float*. The National Museum (Nasjonalmuseet), Oslo, Norway. Photograph by David Levene 3/11/22

Above Front Tears Oui Float is an immersive installation including film, sound, performance, sculptures, textile and text. The boundaries between fiction and reality are blurred and Prouvost refers to art historical and religious motifs such as ancient fountains, the archetypal cave, animals and other than humans, birds and fish. The exhibition has a seriousness with consideration for nature, environmental challenges, migration and the pandemic, conveyed with warmth and absurd humour.

She is the first artist to receive the Fredriksen Family Commission for the new National Museum. This series of five biennial commissions over 10 years will enable large-scale works by leading international artists to be seen in Norway for the first time. Each artist will be invited to create a work or an installation for the Light Hall, exploring the possibilities of this unique space.

Karin Hindsbo, the National Museum's Director says:

We are excited to welcome Laure Prouvost as the first artist to undertake the Light Hall Commission and thankful to the Fredriksen Family for making it possible.



Laure Prouvost. *Above Front Tears Oui Float*. The National Museum (Nasjonalmuseet), Oslo, Norway. Photograph by David Levene 3/11/22

Laure Prouvost said:

It's definitely the biggest project I have done and a great honour to have this opportunity in such a special building.

About the artist

Laure Prouvost was born in Lille, France (1978) and is currently based in Brussels. She received her BFA from Central St Martins, London in 2002 and studied towards her MFA at Goldsmiths College, London. She also took part in the LUX Associate Programme. Laure Prouvost received the MaxMara Art Prize for Women in 2011 and received the prestigious Turner Prize in 2013. She represented France at the Venice Biennale in 2019.

Exhibitions include: 'We, On The Rising Wave', Busan Biennale, South Korea (2022); 'ARS22' at the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki, Finland. Recent solo exhibitions include: 'Deep Travel Ink', Atelier Hermès, Seoul, South Korea (2022); 'Our elastic arm hold in tight through the clouds' at Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark (2021); 'Re-dit-en-un-in-learning CENTER' at Lisson Gallery London (2020); 'Melting into one another ho hot chaud it heating dip', Kunsthalle Lissabon, Lisbon, Portugal (2020); 'Deep See Blue Surrounding You / Vois Ce Bleu Profond Te Fondre', Les Abattoirs, Toulouse, France, LAM - Lille métropole, Villeneuve d'Ascq, France (2020), and Bonnefanten Museum, Maastricht, Netherlands (2021); 'AM-BIG-YOU-US LEGSICON', M HKA - Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp, Belgium (2019); Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France (2018); BASS Museum, Miami, FL, USA (2018); 'They Are Waiting for You', Performance for stage at the McGuire Theatre, Minneapolis, MN, USA (2018). Pirelli HangarBicocca, Milan, Italy (2016); Haus Der Kunst, Munich, Germany (2015); New Museum, New York, NY, USA (2014); Laboratorio Arte Alameda, Mexico City, Mexico (2014); Max Mara Art Prize for Women, Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK and Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia, Italy (2013); 'Laure Prouvost / Adam Chodzko' as part of 'Schwitters in Britain', Tate Britain, London, UK (2013).

Prouvost represented France at the 58th International Art Biennial Venice, May-November 2019 and was included in 'NIRIN,' the 22nd Biennale of Sydney (2020). June 2019 saw the artist's first public commission in the UK through Transport for London's Art on the Underground.

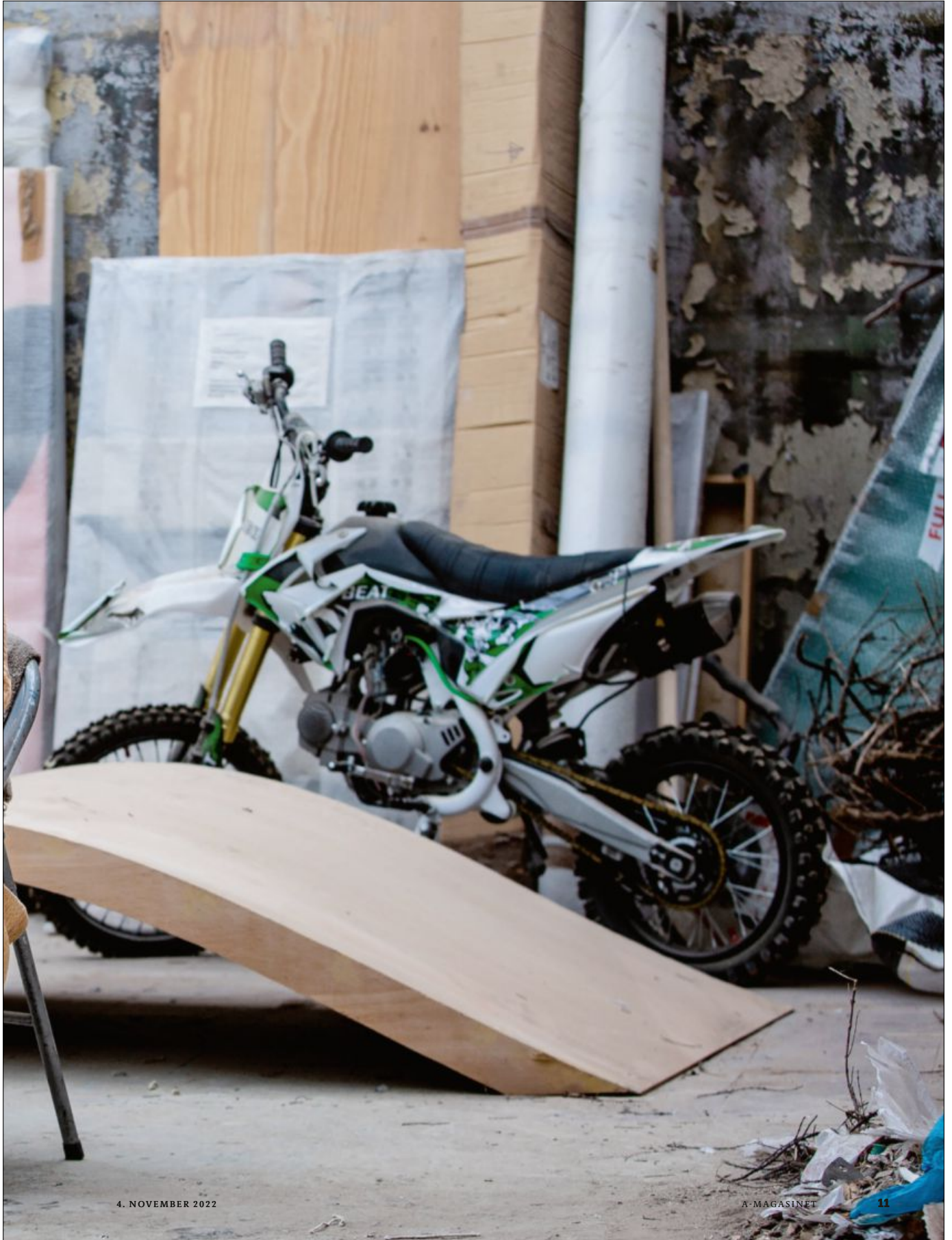
Laure Prouvost | INTERVJUET

IKKE TRO ALT DU SER OG HØRER FRA LAURE PROUVOST

Et par enorme pupper henger i taket. Fuglen i hagen tar seg en en sigg. Men ting er sjelden akkurat slik de ser ut når du møter kunstneren og hennes arbeider.

TEKST Kjersti Nipen FOTO Magnus Knutsen Bjørke







Jeg har aldri sett noe behov for å skille liv og kunst. Alt er det samme for meg.

Laure Prouvost.
kunstner

Det starter ikke så bra. Like bortenfor porten til Laure Prouvost i Brussel stopper to biler opp midt i et veikryss. Sjøførene fyker ut, kranbler vilt og gestikulerende om nestenulykken, en forbipasserende blander seg hissig inn, smeller det nå?

Nei, med mutte, aggressive bevegelser snur mennene hver til sitt og fyker videre i dette ståkete, uordnede kaoset: søppel som flyter, sammenklemt tomflasker overalt, biler som tuter, og skolebarn på lang rekke som stiller opp til en ny dag i Molenbeek.

Bydelens rykte var frynsete fra før, men ble verdensberømt på alle de gale måtene da området viste seg å være base for flere av Paris-terroristene i 2015. Søker du på nett, får du opp treff som «10 reasons you should never visit Molenbeek» og Donald Trumps konsise karakteristikk: «A hell hole.» Og det er altså hit franske Laure Prouvost nylig valgte å flytte sin familie med tre barn og hele sitt kunstatelier, med et team av unge assistenter.

Og når hun nå tar med deler av sin idéverden til Oslo og Nasjonalmuseet, tar hun også med litt av Molenbeek.

I eventyrland. Men først: Hvem er Laure Prouvost? Det korte svaret: et eventyr.

Det litt lengre svaret: De færreste vet alt om det. Å blande fiksjon og virkelighet har alltid vært kunstnerens varemerke.

Men noen fakta later til å være etablert. Hun kommer fra Lille i Frankrike, men har stort sett bodd andre steder: I Belgia som tenårings, i London fra hun startet kunststudiene som 18-åring, så en periode i Antwerpen.

Lenge var kunsten hennes for de få.

– En kamp for å overleve, beskriver hun.

Et par virkelig høythengende kunstpriser velter om på det. Nå har Prouvost et helt fabrikklokale å boltre seg i, et romslig hus med hage vegg i vegg og tre assistenter som hjelper henne å iverksette de mange innfallene som utgjør hennes forunderlige og humoristiske idéverden. Laure Prouvost er en konseptuell kunstner som bygger opp fantasirike universer fulle av ting å ta på, se på, røre ved, oppleve. Og surrealismen stopper på ingen måte når du går ut døren fra hennes utstillinger.

Å gå inn porten til hennes egen avkrok her i Brussel er for eksempel en opplevelse i seg selv. Her er så underlig! Stillheten er én ting, sirenene

FAKTA

Laure Prouvost (44)



Hvem:

Fransk kunstner, utdannet ved Central St. Martins i London, har bodd og arbeidet i Storbritannia og Belgia.



Hva:

Mottok den prestisjetunge Turnerprisen i 2013. Representerter Frankrike på Venezia-biennalen i 2019. Separatutstillinger i flere store byer.



Hvorfor:

Første kunstner til å fylle Lyshallen i Nasjonalmuseet med en spesialutviklet utstilling. «Laure Prouvost. Above Front Tears Oui Float» åpner denne helgen. Del av «The Fredriksen Commissions», prosjekter finansiert av Fredriksen-familiens samarbeid med museet.

fra byen er med ett langt vekk. Alle de grønne plantene og trærne noe annet, en oase i alt det grå og brune. To svarte kyllinger spankulerer koselig forbi mens kaniner hopper rundt i hjørnet av hagen.

Så begynner man å legge merke til små underfundigheter overalt. En gulrot i bedet, den er visst av glass. En fugl med en sigarett i nebbet. Palmeblader som har skiftet farge til signalblått. Og fasaden på atelieret! Den er formet som et par pupper mot himmelen.

– Etter hvert tenkte jeg å få koblet vannslanger til dem så de kan sprute vann ut over hagen, sier hun og smiler som om det var den naturligste ting.

– *Hva er greia med alle puppene?*

– Jeg kan bare ikke motstå dem!

Molenbeek i mitt hjerte (og kunst). Hvorfor flyttet hun hit, midt i det beryktede terrorstrøket? Valget handlet om to ting: Det er billig og sentralt. Mye plass. Det er den praktiske biten. Men det var også en klar ideologisk tanke bak: Hun og familien ville ikke bo i det velstående Brussel blant glassfasader, pene dresser og moules frites.

– Denne byen er veldig delt. Slik skaper man gettoer. Men vi kan ikke isolere verdenene fra hverandre. Dette er en vanskelig del av byen, men vi er nødt til å møtes og delta i samfunnet rundt oss. Engasjere oss sosialt, sier hun.

Utenfor porten har hun og kollegene så smått satt i gang. En grønn plantekasse, med et lite «bokbyttebibliotek», har de hengt opp på en trestamme. Flere grønne flekker følger nedover i kvartalet.

– Når jeg får litt bedre tid, tenkte jeg å åpne mer opp og sette i gang workshoper med barna som bor her.

Det siste året har Prouvost jobbet med et barnekor i Molenbeek, der alle barna har bakgrunn fra migrantfamilier. Barna synger i videoinstallasjonen hun tar med seg til Oslo og Nasjonalmuseet.

– De har vært fantastiske å jobbe med. Når jeg får en så fantastisk invitasjon, ville jeg gjerne dele privilegiet med dem. Jeg håper jeg kan få dem med meg til Oslo.

Inn i lyset. Laure Prouvost er første kunstner invitert til å fylle Lyshallen, hedersplassen på toppen av nye Nasjonalmuseet. Det blir en totalopplevelse som ligner lite annet. Stikkord: Grotter. Fontener. Tåke. Fisker og fugler. ➔



Kaklofoni. De to
kyllingene i hagen
har fått navn av
barna: Natt og Skitt.

TRE
LEVEREGLER

1

Bland.
Bland liv og arbeid.

2

Ha humor.
Fortsett å se på verden med distanse og humor, behold optimismen.

3

Sver.
Svøm, eller gjør hva som helst som gjør at du kan sveve litt, flyte med.



Prosjektet i Lyshallen handler om migrasjon, om å sveve som fugler.

Laure Prouvost.
kunstner

→ Buktende underlag og mystiske hybridskapninger.

Alt spiller opp under grunntemaet i utstillingen: å sveve et sted der grensene på bakkeplan viskes ut.

Det er mange slags grenser hun tenker på: Mellom folk. Mellom land. Mellom dyr og mennesker. Mellom språk.

– Prosjektet i Lyshallen handler om migrasjon, om å sveve som fugler. Bryte barrierer og smelte litt mer sammen, sier Prouvost.

Det uhyggelige bakteppet er klimaendringene og hvordan de tvinger folk på flukt.

Da kunstneren kom til Lyshallen første gang, ble hun fanget av det duse lyset fra de hvite, gjennomskinnelige veggene.

– Det er som om å gå inn i skyene. En melkeaktig, kremete sfære med en opplevelse av å sveve. Det var følelsen jeg ville forsterke, sier Prouvost.

Liv og kunst er samme sak. Telefonen ringer, eldstedatteren har glemt svømmetøy. Prouvost fyker inn i huset rett over gårdsplassen. Der inne er det som å trå over i enda en kunstinstallasjon. Rariteter og snurrigheter overalt.

– Jeg har aldri sett noe behov for å skille liv og kunst. Alt er det samme for meg.

Etter en kjapp sykkelturn er det lunsj på nabolagskafeen. Der samles folk med og uten penger tett i tett på benkene til linsesuppe, potetpai og søt te. Av og til jobber Laure Prouvost og assistentene hennes gratis på dugnadskjøkkenet.

– Stedet har en sosial profil, du betaler det du vil og kan. For noen er det ingenting, forteller Prouvost.

Hun oppfatter noe litt grenseløst ved Belgia som tiltaler henne. Folk, språk, religion, ulike bakgrunner, alt blandes sammen. Da familien først kom hit, følte det litt som om de hadde flyttet til det ville vesten.

– Det er en følelse av at alt kan skje, noe som er fantastisk for en kunstner. Vil vi filme et sted, gjør vi bare det.

Hun poengterer at Brussel, og kanskje særlig Molenbeek, er preget av at en strøm av nye mennesker stadig ankommer.

– Mange av dem trenger kjærlighet og omsorg. Å gi dem det ligger ikke i strukturene våre her, ikke i økonomien heller, sier kunstneren.

Likevel må alle som bor i Molenbeek, forholde seg til det.

– Du er i den virkelige verden her. Ikke i en liten boble av komfort. →

→

Nyinnflyttede.

Mannen fikk ny jobb, familien en attpåklatt, pendlerlivet landet med stor bakgård i Brussel. – Jeg føler meg fullstendig knyttet til flamsk historie, til det surrealistiske i kunsten her, det bisarre ved tilværelsen.



→

Pussige typer. Noen av folkene som henger i atelieret ser litt stive ut i maska.

→→

Anti-Askepott. Overalt i atelieret finnes hverdagsgjensjenstander som ser tilforlatelige ut, men de er laget av glass.







Språket er akkurat som alle andre materialer. Som leire.

Laure Prouvost.
kunstner

➔ **Er det en naken bestemor der?** Hun forteller at hun ble kunstner fordi hun var så dårlig på alt annet. Dessuten:

– Det var vanskelig å finne ordene som kunne uttrykke det jeg ville. Jeg har alltid elsket å lage ting, finne opp ting, sier Prouvost.

Videokunsten hun først startet med, utviklet seg til et mylder av medier og teknikker: performance, tekster, skulpturer, installasjoner, glass og vevkunst, gjerne alt på én gang, i totalkunstverk som er både surrealistiske og humoristiske.

– Det er ikke noe hierarki mellom ulike verktøy og sjangere, ikke noe som er viktigere enn det andre, sier Prouvost.

Ordene er blitt hennes venn, men hun bøyer, virr og vender på dem i leker og ordspill.

– Språket er akkurat som alle andre materialer. Som leire.

Særlig elsker hun å leke med det engelske språket. Feilstave det, lage komiske nytolkninger av ord.

– Engelsk er migrantenes språk, outsidersens språk. Du har ditt engelsk, jeg mitt. Språket eksisterer i så mange varianter.

Da Prouvost vant den prestisjetunge, britiske Turner-prisen, etter mange års virke i London, fant kanskje franskmennene det for godt å minne om hvor kunstneren egentlig kom fra. Prouvost ble i alle fall invitert til å utforme Frankrikes paviljong under Venezia-biennalen i 2019 og laget et konsept karakteristisk for sin blanding av samtidsanalyse og lekenhet: Ett av elementene var å grave en tunnel under bakken, i retning av den britiske paviljongen, i håp om å bli møtt på halvveien av landet som nå rev seg løs fra Europa.

– Jeg elsker England og prøvde å holde forbindelsen mellom de to landene oppe. Men det kom ikke så mye hjelp fra den britiske siden, sier hun lakonisk.

Hun forteller at hun først dro til England for å komme nærmere besteforeldrene der. Men det er ikke sikkert man skal ta henne på ordet. «Grandma» og «Grandpa» er nemlig gjennomgangsfignurer i hennes verker: overalt i kunsten, ingen steder å se i virkeligheten.

Rundt oss i atelieret er det for eksempel en rekke tekanner i keramikk.

– Bestemor lager dem, sier Prouvost og forteller, uten å blunke, om hvordan bestemoren pleier å hoppe i fallsjerm på søndager.

– Naken. Hun elsker å fly, sveve i skyene, flyte av sted, forteller hun.

Et maleri som lener seg inntil veggen, forteller samme historie om nakenflyvning.

– Bestefaren min kjører flyet. Og så hører de på Elton John sammen.

– **Er det en faktisk bestemor et sted?**

– Jeg har mange bestemødre. Jeg blander fiksjon og virkelighet. Det er mye sannhet i det også, svarer hun kryptisk.

Å faktasjekke kunsten blir uansett et blindspor i møte med Laure Prouvosts forunderlige verden.

Hun inviterer folk inn i en fantasi. Du kan velge å bli med på leken – eller la være. **Å**

kjersti.nipen@aftenposten.no

Trangt. På kafeen *Cassonade* i *Molenbeek* spiser alle rundt samme bord og får servert samme rett. En dugnadsbasert og sosial møteplass for nabolaget.



TRE OM

Laure Prouvost



Dóra Benyó

Assistent, *Studio Prouvost*.

Jeg har jobbet med Laure i fire år nå. Det har vært ganske vilt, med så mange prosjekter verden rundt. Hun er en leken kunstner, og har truffet godt på timingen når hun blander virkelighet og fiksjon. Det fine med Laure, er at hun også har full forståelse når jeg trenger å jobbe med mine egne kunstting.



Eva Klerck Gange

Kurator *Nasjonalmuseet*

Prouvost har et rikt kunstnerskap, som syder av livsbejænde humor og dypt alvor. I Lyshallen har hun skapt et kontrastfullt univers. Der vises den globale oppvarmingens ødeleggelser og fuglens kamp for å overleve. Og vi oppfordres til å sveve over skyene, i et grenseløst univers som rommer glede, kjærlighet, frykt for terror og krig.



Gro Dahle

Forfatter og bidragsyter i utstillingskatalogen

Laure Prouvosts er WOW! Jeg gleder meg til å se fascinasjonsrommet hun skaper, installasjonene. Bli overrasket, virvlet rundt. Hun er vilt kreativ, leken, åpner opp sanselige verdener fulle av symbol-ladninger og kropp, kunstneriske akvarier med psykologiske understrømmer. Og hun er morsom!

Aftenposten
6 November 2022

Aftenposten

30

Søndag 6. november 2022 Aftenposten

Anmeldelse Kunst



◻ I utstillingen «Laure Prouvost. Above Front Tears Oui Float» oppløses skillet mellom virkelighet og fiksjon. Kunstneren er best når hun omfavner absurditetene, mener vår anmelder. Foto: Annar Bjørgh, Nasjonalmuseet

Hva om mennesker var fugler og alle var nakne?

Laure Prouvost på Nasjonalmuseet gir oss et symbolspektet drømmeland.

◻ | **Anmeldelse**
Alma Holtvedt
Kunstanmelder

Hvor går skillet mellom virkelighet og fiksjon? I den nyåpnede utstillingen i Lyshallen på Nasjonalmuseet, spiller det ikke lenger noen rolle.

Laure Prouvost har skapt et univers hvor flyvende bestemor er en greie og nakne kvinner oppfordrer til felles migrasjon (i eget tempo). Skitne klær blir rene hvis du ruger på dem



◻ ◻
Det er et overflødhets-horn av surrealisme, humor og liv

som en hekkende fugl.

Det er et overflødhets-horn av surrealisme, humor og liv. Samtidig er den franske kunstnerens mysteriekammer forankret i virkelighetens problematikk: Global oppvarming, nasjonal identitet og trusler mot fuglelivet.

Prouvost inviterer publikum til levitasjon. Hun vil ha oss med på en tur over skyene. Jeg følger henne mesteparten av veien.

På flytur med bestemor. Lyshallens to saler står for anledningen i sterk kontrast til hverandre. En tunnel fører først inn i et dunkelt opplyst rom. Her kommer det ståhør opp av gulvet. Brunt spillvann flyter utover.

Oppmerksomheten trekkes raskt mot den store videoinstallasjonen på kortsiden. Den viser Grandma, kunstnerens konseptuelle bestemor, på flytur. Karak-

Ruster seg for suppesituasjoner

Nå blir det vanskeligere for besøkende på Nasjonalmuseet å få med seg supper og ting som kan kastes på kunsten.

Philip A. Johannesborg og Torkjell J. Trædal

Den siste tiden har klimaaktivister rundt om i verden kastet flytende matretter på uerstattelig kunst. Fredag ble Vincent van Goghs maleri «Såmannen» tilgriset med ertesuppe i Roma. I oktober kastet aktivister tomatuppe på van Gogh-verket «Solsikker» i Storbritannias nasjonalgalleri i London. Nå tar Nasjonalmuseet grep for

å beskytte sin kunst mot potensielt hærverk.

- Vi følger med på aksjonene rundt i verden og har iverksatt tiltak den siste tiden for å forhindre at noe tilsvarende skal skje her, sier kommunikasjonsdirektøren ved museet, Eirik Kydland.

Flere av Nasjonalmuseets verker er allerede beskyttet med glass. De nye tiltakene vil bety en oppgradering av både menneske-



◻ Nasjonalmuseet sikrer seg mot potensielle mat-angrep etter flere aktivistaksjoner rundt om i Europa. Foto: Morten Uglum

lige og elektroniske sikkerhetsrutiner, forklarer Kydland.

- Straffbart. I praksis vil det dreie seg om strengere kontroll av museumsgjestens vesker.

I tillegg er kunstverkene utstyrt med avstandssensorer. Går en for nærme vil det gå en alarm som

tilkaller vaktene.

- Samtidig er vi klare på at det er vanskelig å helgardere seg mot denne type angrep uten at det vil gå kraftig på bekostning av museets tilgjengelighet og åpenhet, sier kommunikasjonsdirektøren.

Hvis kunsten mot alle odds likevel blir utsatt for skade, vil ikke

museet nøle med å ringe politiet.

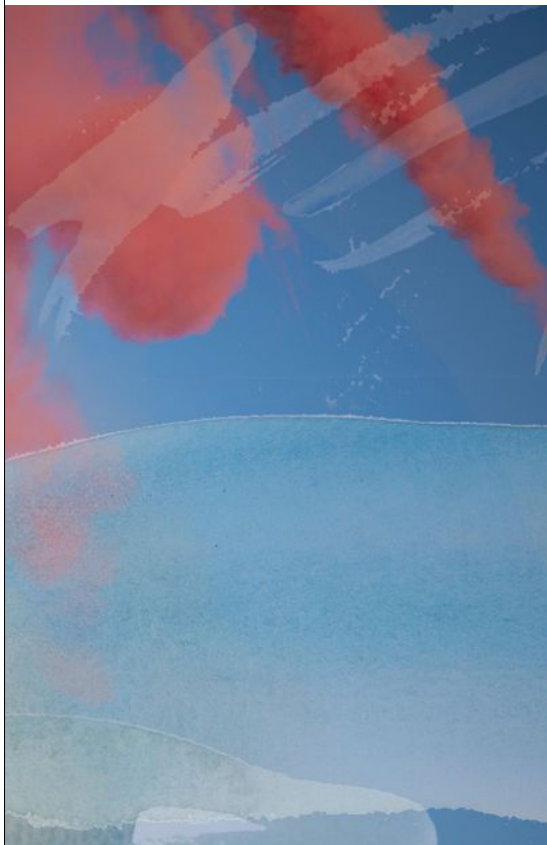
- Skadeverk på uerstattelig kulturarv og gjenstander med betydelig historisk verdi, er straffbart og vil således politianmeldes.

Munch: God sikkerhet. I en uttalelse skriver aktivistgruppen Last Generation at aksjonen fredag er «et desperat og vitenskapelig basert rop som ikke kan oppfattes som rent hærverk». De varsler at aksjonene kommer til å fortsette til klimaendringene tas på alvor.

På Munchmuseet sier direktør Tone Hansen at de i utgangspunktet har svært god sikkerhet som også tar høyde for denne typen trusler.

- Samtidig følger vi utviklingen nøye, skriver Hansen i en epost. **- Er malerier beskyttet av glass på Munchmuseet?**

- Vi kan dessverre ikke gå inn i de konkrete sikkerhetstiltakene våre.



● Prouvosts bestemor har uvanlige fritidssysler. Foto: Alex Kachkaev, med tillatelse fra kunstneren

teren dukker opp flere steder i Prouvosts produksjon.

Bestemoren liker å kaste seg naken ut fra et helikopter med tau bundet til føttene.

Det skal bli enda rarer. Snart forvandles hun til en menneskefugl. På den måten kan hun observere verdens rariteter - og styggeligheter - fra et nytt perspektiv.

Grandma er manifestasjonen

av ideen om vektløshet og grenseløshet. Sammen med fuglesymbolikken i seg selv, er disse ideene gjengangere i utstillingen.

Assosiasjonene trekkes i ulike retninger: Mot lenselen etter å nærme seg naturen, eller kanskje en Gud. Til fuglens likegyldighet overfor konstruerte landegrenser, en motsetning til pandemisk isolasjon. Eller til det vektløse svevet som en frigjøring fra eller oppløsning av menneskelige betingelser og begrensninger.

Dyktig surrealist. Prouvost henter inspirasjon fra kunstretningene dadaisme og surrealisme. Førstnevnte assosieres med nihilisme, *readymades* og brudd på estetiske konvensjoner. Sistnevnte kjennetegnes ved en interesse for underbevisstheten, sammensmeltingen av drøm og virkelighet og uventede sammenstillinger.

Og det er nettopp når hun trer inn i det surrealistiske formspråket med full kraft, at Prouvost virkelig skinner. Enten det er gjennom film, skulptur, tekstil eller tekst.

I et telt som også er et rede, drar hun ideen om menneskefugl-hybrid enda lenger. En videomontasje viser hvordan man kan ruge på mat for å tilberede den, eller på en ledning for å få energi. Verket drives fremover av kunstnerens lavmælte fortellerstemme. Det er både morsomt og litt søtt.

Trer du en flettekurv på hodet, er du derimot inne i et VR-univers. Nakne kvinner løper rundt i Lyshallen, samtidig som de mester budskap om migrasjon.

Disse tankeeksperimentene, som i bunn og grunn er dypt eksistensielle, formidles med en nærmest burlesk humor. Det er sanselig og sterkt. Imponerende lydbilder bidrar til den suggerende opplevelsen.

Best når hun ikke konkretiserer. Når det kommer til menneskers forsøpling og forurensning,

insisterer imidlertid Prouvost på å være konkret. I spillvannet og jordhaugene som flyter utover store deler av gulvet i den ene salen, ligger det panteflasker, sigarettneiper, ødelagt elektronikk og annet søppel.

Man har sett det før og skjønner greia: Det er fy-fy, dumt for fuglene, en forpestelse av miljøet vi lever i.

Ved å konkretisere på denne måten, svekker hun sitt eget absurde univers. Da står hun i fare for å ta publikum ut av det konseptuelle undringsrommet hun har skapt.

Tar i bruk rommets kvaliteter. I Lyshallens andre sal får kvalitene ved utstillingsrommet virkelig komme til sin rett. Her befinner vi oss over skyene. Det er røykfyllt og melkehvitt.

Rommet er langt mer minimalistisk enn det forrige. Bare noen eksotiske glassfugler holder oss med selskap.

Grandma svever på skjermen også her, bak en fiskefontene med bibelske konnotasjoner. Og søppelet dukker opp igjen, men i en mer vellykket form: Det er omskapt til uroer som henger fra taket. Disse kan tas nærmere i øyesyn med kikkert. Vi er på fuglekikking i skyene, og det vi kikker på er menneskelig dilldall. Finurlig.

Romlige utfordringer. Lyshallen er et utfordrende rom. I stedet for en white cube, må kunstneren forholde seg til store, åpne lokaler. Lyset siver inn gjennom fasadens marmorglass.

Prouvost løser utfordringen godt. Utstillingen, skapt spesifikt for Lyshallen, evner å ta i bruk lysets kvaliteter og rommets vidstrakthet. Det underbygger den konseptuelle ideen om en drømmenes verden, der virkelighetens problemstillinger kan ses fra et fugleperspektiv.

Jeg hadde foretrukket om hun lot være å dra meg ned på jorden igjen.

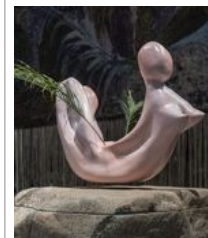
Kunst. «Laure Prouvost. Above Front Tears Oui Float»

Nasjonalmuseet (Lyshallen)

5. november 2022–12. februar 2023

Utstillingen er den første i serien «The Fredriksen Commissions», som skal presentere fem internasjonale kunstnere over en periode på ti år. Prosjektet er del av et større samarbeid mellom Nasjonalmuseet og Cecilie og Kathrine Fredriksen.

Laure Prouvost (født 1978) er en fransk konseptkunstner bosatt i Belgia. Denne utstillingen er hennes største prosjekt så langt i karrieren.



● Prouvost arbeider ofte med hybrider og sammensmeltinger.

Foto: Annar Björgli, Nasjonalmuseet

The Art Newspaper
6 June 2022



THE ART NEWSPAPER

Laure Prouvost
Interview

In partnership with
the Fredriksen
Family

Louisa Buck
6 June 2022

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'My grandma will jump from a helicopter, naked and listening to Elton John': Laure Prouvost on her biggest work yet

French artist is first to fill the spectacular Light Hall in Norway's new National Museum



Laure Prouvost's *Airplane teapot, chandelier* (2019), a Murano glass work inspired by the artist's grandmother
© Laure Prouvost. Courtesy of Lisson Gallery

Laure Prouvost makes richly inventive, idiosyncratic mixed-media installations that combine film, sound and sculptural elements. These elaborate mise-en-scènes confound conventional formats and narratives and use a mixture of wordplay along with personal, literary and artistic references to muddy distinctions between fact and fiction. Prouvost won the Turner Prize in 2013 with an elaborate work revolving around her grandfather and Kurt Schwitters and featuring teapots made by her grandmother. At the 2019 Venice Biennale she filled the French Pavilion with a tentacular sculptural installation that included pieces made by glassblowers from Murano, live performances by magicians and a dreamlike film in which Prouvost and a motley band of travellers made an odyssey from Paris to Venice. Now she's the first artist to be commissioned to fill the National Museum's spectacular 2,400 sq. m Light Hall.

The Art Newspaper: How do you feel about inaugurating the National Museum of Norway's new Light Hall?

Laure Prouvost: It's definitely the biggest project I have done and a great honour to have this opportunity in such a special building where it's just like you're in the clouds. They saw the pavilion in Venice and were really keen to work together and so it's a nice dialogue with the water of Venice and the sky of Oslo. In some ways my whole project is around this idea of levitation, of birds flying, which I was already winking towards at the end of the video in Venice.

There's a great deal of glass and very few solid walls: does that pose a challenge?

I think it's quite challenging to not have white walls but to have light. There's a little thin layer of marble in between the glass and you are in a milky, cloudy sphere—it's stunning. Of course, it's also tricky—you can't put anything on the wall and you either have to levitate from the floor or dig your way in or out.

What have you conceived for the space?

The project is really in response to the space. When I went to see it, I felt as if I was levitating above the clouds. So, post-pandemic, with how we have lived in the past few years where we have really felt stuck to the ground and unable to move, I really wanted to have a feeling of escapism both in mental terms, but also the idea of physical escapism, of losing the weight of your body. Could we levitate? Could we be above the clouds? Could we be closer to the birds? We have all had dreams where we tried to fly, it's in the subconscious of humans. So there are a lot of winks to the birds and the desire of humans to fly. Also—and this was in my Venice pavilion too—there is this idea of migration, of not belonging to a state or a nation.



Kathrine Fredriksen with Laure Prouvost in Venice. Prouvost will be the first artist to undertake the Fredriksen Family Commission in the National Museum's Light Hall

Do you find the prospect of filling this vast expanse daunting?

I have a tendency to try and fill a space, so it's more about finding the right rhythm in the way that people can experience it. I really like tiny, tiny, cosy spaces as well, so it's also about managing to create moments of intimacy within a very large picture. I am playing with a few tunnel corridors where you enter from one space to another and into different parts with paths to guide you. One is very much like you're at the bottom of a valley, a bit dark and very physical and messy, and then in the second space it gets lighter and lighter, you're above the sky and above the clouds. Then there are two videos with two birds where it's as if you are under the nesting birds, being cocooned like a bird that is keeping its eggs warm. There will also be low smoke that makes you feel like you're walking above the clouds and there are going to be fountains, very playful and joyous. And my grandma will jump from a helicopter, naked and listening to Elton John.

Wow. I know your grandmother sometimes features in your work but is she really doing this? How old is she?

Eighty-two. Yes, she always wants me to show her. She's a sculptor—her teapots were in my Turner show and I did a piece on her dreams as well. Now she asks my uncle to take her in his helicopter and she jumps naked every weekend, or whenever she can. He attaches a rope to her and then he pulls her back in. She loves that, so she's going to do an appearance.

This is Norway's new National Museum. Was this national context a consideration?

I have been filming in the Ekebergparken [a sculpture park on the edge of Oslo] and think I will use some of those images, but the work is more about physical sensations and the idea of humans being very much in connection with nature and migrating like birds. We all belong somewhere, but I try to escape from this idea of nation. Keeping the imagination going, that's what is really important.

• The Fredriksen Family Commission: Laure Prouvost, 3 November 2022-12 February 2023

• *Read more about Norway's new National Museum [here](#)*

LISSON GALLERY

Financial Times
17 January 2022



Collector Frédéric de Goldschmidt on creating a 'seventh heaven' of art

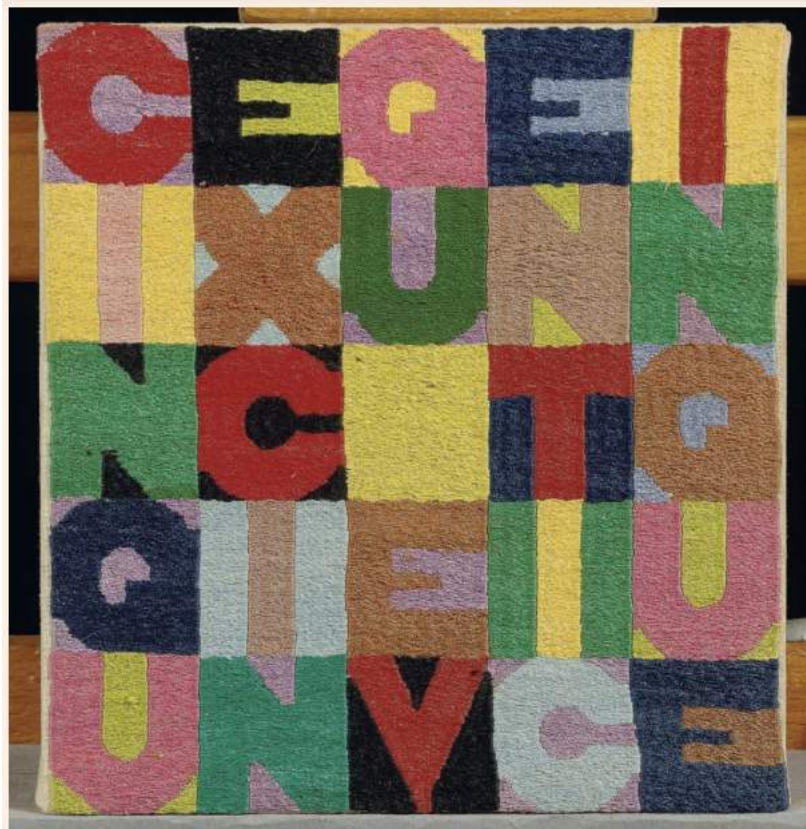
Works by Laure Prouvost, Theaster Gates and Alighiero e Boetti are on display at the Cloud Seven building in Brussels

Caroline Roux JANUARY 17 2022

Since November 2021, Frédéric de Goldschmidt has had hundreds of people passing through his kitchen in Brussels, and more in his living room — a stunning double-height space, complete with mezzanine. His bedroom has been taken over by a series of artworks dealing with place and memory, by artists including Neïl Beloufa and Gabriel Orozco; an installation by Ragna Róbertsdóttir is composed of seven boxes of mud from hot springs in her native Iceland, in a formation that pays homage to Donald Judd.

The property at 7 Quai du Commerce was acquired at auction by Goldschmidt, a film producer and scion of the Rothschild family (though he omits that part of his name), a few years ago. It is in fact two joined buildings, the front one from 1820, the back from 1920, and Goldschmidt decided to turn it into an art gallery and a co-working space, with his own apartment and two loft-style apartments for guests situated in the roof. But first he has opened up its entire 1,500 sq m to show more than 300 works from his extensive collection to the public. “I wanted to establish the idea that this is a place for Brussels,” he says, “for everyone, first of all, and a place for art.”

When the exhibition closes at the end of this month, and after a spot of reorganisation, he will move into his private part of the building. The gallery space will then start to show smaller exhibitions and, he hopes, the rest of the space will begin to make money, welcoming visitors to use its desks, bar, screening rooms and gym, all of which will be filled with works from Goldschmidt's collection. A toilet-shaped fountain by Laure Prouvost, originally shown at the 2019 Venice Biennale, will be installed.



Alighiero Boetti. 'Cinque per cinque venticinque' (1988) © Courtesy the Frédéric de Goldschmidt Collection. Photo: Hugard & Vanoverschelde Photography

“I wanted to do something that would allow me to share my collection on a longer-term basis. But also something financially viable. I don’t have the infinite means of someone like [Monsieur Pinault](#),” he says, referring to French luxury goods magnate François, who has established [vast permanent galleries in Venice and Paris](#). Goldschmidt’s space will be known as Cloud Seven, after the building’s seven storeys and in reference to being “au septième ciel” (in seventh heaven), as well as the street number. He is hoping it will become a meeting place for not just the creative minds of the city, “but anyone who is excited to be surrounded by art”.

Goldschmidt, born in France in 1959, began purchasing contemporary artworks in 2007, after selling a painting by Edouard Manet left to him by his art-loving grandmother which he describes as “just too valuable to keep”. His grandmother was a significant collector, acquiring “L’Arlésienne” by Van Gogh when she was just 22 and gifting it to the French government to celebrate the liberation of Paris. (It is now in the Musée d’Orsay.) “She was obviously a very modern woman in 1915,” he says. “Later in life she became more conventional, she wouldn’t go beyond Picasso.”

The first piece he settled on was a work by Benjamin Sabatier. “It was made from ice-cube trays filled with crumpled pages from magazines,” he says. This attraction to non-valuable materials and found objects permeates his collection and resonates through the current exhibition. There is a sculpture of a plaster block embedded with useless plates, left over from the closure of the American airline Pan Am, by Theaster Gates; a tennis net overlaid with a volleyball net by Bertrand Lavier from 1987; an accumulation of record sleeves pinned to a plywood board by Tom Burr (2010). “I’m discovering the connections between all the works through this exhibition process,” he says, “and poor materials is one of them.”



Laure Prouvost, 'The End of a Dream' (2019) © Courtesy Lisson Gallery, carlier | gebauer, and Galerie Nathalie Obadia. Photograph: Cristiano Corte

Elsewhere are works by artists ranging from Christian Jankowski to Mary Corse, [Shilpa Gupta](#) to Lucio Fontana, unified room by room with subtitles such as “World Reports” or “Time and Space”. However you categorise them, though, 315 works are a lot to take in.

For the acquisitions that form the other strand of his collection, Goldschmidt zeroed in on the Zero group, which flourished in Düsseldorf in the late 1950s. Like their later Italian Arte Povera counterparts, they strove to take art practice back to a new beginning where the canon of western art tradition did not apply; works were made in monochrome and unremarkable materials.

Simultaneously, he discovered Alighiero e Boetti, the conceptual Italian artist who created stacks of words, dense numerological patterns and painstaking pictures in everyday ballpoint and worked with people in Afghanistan in the 1970s to create vibrant tapestries, including world maps made up of national flags.

“There are 17 rooms in this exhibition and there are 11 Boettis in them,” says Goldschmidt, pointing out that the artist’s preoccupation with order and disorder, notions of delegation, authorship and personal and political territories are fundamental to his own collecting and provide a framework for the show. A 1966 Boetti of lounge-chair fabric captured in an aluminium frame, “Zig Zag”, is one of the highlights here, while a text-based embroidery, “Inaspettatamente” (“Unexpected”), from 1987, gives the exhibition its title.



Exterior of Cloud Seven building in Brussels © Courtesy Frédéric de Goldschmidt Collection. Photo credit Caspar



Installation view of 'Inaspettamente' at Cloud Seven © Courtesy the Frédéric de Goldschmidt Collection. Photo credit Regular Studio

Goldschmidt now lives in Brussels, having sold the Paris-based film production company that his father, Gilbert de Goldschmidt, established in 1951 (it produced *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*, among 40 or so others). The Belgian capital, he says, is multicultural and remarkably porous. “It’s always at the crossroads, it’s been invaded by everyone from the Spanish to the Dutch to the French.” It is also notable for its private art foundations, including [Hubert Bonnet’s CAB](#) and the Boghossian Foundation, housed in a dazzling art deco villa. “Art and business rely on individuals here,” Goldschmidt says.

In 2024, the Pompidou Centre’s Belgian offshoot, KANAL, will open nearby in a former Citroën garage, consolidating the Dansaert district’s art credentials. Goldschmidt clearly hopes to play a big role in this critical mass. He is, after all, the only one with a Laure Prouvost toilet in his gym.

LISSON GALLERY

Artnet News
12 July 2021

artnet[®]news

Shows & Exhibitions

What Happens When Artists Take Over a City? See 5 Colossal and Urgently Relevant Artworks at the Manchester International Arts Festival

Works by artists including Christine Sun Kim, Laure Prouvost, and Forensic Architecture have taken over the city.

Caroline Goldstein, July 12, 2021



Laure Prouvost, *The long waited weighted gathering* (2021). Photo: Michael Pollard.

Laure Prouvost, *The long waited weighted gathering* (2021). Photo: Michael Pollard.

As the Manchester International Arts Festival continues into its final weeks, we decided to take a look at some of the best contemporary art interventions happening around the city.

From an installation by Forensic Architecture on the occasion of the group's 10th anniversary, to the transformation of a Jewish synagogue into a meditation on community and history, here are five must-see works.

Laure Prouvost, *The long waited, weighted, gathering* (2021)



Laure Prouvost, *The long waited, weighted, gathering* (2021). Photo: Michael Pollard.

Turner Prize-winner Laure Prouvost has transformed the Ladies Gallery in the newly renovated 1874 synagogue that houses the Manchester Jewish Museum into a time machine. The installation features textiles and a film that pays homage to the Jewish women who helped build Manchester into a modern city, and found comfort and safety within the walls of the Spanish and Portuguese synagogue. Prouvost worked with contemporary members of the Women's Textile Group to create objects within the installation that reference themes of migration, community, femininity, and religion.



Laure Prouvost, *The long waited, weighted, gathering* (2021). Photo: Michael Pollard.

FOUR TO SEE AT MANCHESTER INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

By *Mark Westall* • 5 July 2021

Share —

Manchester International Festival (MIF) has returned with a vibrant programme of original new work from across the spectrum of visual and performing arts and music by artists from over 20 countries. It runs until 18th July.

Artists include Akram Khan, Arlo Parks, Aaron and Bryce Dessner, Cerys Matthews, Christine Sun Kim, Cillian Murphy, Damon Albarn, Deborah Warner, Forensic Architecture, Ibrahim Mahama, Laure Prouvost, Marta Minujín, Rema and Lemn Sissay. Events will take place safely in indoor and outdoor locations across Greater Manchester, including the first ever work on The Factory’s construction site, the landmark cultural space that will be MIF’s future home. With almost all the work created in the past year, MIF21 provides a unique snapshot of these unprecedented times. Artists have reflected on ideas such as love and human connections, the way we play, division and togetherness, equality and social change, and the relationship between the urban and the rural.

The best place to see all the activities and events is the MIF site. But we have chosen four visual art highlights to give you a head start.

Laure Prouvost: The long, waited, weighted gathering



Laure Prouvost *The long waited weighted gathering* at MIF 2021 photo:Michael Pollard

It's a bit of a walk to the Manchester Jewish Museum but worth the work to see the newly renovated Museum by Citizens Design Bureau (a co-operative company of architects) as well as the new commission from Laure Prouvost.

The long waited, weighted, gathering which was co-commissioned by Manchester International Festival and Manchester Jewish Museum, transforms The Ladies' Gallery in the historic synagogue of the Manchester Jewish Museum.

The immersive installation consists of a new film, shot inside the gallery and in the surrounding Cheetham Hill area, inspired by the museum's history as a former Spanish and Portuguese synagogue. Laure Prouvost has explored the museum's extensive collection to discover the stories behind past congregants of the synagogue, unearthing the largely untold stories of the women who once found comfort and community within its walls.

Prouvost's films are often accompanied by objects which evoke its themes and imagery. For this work, materials that have been created while working with the Museum's resident Women's Textiles Group are incorporated within the installation alongside the new film, capturing the voices of modern women in the local community together with those of the women who once gathered in the synagogue's Ladies' Gallery.



Laure Prouvost – *The long waited weighted gathering* at MIF 2021 photo Michael Pollard

"We're thrilled to be working with Manchester International Festival and Turner prize-winning artist Laure Prouvost as we re-open our new museum this summer. Artistic collaborations such as this allow us to explore and share Jewish stories in new and imaginative ways, making our collection more relevant and helping us connect closer to our diverse audiences. We can't wait to welcome everyone through our doors to experience Laure's installation and see our stunning new building."

Max Dunbar, Chief Executive of Manchester Jewish Museum

The long waited, weighted gathering – 3rd October Manchester Jewish Museum £6 adults/£4 children
[Book here](#)

LISSON GALLERY

Whitehot Magazine
July 2021



From The Parrish and The Church to Pace, Art-Hopping in the Hamptons

By **PAUL LASTER**, July 2021

It's summer in New York, which means that if you want to keep up with what's happening on the art scene you have to also take a trip to the Hamptons, where the other half of the local art world is nestled.

Jumping off the Jitney in Water Mill, independent curator Renee Riccardo and I made our way to the Parrish Art Museum for two stimulating shows organized by the Chief Curator Alicia Longwell. *Everything That Wasn't White: Lonnie Holley at the Elaine de Kooning House* features 35 new paintings, works on paper, and sculpture created by the self-taught artist and musician during his 2020 artist-in-residency at the Elaine de Kooning House in East Hampton, while *Affinities for Abstraction: Women Artists on Eastern Long Island, 1950-2020* is a colorful overview focused primarily on paintings by 42 artists who have called the Hamptons home for a week, a season or a lifetime.

Catching a ride to Sag Harbor with Susan Galardi, Director of Communications at The Parrish, we stopped to check out **The Church**, a dynamically designed contemporary art space founded by the artists Eric Fischl and April Gornik in a former church. As I was trying to get Director and Chief Curator Sara Cochran's attention through a window, Renee spotted Fischl on the grounds and they gave us a walk through the space and current group exhibition, *Road Rage*, which features 24 artists exploring car culture in a variety of means and media.

From Sag Harbor, we hopped on the public bus, which is as fast as an Uber in the heavy Hamptons' traffic, and hit the galleries in East Hampton, starting at **Jack Hanley's** pop-up space on Newtown Lane, where he was showing geometric abstractions based on graphic designs from advertising, logos and commercial signage by Belgian painter Alain Biltreyst. Working our way down the lane, we caught the engaging *36 Paintings* exhibition at **Harper's East Hampton** and then ran into Sara VanDerBeek, who was exhibiting manipulated imagery of Roman statuary displayed at the Louvre alongside found-object assemblages by Sari Dienes and Carolee Schneemann performance stills at **Halsey McKay Gallery**.

Further down Newtown Lane, **Michael Werner Gallery** was presenting an historical mix with figurative sculptures by German artist Wilhelm Lehmbruck alongside the abstract paintings and drawings of French artist Eugène Leroy; Sotheby's East Hampton and Van de Weghe had important resale pieces by Damien Hirst, Joyce Pensato and Andy Warhol on view; and **Eric Firestone Gallery** included rarely seen works by Dorothy Dehner in his *Season Opener: 2021* show.

Heading over to Main Street, we ended the day with Rebecca Manson ceramic sculptures at Fairfax Dorn Project's **The Living Room**; Laure Prouvost's glass musical instruments, which looked more like sea creatures, at **Lisson Gallery**; a seascape dipped in tar by Minerva Cuevas and Dr. Lakra's Sumi ink drawings depicting mysticism, sex, violence and survival at **Kurimanzutto Out East**; and compelling conceptual art photographs by Trevor Paglen at **Pace Gallery**. **WM**



Laure Prouvost at Lisson Gallery in East Hampton

Art Forum
July 2021

ARTFORUM



Laure Provost, *Swallow*, 2013, HD video, color, sound, 2 minutes 6 seconds.

BAZOCHES-SUR-GUYONNE

“When our eyes touch”

MAISON LOUIS CARRÉ
2 Chemin du Saint-Sacrement
May 19–August 1, 2021

“When our eyes touch,” Jacques Derrida mused, “the question will always be whether they are stroking or striking each other.” This quote supplies the title for the first in a series of exhibitions curated by Satu Herrala and Hans Rosenström titled “A I S T I T,” meaning “senses” in their native Finnish. Needless to say, the Covid pandemic, which began shortly after this project was in motion, has thoroughly upended our relationship with this primary sense.

Inside Louis Carré’s former residence, built by Alvar Aalto in 1959 on a hillside property in a bucolic village not far from Paris, visitors are

embraced in a calm shaped by careful attention to light and ease of movement. Conceived to present Carré’s collection of Picassos and works by Fernand Léger, the space abounds with white walls and high ceilings. Hanging triumphantly in the living room, Kapwani Kiwanga’s sequined and tasseled silk *Nations: Cap Français 20, 21, 22, and 23 June 1793*, 2020, recalls a decisive battle of Haiti’s revolution. Embellished silks in colors of the Caribbean sunrise invite touch as rebel soldiers hold their hands up high as if to grasp freedom.

Through touch, there is transmission: of viruses, sure, but also of knowledge and love. Laure Prouvost’s *Swallow*, 2013, projected in a bedroom, where the video playfully reflects on a damask bedspread, speaks to the intimacy of dreams and friendship in the artist’s dependable language of humor and flash cuts. Likewise, for *Five Senses for One Death, A Poem in Seven Pieces*, 2021, Simone Fattal transcribes a poem Etel Adnan wrote fifty years ago with black paint on seven pieces of porous lava stone.

In English, as well as in Finnish—and French for that matter—the verb *touch* speaks both to physical contact and the heartstrings plucked by the intangible. Rosenström’s sound installation *A House Divided*, 2015–18, written in collaboration with hypnotherapist Charles Montagu, intones: “The voice, born inside me, now spreads out across the room. . . With each word . . . we sink ever further.” As with Adnan’s poem slowly seeping into the red volcanic stone, words, like fingers outstretched, reach for an answer.

— Lillian Davies

*Wallpaper**
9 May 2021

Wallpaper*

ART | 9 DAYS AGO | BY [TF CHAN](#)

‘Mother!’: artists interpret the many facets of motherhood in Denmark show

Fertility, sacrifice and surveillance are just some themes examined in the group show ‘Mother!’, at Denmark’s Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, coinciding with Mother’s Day 2021



Installation View, 'MOTHER! Origin of Life'. featuring Kaari Upson's installation, *Mother's Legs*.
Photography: Anders Sune Berg. Louisiana Museum of Modern Art

Isamu Noguchi is best remembered for monolithic stone sculptures, ethereal paper lights and organic furniture designs. Lesser known is the fact that he created the first baby monitor. 'Radio Nurse', as it was tagged, was commissioned by the Zenith Radio Corporation in the 1930s, to allow parents to better keep track of their infants following the notorious Lindbergh kidnapping. Made out of Bakelite – an early form of plastic – the device was shaped like an inverted water drop, with a horizontal grille that recalled Japanese kendo masks and a caped back reminiscent of a traditional nurse's headdress. Its distinctive form earned it a spot at the Whitney Museum's annual sculpture exhibition in 1939.

Today, a 'Radio Nurse' is one of more than 140 exhibits at 'Mother!', a multidisciplinary exhibition at Denmark's Louisiana Museum of Modern Art. It is an evocative piece, but its inclusion is unconventional, given its male authorship and its suggestion that technology could take on a caregiving role traditionally fulfilled by a mother. Curator Marie Laurberg explains that this is precisely the point: 'Mother!' is an exhibition that investigates the story of motherhood in modern Western art and culture, and that goes beyond the role of the mother as a giver of love and life to encompass complex and existential themes.



Dieric Bouts, *Virgin with Child*, 1454, oil on wood, National Gallery of Denmark

The exhibition begins, appropriately, with a section titled 'Madonna', showing how artists have refashioned the image of the Virgin Mary to reflect the aspirations and concerns of our time. Contrasting with Dieric Bouts' 1454 *Mother with Child*, a portrayal that intertwines motherhood and sainthood is a work by 20th-century American portraitist Alice Neel that has a bleary-eyed mother cradling her equally

disoriented baby, a candid depiction of the struggles of parenting. Alongside are a self-portrait by Catherine Opie, nursing her son while displaying the scar of the word 'Pervert' that had once been carved across her chest, and Mason Poole's photograph of Beyoncé with her newborn twins, an apotheosis of Black motherhood that has garnered more than 10 million likes on Instagram.

'Mother!' follows in the footsteps of Louisiana's 2018 exhibition 'The Moon', which similarly brought together art, design, literature, film, music, and other cultural and medical artefacts under one overarching theme. It is gratifying to see how the same ideas have motivated creators over the years and across disciplines: the second section in the exhibition, addressing memories of motherhood, is anchored by a first-edition copy of Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*, which begins with an early memory of the author awaiting his mother's goodnight kiss (It is deftly juxtaposed with Sophie Calle's elegy to her mother, *Rachel, Monique*).



Alice Neel, *Ginny and Elizabeth*, 1975, oil on canvas. Photography: Courtesy The Estate of Alice Neel and David Zwirner © The Estate of Alice Neel

A section on mothering includes Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho*, in which a serial killer dresses as his dead mother to murder young women, and the Joni Mitchell song *Little Green*, imagining the future of the baby daughter whom the musician had to give up for adoption; while another section on fertility includes an ivory anatomical model of a pregnant woman, from 18th-century Germany, and a uterus-shaped amulet from Central America that was believed to enhance reproductive powers.

‘When we started working on this show, some people wondered if this would just be an angry feminist exhibition about the 70s,’ Laurberg recalls. ‘But we really wanted to go beyond the clichés, the images you already know, to contribute with something new. Our images show the big discussions about the value system of the contemporary moment – what are the roles of women in society, but also, what are the premises that our most intimate relationships are negotiated on?’



Jean-Paul Goude in cooperation with Antonio Lopez, *Constructivist Maternity Dress* from *The Grace Jones Show*, 1979 Photography: Courtesy the artist and Antonio Lopez © Jean-Paul Goude

She is particularly proud to have Grace Jones’ maternity dress in the exhibition’s final section, ‘History of Motherhood: Nine Highlights’, that had been created by Jones’ then-partner Jean-Paul Goude and fashion designer Antonio Lopez. The constructivist outfit wrapped Jones in colourful geometric panels that diverted attention from her protruding belly, so she could continue performing while becoming a mother. It’s an ingenious piece of fashion, but also a commentary on the pressures that continue to be felt by working mothers today. As Laurberg points out, ‘When you see this maternity dress, it seems both really sad and also so creative. So it speaks really to art’s power to create change’.

Multidisciplinary though the exhibition may be, the star attractions are by contemporary talents. ‘There’s a whole new generation of artists, both women and

men, who are renegotiating or discussing motherhood in their work. I think it has to do with a new interest in intimate relationships, but also the idea that you're seeing in Karl Ove Knausgaard's writing, that your own life could be the starting point for discussing broader issues,' contends Laurberg. Artists like Kaari Upson, whose *Mother's Legs* comprises 26 flesh-coloured trunks suspended from the museum's ceiling, enticing the viewer to embrace them as a child would wrap their arms around their mother's leg. Or Petrit Halilaj, who explores notions of belonging through an enlarged replica of the earrings his mother once buried in their garden when the family had to flee the Kosovo War. The earrings are covered in soil from the artist's hometown of Runik, bringing together the artist's affection for his mother and his motherland.



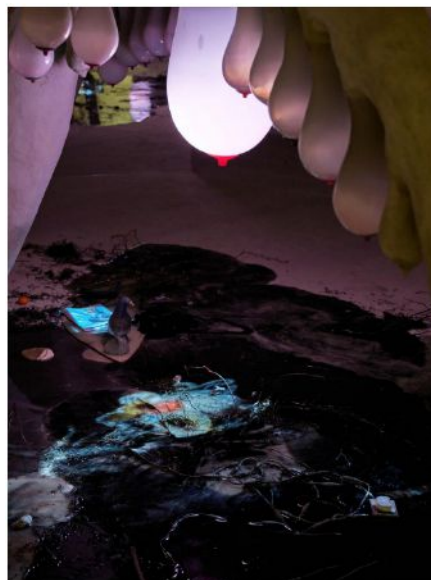
Installation View, 'MOTHER! Origin of Life', featuring Kaari Upson's installation, *Mother's Legs*. Photography: Anders Sune Berg. Louisiana Museum of Modern Art

Most captivating of all is Laure Prouvost's new commission *Mootherr*, which the Turner Prize-winning artist describes as being 'about anxiety and pleasure, anger and extreme beauty.' Within a mirrored room, Prouvost created a giant octopus – an animal known for dying soon after it lays its eggs. This octopus has human breasts

where tentacles would usually appear, which illuminate at intervals to mesmerising effect. Below is a pool of dark ink, strewn with seaweed and electronic waste, and projected with a video that shows a laser scanner in action; in the background, one hears heavy breathing interspersed with recorded conversations between the artist and her son. The installation bundles fertility and caregiving, sustenance and sacrifice, surveillance and ecological crisis. As the artist reflects in an interview for the museum's video platform, Louisiana Channel: art should be 'something that makes you see the world slightly differently, or gets your imagination going.' In these endeavours, the 'Mother!' exhibition has succeeded magnificently. ✱



Installation View, 'MOTHER! Origin of Life'. featuring Laure Prouvost's new commission *Mootherr*. Photography: Anders Sune Berg. Louisiana Museum of Modern Art



Installation View, 'MOTHER! Origin of Life'. featuring Laure Prouvost's new commission *Mootherr*. Photography: Anders Sune Berg. Louisiana Museum of Modern Art



Manjari Sharma & Irina Rozovsky, *At se dit ansigt (To See Your Face)*, 2016-17. © Manjari Sharma & Irina Rozovsky



Candice Breitz, *MOTHER + FATHER*, 2005, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art. Acquired with support from The New Carlsberg Foundation and Museumsfonden af 7. December 1966 © Candice Breitz



Tracey Emin, *I do not Expect*, 2002, appliqué blanket. Art Gallery of New South Wales Photography: Diana Panuccio © Tracey Emin. All rights reserved, DACS/VISDA



Miyako Ishiuchi, *Mother's #38*, 2020 Colour Photo. Photography: Courtesy the artist and Fergus Mccaffrey, New York & Tokyo © Miyako Ishiuchi

INFORMATION

'Mother!', until 29 August 2021, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Denmark, louisiana.dk

ADDRESS

GI Strandvej 13
3050 Humlebæk

Berlingske
4 May 2021

Berlingske |

KULTUR ★★★★★


Anmelderen tabte pusten: Et kort øjeblik får jeg den tanke, at jeg er havnet i himlen

Den franske konceptkunstner Laure Prouvost har åbnet op for sluserne i sin fabulerende totalinstallation på Charlottenborg, hvor du med al sandsynlighed vil opleve en befriende frisættelse og få pulsen lidt i vejret.



»Could Cool Claoud«, 2021.
Foto: David Stjernholm

BIRGITTE ELLEMANN HÖEGH

Tirsdag d. 04. maj 2021, kl. 21.30
Del denne artikel 

»Kom tættere på. Ja, dig, kom, vi er lige herovre. Kom med ind, så skal jeg fortælle dig en lille historie,« er det, som om der bliver hvisket fra alle kroge bag den hvide transparente teltdug, der udgør indgangsportalen til Laure Prouvosts totalinstallation på Charlottenborg, »Our elastic arm hold in tight through the clauds«.



»Our elastic arm hold in tight through the clouds« er kunstneren Laure Prouvosts første soloudstilling i Skandinavien, og den indeholder alt fra hviskende, erotiske stemmer til fisk, der spiser hindbær.
Foto: David Stjernholm.

Indenfor vil du blive omfavnet af et overdådigt fabulerende univers, der i video- og installationskunst sender dig afsted til fjerne galakser med teselskaber på lammeskyer med dansende nøgne kvinder og videre til kilder, hvor badenymfer plasker leende omkring, mens fisk snapper hindbær til sig, og vandfaldet bruser.

Du vil bevæge dig forbi dystopiske landskaber med deforme glasklare figurer, visne grene, gobeliner, aviser, skrald og besynderlige sager for at ende nede i nogle underjordiske gange, hvor sære hændelser i tætte nærbilleder borer sig gennem muldjorden.

Du kommer til at tabe pusten, må du forstå, og det er helt vidunderligt.

For der er noget løssluppet, fjerlet og dybt eskapistisk over Laure Prouvosts værker.

»It's so warm here. You're inside this body, wider. Feel the sun in your mouth. It's so good. Den hviskende stemme, som vist nok er Prouvosts egen, kalder sit publikum, mig, ind i værket, som kræver hun, at jeg bliver en slags deltager.«

I Charlottenborgs sydfløj har Laure Prouvost installeret et helt nyt værk, »Could Cool Claoud« fra 2021, sat sammen med flere af hendes tidligere værker og med så mange gentagende objekter og greb, at forløbet gennem salene får et altomsluttende organisk udtryk. Hun har for vane at genbruge objekter - frugter, blomster, fugle, skyer, munde, blæksprutter, palmeblade, transparente gardiner, gobeliner og fine glasfigurer blandt andet - og arbejder i en tjeper og intuitiv klippestil i sine videoinstallationer.

På skilte, i værkstitler, tekster og collager sætter hun gerne sine ord sammen i engelske sætninger, der er skævt formulerede eller bevidst misforståede.



Figuren her er en del af kunstværket »Ring, Sing and Drink for Trespassing». Foto: David Stjernholm.

Myter, anarki og eskapisme

Men hvem i alverden er hun, **Laure Prouvost**? Indtil for nylig har hun nok været en ukendt kunstner blandt den brede befolkning på dansk grund. Nu er hun pludselig aktuel i tre sammenhænge herhjemme: **Dels på Louisiana**, hvor hun har installeret en stor grå, stønnende blæksprutte som en del af museets »MOR! - Livets begyndelse«-udstilling, dels altså på Charlottenborg, der har tildelt hende Skandinaviens første soloudstilling, og dels på CPH:DOX, hvor hun er med i stedets New:Vision-konkurrence med værket »Re-dit-en-un-in-learning«.

Er det et sammentræf eller er der en mening bag al den sværmen for den franske konceptkunstner?

»Hvis man googler hende, kan man nogle steder læse, at hun er født i 1978. På Charlottenborg-cv'et er hun fra 1967! Lige nu er hun højgravid, så sidstnævnte årstal matcher næppe virkeligheden.«

Prouvost har været en darling på den internationale kunstscene, siden hun i 2013 modtog den respekterede engelske kunstpris Turner Prize. Siden har hun haft soloudstillinger i blandt andet Beijing, München, Antwerpen og New York samt en enkelt gang i sit hjemland på Palais de Tokyo i Paris, året inden hun i 2019 repræsenterede Frankrig på Venedig Biennalen. Det blev en af de pavilloner, hvor

publikum stod i op til halvanden times kø for at blive dirigeret om til en undselig bagindgang og entrere hendes udstilling. Her forsøgte hun blandt andet at grave en tunnel ind til den engelske nabopavillon i ønsket om at »genforbinde Frankrig til Brexit«, har hun forklaret.

Noget af det helt særlige ved Prouvost er, at hun arbejder med fiktive, ja, nærmest surrealistiske selvbiografier og ved hver ny udstilling møder op med et nyt cv. »Bor og arbejder« skriver hun for eksempel denne gang i stedet for, hvor hun rent faktisk bor og arbejder.

Som dadaisterne holder hun af en anarkistisk leg med alle vedtagne normer, både hvad angår hendes egen baggrundshistorie, som hun ikke ønsker skal sætte alt for tunge spor i læsningen af hendes kunst, og hvad angår det æstetiske sprog i hendes værker, der tydeligvis læner sig op ad dadaisternes leg med collager og lyddigte. Hvis man googler hende, kan man nogle steder læse, at hun er født i 1978, på Charlottenborg-cv'et er hun fra 1967! Lige nu er hun højgravid, så sidstnævnte årstal matcher næppe virkeligheden.

Samtidig har hun for vane at arbejde med familiære fortællinger befolket af bedsteforældre, mormødre og fætre, der understreger hendes smågakkede og lemfældige omgang med sandheden. Møder hun op til en *talk*, er hun sjov, belevet og imødekommende og fortæller gerne om tankerne bag sine værker, men med så løst et sprog, at man også bare kan droppe en lineær forståelse af, hvem hun er, og hoppe direkte ind i hendes udstillinger.

Vatskyer og åndedrag

Godt så. På Charlottenborgs første sal mødes jeg af et så hvidt lys, at jeg et kort øjeblik får den tanke, at jeg er havnet i himlen. En stor del af hendes video, som jeg ser liggende på en enorm puf formet som en vatsky, foregår ganske rigtig også oven på hvide skyer.

Her danser to nøgne kvinder omkring med ledninger ud ad deres rumpetter for derefter at drikke te med en tredje kvinde, der æder blomsterhoveder i grådige mundfulde. Man hører fredfyldte suk og harpeklang og møder en flok kåde får på vej ud på grønne enge.

Jeg smelter helt ned i den bløde puf og kunne lade filmen køre i loop, for den giver adgang til en helt særlig glasklar ro oven på sidste års dance macabre med den forbandede pandemi, som har holdt hele verden i sit dødssyge jerngreb. Her bliver jeg omfavnet af en håbefuldt følelse af et intakt og let samvær. Hvilken befrielse.



»When global warming messed up with Gelati's cat flap«, står der over kunstværket, der skal forestille en tilfrosset kattelem.

Foto: David Stjernholm.



Laure Prouvost er en prisvindende fransk kunster, og udstillingen »Our elastic arm hold in tight through the clouds« har overtaget hele Kunsthall Charlottenborgs nordfløj.
Foto: David Stjernholm.

Længere inde i mørket sætter jeg mig på en stiv træbænk foran hendes værk »Swallow« fra 2013. En åben rød mund, der fylder hele skærmen, trækker vejret indad og indad og indad med et heftigt åndedræt, der gentages i glimt og danner rytmen gennem videoværket. Gentagne gange klippes til badende nøgne kvinder mellem vandfald og sø.

De læner sig tilbage på store sten, slikker på vaffelis, vrider frugt fra hinanden, ler, kysser og træder hindbær op mellem tærne. Der er glimt af falliske springvand, glinsende biler og katte, der strækker sig dovent oven på palmeblade. Undervejs bliver åndedrættet mere og mere intenst og kulminerende, alt imens en *voice over* taler til mig i sødmefulde hviskende fraser.

»It's so warm here. You're inside this body, wider. Feel the sun in your mouth. It's so good.«

Den hviskende stemme, som vist nok er Prouvosts egen, kalder sit publikum, mig, ind i værket, som kræver hun, at jeg bliver en slags deltager. Det er meget effektivt og et af Prouvosts tilbagevendende kneb. Mit åndedræt er påvirket, mit hjerte banker, og jeg glemmer bænkens hårde træ. I værket, som vandt Max Mara Art Prize for Women i 2013, valgte hun at gøre opmærksom på sin position som kvindelig kunstner - en kønnet position, som hun ikke tidligere havde arbejdet bevidst med i sit arbejde, omend hun altid har haft et kvindeligt fokus. I »Swallow« er fokus på nogle kvinders »Grand Tour« gennem et lyst- og klichéfyldt Italien, er hendes forklaring.

»Du kommer til at tabe pusten, må du forstå, og det er helt vidunderligt. For der er noget løssluppet, fjerlet og dybt eskapistisk over Laure Prouvosts værker.«

I en anden tilstand

Længere fremme i udstillingen sænkes lyset mere og mere, og jeg ender foran endnu et videoværk, »Into All That Is Here« fra 2015. Videoen reflekterer angiveligt over Prouvosts tab af sin mytiske bedstefar, der gravede en tunnel fra England til Afrika og siden aldrig lod høre fra sig. Det lyder lidt mærkeligt, ved Prouvost godt, og det er filmen også. Den må du selv opleve og så ellers hitte ud af, om du vil hoppe med på hele Prouvosts spøg, lade dig føre med eller bruge din energi på at skabe en mening i hele det meget *frenchy-frenchy* hurlumhejhus.



»This dirty fig kissed many small boobs«.
Foto: David Stjernholm.

Jeg vælger det første og har også en klar fornemmelse af, at det er Prouvosts ønske, at vi skal lade os rive med af hendes synligt styrede intuitive diktatur. Der er selvfølgelig et væld af symboler og tolkningsmuligheder at pille ned fra hylderne, hvis man vil. Helt overordnet er der en stærk styret eskapistisk tråd at forfølge - måske væk fra alle bekymringerne om global opvarmning, overforbrug og pandemier.

Jeg står tilbage med en følelse af en stærk opfordring til, at vi skal blæse lidt på normerne, frigøre os - fra os selv - og tillade os at bevæge os ind i en anden tilstand. Det lykkes bedst i hendes videoværker, mens hendes collager af gobeliner, glasfigurer, skrald og grene fremstår lidt for manierede til min smag. Jeg får i hvert fald ikke lyst til at dvæle særlig længe ved dem. Til gengæld fungerer de ganske godt som en sociopolitisk

ramme for hendes tre videoutopier, der fylder alle sanser tilstrækkeligt, ja, nærmest orgastisk, op.

Our elastic arm hold in tight through the clouds

Charlottenborg, Kongens Nytorv 1, 1050 København K. Frem til 8. august.

LISSON GALLERY

Vanity Fair On Art
November 2020



London BRIDGED

A sense of connectedness has never been more vital. Head to the capital's galleries for works inspired by global events, distant landscapes and universal human emotion



WATCH this Face

The same figure appears over and over in American painter Rashid Johnson's (b.1971) canvases: a boxy, terrified-looking face of absolute anxiety. He repeats it ad infinitum in his graffiti-infused paintings, often pushing it into abstractions. It appears again in his new body of work at Hauser & Wirth (until December 23), all of which was made during the pandemic—with events of the Black Lives Matter movement occurring simultaneously—and brutally express the trauma, anger and pain of these incredibly difficult times.

QUEER EYE

The female body gets put under the microscope and torn to bits in Christina Quarles' paintings. The L.A.-based artist pulls flesh in every direction imaginable, filling her canvases with looping nudes and searching hands, like the artist game of Twister over. Needless to say, her current exhibition at Pilar Corrias (until November 28) is all about sensual, sexual art—but it also takes aim at ideas of gender, identity and queerness. Clever, pretty figurative painting with a strong conceptual edge. What more could you want?



Lisson Up

This is our first chance to catch Laure Prouvost in London (the city she studied in) since her jaw-dropping installation at last year's Venice Biennale, where she created a liquid dreamscape of a show for the French Pavilion that had people queuing around the block. Now she's back at Lisson Gallery (until November 7) for an exhibition of film and installation work. The upside of social distancing and timed entry is you've actually got a chance of seeing it without interruption.



NO MAN is an Island

Robert Smithson is best known for "Spiral Jetty", a huge swirling construction of rocks that juts out into the remote Great Salt Lake in Utah, only appearing when the water recedes. And now, out of the mark of the art world, appears a super-rare U.K. exhibition, *Hypothetical Islands*, at Marian Goodman Gallery (November 5 to December 23). The pioneering artist died in 1973, but his impact is still being felt; this show proves just how radical his ideas were.

Perpetual Emotion

Emotionally potent and visually colorful, the figures in U.S. artist Dana Schutz's works are extreme things. But in that extremity—in all of that sorrow, aggressive melancholy—is a kaleidoscope of emotions and narratives. Schutz makes paintings full of sadness, pain, honey and a whole heap of eye-searingly bright, clashing colors. It's a unique look that's helped to make her one of the most recognizable figurative artists working today. After a few years of controversy and isolation, her first solo exhibition in London at Thomas Dane Gallery (until December 30), *Shades of a Child Among Stars*, is a welcome opportunity to take a fresh look at her art.



COVER(ING) STORY

You can finally put your money where your mouth is by investing in some sustainable, hygienic and very chic-looking artist-designed face masks. *Solo With Art* has already released masks designed by artists including Rob Pruitt, Marjolein Heister and Louise Simonsen, with future designs by the brilliant Peter Dink, Kikiwide Wiley, Cindy Sherman and Barbara Kruger. A portion of each sale will go to the charitable cause of the artist's choice, so you'll be doing good while helping to keep the world as virus-free as possible.



■ Lisson Up

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LISSON GALLERY

Connaissance des Arts
15 October 2020

connaissance **desarts**

Visite d'atelier : Laure Prouvost, l'ange du bizarre



Laure Prouvost nous convie dans sa « caravane nomade ». On y accède uniquement par cette mini-porte, le voyage peut commencer... ©Bernard Saint-Genès / Bernard Saint-Genès

L'atelier de Laure Prouvost donne les clés de son univers extravagant, entre fiction et réel. Fantastique, l'artiste revisite au LaM, à Villeneuve-d'Ascq, son installation créée pour la Biennale de Venise, en dialogue avec la collection d'Art brut du musée. À découvrir à partir du 17 octobre.

« *Il faut que nos caravanes se rencontrent* », murmure Laure Prouvost au téléphone d'une voix suave. Après un premier rendez-vous manqué, une nouvelle rencontre est organisée dans son atelier à Anvers. Train en retard, descente *in extremis* à la gare d'Antwerpen-Centraal, taxi nous conduisant à Gijsselsstraat au lieu de Gijzelaarsstraat. Il s'en faut d'une syllabe pour se retrouver à l'autre bout de la ville... de l'autre côté du miroir ? On se croirait déjà dans une œuvre de l'artiste, qui affectionne les jeux de langage et les mondes parallèles. Enfin nous parvenons au sommet d'un bâtiment industriel.

Un écriteau au mur, énigmatique, annonce : « *They are waiting for you* ». Qui nous attend ? Deux jeunes assistantes, l'une peignant une femme enceinte nue sur une grande toile, l'autre montant sur écran la vidéo d'une chèvre, tournée ici même dans l'atelier... Après avoir marché sur des tapis, il faut s'accroupir pour passer une petite porte noire. Là, Laure Prouvost, chevelure blonde coupée à la garçonne, une mèche lui balayant les yeux, nous accueille : « *Bienvenue dans ma caravane...* ».



Laure Prouvost a réalisé ce drapeau au moment du déconfinement @Bernard Saint-Genès

Apocalypse joyeuse

Si l'artiste a représenté la France à la Biennale internationale d'art contemporain de Venise en 2019, elle est la première Française à avoir obtenu en 2013 le prestigieux Turner Prize décerné à un artiste britannique ou résidant au Royaume-Uni. Née à Croix près de Lille en 1978, son séjour entre 1999 et 2013 à Londres – où elle a été formée au Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design et au Goldsmiths College avant d'être l'assistante de l'artiste conceptuel John Latham – lui a donné le goût de la liberté et de l'excentricité. Elle passe du français à l'anglais, cherche ses mots dans notre langue et saute d'une idée à l'autre sans logique.



Laure Prouvost, Deep See Blue Surrounding You / Vois ce bleu profond te fondre, Pavillon français à la 58e Biennale d'art de Venise, 2019 © Giacomo Cosua

LISSON GALLERY

Artforum
7 May 2020

ARTFORUM



Emily Karaka, *Kingitanga ki Te Ao (They Will Throw Stones)*, 2020, mixed media on canvas, 78 3/8 × 109".

22nd Biennale of Sydney

Curated By Brook Andrew

ON SEPTEMBER 12, 2019—a lifetime ago—Biennale of Sydney artistic director Brook Andrew announced his curatorial framework for the event’s twenty-second edition: “The urgent states of our contemporary lives are laden with unresolved past anxieties and hidden layers of the supernatural. ‘NIRIN’”—the title means “edge” in the language of the Wiradjuri people, from whom Andrew descends—“is about to expose this, demonstrating that artists and creatives have the power to resolve, heal, dismember, and imagine futures of transformation for resetting the world.”

What no one could have anticipated in September was how, and how quickly, that “future of transformation” would arrive. “NIRIN” opened on March 14. I arrived in Sydney from Auckland the Thursday before, just as the World Health Organization declared Covid-19 a pandemic and Donald Trump banned flights from Europe to the United States. Moored next to the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia in Circular Quay was one of the biggest cruise ships I’d ever seen, breathing travelers in and out of its infection-ready maw. On Saturday afternoon, I was at Campbelltown Arts Centre (C-A-C)—an important biennial venue in one of the city’s working-class suburbs—when a phone notification told me that all returning citizens and residents of New Zealand would be required to self-isolate for fourteen days on arrival. I write this review from Auckland, 1,300 miles from my subject, where not only travelers but the entire country is now under a strict lockdown in an effort to eliminate Covid-19 altogether. It is working, but at enormous cost. People are losing their jobs at a vertiginous rate. We don’t know when our son’s school will reopen. To be sure, New Zealand is among the luckiest countries in the world, with the virus largely contained. But, economically speaking, we are, like everyone else, thoroughly fucked.



Aziz Hazara, *Bow Echo*, 2019, five-channel digital video, color, sound, 4 minutes 17 seconds.

This is globalization’s most decadent era—environment-obliterate, debt-laden, enthralled by the vanity of the present—beginning its death rattle. And that it must end was, intuitively, Andrew’s overarching message. What was so brutally unfair about the Covid-19-induced suspension of “NIRIN” (the show continues in an online form) is that, for those few days it was open, it skewered many of our worst excesses. Without a whiff of tokenism, Andrew foregrounded Indigenous knowledge systems to emphasize the existential truth industrialized modernity has fought so hard, and failed, to overturn: that, despite all our efforts, we are not in control of the future of our planet or, for that matter, the pathways of our own lives.

Brook Andrew foregrounded Indigenous knowledge systems to emphasize the existential truth industrialized modernity has fought so hard, and failed, to overturn.

For First Peoples around the world, this is a given. Identity is formed and maintained through a deep and intergenerational connection with place, and settler-colonialism's conversion of land into exploitable property and its consequent effects on the people it was expropriated from were consistent themes throughout "NIRIN." Among the historical collections of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Andrew hung paintings by Ma-ori artist Emily Karaka that referred to her ancestral relationship with Ihuma-tao in Auckland. The area's volcanic stonefields are among New Zealand's earliest sites of Ma-ori settlement. Karaka's paintings—brightly colored, expressive landscapes overlaid with text—invoked both this history and the current situation at Ihuma-tao, now the site of a land dispute and occupation stretching back to 2016, when it was sold for private residential development. This focus on land rights and sovereignty was echoed at the C-A-C by John Miller and Elisapeta Heta's installation documenting Ma-ori protest movements over the past several decades. At Artspace and Cockatoo Island, the collective Tennant Creek Brio—the group's name refers to its small Northern Territory hometown—displayed a number of "pokie machines" (as slots are known in Australia), punkishly overpainted with abstract marks and cartoonish figures and mounted on empty plastic crates. Alcohol and gambling—and pokies in particular—have had notoriously devastating effects on Aboriginal Australians; the collective itself began as an art-therapy group.



Mayunkiki with traditional *sinuye* tattooing and ethnic clothes of the Ainu, 2018. Photo: Hiroshi Ikeda.

Andrew's solidaristic approach extended across national boundaries, framing Indigenous activism as a global struggle against late capitalism's repressive and extractive effects. At the MCA, the artist and musician Mayunkiki presented *SINUYE: Tattoos for Ainu Women*, 2020, a photo-essay documenting attempts to keep alive the facial-tattoo traditions, banned under Japanese law, of the country's Ainu people. And at the C-A-C, Adrian Stimson, an artist from the Siksika Nation in southern Alberta, Canada, reprised his Buffalo Boy alter ego and a newer persona, Naked Napi, through a kind of coyote-summoning shamanistic camp, both in a video in which he squirts cum from a massive prosthetic cock at an oncoming Canadian Pacific train and in photos in which he dances through the desert wearing animal skins, fishnets, and pearls.



Adrian Stimson, *Shaman Exterminator*, 2004, wallpaper, 84 × 48".

By blowing open Western conceptions of art, time, and property, Andrew also reframed and reenergized works by members of the more recognizably internationalist art-world set. On Cockatoo Island in Sydney Harbour, Laure Prouvost's *Into All That Is Here with the Two Cockatoo Too*, 2020, snaked through one of the location's most distinctive spaces: the nearly 600-foot-long Dog Leg tunnel, constructed in 1915 to facilitate the transportation of workers and materials across the island. Prouvost's work took the viewer on a journey through, and past, a series of memento mori vignettes, which included objects like dried fish, a half-consumed stick of butter, an open Aussie beer can, and a lone mandarin orange. Scattered throughout were surreal animal totems that resonated with the site, such as a shark with a fish in its mouth, the head and tail made from ceramic, the body from driftwood. Syrupy voice-overs accompanied videos of oneiric landscapes, displayed on mucky screens or projected

straight onto the dank floor. The installation was calling, in a sense, to Cockatoo Island's traumatic past as a colonial prison surrounded by shark-filled waters and, later, as a brutal reformatory for young Sydney women who'd found themselves on the wrong side of Victorian laws.



Laure Prouvost, *Into All That Is Here with the Two Cockatoo Too*, 2020, mixed media. Installation view, Cockatoo Island. Photo: Jessica Maurer.

High above in the convict precinct on the cliffs was Lawrence Abu Hamdan's *Once Removed*, 2019, a two-channel video in which the artist interviews Bassel Abi Chahine, a young historian convinced he is the reincarnation of a teenage soldier who died in the 1984 Lebanese Civil War. Past and present were also collapsed in Mohamed Bourouissa's immersive installation *Brutal Family Roots*, 2020, which draws connections to his childhood memories in Algeria of Australian wattle tree flowers, which he knew as "mimosas." Saplings dotted the space, its floor a perfect wattle yellow, while a soundtrack relayed spoken poetry by Yui hip-hop artist MC Kronic and Egyptian-Australian poet, MC, and singer Nardean. Their reflections on displacement, shape-shifting, and putting down roots were engineered by Jordan Quiqueret to be successively staged from multiple speakers, while electricity generated by the young trees' growth was recorded and fed back into the sound design.



Arthur Jafa, *The White Album*, 2018–19, digital video, color, sound, 29 minutes 55 seconds. Installation view, Art Gallery of New South Wales. Photo: Zan Wimberley.

The Cockatoo Island works cumulatively produced an ecospiritual haze, enhanced by the strange emptiness of the place just a couple of days before the exhibition opening. (Adding to the sublime fug was Ibrahim Mahama's *No Friend but the Mountains*, 2012–20, one of his overwhelming environments of Ghanaian jute sacks, used to ship cocoa and, later, coal.) Elsewhere in the biennial, this romanticism was cut with a more explicit politics. On large screens, arranged in a pentagon so that viewers stood in the middle, Aziz Hazara's *Bow Echo*, 2019, showed five young boys fighting strong winds to reach the top of a rock in the hills of the artist's home province of Wardak, Afghanistan, each trying to hold his footing while playing a plastic bugle—the piece an elegy of sorts for the death and devastation caused by suicide bombings in the capital city of Kabul below them. At the Art Gallery of New South Wales, surrounded by nineteenth-century paintings, Arthur Jafa's *The White Album*, 2018–19—an assemblage of toxic whiteness, Iggy Pop vocals, Black memes, aerial footage of guided missiles, and portraits of the artist's friends—laid bare the escalating violence of the internet and its platforming of white supremacy. A teenage girl rehearses a typical “reverse-racism” YouTube rant; a bearded young man, framed by the narrow rectangle of his phone, horrifically demonstrates concealed-carry techniques designed for mass murder, retrieving magazine after magazine from his person, as well as an entire semi-automatic rifle from the front of his baggy jeans.



Mohamed Bourouissa, *Brutal Family Roots*, 2020, mixed media with audio, acacia, and carpet. Installation view, Cockatoo Island. Photo: Jessica Maurer.

March 15, the day after “NIRIN” opened to the public, was the one-year anniversary of the murder of fifty-one Muslims in Christchurch by a lone gunman who broadcast the massacre live on social media. Jafa’s work prompts a question that should be floating through all our minds: *What the hell is going on with white people?* One answer—at least in Australia and the Pacific—might be the long, atomizing, devastating histories of colonial modernity, captured and excoriated not only by contemporary works throughout the show but in a series of curatorial interventions Andrew titled “Powerful Objects,” in which he distributed culturally charged artifacts from private and museum collections throughout the biennial’s venues. At the MCA, for example, above Kulimoe’anga Stone Maka’s massive Tongan tapa cloths, and mounted on Eric Bridgeman’s abstract mural *Rot Bung* (Junction), 2019–20, was Frederick McCubbin’s *A bush burial*, 1890—a classic Aussie painting ennobling the mortal hardships of frontier life. And at the C-A-C, a cabinet contained a Ned Kelly helmet, manacles, and a book of photographs of Japan by Yo-nosuke Natori from 1937, open to an inscription in German to “*Meiner Rosemarie.*” The message is translated thus: “National Socialist racial thought and its underlying racial science does not lead to contempt or low estimation of other peoples, but much more to the realization of the task of the necessary survival and continuation of life of one’s own people.” It is dated 1939 and signed “Adolf Hitler.”

By the end of the opening weekend, it was clear that Covid-19 was going to be the most consequential global event since Hitler invaded Poland in 1939. Since then, more than one hundred thousand people have died, scores of millions have lost their jobs, and hundreds of millions of children are at home looking at adults and wondering what the hell happens next, while we hide the truth from them: that we have no clue. Like everything else, the art world will be permanently transformed. “NIRIN” was a short glimpse into its stranger, spikier, fairer future, a brilliant light that flared briefly at the bottom of the world. I am thankful to have seen it; I wonder if we’ll ever see anything like it again.

Anthony Byrt is a critic and journalist based in Auckland.

LISSON GALLERY

Contemporânea
14 April 2020

contemporânea

**Laure Prouvost: *Melting into one another ho hot chaud
it heating dip***



— por Sofia Nunes

No outro dia, enquanto desinfetava os meus ténis, depois de vir da rua, reparei que o perfil da sola estava cheio de salpicos de tinta preta. Não me lembrava de ter passado por nenhuma zona de obras, nem de ter pisado nenhum pavimento sujo ou molhado. Aliás, os salpicos até já estavam secos e bem impregnados na borracha, mas continuavam a exalar um cheiro ligeiramente enjoativo, denso e fechado, embora familiar. Foi então que voltei a entrar, agora de memória, na exposição concebida por Laure Prouvost para a Kunsthalle Lissabon, a convite dos curadores João Mourão e Luís Silva.

É a primeira vez que Prouvost expõe em Portugal (finalmente!) e não tenho dúvidas de que esta é uma das melhores exposições a que pudemos assistir nos últimos tempos em Lisboa. É contida no número de peças (uma instalação principal que dá nome à mostra, acrescida de uma segunda peça mais pequena), mas suficientemente inventiva para nos envolver numa complexa rede de materialidades, onde o mundo é já sempre outro e onde o que sentimos e pensamos se negocea no minuto seguinte com novas sensações, sentimentos, incertezas e ideias. Tudo se experimenta sob fluxos. É como se o nosso aparelho sensorial inteiro e o conhecimento das coisas se alterassem à velocidade da circulação de objetos, informação e imagens e como se os dados da realidade se modificassem ao ritmo das sinapses, do sonho, do desejo e da contaminação entre cheiros, texturas, estados líquidos e sólidos ou entre elementos físicos e imateriais. Um processo de associação livre que, nos termos de Prouvost, se alia a técnicas de *escavação* e à criação de zonas subterrâneas.

“Keep digging, keep digging deeper and deeper...” diz o poema que acompanha a folha de sala. E entramos.

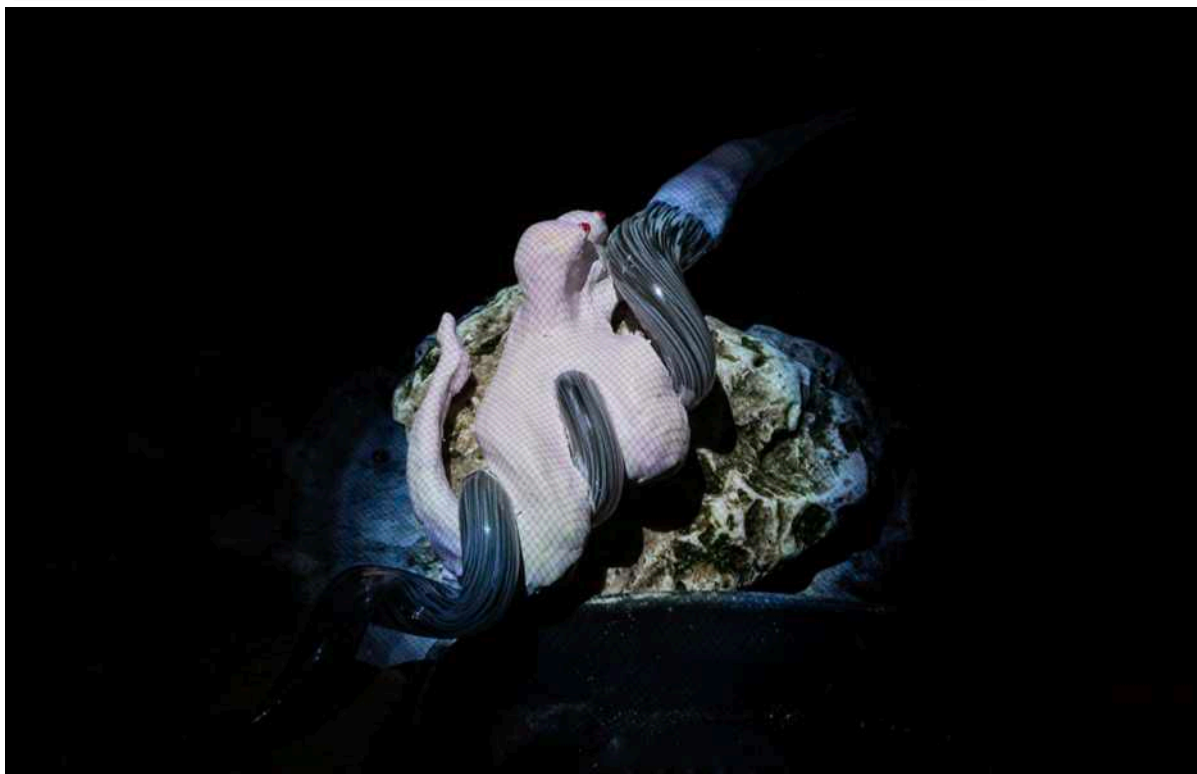
O espaço expositivo da Kunsthalle, que por sinal é uma cave, foi totalmente transformado num ambiente escuro, húmido e de odor nauseante. O piso está coberto por uma substância líquida preta e fede a tinta de moluscos. A visibilidade é escassa. Caminhamos mais com o tato do que com a visão que se vai habituando, com dificuldade, à ausência de luz. O trajeto faz-se por entre cortinas que pendem do teto, lado a lado, formando corredores estreitos. É impossível não tocá-las com o corpo. São finas e estão molhadas por escorrências de água, como guelras de um animal aquático. Algumas bloqueiam a passagem por terem a si agarradas umas esculturas que o toque reconhece serem tentáculos. Outras deixam-nos passar até chegarmos a uma área mais ampla e iluminada pela luz brilhante das várias imagens-vídeo digitais avulsas que são projetadas sobre o piso ensopado.

Agora que visionamos filmagens de um polvo enfeitado de frutas a arrastar até si as imagens que se vão acumulando no chão e que descobrimos à nossa volta uma série de objetos e detritos do quotidiano, perguntamo-nos se não estaremos afinal dentro da cabeça de um espécimen de polvo a testemunhar as suas memórias e sonhos, apetites e inteligência. Não fosse a cabeça deste animal o repositório do seu cérebro, estômago ou brânquias.

Porém, nos espaços interiores *escavados* por Prouvost não há binarismos que resistam. Para além do polvo aparecer representado no vídeo com braços de mulher e de escutarmos ao fundo uns gemidos pré-verbais, meio-humanos meio-animais, percebemos que o chão está também povoado por uma série de tentáculos moldados a vidro e agarrados a mamas e pernas femininas passadas a argila. Múltiplas ressonâncias

passam então a ligar os dois mundos, pelo que no desejo, corpo húmido e voracidade do animal é também a libido e o subconsciente humanos que se reveem, assim como a cultura digital que tudo aglutina e absorve. É neste instante que o cheiro intenso a tinta de moluscos volta a interrogar-nos. Sabemos que este líquido orgânico preto, viscoso e brilhante é expelido quando os polvos, à semelhança de outros moluscos cefalópodes, se protegem contra uma ameaça, mas a linguagem surrealizante de Prouvost recusa naturalismos. A questão persiste como latência, sem forma concreta, ainda que a ação das políticas extrativistas sobre o ecossistema não demore a surgir-nos, especialmente quando pensamos na captura económica e industrial da vida oceânica e reparamos que, entre as imagens projetadas absorvidas pelo polvo, se destacam notícias televisivas de cheias e incêndios descontrolados.

Já de saída, somos atraídos por uma outra peça, intitulada *The smoking mother is hot*, 2023 que tende a funcionar como linha de fuga, introduzindo na exposição um contraponto. Trata-se de um telemóvel caído no chão com um vídeo a passar, cuja datação nos situa ficcionalmente três anos à frente. Baixamo-nos para ver melhor. Uma filmagem em *close up* mostra-nos uma mão a apontar para um solo de terra com alguma vegetação, enquanto uma voz *off* feminina sussurra. Pede para nos aproximarmos, ao mesmo tempo que nos seduz com humor e tenta oferecer algo. Será uma saída para a vida, para as suas possibilidades germinais? Enquanto olhamos para a terra através do ecrã e o desejo de escavá-la aumenta é também uma ideia de mundo que emerge e se alastra à exposição. Um mundo onde cada elemento material — animal, vegetal, mineral, digital, objetual, humano — intervém, se contagia e confronta para se re-singularizar. Pousados ao lado do telemóvel estão uma clementina e uns ramos de uma árvore. Um cheiro cítrico envolve-nos agora numa atmosfera fresca e não resistimos a tocar no fruto, sem imaginarmos que dali a escassos dias toda a experiência tátil mudaria e que a estratégia multissensorial e ecológica dos corpos explorada pela artista se tornaria talvez ainda mais preciosa.



A few days ago, while I was disinfecting my sneakers after coming home, I noticed the sides of the soles were spattered with black paint. I couldn't recall having passed by any construction site nor stepped on any dirty or wet pavement; in fact, the paint was already dry and impregnated into the rubber. However, it still exuded a slightly sickly, dense, and concentrated, if familiar, smell. That was when I re-entered — through memory — Laure Prouvost's exhibition at the Kunsthalle Lissabon, curated by João Mourão and Luís Silva.

It is the first time that Prouvost shows in Portugal (at last!), And I have no doubt this is one of the best exhibitions we have recently seen in Lisbon.

It is moderate in quantity — a main installation which gives name to the exhibition in addition to another smaller piece — but sufficiently inventive to comprise a complex network of materialities: one where the world is already, constantly another and where what we feel and think is immediately bargained with new sensations, feelings, uncertainties, and ideas.

Everything is experienced within fluxes. It is just like our entire sensory system and the knowledge of things altered at the speed of circulating objects, information, and images; and the data of reality changed at the pace of synapses, dreams, and desire together with the contamination of smells, textures, liquid, and solid states or physical and immaterial elements. Prouvost links this process of free association to techniques of excavation and to subterranean areas.

"Keep digging, keep digging deeper and deeper..." the poem in the exhibition brochure reminds us.

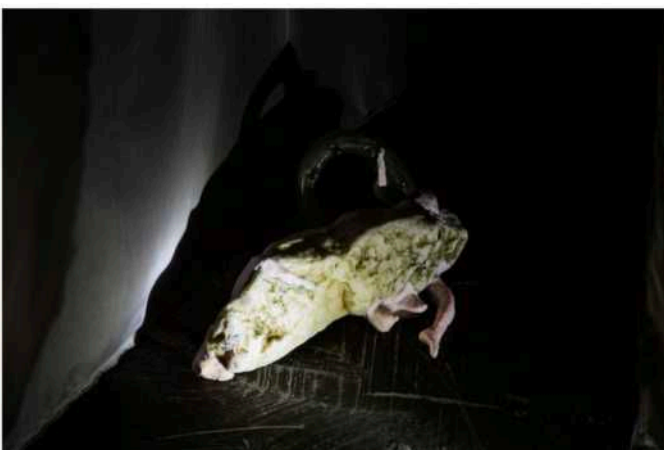
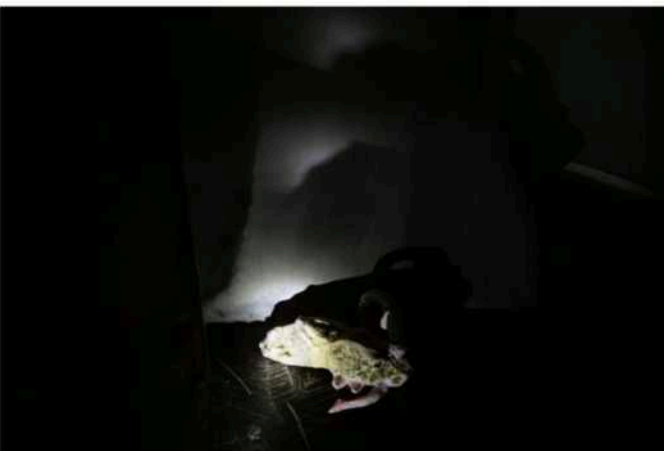
The Kunsthalle venue, which is curiously enough a basement, has been transformed into a dark, damp space of nauseating smell. The floor is covered in a wet black substance that reeks of mollusc ink. Visibility is poor. Touch is more useful to walking than sight, which gradually, barely grows accustomed to the absence of light. We walk through corridors of thin curtains hanging side by side from the ceiling. It is impossible not to touch them with our bodies. Like gills of aquatic organisms, water runs off their surfaces. Sculptures that our touch recognitions as tentacles are stuck fast to some of the curtains, which thus block the path; others let us through to a more spacious area, illuminated by the brightness of several separate digital video-images projected onto the soaked floor.

Now that we watch footage of a fruit-adorned octopus dragging piled-up images on the floor towards itself, and we notice a number of everyday objects and dross around us, we wonder: are we actually inside the head of an octopus specimen, witnessing its memories and dreams, its desires and intelligence, as its head contains its brain, stomach, and branchia?

However, no binarism survives in the interior spaces Prouvost *digs*. Apart from a video depiction of the octopus with female arms and from the pre-verbal half-human, half-animal moans we hear at the back, a number of glass-molded tentacles grasping clay-cast female breasts and legs can be found all over the floor. The multitude of resonances thus connect the two worlds. Not only the human subconscious and libido but also digital culture, which absorbs all, recognize themselves in the animal's desire, voracity, and wet body. At this moment, the strong smell of mollusc ink queries us again. We know octopuses and other cephalopod molluscs release this glossy, slimy, black organic liquid as a means of protection, but Prouvost's surrealizing language rejects naturalist approaches. This matter remains latent, with no concrete form,

On our way out, another piece titled *The smoking mother is hot* , 2023, attracts us. Tending to function as a line of flight, introducing as such a counterpoint into the exhibition, it is comprised of a mobile phone on the floor playing a video, the date of which fictionally fast-forwards us for three years from now. We stoop down to get a better view of it. A close-up footage of a hand pointing to a piece of ground covered with vegetation complements a whispering female voice-over. The latter asks us to get closer as it humorously seduces us and attempts to offer us something. Could it be an exit to life, to its germinal possibilities? As we look at the piece of ground on the screen and our desire to dig it increases, an idea of world too emerges and permeates the exhibition. This is a world in which all material elements — animal, vegetable, mineral, digital, objectual, human — take part, contaminating and confronting each other towards resingularisation. A clementine and some tree branches are found by the phone. The fresh atmosphere produced by the citric scent surrounds us, and we cannot help but touch the fruit — without the slightest awareness that in very few days all tactile experience would change, and that the multisensory, ecological strategy of bodies employed by Prouvost would become ever more precious.





Laure Prouvost: *Melting into one another ho hot chaud it heating dip*. General views of the exhibition. Kunsthalle Lissabon. Photos: Bruno Lopes. Courtesy of the artist and Kunsthalle Lissabon.

Laure Prouvost

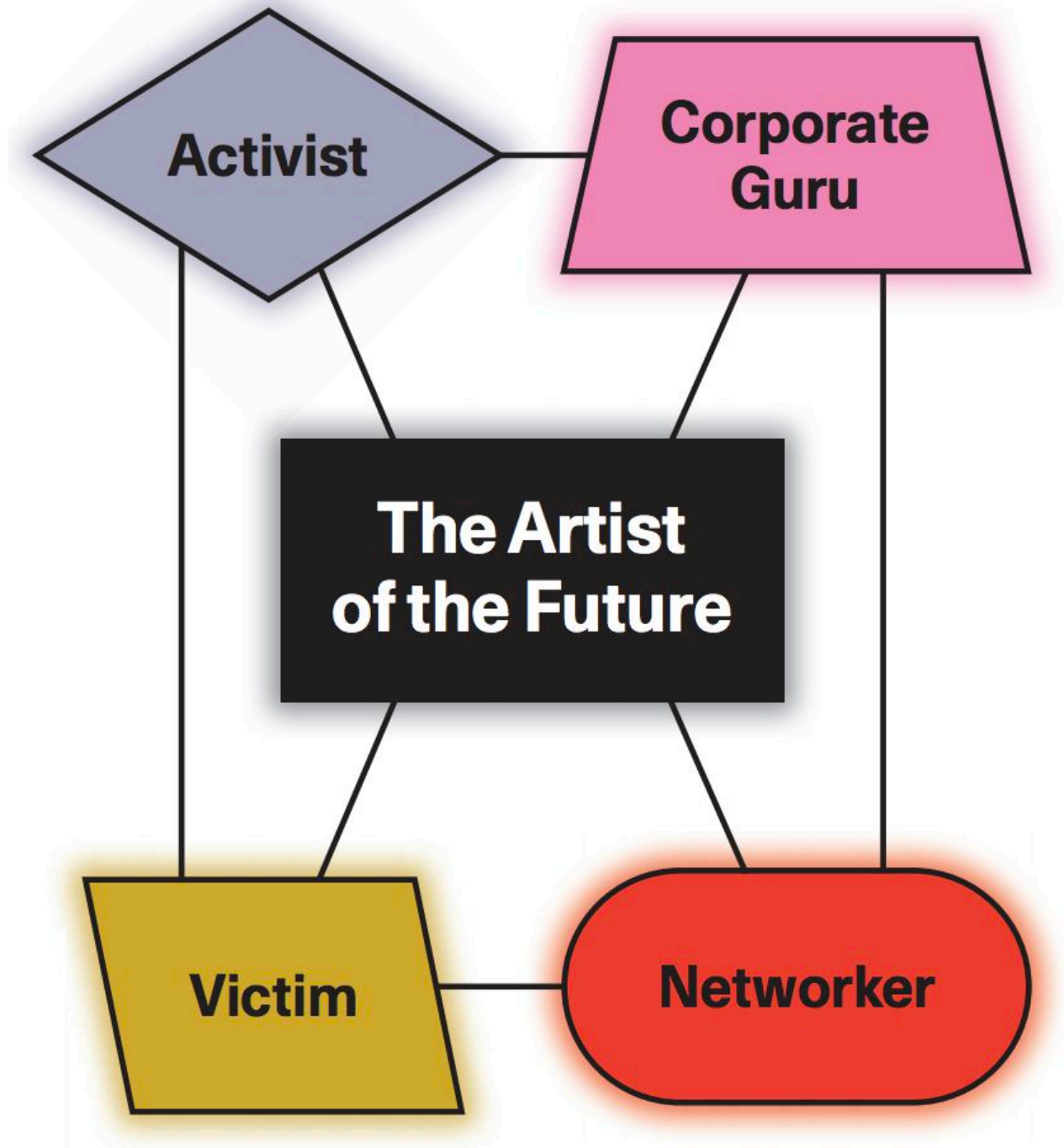
Kunsthalle Lissabon

Vimeo

Sofia Nunes. Crítica de arte e doutoranda em História da Arte/Teoria da Arte na Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas - UNL e na Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne. Exerceu assistência de curadoria e produção de exposições no Museu do Chiado – MNAC, Ellipse Foundation e Centro de Exposições do Centro Cultural de Belém (2000 a 2007). Foi professora convidada no Mestrado de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade Católica Portuguesa de Lisboa (2009 a 2011). Escreve com regularidade para publicações de arte contemporânea e académicas.

Charting
the uncharted
since 1949

ArtReview



New Worlds, New Words

Project by Laure Prouvost Story by Céleste and Isidor Prouvkens

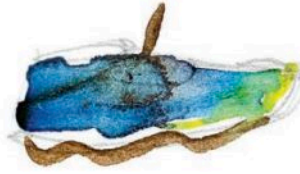
Language and narrative have consistently played a major role in the work of Turner Prize-winning, Antwerp-based artist Laure Prouvost, who represented France at last year's Venice Biennale. Many of her works combine film and installation to explore instances of miscommunication and mistranslation, and the trajectory of ideas gone awry. In the project that follows, she presents a verbal–visual story that explores the construction of new languages, red herrings (not actual ones) and the art of communication itself. Themes, in short, that dominate and perhaps provide an antidote to these isolating times.

REMEMBER THIS MEANS...

LEFT



CAR



HOME



NO



LOVE



TOGETHER



ANGRY



LOST



I'M EXITED



YOU



HELP



LATE



MOTHER



FATHER



**WHAT DOES
THIS**



MEANS?

ONE DAY THERE WAS A



CALLED CARL AND HE WAS ALWAYS



TO GO TO THE GARAGE,



TO GET WASHED AND HIS





WAS ALWAYS TELLING HIM OFF,

WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS



.

**ONE DAY CARL DECIDED TO
ALWAY BE ON TIME AND BECOME
AND ALARAM OCLOCK, SO HOW
COULD THE DO THAT HE DECIDE
TO GO  TO THE  TO
SEE HOW WE COULD BECOME AN
ALARM OCLOCK.**

THIS MEANS



FATHER

THIS MEANS



NO

THIS MEANS



HOME

**THERE WAS BOOK ABOUT BELLS,
HORSES, AND AFTER A LONG
TIME LOOKING HE FOUND A BOOK
ABOUT AN OLD MACKBOOK.
HE OPENED THE BOOK THE FIRST**

THIS MEANS




LATE

THIS MEANS



MOTHER

**THINGS HE LEARNED WAS THAT
CLOCK HAVE TO COUNT TO 60.....
SO HE STARTED COUNTING AND
COUNTING ALL NIGHT LONG,
UNTIL MIDNIGHT. 58, 59, 60. CARL
THE  TURNED INTO**

**A CLOCK, HIS WEELS BECAME
HANDS AND BODY ROUND. THE
SPEED DIALS BECAME NUMBERS
AND THE CLOCK CARL SAID 🍌 ,**



**I HAVE TURNED INTO THE
CLOCK. AND CARL THE CLOCK
STARTED**

TO WALK AROUND BUT HE COULD

NOT. I AM  **AS A CLOCK**

MAN HIS  **ARRIVED AND SAID**

WHAT HAPPENED. PUT YOUR SELF



CARL LOOKE AT HIM AND

STARTED TIDING AND LOOKED

AT HIS DAD AND  ONE

 TO BE A CLOCK I AM NEVER

GOING TO BE  .

A FIRST CARLS  GOT UPSET,

THAT CARLS WAS NOT A 

BUT THEN HE GOT  .

HE SAT TO CARL I  YOU AS

 NOT AS A CLOCK I DON'T

WANT MY NEW SONS.

AND THIS?



--

AND THIS?



H _ _ E

AND THIS?



Y _ O

BUT CARL LOOKED AT HIS



AND SMILED DON'T BE



I



AND I



MY



NOW I AM AN ALARM

CLOCK I CAN



LETS GO



AND

THE



SAID I WAS



BUT

NOW



TO HAVE A SONS LIKE

A CLOCK.

I



.

THIS MEANS



LOVE









LISSON GALLERY

Concrete Playground
16 March 2020

**CONCRETE
PLAYGROUND.**



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Ten Highlights of the 22nd Biennale of Sydney 2020

Visit a heart wrenching memorial, walk through an immersive exhibition inside a tunnel and see a sarcophagus at this citywide exhibition.

It's time to hit the galleries, as [22nd Biennale of Sydney](#) is set to return from Saturday, March 14 through Monday, June 8. Sure, three months might sound like a lot of time, but this massive biennial showcase spans over 700 artworks and 101 artists from 65 different countries — as well as several galleries across our city, from Campbelltown to Cockatoo Island.

The 2020 edition is entitled *Nirin*, which means 'edge' in the language of western NSW's Wiradjuri people. It is helmed by a new First Nations artistic director, famed Sydney-born, Melbourne-based interdisciplinary artist Brook Andrew. [Andrew has selected an impressive lineup of artists and creatives](#) — many of them First Nations — from around the world to exhibit at the Art Gallery of NSW, Woolloomooloo's Artspace, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Cockatoo Island, MCA and the National Art School for the exhibition's 12 weeks.

The showcase brings together artists from all over the globe, with fresh perspectives on Australia that span culture, gender and place. Expect installations, performances, sculptures, videos, paintings and drawings that examine what it means to be First Nations. Here are ten highlights that you can't miss.



📷 Laure Prouvost installing 'Into All That is Here With The Two Cockatoo Too' (2020), Cockatoo Island. Courtesy the artist; Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris/Brussels; carlier | gebauer, Berlin / Madrid; and Lisson Gallery, London / New York / Shanghai. Photograph: Zan Wimberley

***INTO ALL THAT IS HERE WITH THE TWO COCKATOO TOO* BY LAURE PROUVOST, COCKATOO ISLAND**

French artist Laure Prouvost's Biennale artwork is potentially the most unsettling of the bunch. *Into All That Is Here With The Two Cockatoo Too* is a site-specific work that uses the entirety of the island's Dog Leg Tunnel. Within the dark tunnel, Prouvost provides an immersive experience that touches many senses and mimics the 'daily flow of images and texts that assail us'. Think of it as content overload, while trying to traverse a house of horrors. You'll hear whispers throughout the tunnel, and one of those voices may just be the artist herself — who at times will be lurking in the shadows and encouraging you to sit with her. Further in, the tunnel begins to 'wind' as constructed black curtains make you weave in-and-out, which starts to feel endless. Needless to say, you better not be afraid of the dark for this one.

LISSON GALLERY

NOWNESS

30 January 2020

NOWNESS



+ ADD TO QUEUE

☰ ADD TO PLAYLIST

♥♥♥♥♥ 4.8

💬 COMMENTS (0)

ℹ CREDITS

SERIES

Thanks for the Dance

Artistic Responses to Leonard Cohen

Thanks for the Dance: Moving on

Walk in the footsteps of Leonard Cohen at his Hydra hideout in this visual elegy by Turner Prize-winning artist Laure Prouvost and collaborator Ciarán Wood

To continue NOWNESS's exciting collaboration with Sony Music Canada and the Leonard Cohen Estate, *Moving On* is the latest release in a project that brings together a talented host of creatives and filmmakers sharing their artistic responses to Cohen's last posthumous album, *Thanks For The Dance*.

Laure Prouvost, who recently represented France at the Venice Biennale, went on a pilgrimage to Cohen's home on the idyllic Greek island of Hydra for this latest film. Entering what Cohen once described as a "big house full of little rooms," she explores the folk poet's white-washed hideout where he lived, learned, and loved for almost a decade.

"Prouvost explores the white-washed hideout where Cohen lived, learned and loved"



Prouvost—who directed, shot and edited the film with artist and friend Ciarán Wood—uses first-person filming to give the viewer a sense that they are walking in the musician's footsteps, across an island mostly unmarked by the passage of time, and hugged by the deep blue Aegean Sea. "The island felt timeless, floating in quietness with no cars," says the French multimedia artist who captured the donkeys that still do some of the transportation around Hydra. "I felt in union with all that was there."



During the Sixties, Hydra was a little-known creative mecca for English-speaking bohemians. It was among this circle that Cohen met Marianne Ihlen, the Norwegian transplant who would go on to become his romantic partner and muse, immortalizing her in his hit song "So long, Marianne."

“The island felt timeless, floating in quietness with no cars”



Coming full circle in this tale of love, Cohen recorded the elegiac “Moving on” with its haunting Bouzouki tremolo intro as a tribute to Ihlen after he learned of her death in 2016. “There’s a nostalgic Mediterranean romance in the music and the vocal delivery,” says Adam Cohen, the late musician’s son and producer of *Thanks For The Dance*. “We wanted to conjure the narrator’s memories of Hydra, and put him back in the house where he wrote “Bird On The Wire” with the ghostly presence of Marianne in the next room.”

“We wanted to put him back in the house where he wrote Bird On The Wire”



In quintessential Prouvost style, the artist-director alludes to this romance in her film by disassociating imagery and meaning with an idiosyncratic playfulness. “The clementine means love. The taste of its liquidity, sweet and sour, it trickles with life,” says Prouvost, who places the fruit as a central motif within her work. “The clementine is also connected with memories of my Grandma’s clementine tree where we used to pick the fresh fruit, spreading and swallowing love.”

January 30, 2020



[INTERVIEW](#) → [ARTISTS](#)

'I wanna catch a fish with my bare hands': Laure Prouvost on politics, mythmaking and her 'grandma's' cure-all tippie

The French artist, for whom interviews are treated as a piece of performance art, is showing work in Art Basel's new Meridians section

MARGARET CARRIGAN

4th December 2019 15:06 GMT



Simple interviews are elevated to a form of performance art for Laure Prouvost. For this one, for example, the French-born Antwerp-based artist sent back four sets of revisions to her answers and advised that misspellings were a “part of it”. Like her installations and videos, which often feature outsized boobs as well as titular stories, the artist-cum-trickster mixes fact and fiction into one amusing, sometimes unsettling narrative.

At Art Basel in Miami Beach for its inaugural Meridians section, she is presenting *DEEP TRAVEL Ink* (2016-ongoing), a “pseudo-functional” travel agency that is part of her fictional family business, iterations of which were previously shown in Frankfurt and New York. According to her gallery, Lisson: “This hypnagogic environment replete with water coolers, palm trees, fans, people working at desks, as well as a waiting area conflates time and space, rendering any concrete or psychic destination tantalisingly uncertain.”

We spoke with Prouvost about politics, mythmaking and her “grandma’s” cure-all teatime tippie.

The Art Newspaper: You’ve had a non-stop year: representing France at the Venice Biennale off the back of a 2018 retrospective at Paris’s Palais de Tokyo, your largest solo show ever in Antwerp, a major commission for London’s Art on the Underground and now a large-scale installation at Art Basel in Miami Beach. What’s keeping you going?

Laure Prouvost: I don’t want to be here licking my TV every night, turning into the plastic that is slowly covering us. I would rather keep drinking Grand ma’s spécial tea (always with a little drop of gin). But you know I am just following the work, it’s my Uncle’s project—I am just there to support him. The works happen with many beautiful little tentacles helping me and my family always, it is fascinating to be touching and feeling the world.



The artist's *DEEP TRAVEL Ink* (2016-ongoing) in Art Basel in Miami Beach's new Meridians section Photograph: David Owens, The Art Newspaper

When it comes to your Meridians installation, is bigger better?

If you come some squid will show you the way, throwing some ink, showing us how to find the raw feelings. We are installing a franchise of the travel agency, Deep Travel Ink. Ideally, it would be 5 times bigger... the ambition of my Uncle's Deep Travel Agency is huge. I have told him that big is not always better but he does not listen. He wants to open a franchise in each corner of the globe. If you come and if you do everything we tell you to do the film will make you richer a lot richer we're really happy if you make the effort to come.

What is the importance of storytelling and mythmaking to understanding reality, and how does art, yours or otherwise, help write those stories and resituate reality?

You realise that you own everything, that everything is yours, just by reading this you might make a bird fly, you're so powerful, rolling yourself in the sand, you own every little bit of sand touching your body, you're so rich now, the stars are yours, you own the stars you can even grab the stars in the palm of your hand, reading this text made you richer. I am not making up much you know, I am mostly just driven by family demands... Keeping these limits and these systems are very important, keeping playing and imagining with the wild.



Prouvost with her work © Laure Prouvost

You recently said in the *Guardian* newspaper that visitors to your London Underground art installations should bring a shovel to dig a new tunnel from the UK to the European continent as a response to Brexit. That's far from resolved and maybe still good advice, but what would you advise visitors bring to Miami Beach?

We could go far, far away... follow me, I will show you the way. I wanna catch a fish with my bare hands. The advice I can give is to follow the feeling hanging on your sleeve as tentacles feel and think, immediately as they touch. And keep a shovel in the over hand to brake walls.

Your work is funny, because it has a certain amount of absurdism in scale and concept, but it is also political in that it addresses ideas of the body, gender, climate change—all the big socioeconomic topics. To what extent do you think absurdism is needed to understand our political reality today?

With my hand deep in the ground, I feel the heart beat of the earth. If we carry on like that, we will just dig the future out of its past. It's our way to feel above the little political games and keep a distance to the big deeper things and keep joy and amazement central within the absurdity of it all.

Why are boobs and bums important symbols in your work?

It's the soft parts of our body, to soften the world.

Art Basel Miami Beach
November 2019

Art | Basel



Laure Prouvost and her Uncle will open a travel agency in Miami Beach

Coline Milliard

As she prepares to set up shop in the Meridians sector, the artist shares highlights of her off-the-wall collaborative project with her pseudo-fictional family

Laure Prouvost has made a name for herself with her quirky – sometimes laugh-out-loud funny – videos and installations, laced with wordplay and double entendres. The French-born, UK and Belgium-based artist represented France at the last Venice Biennale, where she received critical acclaim for an oneiric pavilion that touched on topics as varied as the ecological crisis, magic, and the biennale situation itself with a wild ride of a video travelogue. At Art Basel Miami Beach, Prouvost – together with **Lisson Gallery** – will present the latest version of her fictional travel agency, *DEEP TRAVEL Ink* (2016-2018), in the newly launched Meridians sector. She spoke to Art Basel's Coline Milliard about connecting with our subconscious, her Dada hero Kurt Schwitters – and explained why, for her, art is often a family affair.

Coline Milliard: Could you tell us about your collaboration with your 'Uncle'?

Laure Prouvost: The agency was designed by my Uncle. Every Christmas, he talked about this idea of a travel agency. So, when I was offered a space to use in the center of Frankfurt, he wanted to try it out, and now it's coming to Miami. He asked me to make a video which takes you Deeper ... to help you *For Forgetting*. At *DEEP TRAVEL Ink*, you can also taste squid ink vodka at the bar that one of our cousins sometimes runs. Collecting ink has been an important artistic endeavor – to communicate with each other ... but also to be connected to the creatures that were here long before us. The *Deep See Blue* water tank recalls our connection to the ocean as well as to the world of tentacles and suggests how our senses can be developed in new ways – our brain extending to our extremities.

CM: How does *DEEP TRAVEL Ink* relate to Miami Beach?

LP: Miami was always a place my Uncle dreamed of going to, set up an outpost of *DEEP TRAVEL Ink*, and have the chance to feel the sun shining on his face. It seems the perfect place for people to go beyond appearance and deep into their subconscious. When the offer came to open another branch in Florida, it was a no-brainer.



Laure Prouvost, Uncle's Travel Agency Franchise, *DEEP TRAVEL Ink*. NYC (detail), 2016-2018. Mixed media installation and HD video, dimensions variable. © Laure Prouvost. Courtesy of Lisson Gallery, London, New York City, and Shanghai.

CM: Do you see this piece as political in some ways?

LP: We all travel a lot these days, but how can we go into our subconscious to find desires other than just through physical movement? My Grand Dad had this ethos. He has been lost for years in the tunnel of history, digging from the north of England towards Africa. He enjoyed the way of life there, but mostly did this as his last conceptual piece of art, to see how far he could go without the authorities knowing about it. I think a lot of us feel we don't have a grasp on our realities and want to physically dig our way through the earth to tunnel out of the world. It has been years since we last saw him. *DEEP TRAVEL Ink* is a homage to his work, and his quest to go deeper always and connect with the elements.

CM: References to Kurt Schwitters crop up in the *DEEP TRAVEL Ink*, and he's been a very significant figure in your practice for years. What's your relationship to him and his practice?

LP: Kurt Schwitters is a good friend of our family. As my Grand Ma has too many of his sculptures in her home, she suggested we take some to fix the office chairs in Miami. Schwitters's plays on words are free from convention, they let go of the system, have a sense of freedom and liberation, or half-getting the system and transgressing it. His influence is also about giving strength to this imperfect language – an imperfect english that can be very poetic and open itself up to misunderstandings. It was important for my Uncle and I to create a familiar space. As you take a seat and wait to be taken care of, you start seeing elements that take you deeper. This invitation goes beyond you tasting Grand Ma's tea, enter the *For Forgetting* video room, it's the idea you can own everything – the sky, the stars, all the experiences you have; connect with all of your memories and experiences.



Laure Prouvost. © Anthony Lycett. Courtesy of Lisson Gallery, London, New York City, and Shanghai.

The Meridians sector, newly launched for Art Basel Miami Beach 2019, will feature 34 expansive projects by artists including Prouvost, **Frank Bowling**, **Isaac Julien**, **Candice Lin**, and **Luciana Lamothe**. Discover all projects [here](#).

Laure Prouvost is represented by **Lisson Gallery** (London, New York City, Shanghai), **Cartier Gebauer** (Berlin, Madrid), and **Galerie Nathalie Obadia** (Paris, Brussels).

Coline Milliard is Art Basel's Deputy Editor.

Top image: Laure Prouvost. © Giorgio Benni. Courtesy of Lisson Gallery, London, New York City, and Shanghai.

LISSON GALLERY

AnOther

26 September 2019

AnOther

Artist Laure Prouvost Is Giving Away Massages at Her New Exhibition



In Reflection We Rest by Laure Prouvost

We speak to the Turner Prize-winning artist about her current Berlin exhibition, a playful yet thought-provoking space designed to inspire R&R

SEPTEMBER 26, 2019

TEXT Daisy Woodward

This year has seen the French-born, Belgium-based artist and Turner Prize-winner **Laure Prouvost** do many things: open her biggest exhibition to date, a retrospective at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Antwerp; perform at the Brussels performance art biennial, *Performatik19*; infiltrate advertising sites across all of London's 270 Underground stations as part of TfL's Art on the Underground scheme; and of course, represent France at this year's Venice Biennale with a poetic musing on personal identity. What she hasn't been doing is resting. Until now, that is. Her latest show – newly opened at Berlin's Carlier | Gebauer gallery and titled *In Reflection We Rest* – is devoted to the concept of relaxation.

"After Venice, I was like, 'How can I do another show? I need a rest,'" the artist says with a laugh, perched on a small table in the centre of the show, the day before its opening. "I worked really hard on resting all summer, and I wanted this to be a place where you could let go a bit. That's why it's kind of a mess," she says, indicating to the many assistants helping to add the finishing touches to the display's myriad components. "It's a kind of campsite, a bedside, a massage parlour."

On the opening night, a masseuse will offer attendees back rubs in designated chairs, Prouvost explains, while one room is dedicated to a vast "breathing tent" for visitors to recline in. In the middle of the largest room is a double bed, upon which the ever-playful artist hopes visitors will make themselves at home. On it is a hand-painted duvet, which Prouvost tells me she stole from "grandma", along with others strewn about the space. (For those not familiar with the artist's amusing personal mythology, which blurs the line between fact and fiction, she has a fictional grandparents, her grandmother an Elton John-loving eccentric, who weaves Prouvost's many tapestries.)

A number of these are presented here as floor coverings. "They're grandma's leftovers – ones I complained about and we had to do again." A lot of the works on display are what Prouvost refers to as "leftovers" from recent shows: "because leftovers can be the best sometimes." In a small dark screening room are two Venice leftovers – short film clips projected onto paintings.



In Reflection We Rest by Laure Prouvost

"The narrative of these works is falling apart; the pixels are falling apart," Prouvost explains of the visually enticing film fragments, featuring gaping fish mouths, and various fictional characters from her aquatic-themed Venice show. "It's much more abstract than the Venice piece though – it's like a subconscious reminiscence." Elsewhere, monitors switch between imagery and typed phrases (Prouvost is known for her surrealist, often humorous wordplay). One, placed next to a "cooling system" comprised of a blown-glass cone, sprouting small, flower-like shower heads, informs us that "we might find [this] of use" in the midst of the global warming crisis – however whimsical, Prouvost's work frequently carries a socio-political message.

Prouvost enjoys surprising visitors to her shows, poking fun at the serious nature of art – she shut off the main entrance to the French Pavilion in Venice, and forced the public to enter through a dank basement. The entrance to this exhibit is particularly entertaining: the artist has constructed a clay "airport security gate", adorned with breasts (one of her trademarks) and phallic shapes. "Art is almost this entry to another state, but at the same time you're really just clicking your brain into a different mode – you still belong in the same world," she reflects. "I included potted plants in the show too, alongside the sculptures. I love if the work extends outside or the outside comes in; it's lessening limits between what's meant to be art and what's not."

Entering the exhibition space itself requires you to ascend a staircase and wobble precariously down a giant slide. "You can roll into this show like when you were little on grass, and just stay there," Prouvost says gleefully – and in this politically farcical time Prouvost's calm, curious world is one we could happily remain in.

In Reflection We Rest is at Carlier | Gebauer in Berlin until November 9, 2019.

Le Monde
3 August 2019

Le Monde

Un château de sable avec Laure Prouvost : « C'est cosy, les seins. On aime tous ça »

Sur la plage de Wissant, l'artiste, ambassadrice française à la Biennale de Venise, transforme le sable en œuvre d'art.



Laure Prouvost, sur la plage de Wissant (Pas-de Calais), le 1er juin. LUCIE PASTUREAU / HANSLUCAS POUR LE MONDE

«Hein! Les enfants, on va faire des coussins... Des seins... A pair of boobs. Tournés vers l'Angleterre. C'est cosy, les seins. On aime tous ça... Les enfants, les mecs, les femmes... C'est tellement confortable. C'est doux et rond, c'est la féminité, le futur. Et puis c'est le début d'une histoire de l'art. Ça dit: We are coming out. Des seins, par une femme, c'est la réappropriation de son corps.» **Laure Prouvost** s'est emparée d'une pelle de plage et, aidée de ses enfants Céleste et Isidore, se met à sculpter dans le sable un château - «coussins» -, dans la parfaite lignée de son travail qui voyage entre l'absurde et le revendicatif. Première Française à obtenir le prix Turner (2013), elle était, cette année, l'ambassadrice de la France à la Biennale de Venise.

Il fait un temps extraordinaire ce jour-là du côté de Calais. On dirait que toute la région s'est déversée sur la jolie plage de Wissant (Pas-de-Calais). Voitures en double file, queues chez les glaciers, et une plage qui, à marée haute, ressemble à un de ces livres pour enfants où dans une foule compacte il faut chercher un certain Charlie. «Ne croyez pas, normalement ce n'est pas comme ça. Ici, on est seuls, avec dix manteaux, on court en criant pour se réchauffer... Et pourtant on a du sang du Nord! dit **Laure Prouvost** en creusant sous le cagnard. Mais les plages, c'est quelque chose de spécial. Un endroit où on déconnecte et un endroit où on est ensemble. Immense et libre.»

Etudes à la Saint Martin's School of Art de Londres

Au nord, le cap Blanc-Nez et ses parois de craie. Au sud, le cap Gris-Nez aux argiles sombres. En face, l'Angleterre: «C'est vraiment un morceau de terre qui s'est séparé. Des falaises qu'on pourrait recoller», constate l'artiste en montrant les falaises de Douvres vers lesquelles de lents ferrys dirigent leurs étraves. «Ce qui est bien, ici, c'est qu'on est près de nos amis», poursuit-elle tout sourire en parlant des Britanniques. A 20ans, **Laure Prouvost** a rallié Londres et sa prestigieuse Saint Martin's School of Art. Elle y a fait ses études, sa carrière et sa vie avant de s'installer avec Nick Aikens, son mari, commissaire d'exposition, et leurs enfants à Anvers, en Belgique.

Pourquoi l'art? «Parce que j'étais très nulle dans tout le reste. L'art, c'était la possibilité de créer mon propre langage», analyse celle qui est arrivée au Royaume-Uni sans connaître un traître mot d'anglais et parle désormais un sabir franco-anglais déroutant pour cette enfant du ch'nord. «Il y a une poésie dans les fautes de phrases, de mots. J'écoute désormais le français avec beaucoup de curiosité. Pourquoi on dit: "Occupez-vous de vos oignons"?» Y aurait-il un sens caché à sa remarque?

« Des parents très inventifs, des aventuriers » **Laure Prouvost** est née il y a quarante et un ans à Croix, dans la métropole lilloise. C'est là que les grandes familles du Nord issues de la révolution industrielle ont trouvé

refuge. Au sein de la propriété familiale, ses parents à elle ont hérité de la modeste mais coquette maison du jardinier. La jeune fille et ses frères y grandissent à l'écart de la ville. «J'avais peur des gens», confie-t-elle. Sa mère est institutrice de maternelle dans une école Montessori. Son père, elle le définit comme un «inventeur»: de Pic'pain, une minichaîne de burgers à la française qui a fait long feu, à Ciel & Terre, qui propose des centrales photovoltaïques implantées sur des réservoirs d'eau, en passant par Isostone, qui développait un matériau de construction isolant.

«Des parents très inventifs, des aventuriers», dit-elle, tout en continuant de creuser avec une belle énergie. Lorsqu'elle est enfant, le vendredi soir, toute la petite famille prend la route pour Wissant, cette coquette petite station balnéaire de briques et de broc, au milieu des dunes que la mer grignote, au risque de menacer à terme leur villa. Une tante a aussi une maison ici. Valse des cousins. Pour les grandes vacances, ils embarquent et parcourent le monde à la voile. Laure, comme son père, a le mal de mer. Elle hausse les épaules: on ne s'arrête pas à ça chez les Prouvost. Sa mère a bien des ruches, elle qui est allergique à la piqûre des abeilles. L'océan est un monde de changements de cap permanents. Un univers où nous sommes tous inadaptés, et s'adapter à l'inadaptation devient un art de vivre. «Dès que tu es sur la mer, tu es hors système, dit-elle. Il n'y a pas de routes tracées.»

Laissons-lui le reste de sa généalogie, comme ce prétendu grand-père, artiste conceptuel minimaliste avant l'heure («mais qui néanmoins peignait des seins et des fesses sur l'envers de ses toiles, s'amuse-t-elle, parce que c'est tout ce qui l'intéressait»), et sa femme («qui, après sa mort, embellissait ses œuvres»). Laure serait allée les retrouver en Angleterre, dans la région des grands lacs du Cumbria où ils étaient voisins de Kurt Schwitters, le dadaïste allemand, inventeur du mouvement Merz, qui mélangeait collages, poèmes, peintures pour incorporer à son œuvre les objets de la société industrielle et qui trouva là refuge en 1940.

«Certes, on porte notre passé, on le continue, mais on le questionne, on le repositionne, explique la Française. J'aime laisser du mystère. Rendre tout factuel ou clair ne m'intéresse pas. On sait qu'on est sur terre mais on ne sait pas trop comment on en est arrivé là. L'art niche dans l'imaginaire.» C'est le principe du transfert en psychanalyse: l'artiste, comme le thérapeute, se propose comme le réceptacle de nos fantasmes. «Ouh là là..., soupire-t-elle en enlevant son tee-shirt pour se jeter à l'eau. C'est très, très philosophique, tout ça... Moi, je ne fais que raconter des histoires.» Elle a ramassé une brindille qui traînait sur le sable et, très solennellement, nous la remet: «Tenez, je vous la confie. Elle a appartenu à mon grand-père, prenez-en soin.» Et d'expliquer: «L'idée de la relique est importante pour moi. En art comme dans la religion - ma mère est très croyante -, les objets permettent de créer des histoires autour d'eux.»

Marges du monde Et c'est comme ça que, sur une de ces marges du monde que sont les plages, on se retrouve un beau jour doté d'un souvenir du grand-père, lequel aurait creusé un tunnel vers l'Afrique et se serait perdu... Et qu'une petite fille de 6ans, Céleste, et son frère de deux ans son cadet, Isidore, se mettent à sauter à pieds joints avec leurs copains sur les deux seins de sable.

«La vie est intéressante quand on la questionne ou la provoque. Ce que je produis ne sera jamais aussi fort que la vie - je ne pourrai jamais reproduire ce que je ressens en mettant les pieds dans le sable -, mais, en même temps, ces objets provoquent la vie.» Coussins à l'air, la peau rosie par le soleil, **Laure Prouvost** plonge dans la vague. Elle disparaît puis émerge, le visage éclaboussé de soleil. Avec tout le sérieux des gens qui se nourrissent d'humour, elle glisse: «Il faudra réécrire toute cette interview. On dira qu'on s'est rencontrés au Guatemala, et puis qu'on est partis à la nage.»

LISSON GALLERY

The New York Times
7 June 2019

The New York Times

Laure Prouvost Represents France. But She Doesn't Feel Very French.

The artist's surreal installation is the talk of the Venice
Biennale.



Ivy Njikiktjen for The New York Times

By Nina Siegal

June 7, 2019

The French Pavilion at the Venice Biennale is a stately Beaux-Arts temple with red marble columns. But visitors this year will find its front door shut.

Instead, they'll have to enter through a doorway at the back, then walk through a dirt-filled basement, up a set of rickety wood stairs and into a room where broken eggshells, cigarette butts, old cellphones and other detritus poke out of a floor of clear blue resin.

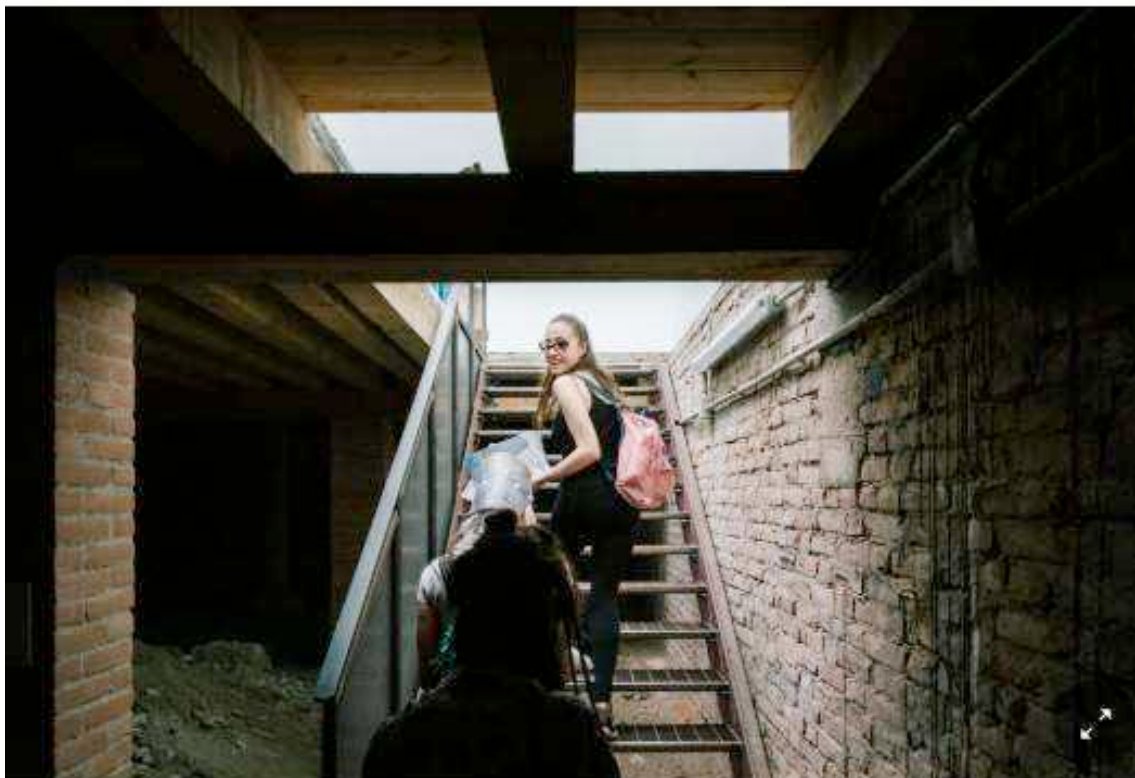
In the next room, where car seats and garden chairs seem to melt into sand, they'll watch a nearly half-hour video of a dreamlike road trip from the suburbs of Paris to Venice, by car, horse and boat, featuring a naked bicyclist, a brass marching band and a magician who levitates furniture.



Visitors to the French pavilion at the Venice Biennale on May 25. Gianni Cipriano for The New York Times



In one room of Ms. Prouvost's "Deep See Blue Surrounding You" detritus pokes out of a floor of clear blue resin. Gianni Cipriano for The New York Times



Rather than coming through the French pavilion's front entrance, visitors enter through a doorway at the back, walk through a dirt-filled basement and up a set of rickety wood stairs. Gianni Cipriano for The New York Times

This installation, “Deep See Blue Surrounding You,” is the work of the artist Laure Prouvost, who, for several reasons, is an unlikely choice to represent France in the world’s most prestigious international art showcase. For one thing, as she herself admits, her French isn’t very good.

“I speak French, but like a child,” she said during a recent interview at her studio in Antwerp, Belgium. She left France from her hometown, near Lille, to study as a teenager, she said, and has never moved back.

Since then, Ms. Prouvost, who was awarded the Turner Prize in Britain in 2013, has established her career in Britain and Belgium. She’s had major solo shows in Beijing, Munich, New York, London and Antwerp, but only one major solo exhibition in France, at the Palais de Tokyo, last year.

And yet she has done France proud at the Biennale. The pavilion has been widely praised as one of this year’s most impressive, and was the talk of the preview week earlier this month, when critics and collectors descended on Venice. Many were surprised when the Golden Lion, the Biennale’s top honor, went to Lithuania, not France.

Ms. Prouvost’s Antwerp studio is on the top floor of a former coffee factory in the city’s fashionable art district, Het Zuid. There, a couple of weeks after the Venice vernissage, a piece of paper that read “They Are Waiting For You” was tacked next to a hole in a wall, just high enough for a child to fit through. We crouched down and passed through it into an office, where we sat for tea on the couch, next to a giant pair of papier-mâché breasts.



Ms. Prouvost in her studio in Antwerp, Belgium on May 23. Ivy Njokiktijen for The New York Times

Ms. Prouvost's work extends past the gallery and into her life, where she continues her personal brand of performance art — at least when journalists are in the room. She mentioned that she was 13 when she left France, to study in Belgium — but hadn't she said elsewhere that this happened when she was 17, and that she left to attend Central St. Martins, the art school in London?

"I was 52," she said, deadpan. "But now I'm feeling great because I went to Los Angeles and got my boobs done."

We both laughed — that answer didn't jive with reality. For instance, she's only 41.

What was she working on at the moment?

"I'm trying to arrange for my grandma to arrive at the pavilion," she said. "She wants to come by helicopter. She loves hanging upside-down naked. She will attach herself using ropes and blast Elton John. She couldn't come to the opening, because she doesn't like to be so public, but we will do it at a moment when there's no one around."



The French pavilion in the Giardini della Biennale, a public park. Gianni Cipriano for The New York Times

Ms. Prouvost is known for conducting interviews in this manner, blending fact and fiction, often to comedic effect. It reflects the way she makes her art, using some elements from the real world, but combined with lots of whimsy and Lewis Carroll-style Jabberwocky.

“Wantee” the installation that won her the Turner Prize, is a film about her fictionalized grandfather, a famous conceptual artist who disappeared one day down a tunnel he dug under his house.

This may be a nod to her “conceptual grandfather,” the British artist John Latham, for whom she worked as a studio assistant early in her career, said Ossian Ward, the content director at Lisson Gallery in London, which has represented Ms. Prouvost since 2017.

“She spent a lot of time in his studio and was embedded in his interesting theoretical world, which was about time and cosmic events,” Mr. Ward said. “If you listen to his ideas, there’s a lot of language slippage, and almost punning, which comes into Laure’s work a lot,” he added. But Ms. Prouvost, he said, “has a more humorous bent.”



Part of the installation in “Deep Blue See Surrounding You.” The French pavilion’s curator, Martha Kirszenbaum, said Ms. Prouvost’s politics can be seen “in her surrealism and in her narration.” Gianni Cipriano for The New York Times



Gianni Cipriano for The New York Times

Her work often consists of large-scale immersive installations incorporating video, and signage that is sometimes instructional (“Please sit here to drown your sorrow”) and sometimes Dada (“Ideally, This Sign Would Take You In Its Arms”). There’s also a lot of tapestry, octopuses and disembodied breasts.

“The audience becomes very complicit in the environment she creates,” said Hana Noorali, a representative of Lisson Gallery. She added that Ms. Prouvost was often “inverting architectures, in some cases literally, to create a more surreal environment.”

Ms. Prouvost will often “change the way you enter a space and then re-enact that in a video work, so what you’re watching is actually a reflection of what you’ve already experienced,” Ms. Noorali said.

The video that is central to her Venice installation pulls together many of the elements she has explored in previous works. On her peripatetic journey, she brings with her several voyagers, including a priest from Burkina Faso, a retired French nursery-school teacher and a Gabonese-French dancer. She also encounters other people along the way, like the French filmmaker [Agnès Varda, who died earlier this year](#) at age 90. The travelers’ lines are spoken in French, English, Italian, Arabic and Dutch.



A visitor parts a series of heavy curtains to enter a darkened screening room in “Deep See Blue Surrounding You.” Gianni Cipriano for The New York Times



The 28-minute video at the center of the work imagines a bewildering journey from Paris to Venice, with a diverse cast of characters joining in. *Gianni Cipriano for The New York Times*

In one part of the film, they visit the [Palais Idéal](#), a fantastical stone palace created over 33 years as a labor of love by a letter carrier in rural France. Later, they swim in the Mediterranean Sea at Marseille, where they contemplate the lives lost in those waters — refugees and migrants trying to make their way to Europe. From there, they swim to the canals of Venice, and ultimately arrive at the French pavilion.

“The whole idea was a kind of subconscious road trip of who we are,” Ms. Prouvost said. She wanted to “look at the ideas of representation and France,” she added.

The characters who populate her film also pop up as performers in the pavilion: One arrives out of the blue to present an impromptu magic show for visitors, for instance. Most of them could be considered outsiders, or outsider artists, because they’ve had no formal training. Her attention to these figures, and her incorporation of their worlds into her own, is where the subtle social commentary of her art starts to emerge.

“Her politics exist in her fiction, in her surrealism and in her narration,” said Martha Kirszenbaum, who curated Ms. Prouvost’s Venice show. (Ms. Kirszenbaum is an outsider, too, the artist pointed out: a French daughter of Polish-Jewish immigrants who has mostly worked in New York and Los Angeles.)

"She's more interested in the society around her, but sociopolitical issues are under-layers to her work," Ms. Kirszenbaum said. "The idea of utopia is very important to this project," she added, speaking of the Biennale installation. "It's like a utopian possibility of how we could maybe live together."

She added that Ms. Prouvost's vision was "to bring together an intergenerational and interracial group of people who could travel together and have a moment of life together."

"It's a trip that represents a global utopia," Ms. Kirszenbaum said. "It's Laure's utopia and it's my utopia."



"I think it's always nice to see your country taking some risks," Ms. Prouvost said of the decision to show her work in the French pavilion. Gianni Cipriano for The New York Times

Nav Haq, the curator of a recent retrospective of Ms. Prouvost's work at the [M HKA Museum of Contemporary Art](#) in Antwerp, said this consciousness reflects the artist's own history.

"She's from Lille, which is in the very north of France, right by the border of Belgium," he said. "That part of France has a lot of links to the Low Countries: the Netherlands and Belgium. It's only really now that she's become recognized in France, but I see her as an international artist."

Ms. Prouvost said that part of the mythmaking in her art is about "trying to reject a past or the weight of history by making or reinventing it." She said she was the first generation of her family that actually moved away from France. "The great thing about movement is that we question our system or the way we do things."

After spending six months preparing her work for the Biennale in France, some of her friends have told her that her French has improved, she said, and she feels a little more French now.

"I am honored that they trusted me to do something," she said. "They took a risk and I think it's always nice to see your country taking some risks. I am from where I am, but at the end, in the video, I say: 'We are like birds that don't belong to any nation.'"

Libération
28 May 2019



Deep See Blue Surrounding You (détail) de Laure Prouvost. PHOTO SAMUEL KIRSZENBAUM

Mais l'essentiel donc, le voyage, les rencontres, l'inspiration, le souffle de la création, s'est joué ailleurs et bien avant.

cette fois, crée sous nos pas l'impression de marcher sur l'eau.

A l'écran, une joyeuse bande de personnages court, roule, navigue en chantant et en chahutant, de la banlieue parisienne à Venise, en passant par Roubaix et Marseille, avec un stop nocturne et chamannique dans le palais du facteur Cheval où une fanfare en tenue de gala les rejoins. Ce road-trip dont une pieuvre, un acrobate, un rappeur, un «*raconteur d'histoires*», un prêtre sont les héros, s'achève là où l'on se tient : dans le pavillon français vide, au moment où le travail d'accrochage va commencer. Mais l'essentiel donc, le voyage, les rencontres, l'inspiration, le souffle de la création, s'est joué ailleurs et bien avant. Et c'est de cela, du monde et du hasard, de ses souvenirs et de ses amitiés (Agnès Varda glisse une tête dans le film) que Laure Prouvost remplit son expo. Elle refuse d'ailleurs de mettre vraiment une fin au projet en invitant ses acteurs à se lever soudain au milieu du public pour continuer la danse, l'errance et l'odyssée.

J.L. (à Venise)

Le pavillon français de Laure Prouvost, pieuvre d'amitié

Grâce à l'artiste française, le visiteur marche sur l'eau et suit un joyeux road-trip qui s'achève à Venise même.

Dès le seuil du pavillon français, la file d'attente qui s'allongeait de minutes en minutes disait à quel point l'exposition de Laure Prouvost retenait les spectateurs en son sein et les cajolait. Tant et si bien qu'une fois entrés, ils n'en sortaient plus, pas

avant la fin du film en tout cas, retardant l'entrée des autres. Ce qui n'est pas toujours le cas ici à Venise : la peur de rater une pièce convainc certains de visiter la biennale au pas de charge. L'attente est aussi à la hauteur de la renommée de l'artiste, née en 1978 près de Lille et aujourd'hui installée entre Anvers et Londres, où elle étudia et reçut le Turner Prize en 2013. Depuis, elle enchaîne les shows partout dans le monde et son travail est vendu par trois galeries bien établies. Représenter la France à Venise n'en reste pas moins

une forme de consécration, que son œuvre travaille justement à dégonfler en esquivant la pompe du lieu et l'emphase de l'événement. L'entrée de l'expo se fait comme par effraction, non pas entre les colonnes néoclassiques du pavillon, mais par l'arrière et les sous-sols. Dans la première salle, tout se passe à terre : le plancher est recouvert d'une couche de résine vert d'eau, translucide, où sont englués déchets, poissons, crustacés, et menus objets. On les retrouvera aussi dans le film projeté dans une salle dont le sol, mou

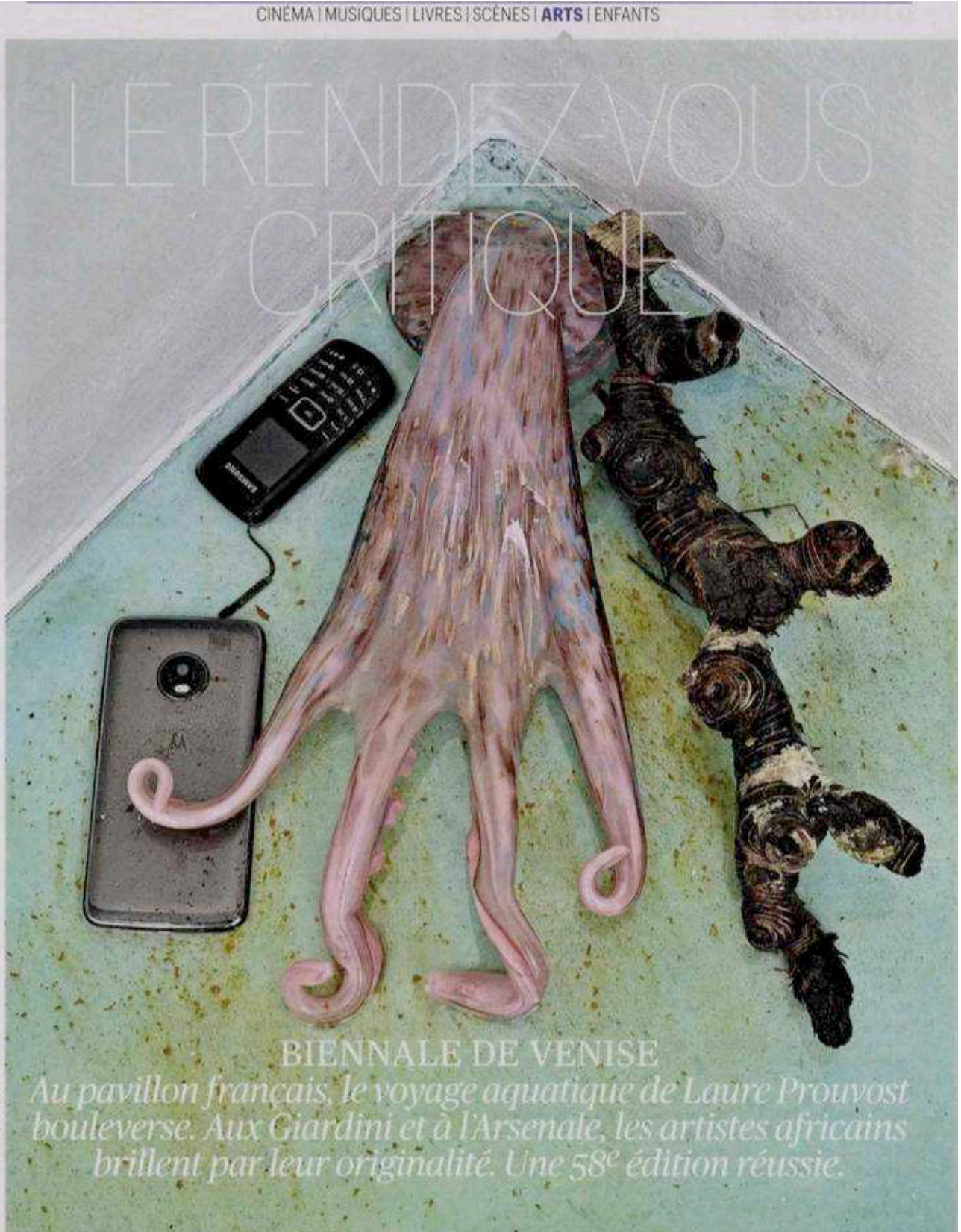
LISSON GALLERY

Telerama France
25 May 2019

Télérama¹

CINÉMA | MUSIQUES | LIVRES | SCÈNES | ARTS | ENFANTS

LE RENDEZ-VOUS CRITIQUE



BIENNALE DE VENISE

Au pavillon français, le voyage aquatique de Laure Prouvost bouleverse. Aux Giardini et à l'Arsenale, les artistes africains brillent par leur originalité. Une 58^e édition réussie.



BIENNALE DE VENISE

INSTALLATIONS, PEINTURE, VIDÉOS...

11

« Mais c'est le bordel, ici ! » Elle a raison la petite dame du film de Laure Prouvost. La plasticienne de 41 ans – qui représente l'Hexagone à la Biennale de Venise – a mis un sacré bazar au sein du pavillon français. S'en plaindre ? Au contraire. Voilà des lustres que notre pays n'avait offert aux visiteurs de la manifestation une œuvre aussi singulière, aussi riche, aussi maîtrisée malgré ses airs foutraques. Un film, donc, mais pas seulement. Il est projeté en boucle dans la salle principale du pavillon, transformée en un étrange royaume sous-marin aux trônes comme sculptés dans le sable. Chacun peut s'y installer à sa guise ou s'allonger au sol afin de profiter de l'œuvre, produite par l'Institut français. Et se laisser emporter par l'odyssée qu'elle raconte : une traversée de la France jusqu'à Venise.

Douze personnes participent au voyage. Des hommes et des femmes, des jeunes et des vieux, des artistes, un instituteur à la retraite, et même un prêtre. Ils viennent d'ici, ou d'ailleurs. Ils parlent français et d'autres langues. Et les voilà partis pour une aventure délirante. A Roubaix, une colombe

s'échappe d'un tableau. A Hauterives, le Palais idéal du facteur Cheval, visité la nuit, se transforme en vestige d'une ville engloutie par les eaux, avant que le jour n'y amène une fanfare interprétant l'entêtant *Lasciatemi cantare* de Toto Cutugno. Des calanques de Marseille, on s'envole. Et des ateliers de Murano sortent de drôles de totems en verre...

Laure Prouvost est une conteuse. Elle a un rythme bien à elle. Les images du film nous arrivent par saccades, tandis qu'une voix off douce, traînante, pleine d'humour les accompagne. On en capte des bouts, pas tout, mais qu'importe. L'artiste nous prend d'emblée dans ses filets. Pour compléter son installation, elle déroule aussi son histoire sous la forme d'une tapisserie où l'on retrouve les paysages traversés et des personnages du film. Mais aussi des coquilles d'œufs ou des poissons en verre.

Son travail tranche franchement avec celui de ses confrères de la Biennale ! Si nombre d'entre eux s'attachent à dire le monde atomisé qui est le nôtre, elle célèbre la vie et le vivre-ensemble. Ce bonheur d'être à plusieurs et de s'apporter tant et tant en-

core. Une certaine idée de la liberté, de l'égalité et de la fraternité. La France dans ce qu'elle a de plus beau. Et de meilleur. On lui aurait donné le Lion d'or. Mais il a été remis à la Lituanie.

A Venise, les pavillons nationaux ne sont pas les seuls endroits où bat le pouls du monde. L'exposition internationale se déploie aussi aux Giardini et à l'Arsenale. Elle a, cette année, été confiée à l'Américain Ralph Rugoff, directeur de la Hayward Gallery de Londres, commissaire de la Biennale de Lyon en 2015, qui s'est appliqué à concocter l'une des meilleures expositions qu'il ait été donné de voir ici. Car il a fait le choix de ne présenter que des artistes vivants. Rugoff s'est également attaché à respecter un équilibre parfait entre les médiums. La peinture, pratiquement absente des pavillons nationaux, trouve sa place comme la sculpture, l'installation, la photo et la vidéo. Internationale, cette exposition l'est aussi vraiment, ce qui permet à l'Afrique de briller. Enfin, le commissaire général a eu la belle idée d'exposer les mêmes artistes sur les deux sites, en donnant à voir à chaque fois des œuvres radicalement différentes. S'ensuit alors pour les visiteurs un véritable jeu de piste et de formidables découvertes. Des plasticiens que l'on n'avait pas remarqués aux Giardini surgissent sou-

Tableau issu de *Various Works*, de Michael Armitage. A l'Arsenale.

Page précédente, élément de l'installation « Vois ce bleu profond te fondre », de Laure Prouvost. Au pavillon français.

MUSÉE ANNE DE BEAUFORT/MONDRIËN | WILLIAM BLAUGARINI | CATHERINE HÉLÈNE GALLIMARD | ALAIN WILLAUMEZ/TENDANCE FLOUE | OLIVIER HOUEK | CHRISTINE PLENIER-LES FILMS DU FLEUVE | ARCHÈLE 30-RTBF

dain à l'Arsenale. D'autres ne tiennent pas leurs promesses. Mais il y a surtout ceux qu'on a été heureux de découvrir, de revoir, et qui continuent de nous obséder longtemps après. Le photographe indien Soham Gupta, par exemple, qui tire des portraits saisissants d'hommes et de femmes abusés, harcelés, qu'il saisit dans la nuit la plus noire, laissant ainsi éclater leur angoisse. La peintre uruguayenne Jill Mulleady, qui en appelle à Edvard Munch pour dire un quotidien où la violence n'est jamais loin. L'Américain Henry Taylor, qui s'impose comme l'un des grands peintres actuels avec ses tableaux hantés par la question noire.

Mais de toutes les propositions, celles des peintres africains sont les plus originales. Le Kenyan Michael Armitage propose aux Giardini de petites encres saisies sur le vif, au cœur de meetings politiques de son pays. Sujet qu'il reprend dans d'immenses tableaux dévoilés à l'Arsenale. De ces œuvres à la végétation luxuriante, dont les couleurs vertes et mauves empruntent aux Gauguin des années martiniquaises et tahitiennes, émane une vitalité folle que contrebalance une violence certaine. Tout aussi envoûtant est le travail de la Nigériane Njideka Akunyili Crosby, qui régale les Giardini de grandes toiles sur la vie familiale, mêlant aplats de couleurs et collages de photos prises dans des magazines. Et à l'Arsenale, de beaux portraits tout en transparence. Ralph Rugoff a donné pour titre à son exposition « Puissiez-vous vivre des temps intéressants ». C'est le cas, à Venise. – *Yasmine Youssi*

Jusqu'au
24 novembre,
Venise.
www.labiennale.org

ÉCLATS DU GHANA

Pour sa première participation à la Biennale de Venise, le Ghana offre un florilège de ses meilleurs artistes, dont les travaux sont mis en espace par l'architecte David Adjaye. L'occasion de renouer avec les sublimes tentures réalisées par El Anatsui avec des capsules de soda. De découvrir les portraits de studio en noir et blanc de Felicia Abban (née en 1935), la première femme photographe professionnelle du pays dans les années 1960-70. De retrouver les beaux tableaux d'hommes et de femmes peints par Lynette Yiadom Boakye (née en 1977). La touche est vive, large. Les couleurs, sombres. Mais c'est par leur sujet, au fond, que ces toiles étonnent. Car l'histoire de la peinture offre finalement peu de portraits où les Noirs sont traités comme n'importe quel autre modèle ou sujet.

LISSON GALLERY

The Spectator
24 May 2019

THE SPECTATOR

It was bucketing it down in Venice, yet the beach was heaving. Families, lovebirds, warring kids, a yappy mutt, all strewn across a sandy expanse, basking on beach towels. Balls were bounced, crosswords filled, timelines scrolled. Out of this idleness, songs would bubble up, light billowy airs — speaking now to sunscreen mundanities, now to geological anxieties — whisked up to our ears as if on a cooling breeze.

We were in the Lithuanian Pavilion inside a dilapidated former military storehouse in a corner of north Venice, being given a god's-eye view on an extraordinary new opera, *Sun & Sea (Marina)*, by a Lithuanian trio: composer Lina Lapelyte, director Rugile Barzdziukaite, and writer Vaiva Grainyte. Word had spread that the Pavilion was the favourite for the Biennale's top gong, the Golden Lion, and the queue was now an hour long. Those of us already inside, however — peering over the bannisters on to this desert island on the floor below — were not shifting.

The libretto at times echoed the throwaway small talk of John Adams's operas. The music bobbed around in the unnerving, almost chemically-clear waters of Philip Glass — though sometimes, harmonically, it drifted further this way into twangy West End territory, or further that way into more interesting scummier synthier drones. Dictating everything was the law of flotsam and jetsam, the work chucking up a variety of disposable musical forms, deliberately unsophisticated, pretty, plasticky, mesmerising. A 'Sunscreen Bosanova', for example, delivered in beautifully hushed tones by a large woman to her prostrate husband: 'Hand it here, I need to rub my legs...', her fellow bathers adding the soothing gust of a sleepy humming chorus.

Puncturing every one of these aerated lullabies was the undertow of something darker. Exhaustion, extinction, anxiety dreams, a 'Chanson of Too Much Sun'; a woman sings of her drowned ex. In one nervy choral tutti the beach bums remember a volcanic eruption that downed a plane. 'What a relief that the Great Barrier Reef has a restaurant and hotel!' sings the Wealthy Mommy.

Rarely has an environmental message been so subtly, humorously, tellingly conveyed in an artwork. The genius lay in exploiting the paradox of the beach holiday. How the act of relaxation is not relaxing at all, and how we forget every time, only to be reminded, just as we close our eyes on the hot sand, that there is nothing like the vacuum of total tranquility to flood the brain with the noise of work, doubts, apocalyptic dread.

Elsewhere at the Biennale, the pace was more frenetic. In **Laure Prouvost's** thrilling Gesamtkunstwerk *Deep See Blue Surrounding You* for the French Pavilion, you felt like a seed whooshed around by the winds. Prouvost's fantasy road trip leaps around with tentacular curiosity, from the Paris banlieues to Venice via Marseille and a dip in the Med, spilling its watery contents — fags, trainers, squid, all crafted in Murano glass — on to the gallery floor. Entering through flappy gills, you watch the saga in a fishy belly of a cinema sat on a squidgy seabed floor. Buried within fold upon fold of playful cinematic poetry — edited as if alive, blinking and breathy — was one of the briefest but most moving elegies to the drowned migrants of the Med.

Oh, how depressing to have to return to an opera house, to Glyndebourne's first offering of 2019, a new production of Berlioz's *Damnation of Faust*, after all this imagination, ambition, thoughtfulness.

I realise that opera directors think a scene is well choreographed if someone in vomity spandex wiggles their tush, but in London we have a place called Sadler's Wells, and we know that choreography means something else. There's a lot of 'choreography' in Richard Jones's staging because there's a lot of theatrical gaps to fill. Why? Because Berlioz's *Faust* isn't theatre. It's a concert drama, in which the music stages itself. You can virtually smell the score, taste it, touch it, stroke its horns and tickle its chin. And conductor Robin Ticciati and the sulphurous and hot-tarmacy odours of the brass and winds of the LPO went some way to reminding us of the its multisensory power.

To think this lightning-bright music needs propping up with a laboriously worked-out plot is to think the Pantheon could be improved by some interior scaffolding. Worse still, so busy is Jones filling in the backstory he completely forgets to give mien or motivation to the main characters. Christopher Purves's *Méphistophélès* has nothing to do but wheel scenery on and off stage. At one point Faust (Allan Clayton) murders someone, yet it's not only impossible to care, it's impossible to know who he's killed or why.

It's the kind of profoundly mediocre night that Berlioz the critic would have had great fun demolishing.

ELLE France
24 May 2019

ELLE



TÊTES DE GONDOLES

QUATRE-VINGT-DIX PAVILLONS NATIONAUX, UN PAVILLON INTERNATIONAL EXCEPTIONNEL, ET DES EXPOS TOUS AZIMUTS...

LA BIENNALE D'ART DE VENISE FAIT SON SHOW. CE QU'IL FAUT SAVOIR. PAR SOLINE DELOS

Sous l'arsenal, la plage ! C'est au fin fond de l'Arsenal, dans une ancienne marina militaire, que Lina Lapelyte, Vaiva Grainyte et Rugile Barzdziukaite ont reconstitué une plage, toile de fond de leur opéra-performance insolite imaginé pour le pavillon lituanien. Sur le sable, des vacanciers vaquent à leurs occupations et déplacent en chantant les ordures qui s'entassent ou la météo qui déraile (1). Un pavillon qui pointe notre passivité face au désastre écologique annoncé, primé par le Lion d'or. « Sun & Sea (Marina) », jusqu'au 31 octobre.

Quelle queue pour le pavillon français ! Avec son écriture généreuse et sensuelle, Laure Prouvost nous entraîne dans les pas de joyeux saltimbanques de 20 à 80 ans. Ils dansent, chantent, aiment. Un film comme un voyage avec l'humain et la poésie en majesté (5). « Deep See Blue Surrounding You », jusqu'au 24 novembre.

Formidables, les petits nouveaux. Pour leur première participation, le Ghana et Madagascar ont recueilli tous les suffrages. Pendant que le premier rassembleait les tentures de prince — et de rien — d'El Anatsui (2), les portraits magnétiques de Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, ou le film envoûtant de John Akomfrah, l'artiste malgache

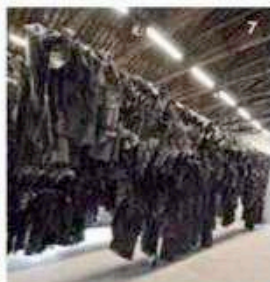


Joël Andrianomearisoa imagine un labyrinthe de papier de soie noir qui effleure le visiteur au gré du vent (7). « Ghana Freedom » et « I Have Forgotten the Night », jusqu'au 24 novembre.

On a trouvé le calme dans cette frénésie. Pour célébrer (tout en sobriété) son dixième anniversaire, la Punta della Dogana imagine une exposition comme un songe. Ann Veronica Janssens sème au sol une poussière scintillante qui fait écho au miroitement du soleil sur la lagune, Charbel-Joseph H. Boutros capture la nuit du marbre blanc, et Cerith Wyn Evans fait clignoter un lustre au rythme des textes de Bataille (3). Le sensible à fleur d'art. « Luogo e Segni », jusqu'au 15 décembre.

Le design, c'est de l'art. La crème des designers a imaginé des œuvres qui dialoguent avec les chefs-d'œuvre d'un des plus beaux palais vénitiens, le Ca' d'Oro. Une sculpture de lumière de Studio Drift vient diffuser son aura autour du « Saint Sébastien » d'Andrea Mantegna, les chaises et les bancs de Virgil Abloh semblent s'enfoncer dans l'eau du grand canal, et le luminaire organique taille XXL de Nacho Carbonell (4) enchante le palazzo. Comme dans un conte, « Dysfunctional » et « May You Live in Interesting Times », jusqu'au 24 novembre.

Comment réagir face à « Barca nostra » ? L'épave du chalutier naufragé en Méditerranée en 2015, avec à son bord entre sept cents et mille exilés, est exposée par l'artiste suisse-islandais Christoph Büchel sur un quai de l'Arsenal (6). Une installation qui a suscité une vive polémique : geste politique visant à piquer au vif le gouver-



Grazia France
24 May 2019

GRAZIA

EXPO

Réalités parallèles

La Biennale de Venise, plus importante manifestation internationale d'art contemporain, dresse un portrait des nouveaux courants: entre artisanat et digital, construction de murs et afro-futurisme.

Par Pedro MORAIS

O n y entre par une petite porte arrière, après avoir pénétré la végétation qui entoure le pavillon. Une fois dedans, on traverse un sol liquide et glacé parsemé de fossiles (baskets, méduses, poissons qui fument) avant de plonger dans le film réalisé par Laure Prouvost, 41 ans et représentante de la France à la Biennale de Venise, après avoir gagné le prix Turner en 2013. Elle parle de son pavillon comme d'une pieuvre, elle qui s'intéresse à l'intelligence animale («*La pieuvre contient ses cerveaux dans ses tentacules et pense par ses extrémités de façon sensorielle*») et aux possibilités de la fable. La sienne est un road-trip vertigineux qui traverse la France, des cafés de Roubaix aux tours Nuages de Nanterre, en passant par Marseille ou le Palais du Facteur Cheval. Troisième femme (seulement !) à investir le pavillon, Laure Prouvost y a fait entrer aussi un autre pays: une communauté croisant les âges, les origines et les genres, portée par un élan vital, le désir d'échanger et de prendre la parole. Rarement un pavillon français aura été si contemporain. dépassant le

principe archaïque des représentations nationales pour donner à voir une réalité sociale mélangée, proche de la rue et des solidarités qui se tissent, malgré l'instrumentalisation politique de la peur de l'autre. L'artiste y apporte une réponse magistrale à la question des identités, très présente dans le débat actuel sur l'art: en affabulant sa propre vie, Laure Prouvost mise sur l'invention de soi et des communautés nouvelles plutôt que sur un récit fantasmé des origines. La fiction augmenterait ainsi le réel, plutôt qu'elle ne le fausse. C'était d'ailleurs le point de départ de l'exposition principale de la Biennale, proposée par le commissaire américain Ralph Rugoff: «*Que peut-on faire à une époque où les fake news ont des effets réels?*» Selon lui, quand les gouvernements eux-mêmes cherchent à brouiller les frontières entre réalité et fiction, la simple critique ne suffit plus. Inspiré par le génial roman SF de China Miéville (*The City and The City*) – une dystopie urbaine où deux Etats ennemis coexistent dans un même espace en s'ignorant l'un l'autre –, le commissaire voit dans l'exposition la possibilité d'avoir plus qu'une opinion sur le monde. Ce propos générique cache une Biennale qui tire dans tous les sens, réunissant des œuvres fortes et des propositions spectaculaires mais banales. Il est néanmoins possible d'en extraire quelques traits qui traversent l'art de notre époque. L'un d'eux concerne la «blackness», un mot pour désigner les cultures afro-descendantes, qui assument à la fois une condition historique

liée à la diaspora et l'affirmation exubérante d'identités noires, au-delà des mythologies nationales. S'agirait-il d'un renouveau du panafricanisme à l'ère du Black Lives Matter et de Justice pour Adama? La réponse prend souvent la forme du portrait, que ce soit en photo, à l'image du rôle des cheveux dans la culture noire chez Zanele Muholi, ou en peinture, jouant de l'effacement historique d'un continent, avec Njideka Akunyili Crosby, ou transformant la rue en performance sociale dans le cas d'Henry Taylor. Les vidéos complexes d'Arthur Jafa retournent la question: «*De quelle couleur sont les Blancs?*», quand celles de Kahlil Joseph puisent dans le maelstrom internet pour observer comment la culture mainstream condense des élans à la fois normatifs et émancipateurs.

«IL N'Y A PAS DE VIEUX SUR INTERNET»

Ce jeune artiste américain intègre l'un des autres traits majeurs de la Biennale, qui semble assumer pour la première fois les effets de la culture post-Internet (l'impossibilité d'établir une distinction ou une hiérarchie entre la vie virtuelle et la vie réelle), qui a pénétré tous les médias, au-delà des installations technologiques, qui restent très présentes. C'est le cas des peintures d'Avery Singer, qui évoquent un quotidien traversé par des écrans, mais aussi d'un paysage de la planète Mars signé Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster et Joi Bittle, ramenée à sa condition d'image du futur par l'utilisation du dispositif désuet du diorama. Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster présente par ailleurs la première œuvre de réalité virtuelle de la Biennale (un feu d'artifice de couleurs qui ne fera pas date). Pourtant, malgré les nombreuses installations convoquant la nouveauté technologique, le ton est sombre. «*Il n'y a pas de vieux sur Internet*», affirme l'artiste Ed Atkins à propos de ses personnages en 3D, exposés au milieu d'un vestiaire de costumes d'opéra.



Des vieux et des enfants pleurent convulsivement, rappelant l'autre dénominateur commun entre plusieurs artistes exposés: la manière dont les technologies intègrent et conditionnent nos émotions, loin de la froideur à laquelle il est convenu de les associer. Antoine Catala, Français établi à New York, ne parle que de cela, d'empathie avec la machine, de sa capacité à s'introduire dans nos vies en employant un langage de couleurs douces et des mots-clés liés à des affects. Cette jeune génération d'artistes, qui a vécu le passage entre l'ère pré-Internet et celle des millennials, même quand elle s'emploie à échanger virtuellement avec des guérilleros dans différents coins du monde, à l'image de Neil Beloufa, semble avoir adopté une attitude post-critique. Plutôt qu'un art engagé,

qui se voudrait toujours du bon côté de l'Histoire, ces artistes ne s'excluent pas de l'analyse des contradictions, incohérences, compromis et autres paradoxes qui les intègrent au monde et aux relations de pouvoir. Cela devient une évidence dans les installations vidéo d'Alex da Corte, mais aussi de Jon Rafman, de Darren Bader, de Slavs and Tatars ou de Christian Marclay. Hito Steyerl, artiste majeure et théoricienne engagée, présente de son côté une installation mélangeant vocabulaire corporate et manifeste pour le renouvellement des relations

interespèces (les plantes en l'occurrence). Se pose alors la vieille question de savoir si l'on peut combattre ou tout au moins établir une distance avec l'ordre dominant en employant les mêmes outils que lui? Ce que cette biennale met en évidence, c'est que les positions dénonciatrices, en surplomb, n'apportent pas de réponse. Au pavillon belge, Jos de Gruyter & Harald Thys, connus pour leurs installations où règnent l'absurde et l'angoisse, nous placent face à des automates représentant des stéréotypes du folklore européen, séparés par des grilles d'un groupe de voyous, zombies, fous et marginaux. Ce musée des traditions et zoo humain, portrait d'une Europe en proie aux replis nationalistes, laisse planer une ambiguïté: cette prison serait-elle la nôtre, celle de l'enfermement dans nos préjugés? Pourtant, si l'on veut trouver les perspectives pour un autre futur, il faut compter sur les ressources de ce monde. Cela peut prendre la forme d'une performance opéra où des vacanciers chantent l'apocalypse écologique sur une plage grandeur nature (création des trois Lituaniennes, Rugilė Barzdžiukaitė, Vaiva Grainytė et Lina Lapelytė, Lion d'or du Meilleur Pavillon), ou celle du désordre érotique des magnifiques peintures de Nicole Eisenman. Mais peut-être que pour se rendre directement dans le futur, il faut faire un pas en arrière. Pour le pavillon suisse, les artistes Pauline Boudry et Renate Lorenz s'intéressent au recul comme stratégie de résistance politique et mettent en scène un club où des rideaux pailletés s'ouvrent sur un nouveau monde (Berlin?), où le régime binaire des identités de genre a disparu pour devenir un terrain de jeu où s'inventent d'autres corps et des relations inédites. Pour désapprendre ce monde, commençons par danser. •

Ce que la Biennale de Venise met en évidence, c'est que les positions dénonciatrices, en surplomb, n'apportent pas de réponse.

LISSON GALLERY

Le Journal des Arts
24 May 2019

LE JOURNAL DES ARTS

EXPOSITIONS

Détail de l'exposition
de Laure Prouvost
au pavillon français.
© Photo Francesco Gatti



Laure Prouvost, *Deep See Blue Surrounding You/Vis ce bleu profond te fondre*, pavillon français, Biennale de Venise 2019. © Photo Francesco Gatti.

RÊVERIE AQUATIQUE EN MODE MINEUR

Pareille à une plongée dans son univers déjanté et poétique, l'installation de Laure Prouvost est une déambulation sensible, qui réussit à troubler, voire émouvoir, ses nombreux visiteurs. Un succès

BIENNALE DE VENISE PAVILLON FRANÇAIS

Le ministre de la Culture a tenu à saluer, ce mercredi 8 mai où il inaugurerait le pavillon français, les parents de Laure Prouvost («...qui sont là, Formidable!»), ainsi que «le papa de Martha» Kirszenbaum, la commissaire associée. Sympathique, mais légèrement infantilisant? Laure Prouvost endosse volontiers, il est vrai, la position de l'enfant, tantôt gosse mal élevée qui mettrait ses doigts là où on ne doit pas – dans la boue, dans le sable – tantôt fille prodigue d'une France quittée tôt et dont elle est aujourd'hui la glorieuse ambassadrice à Venise. La troisième, donc, dans l'histoire tricolore, à être une femme.

Intitulée *Deep See Blue Surrounding You/Vois ce Bleu Profond te Fondre*, l'installation qu'elle a conçue fait appel à la performance, à la sculpture et même à la micro-architecture, autour d'un film imaginé «comme un voyage sous la forme d'un univers liquide et tentaculaire s'interrogeant sur là d'où nous venons et vers où nous allons», écrit Martha Kirszenbaum dans la monographie publiée à cette occa-

sion. Le dispositif ménage trois temps avant, pendant, et après la projection : trois espaces, où l'on retrouve des motifs récurrents dans le travail de l'artiste, branchages prélevés dans la nature, détritiques qui semblent avoir été déposés là par le ressac, plaques de résine, grilles métalliques, mais aussi ouvrages en tapisserie, ou encore cette fontaine, ici gravée de l'inscription «The End Of the Dream», rappelant l'esthétique baroque du facteur Cheval auquel il est longuement fait référence. On remarque également l'usage de matériaux nouveaux, tels ces objets en verre de Murano, témoignant de l'ancrage de l'œuvre dans le lieu où elle vient s'inscrire et du goût de Laure Prouvost pour les expérimentations. La première salle est baignée par une lumière zénithale de bord de mer. Ce

jour-là, un des «acteurs» accueille les visiteurs avec des colombes apprivoisées.

Un road trip filmé

Le film, central, prend place à l'intérieur d'un dôme de tissu évoquant le ventre du céphalopode fétiche sous les auspices duquel il est placé, la pieuvre qui «pense en touchant». On s'assoit à tâtons dans des fauteuils aux formes de récifs coralliens ou sur un épais tapis dont on ne sait, dans l'obscurité, s'il est fait de lichen, peut-être d'algues. Relativement classique dans sa narration – on distingue un début, un milieu et une fin –, la vidéo procède par une succession de séquences courtes comme résultant d'un zapping frénétique qui reviendrait toujours sur le même programme. La petite troupe embarquée

pour le *road trip* entre Roubaix et Marseille à des airs de casting identitaire et l'on craint un instant les bonnes intentions à la clef. Une vieille dame forcément indignée profère des impératifs extatiques, «Embrassons le ciel!», et des jurons dans la langue de Shakespeare, «What the fuck!», comme de Molière, «C'est quoi ce bordel?» Un prophète de banlieue annonce une pluie de légumes tombés du firmament – clin d'œil à *Stony Sory Vegetable*, une œuvre de l'artiste datée de 2010. Un magicien improbable exécute des tours de magie devant un comptoir de bistrot, un enseignant déplore, l'œil humide, la disparition «d'un organisme marin». C'est une vision de la France, rétro et hip-hop, gentiment cliché, saisie comme par une caméra amateur, et Laure Prouvost elle-même semble assez distante avec ces figurants. C'est la deuxième fois, après *We Will Go Far*, 2015, qu'elle met en scène des personnages, leur préférant d'habitude le seul usage de la voix *off*.

Une parenthèse déconnectée

L'essentiel est ailleurs, dans le tempo, dans cette respiration sonore qui fait entendre l'effort pour s'arracher à

Le dispositif ménage trois temps avant, pendant, et après la projection ; trois espaces, où l'on retrouve des motifs récurrents dans le travail de l'artiste, branchages prélevés dans la nature, détritiques qui semblent avoir été déposés là par le ressac, plaques de résine, grilles métalliques...

l'apesanteur, ou pour plonger, au-delà de la surface, dans les profondeurs « *de notre subconscient* ». Bleu azur, gros plans de fleurs, scintillement au ras des flots... évoquent par flashes brefs le réconfort d'une nature heureuse. Des chevaux enfourchés écrasent lourdement sous leurs sabots des agrumes couleur orange, une voiture roule sur des coquilles d'œufs. Une bouche salivante s'ouvre sur un globe oculaire : extraits d'un flux d'images auquel nous a habitués celui, incessant, des écrans qui nous environnent.

Tout cela fait-il poésie ? Au vu de ce qui est proposé dans les autres pavillons, il faut reconnaître à Laure Prouvost le talent d'une certaine singularité, une propension rafraîchissante à prendre les chemins buissonniers, sans courir de grands risques de s'égarer, mais en offrant cependant une parenthèse déconnectée, un horizon. Plus ramassée, sa proposition est beaucoup plus convaincante, plus affûtée, que ne l'était son exposition au Palais de Tokyo. Agnès Varda y fait une apparition dans son costume de pomme de terre, caution posthume et désacralisée, manière de revendiquer en passant une filiation, une parenté spirituelle. De poser à la relève.

Beaucoup de visiteurs semblent émus, et l'affluence, dès le premier jour, est la preuve d'un excellent bouche-à-oreille autour du pavillon, également plébiscité par les réseaux sociaux. Mention spéciale aussi, au choix judicieux du compositeur Flavien Berger, dont les sonorités électroniques portent les images du film. On sort de là un peu flottant, dans un décor de naufrage ou d'inondation, une vallée de larmes traversée dans un éclat de rire.

● ANNE-CÉCILE SANCHEZ

art - Das Kunstmagazin
May 2019

FRANKREICH

Laure Prouvost
reist mit einer Gruppe
unterschiedlich
Talenter von Paris
nach Venedig

Man muss in einer Ausstellung von Laure Prouvost auf alles gefasst sein: auf zahllose Busen aus Muranoglas, abscheulich getöpferte Teekannen, aus der Tüte gefallene Chips, die unter den Füßen knirschen – und auf Filme, deren Bilder und Geschichten einem explosionsartig ins Gehirn krachen. Die opulenten Rauminstallation der Französin, die 1978 in Lille geboren wurde und derzeit zwischen London, Antwerpen und einem Wohnwagen in der kroatischen Wüste lebt, stimulieren sämtliche Sinne gleichzeitig. Sie überwältigen mit einer geballten Ladung Wahnsinn, Blödsinn und Schönheit und sind so abgedreht, dass man sich ihnen kaum entziehen kann: schnelle Schnitte, krude Bilder, absurde Texte. Lineare Handlungen sucht man in diesen Filmen vergeblich. Dafür wird man immer wieder verbal ins Werk gezogen («They are waiting for you»), als drehe sich das alles tatsächlich um einen selbst.

In Venedig zeigt Prouvost im französischen Pavillon eine Rauminstallation, deren Titel *DEEP SEE BLUE SURROUNDING YOU/VOIS CE BLEU PROFOND TE FONDRE* sich direkt auf die Lagunenstadt bezieht. Eine Präsentation, die auch gedanklich um den Aggregatzustand des Flüssigen kreist und sich mit einer globalisierten Welt auseinandersetzt, die von körperlosen, gleichsam fließenden Kommunikationsformen geprägt ist. Im Zentrum steht ein Roadmovie: Die Kamera begleitet eine größere Gruppe mehrsprachiger Protagonisten mit besonderen, jedoch unterschiedlichen Talenten, die von der Pariser Vorstadt über Umwege nach Venedig reist. Menschen, die zunächst nichts verbindet außer ihr gemeinsames Vorhaben, und die einander immer wieder auf produktive Weise missverstehen. Eingebettet ist der Film in eine Installation, in der Requisiten aus dem Film die Fiktion in den realen Raum – ein Setting aus Harz, Ton, Glas, Pflanzen und Wasserdampf – erweitern. Wie ein Oktopus, der aus dem Bildschirm schwappt. Wenn die Besucher sich fühlen, als seien sie selbst «ein Tentakel des Projekts», dann hat Laure Prouvost ihr Ziel erreicht. // SANDRA DANICKE



< Laure Prouvost wurde 1978 in Lille geboren und lebt heute zwischen London, Antwerpen und einem Wohnwagen in der kroatischen Wüste

AAA In Venedig zeigt sie die Rauminstallation »DEEP SEE BLUE SURROUNDING YOU/VOIS CE BLEU PROFOND TE FONDRE«, die sich direkt auf Venedig bezieht

AA Die Künstlerin begibt sich darin mit einer Gruppe von Leuten auf einen Roadtrip, der in der Pariser Banlieue startet ...

^ ... und am Palais Idéal du Facteur Cheval und am Mittelmeer vorbei nach Venedig führt. Eingebettet wird der Film in ein Setting aus Harz, Ton, Glas, Pflanzen und Wasserdampf

Paris Match
23 May 2019



ART

Par Anaël Pigéat
@Anaël_Pigeat

Visiter la Biennale de Venise, c'est faire un tour du monde au fil des pavillons des Giardini, chacun occupé par un pays qu'un ou plusieurs artistes sont chargés de représenter. C'est aussi découvrir une géopolitique d'un genre particulier, avec parfois des visions saisissantes, comme le fantomatique pavillon vénézuélien, dont l'ouverture a été reportée sine die. C'est aussi se perdre en ville dans des palais qui abritent des pavillons plus discrets; le Lion d'or a été attribué à l'un d'eux, celui de la Lituanie, défendue par Rugile Barzdiukaite, Vaiva Grainyte et Lina Lapelyte. Ces artistes ont monté un opéra chanté par des baigneurs sur une plage cachée dans un bâtiment militaire de Castello, près de l'Arsenal. On y entend parler du changement climatique et du monde d'aujourd'hui. «Sun and Sea (Marina)» est une véritable découverte, comme une apparition onirique dont on se souviendra longtemps...

Dans les Giardini, trois pavillons se distinguent, tous pris en main par des femmes vidéastes. Le premier est celui de la Française Laure Prouvost, plongée dans des mondes flottants qui parviennent à évoquer la complexité de l'univers contemporain et les questions qui le traversent, avec une énergie folle qui ne perd jamais sa légèreté. Qu'est-ce qu'une communauté? Qu'est-ce qu'une génération? Comment

SWISSE

Installation filmique
«Moving Backwards»,
des artistes Pauline
Boudry et Renate Lorenz.



BIENNALE DE VENISE NOS QUATRE COUPS DE CŒUR

Alors que la cité des Doges n'a jamais accueilli autant de pavillons, retour sur les plus inventifs et surprenants.

préserver notre planète? Dans le film «Deep See Blue Surrounding You», une troupe de saltimbanques traverse l'Europe de Roubaix à Venise en passant par le Palais idéal du facteur Cheval et les calanques de Marseille. On croise des poulpes, des poissons, des framboises qui flottent dans l'eau, des figues posées sur la pointe d'un sein, un magicien qui fait apparaître des colombes, des musiciens qui jouent «Lasciatemi cantare».

Dans le pavillon autrichien, intitulé «Assembly», Angelica Mesiti parle aussi de communauté, mais avec une tonalité très différente. Cette artiste, installée entre Paris et Sydney, explore les effets de la communication non verbale, les passages entre les gestes, les codes, les images et les sons.

Alors qu'une exposition de son travail vient de s'achever au Palais de Tokyo, elle montre à Venise trois vidéos: dans les salles du Sénat italien et du Sénat australien, des groupes de musiciens se déploient, passant de la cacophonie et de la dissonance à une forme d'harmonie.

Et si c'était en reculant qu'on avançait le mieux? Dans leur vidéo «Moving Backwards», le duo suisse Pauline Boudry et Renate Lorenz a demandé à des danseurs de faire des mouvements en marche arrière... à moins que ce ne soient les images vidéo qui aient été montées à l'envers. Mouvements de combats ou de danses urbaines? «Moving Backwards» est l'image engagée d'un monde de résistance. ■

A L'ARSENAL,
L'EXPOSITION
COLLECTIVE
«MAY YOU LIVE
IN INTERESTING
TIMES» OFFRE LA
VISION SOMBRE D'UN
MONDE EN PLEINE
DÉLIQUESCENCE



LITUANIE

Lion d'or pour l'opéra-performance « Sun and Sea (Marina) » de Rugile Barzdziukaite, Vaiva Grainyte et Lina Lapelyte.



AUSTRALIE

Poésie musicale pour l'installation vidéo sur trois écrans d'Angelica Mesiti, « Assembly ».



FRANCE

Sélectionnée en mai 2018, la plasticienne Laure Prouvost est la troisième femme à représenter le pays à la Biennale. Elle propose un road-trip onirique, « Deep See Blue Surrounding You », avec le commissariat de Martha Kirszenbaum.

Biennale de Venise, jusqu'au 27 novembre.

The Telegraph
14 May 2019

The Telegraph

Venice Biennale 2019: our expert guide to the best shows and pavillions



Laure Prouvost, *Deep See Blue Surrounding You / Vois Ce Bleu Profond Te Fondre* at the French Pavilion

The Venice Biennale is always an unwieldy, many-headed beast but this year it's even more gargantuan than ever. Exhibitions - both official and unofficial - proliferate throughout the city in national pavilions, museums, palazzos, shipyards and churches, dominated by issues of the day in what is one of the most thought provoking and stimulating biennales in recent years.

'May You Live in Interesting Times,' is the title of the main exhibition curated by Hayward Gallery director Ralph Rugoff which takes the fictitious Chinese curse misquoted by an English statesman as a starting point, rooting the biennale in the problematic matters of the here and now. His show of 79 artists, each of whom has works in both its locations - the historic Arsenale ship building complex and the Central Pavilion in the Giardini - is a must.



The Lithuanian Pavilion, inside a warehouse, comprises a beach complete with imported sand and crowds of holidaymakers

There's an especially strong representation of painting; from Michael Armitage's responses to the 2017 Kenyan election executed on traditional bark cloth to Henry Taylor's depictions of personal and American histories and the richly layered domestic interiors and vivid portraits of Njideka Akunyili Crosby.

Also don't miss Arthur Jafa's chilling film 'The White Album' which explores whiteness and white supremacy, mixing YouTube, music videos and CCTV internet footage of white supremacists with exquisitely shot portraits of the white people he loves.

Among the international pavilions a high-point is Lithuania, with a pavilion that creates a beach inside a disused warehouse, complete with imported sand and crowds of holidaymakers. Viewed from a gallery above, these lolling, chatting sunbathers surrounded by their seaside clobber are in fact singing an opera based on their worries and concerns.

What begins as a charming eavesdrop into everyday ruminations unfolds over an hour into an ominous lament for the end of the world as the light changes and the work builds up to an apocalyptic finale. There was wide agreement that this mundane playing-out of the last day on earth – by theatre director Rugilė Barzdžiukaitė, playwright Vaiva Grainytė, and composer Lina Lapelytė- was a worthy winner of the Golden Lion for best pavilion.



Swinguerra stills, Barbara Wagner and Benjamin de Burca, at the Brazilian Pavilion

Music of a very different kind pounds through the Brazilian Pavilion where artists Barbara Wagner and Benjamin de Burca are showing a film and photographs of three dance groups from Recife in North East Brazil who strut their stuff to the latest dance trends.

Set against the backdrop of the current regime, there's a particular political charge to the conspicuousness of these predominantly black, transgender and non binary bodies and as the title 'Swinguerra' suggests, these exhilarating dance routines are also a battle for freedom in the face of oppression.

Dance as a form of resistance seems to be a popular theme at this Biennale – Switzerland has a series of gender fluid dancers making subtly subversive gestures whilst inexorably moving backwards and Korea offers a series of dance routines both traditional and modern, which interrogate the past and look to the future.



Portraits and self-portraits by Felicia Abban - CREDIT: DAVID LEVENE

One of eight African countries showing at Venice this year, Ghana makes a triumphant Biennale debut with a distinctive pavilion designed by the British Ghanaian architect Sir David Adjaye which has been inspired by West African architecture. Its walls are coated in earth specially shipped in from Ghana and its curved interlocking forms give each of the six artists – all of Ghanaian descent - their own separate but interconnected spaces.

There are shimmering sculptures by El Anatsui made from metal bottle tops and a powerfully pungent installation from Ibrahim Mahama incorporating the metal grilles used to smoke fish in Ghana's coastal and riverside communities.

Felicia Abban was Ghana's first professional photographic portraitist and is here showing both self-portraits as well as those of Ghanaian women in both Western and traditional African dress, while Lynette Yiadom-Boakye has made a powerful new series of her oil paintings of fictitious but oh-so present individuals. There is also a new three-channel video installation by John Akomfrah and a video sculpture by emerging artist Selasi Awusi Sosu.



Laure Prouvost, *Deep See Blue Surrounding You / Vois Ce Bleu Profond Te Fondre* at the French Pavilion CREDIT: GIACOMO COSUA

Another talking point is Laure Prouvost's French pavilion, 'Deep Sea Blue Surrounding You,' which immerses you in a carnivalesque oceanic extravaganza. Her installation mixes sculpture – breast shaped lamps of glass, sea creatures and rubbish afloat on a glazed blue floor - with performers – including a magician who hypnotizes pigeons - around a central film in which the artist and a motley gang of adventurers make their way by land and sea, horse and elephant, from the suburbs of Paris to the Giardini of Venice. The message seems to be that there should be no boundaries either national or imaginative and the film ends with a man leaping off the pavilion roof and into the open air.

Journeys of a different kind unfold in SaF05, the intensely personal film of Charlotte Prodger, the winner of last year's Turner Prize who is now representing Scotland in a 'collateral' pavilion housed in a working shipyard. SaF05 is the film's title as well as the name of a rare and elusive maned lioness which Prodger seeks in vain in the Okavango delta.



Charlotte Prodger, SaF05 video installation, at the Venice Biennale. CREDIT: CRISTIANO CORTE

But she's also journeying through her own past, filming in the Utah Desert, the streets of Glasgow and in the Highlands of Scotland, whilst her personal experiences and accounts of growing up as a queer teenager outside Aberdeen in the 1980's intertwine with these very various landscapes.

To coincide with the Biennale there is a plethora of shows in the city's museums and institutions - these include the paintings of Baselitz in the Arsenale, a retrospective of the late Arte Povera artist Jannis Kounellis at the Prada Foundation, and - notably - the Belgian Luc Tuymans in Palazzo Grassi.

This stunning exhibition of more than 80 paintings spans from the 1980's to the present and has at its centre a giant floor mosaic made especially for the palazzo's grand atrium. The title of the show, *La Pelle* - the skin - comes from a 1949 novel by the Italian writer Curzio Malaparte, set in wartime Naples when, as Tuymans has remarked, "Europe was in chaos just like today."

Always the master of the quiet understatement, Tuymans' spare oblique paintings hint at hidden trauma and, like so much of the best work currently to be seen in Venice, offer a very particular perspective from which to view and try and get to grips with our current 'interesting times.'

LISSON GALLERY

Le Figaro
7 May 2019



LA RUMEUR DE LA LAGUNE 1/6- Les festivaliers de cette 58e édition ont rendez-vous ce matin, pour les plus chanceux, dans le Pavillon français chamboulé par cette Lilloise forgée par la scène anglaise. Voici quelques pistes avant le lever du rideau.

Ce mardi matin à dix heures, les privilégiés découvriront dans les Giardini le Pavillon français en compétition pour la [58e Biennale de Venise](#) et le projet vénitien de l'hôte de ces lieux, l'artiste [Laure Prouvost](#). Fille du Nord comme son nom l'indique, née à Croix aux portes de Lille en 1978, elle a été propulsée sur la scène internationale à 35 ans par son [Turner Prize](#) en 2013, le premier jamais attribué à une Française (elle a fait ses études à la Central Saint Martins puis au Goldsmith College de Londres).

» LIRE AUSSI - [Laure Prouvost, un parcours sans fautes](#)

Depuis, elle a gardé ce mélange de simplicité et de sophistication, d'humour et de candeur, de stratégie et de franche fantaisie qui font le charme de la scène anglaise. Elle s'affiche en (version) originale, savamment coiffée décoiffée, visage frais maquillée «nude», habillée en vraie cavalière à l'Élysée pour devenir Chevalier de l'ordre national du Mérite à l'automne 2016. C'est un personnage qui donne un coup de vieux et d'apprêt à quiconque reste dans les cordes des conventions. Elle vit et travaille entre «Londres, Anvers et une caravane dans le désert croate» (sic).

État d'attente contemplative, proche du rêve éveillé

Le titre de son œuvre vénitienne est aussi poétique que sibyllin, *Deep See Blue Surrounding You / Vois Ce Bleu profond Te Fondre*. Héritière des jeux dada ou surréalistes, [Laure Prouvost](#) est un être étrange qui parle souvent par énigmes, qui a invité un magicien avec colombes à sa conférence de presse parisienne pré-Biennale de Venise en janvier au Palais de Tokyo (elle y a exposé l'été dernier et dérouter plus d'un). Bref, qui maintient son public dans un état d'attente contemplative, proche du rêve éveillé qui a ses adeptes (Éric Cantona, hypersensible derrière sa carrure d'athlète est grand «fan de sa poésie et de sa liberté», il la collectionne avec foi).

Sa jeune commissaire (sa cadette de cinq ans), Martha Kirszenbaum, est venue défendre sa championne en reine du stand-up lors de la traditionnelle conférence de presse de la 58e Biennale de Venise, le 13 mars à l'Institut italien, rue de Varenne (VIIe).

Les explications savamment confuses et le jeu théâtral de cette diplômée en histoire politique et cultural studies de Sciences Po Paris et de Columbia University à New York n'ont guère éclairé les curieux sur ce qui pouvait survenir dans ce charmant pavillon français en forme de boudoir. Un défi à tous les artistes qui s'y sont succédé. Le mystère de l'attente resta intact, comme avant la sortie d'un film délirant du troisième type.

«Utilisant à la fois la vidéo, le dessin, la tapisserie, la céramique, la photographie, la performance et, par-dessus tout, le langage, [Laure Prouvost](#) crée des installations immersives qui plongent le spectateur dans un état d'introspection personnelle et collective», prévient le dossier de presse officiel (35 pages), sous la bénédiction du directeur de l'Institut français, Pierre Buhler, et de deux ministres, Jean-Yves Le Drian pour l'Europe et les Affaires étrangères et Franck Riester pour la Culture.

«Les mots, les images, les souvenirs, les cinq sens, tout ce qui nous paraît tangible et fiable est âprement tourmenté par le fantastique des récits à double sens introduits par l'artiste. Facétieuse et pleine d'humour, sa relation au langage se nourrit de sa propre expérience et du décalage entre la langue parlée au quotidien, en Angleterre, et la langue maternelle». C'est donc du sérieux.

En janvier dernier, au lendemain de sa conférence de presse performative, nous avons rencontré à Paris cette dame à la licorne. Elle était en plein milieu de son itinérance bien réelle pour établir un «voyage échappatoire, à la fois tangible et imaginaire, vers un ailleurs idéal». La voici donc, telle quelle, de tout son charme désarmant, qui nous explique cette odyssee entre «le road-movie dans le subconscient» et le chemin initiatique, sorte de Quête du Graal contemporain sans Dieu revendiqué, mais «avec un moteur intérieur».

«J'ai donc un peu rampé sur les routes de France»

«Mon projet est un voyage, depuis l'invitation que j'ai reçue pour Venise, à où l'on en est maintenant. L'artiste se pose des questions. Savoir d'où on vient, où on va, se demander qui nous sommes... Et donc moi, qui suis-je en représentant une nation, vis-à-vis des frontières, de l'identité personnelle, de l'autre. Les poulpes ont leur cerveau dans leurs tentacules, donc elles pensent en sentant, elles sentent en pensant. J'ai donc un peu rampé sur les routes de France, on est parti de Paris, direction la lagune. On a fait un vrai voyage qui a commencé en septembre dernier de Nanterre. Au début, il y avait moi, et Martha qui a été très présente. Puis on a rencontré des gens, un magicien avec des coiffures extraordinaires, et ainsi de suite, une troupe s'est constituée». Troupe de théâtre ou carnaval instantané, qu'importe.

«C'était un chemin par étapes, par découvertes, pour que le projet grandisse doucement, que d'abord on touche le terrain. On l'a fait par moments en voiture, à d'autres vraiment à pied. Parfois, on a même creusé. On est ainsi arrivé au Café de l'Opéra à Roubaix, un petit café tout sale, incroyable: le magicien était là, les oiseaux sont sortis des tableaux devant les gens impassibles qui jouaient aux cartes».

«Je cherchais alors à imaginer tous ces pavillons de la Biennale de Venise incarnés par autant d'artistes: comment faire pour se chercher et se rencontrer? Cette histoire des pavillons à Venise est peu décalée par rapport à notre monde, maintenant. Elle témoigne d'un autre temps et de sa politique. Mon voyage voulait aussi parler de cette liquidité de notre monde contemporain, migrations du chaud vers le froid, frontières barrières, multiplicité des chemins. Roubaix n'est pas sur la route de Venise, mais il existe sans doute dans mon subconscient, je suis originaire de là-bas.»

«Ce palais du facteur Cheval, c'est le désir pur de créer»

«On est arrivé chez le [facteur Cheval](#) de nuit, certains étaient venus à cheval au galop, d'autres sur les petites roues modernes, tous dans des modes de transport différents. La nuit, autour de nous, c'était soudain se retrouver dans les profondeurs humaines. Ce palais du facteur Cheval, c'est le désir pur de créer, c'est l'humain qui vit et veut être reconnu. Je connaissais déjà ce lieu incroyable, j'aime beaucoup ces personnages qui existent dans les extrémités de la société, qui sont un peu en dehors d'un système, qui ont des choses à dire. On flottait dans ce palais du facteur Cheval. On est reparti le matin pour Marseille: une fanfare s'est mise à jouer devant nous Italiano vero, comme un signe, un feu vert pour notre départ vers l'Italie. La fanfare nous a d'ailleurs suivis jusqu'à l'étape suivante».

«À Marseille, le ciel chargé s'est soudain ouvert devant nous. Le titre de mon projet pour la Biennale vient de là, Deep See Blue Surrounding You / Vois Ce Bleu Profond Te Fondre. Marseille, c'est l'échange avec la mer qui nous connecte avec Venise. Cette mer Méditerranée qui voulait dire vacances, bateaux, jeux, a changé de sens ces dernières années.»

«Tristesse, mélancolie. On la regardait en sentant les âmes, aussi bien perdues que vivantes. Tout au long de ce périple, on a enregistré, photos, films, ces moments, ces bruits, ces musiques, ces gens, ces histoires, ces pêches miraculeuses transportées dans le K-Way de Jules et nos barbecues sur la plage, j'avais mon ordinateur avec moi sur la route. Même si, derrière le produit qui se construit et qui questionne le virtuel et le réel, ce qui était le plus important était de vivre ce voyage. Demain, nous repartons au galop pour Venise...»

Représenter la France à Venise, est-ce angoissant, enivrant, stimulant, exaltant, perturbant? «C'est tout ça, c'est aussi beaucoup de joie», répond franchement cette belle personne, d'une simplicité tout insulaire, d'une franche bonne éducation à la française tapie, juste derrière.

• **Laure Prouvost** est représentée par la Galerie Nathalie Obadia (Paris /Bruxelles), carlier/gebauer (Berlin) et Lisson Gallery (Londres / New York) .

LISSON GALLERY

The New York Times
13 May 2019

The New York Times

The Don't-Miss Shows and Pavilions at the Venice Biennale

There are more than 100 exhibitions and presentations taking place in this year's extravaganza. Our critic soaks up the highlights.



The Lithuanian Pavilion transforms the interior of a historic quayside building within the Marina Militare complex into an artificially lit beach scene — the backdrop of its opera for 20 voices. Andrej Vassilenko

VENICE — When the yachts of billionaire collectors sail into the city and the vaporettoes are full of hurried, multilingual aesthetes in head-to-toe black, it can mean only one thing: The Biennale is underway! The 58th edition of the world's oldest international art exhibition opened to the public on Saturday after a professional preview that saw far too many of us clamber from show to show, cocktail to cocktail.

As always, the Venice Biennale is a show of two halves. It consists of a principal international exhibition, curated this year by Ralph Rugoff and including about 80 artists; and a collection of 90 national pavilions, each organized independently of Mr. Rugoff's show. The pavilions are scattered in the Giardini, a park in the city's east, and in the Arsenale, a complex of former shipyards and armories; and elsewhere across town. A jury awards prizes to artists in both sections; this year, the top award, for best national pavilion, went to [a sensational performance piece by three artists from Lithuania](#).

Museums and foundations in Venice also put on their biggest shows during the Biennale, and in canalside palazzi rented for the season, you'll find a pop-up masterpiece here, some sponsored schlock there. Give yourself a week and you can make a solid dent, but don't neglect the churches and monuments all around you; when contemporary art lets you down, [there's always Tintoretto!](#)

We'll be publishing a full review of the 2019 Venice Biennale shortly — but here is a primer to this year's event, with a trio of the best national pavilions and some other important shows.

The Must-See Pavilions

Lithuania: 'Sun & Sea (Marina)'



One of the cast of performing characters in "Sun & Sea (Marina)." The installation won the prestigious Golden Lion award. Andrej Vasilenko

This year's showstopper, whose deep ecological engagement comes with irrepressible joy, is one of the hardest to find. To reach the Lithuanian pavilion requires a long walk north to an active military site near the Arsenale. Enter the hangar, climb some stairs to an empty attic, look down through a large hole in the floor, and you'll find an artificial wonder: Here, in this city on the water, is a pristine sand beach.

The beach is full of bathers, young and old, fit and fat. Children skip through the sand, three friends play chess on a travel set, a middle-aged woman fills out a Lithuanian crossword. And they sing, all 20 of them, all through the day, while the spectators look down on them, benevolent and pitiless as the sun.

Rugile Barzdziukaite, the director; Vaiva Grainyte, the librettist; and Lina Lapelyte, the composer, all in their mid-30s, are the creators of [this astounding operatic installation](#), which their cast will perform for eight hours straight every Saturday. The bathers sing of airplanes and piña colodas, of the Chinese sweatshops that made their swimsuits. A mother on a beach chair wishes for her son to visit the Great Barrier Reef before it's gone, and twins in identical bathing suits imagine life after death via 3-D printing. The winters, one soprano trills, have lately been unseasonably hot. Better put on more sunblock.

Ms. Barzdziukaite, Ms. Grainyte and Ms. Lapelyte understand that the beach is not an eternal human reality, but a bourgeois invention: Only in the 19th century did the once dangerous seaside become a place of public leisure. That century also gave us the Industrial Revolution that has since pushed human existence on the planet toward catastrophe — making the opera at the beach sound like a climatic requiem.

France: Laure Prouvost



The longest lines during the vernissage — two hours' wait, if you believe the complainers — were for the absorbing video installation by this psychologically inclined artist. In "Deep See Blue Surrounding You," a group undertakes a rattling journey southeast from the Paris suburbs, galloping through a forest, teleporting to a cafe with a largely Arab clientele, sunning on the rocky coast of Marseille, and, at last, reaching this very pavilion in Venice.

Laure Prouvost's film deftly mixes high-resolution footage with shaky smartphone video, and is so up-to-the-minute that, at one point, we see the crumbling steeple of Notre-Dame. Its propulsive images of slithering octopuses and singing migrants imagine a community of bodies on the move, while Ms. Prouvost whispers in her signature breathy *Franglais*. So many artists get heavy-handed when tasked to "represent" a nation at Venice; Ms. Prouvost, almost alone, clearly saw the job as a chance to dream and approached "Frenchness" as a vessel big enough for all people, animals, and things. Bonus: Watch closely and, in one hilarious sequence, the artist will teach you how to sneak into the Giardini without paying.

Ghana: 'Ghana Freedom'



Portraits by Felicia Abban, regarded as the first woman in Ghana to work as a professional photographer. The pavilion's walls of packed African soil were designed by David Adjaye. Felicia Abban; David Levine

This is the first outing at Venice for Ghana, and the country's pavilion contains an almost irresponsible amount of artistic firepower: the Ghanaian-British architect David Adjaye has outfitted a section of the Arsenale with temporary internal walls of packed African soil; the philosopher Kwame Anthony Appiah has written the lead catalog essay; and it features not one but six artists, including the filmmaker John Akomfrah and [the sculptor El Anatsui](#). It's a show of force, but, for a first national presentation, not so revelatory: Mr. Anatsui, for example, already won a Golden Lion here in 2015 for lifetime achievement.

The pavilion succeeds best by mapping the rich historical inheritance shared by Ghana's citizens and its diaspora. You can see it in Mr. Anatsui's three glorious meshes of bottle caps; in Mr. Akomfrah's video triptych of human and ecological violence; and in the cordial, soft-focus studio portraits from the 1960s by [Felicia Abban](#), regarded as the first woman in Ghana to work as a professional photographer.

LISSON GALLERY

Financial Times
3 May 2019

Collecting [+ Add to myFT](#)

The weird conceptual universe of the artist Laure Prouvost

Ahead of representing France at the Venice Biennale, the Turner Prize-winner talks about creating her semifiictional world.



Harriet Fitch Little MAY 3, 2019



Laure Prouvost would like you to imagine that this interview is taking place on horseback. She suggests how I might begin: “Here we are, doing this article on two horses galloping towards Venice . . . While we were galloping, I asked some questions.”

Prouvost is, metaphorically, on her way to Venice; the Turner Prize-winning artist is representing France at the 2019 Biennale, with her project “Deep See Blue Surrounding You”, a video and installation work in which “liquid modernity” is represented through the tentacular body of an octopus. We are, of course, not on horseback but in Antwerp, where Prouvost lives and where she is currently showing *Am-Big-You-Us Legsicon* — her largest solo exhibition to date — at the nearby Museum of Modern Art (M KHA). The 41-year-old artist has spent the morning posing for theatrical masked photos inside the exhibition space. Now she is perched cross-legged in her studio, dressed in the blousy shirt and black shorts of a Victorian pageboy, and it’s clear that the performance isn’t over.

Few artists flesh out a conceptual universe as full or as tightly sealed as Prouvost’s; fewer still insist on inhabiting it so continuously. Over the last decade-plus she has built up an extensive symbolic vocabulary of “relics” — her word for objects that form part of a larger story — including raspberries, tunnels, bums, tea pots and an imaginary extended family. She ascribes specific meanings to many objects (flamingo means “angry”; nail brush means “excited”) and, to coincide with *Am-Big-You-Us Legsicon*, has even published a dictionary of her most-used concepts. Does she ever consider widening this vocabulary? “I have been using clementines recently,” she says. “I’m going totally wild.” Her young studio staff — who have so far been pretending not to listen — laugh appreciatively.



Laure Prouvost in her studio in Antwerp, holding a banner made for the Venice Biennale © Joshua Osborne

Interviews with Prouvost take place inside her semifictional universe. She reacts with dismay to attempts to pin her down on biography, and even dislikes the fact that her career success means that the chronology of her work is now Googleable. "I quite like that it's a lot of open doors," she says. Insisting that we're currently on horseback is a poetic way of showing how language can kick-start the other senses. "Like with my films, often I don't film the most crazy things I say because it works as strongly as spoken word," she explains. She believes zealously in the power of suggestion.

Prouvost won the Turner Prize in 2013 for “Wantee”, a work about her fictional grandfather’s disappearance down a tunnel he’s dug under the house. While she continues to vocally mourn his loss (“When you go down the tunnel, you don’t know which way to go,” she tells me ruefully), she keeps her real family out of things. A case in point: when Prouvost got up to accept the Turner Prize, the presenter surprised her by bringing the artist’s two-month-old baby on to the stage. In a slightly awkward interaction, Prouvost declined the suggestion she hold the newborn while giving her acceptance speech. What was going through her head? “Pfff. [It was] the worst idea. I was like, ‘What the f***?’” she recalls. “It was a moment where it was about my work.”



A still from 'Deep See Blue Surrounding You' (2019)

Winning the Turner Prize is a career-defining moment for any artist, but for Prouvost it marked a particular turning point; it was the moment in which France claimed her as one of its own. “The press was outrageous in some ways. They were really so proud of it,” says Prouvost, who points out that she’s spent only a minor part of her life in her home country; she lived in Belgium as a teen, then moved to London to study at Central Saint Martins aged 18.

But even with the blessings of *la mère patrie* (and the licence to deck out her national pavilion in Venice), Prouvost could never be considered a fully French artist. Her art is about being stuck in the “misunderstanding and mistranslating” limbo of thinking in a foreign language, making her the laureate for a global community that speaks English second. “I want to almost [give] power to that pidgin English, which is imperfect,” she says. “You’re floating a little bit, that gives you a lot of freedom.” For the Biennale, she’s made a tapestry of a lettuce with the banner “We will tell you loads of salades on our way to Venice” (“*Raconter des salades*” means to tell tall tales in French). “I’m just a *perroquet*, parrot, *pirate*, pirate,” she muses now, slipping between the two languages playfully.



Prouvost's 'The Fountain' (2019) © M HKA

Prouvost uses humour as entrapment: a way to trick viewers into thinking about her art. From June to December this year, she'll have a new, and, for the most part, unsuspecting audience to reel in when her first public UK commission, by Art on the Underground, is unveiled. As part of this huge project, Prouvost is putting up posters in all 270 underground stations bearing her sometimes poetic, often pun-driven interpretations of motivational posters: “You are deeper than what you think,” reads one; “Ideally these words would pause everything now,” announces another.

It's partly this deft linguistic humour that makes her work accessible. And it's partly the way in which she funnels the personality of an overeager host into it. Prouvost narrates her videos with the tumbling, breathy inflection of a child explaining how to play a game they've just invented; even if you don't quite understand the rules, it's a pleasure to be included so enthusiastically. For her 2015 exhibition at Haus der Kunst in Munich, her voice whispered apologetically to visitors that if this were her museum the floor would be kissed every night, while at M KHA currently there's a working tea shop and a bar serving squid vodka inside the exhibition. "It's hospitality — but of course it's fictional," Prouvost reminds me. "It's pixels, it's performance, it's a trigger to engage."



'I want to give power to that pidgin English, which is imperfect. It gives you a lot of freedom' © Joshua Osbourne

Because Prouvost is so teasing, she is often described as a great interviewee; journalists, like most people, don't get much joy from talking to artists whose answers sound like catalogue essays. But she can also be challenging, as skilled in using humour for evasion as for entrapment. I ask what she is most looking forward to about representing France at the Biennale. (After Annette Messager and Sophie Calle, she's only the third woman to do so.) "Digging a tunnel to the British Pavilion," she says — a provocative answer, given her own acknowledgment that it's a "huge issue" in France that she works primarily in English. Asked again, she says she's looking forward to drinking Campari, then that she can't wait to see "all these planes f***ing up the planet landing there". Come on, I say. Be serious. "I'm excited to make a strong piece," she says with bland finality.

With Prouvost, you have a choice: Engage on her terms, or stay out of her world. She would be delighted if you decided to join her. "The work doesn't exist without you. If I don't talk to you, I'm just talking to myself."

"So are we galloping?" she asks, and claps her hands. "Come on, it would be nice. We can do it if you write it."



THE ART NEWSPAPER *DAILY*

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DES ŒUVRES D'ART CONTEMPORAIN MIRACULÉES À NOTRE-DAME DE PARIS P.3



BIENNALE DE VENISE LE CARNET DE BORD DU PAVILLON FRANÇAIS : SEMAINE 2 P.7



PATRIMOINE LES MÉCÈNES AMÉRICAINS SE MOBILISENT POUR NOTRE-DAME DE PARIS P.5

NOTRE-DAME WIM DELVOYE VA PARTICIPER AU CONCOURS POUR LA RESTAURATION DE LA CATHÉDRALE DE PARIS P.9

ART CONTEMPORAIN UN NOUVEL ESSOR POUR LA BIENNALE DE LYON P.9

MARCHÉ DE L'ART UNE RARE SCULPTURE DE MODIGLIAN CHEZ CHRISTIE'S P.9

VENISE / CARNET DE BORD

SEMAINE 2 : « POULPES ET UNIVERS TENTACULAIRE »

Nous publions quelques semaines avant l'ouverture du Pavillon français à la 58^e Exposition Internationale d'Art – La Biennale di Venezia le deuxième carnet de bord du projet de l'artiste Laure Prouvost « Deep See Blue Surrounding You / Vois Ce Bleu Profond Te Fondre » et de sa commissaire Martha Kirszenbaum.

Par Martha Kirszenbaum



Laure Prouvost, *Film still* (2019), vidéo HD. Courtesy de l'artiste, Galerie Nathalie Obadia (Paris - Bruxelles), carlier | gebauer (Berlin) et Lisson Gallery (Londres - New York).

**LE POULPE EST,
DANS LA
MYTHOLOGIE
SYMBOLIQUE,
SOURCE
D'INTELLIGENCE,
DE FLEXIBILITÉ ET
D'ÉROTISME**

L'importance de la figure du poulpe dans l'œuvre de Laure Prouvost apparaît comme une grille de lecture primordiale de son travail. Elle en avait d'abord accroché un au mur de l'une de ses premières expositions à Londres en 2011, bu de son encre noire, filmé ses mouvements dans l'eau et dessiné ses courbes infinies au sol. Mollusque céphalopode dont la spécificité est de contenir ses organes sensoriels et cérébraux dans ses tentacules, le poulpe pense en sentant et sent en pensant. Il est, dans la mythologie symbolique, source d'intelligence, de flexibilité et d'érotisme, et son encre sécrétée comme défense, sombre et visqueuse mais parfois comestible, fascine et interpelle.

Pour l'installation au pavillon, la figure du poulpe est développée comme un référent métaphorique, en ce que le film fait figure de « centre mou » de l'exposition, qui découle dans l'espace d'exposition et s'active dans les salles latérales, prenant la forme de tentacules au travers des objets et des performances qui les jalonnent.

C'est en réalité tout un univers tentaculaire que l'on retrouve en filigrane dans la pratique artistique de Laure Prouvost et qui fait ainsi écho aux écrits de la philosophe et sociologue américaine, pionnière du cyberféminisme, Donna Haraway, dont les recherches mettent l'accent sur la connexion qui lie les éléments entre eux. « *Personne ne vit partout, tout le monde vit quelque part. Rien n'est connecté à tout, tout est connecté à quelque chose*¹ », écrit-elle, et définit le tentaculaire comme un ensemble de filets et de réseaux, de petites bestioles qui tombent des nuages et de la vie représentée par une multitude de lignes complexes plutôt que de se focaliser sur des points précis ou des sphères.

Dans l'œuvre de Laure Prouvost, les objets artistiques et les différents supports – films, sculptures, tapisseries, dessins, performances – figurent une constellation de réalités ou de surréalités.

¹ Donna Haraway, « Tentacular Thinking: Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Chthulucene », dans Donna J. Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*, Durham, Duke University Press, 2016.

PAVILLON FRANÇAIS À LA 58^e EXPOSITION INTERNATIONALE D'ART – LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA, GIARDINI DELLA BIENNALE, VENISE, DU 11 MAI AU 24 NOVEMBRE 2019

« Deep See Blue Surrounding You / Vois Ce Bleu Profond Te Fondre »

Artiste : Laure Prouvost

Commissariat : Martha Kirszenbaum

Commissariat général : Institut français

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Monopol Magazine
April 2019

Porträt.LAURE PROUVOST



Im Arm des OKTOPUS

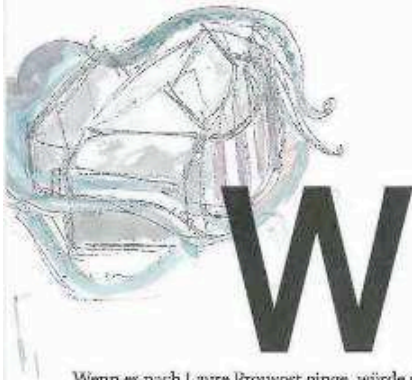
EIN ATELIERBESUCH BEI
LAURE PROUVOST IST WIE EINE VISITE
IM WUNDERLAND. AUCH IHR
FRANZÖSISCHER PAVILLON AUF DER
VENEDIG-BIENNALE
VERSPRICHT EIN BESONDERER
TRIP ZU WERDEN

LAURE PROUVOST, VORBEREITENDE
SKIZZE FÜR „FOUNTAIN“, 2018

Text
Saskia Trebing



Porträt.LAURE PROUVOST



Wenn es nach Laure Prouvost ginge, würde dieser Text mit einem Gespräch in einem Oktopus beginnen. Künstlerin und Autorin würden sich von einem Riesenkraaken verschlingen lassen und sich irgendwo in den unmobilierten Tentakeln, einem eher schleimigen Coworking Space, ein hübsches Plätzchen zum Reden suchen.

Ganz so psychedelisch wird es dann doch nicht, wenn man die 41-jährige Französin in ihrem Studio im Süden Antwerpens besucht. Im peitschenden Regen der Hafenstadt sieht der unscheinbare Backsteinbau in einer Seitenstraße nahe dem Kanal wenig magisch aus. Aber wer in Laure Prouvosts verrümpelte Kreativkammer vordringen möchte, muss sich einem Alice-im-Wunderland-Moment stellen. In den wohnzimmergroßen Raum führt nur ein einziges Loch in einer Sperrholzwand, das einem durchschnittlich großen Menschen ungefähr bis zur Hüfte reicht. Als hätte man wie Alice vom falschen Pilz abgebissen, fühlt man sich beim Hindurchzwängen wie eine Kurzzeitriesin.

Das Gespräch, das folgt, lebt vom Fabulieren. Beim Sprechen lässt Laure Prouvost ihre Hände permanent durch die Luft



Oben: VORBEREITENDE SKIZZE FÜR DEN FRANZÖSISCHEN PAVILLON, 2019.
Unten: „THIS GLASS CONTAINS WATER FROM A PLACE NO ONE'S EVER BEEN“, 2018.



»Es geht nicht darum, ob es wahr ist oder nicht. Ich mag es, die Grenzen zu verwischen«

— Laure PROUVOST

„THEY ARE WAITING FOR YOU“, 2017.

fliegen, mal scheint sie wie eine Skirennfahrerin einen Slalomkurs nachzufahren, mal ein ganzes Orchester zu dirigieren. Immer wieder gleitet sie zur Frage „Was wäre, wenn ...?“, dichtet einer leicht verschrumpten Kiwi auf dem Tisch eine komplexe Migrationsgeschichte an und wünscht sich die besagte Beschreibung eines Interviews im Oktopus. Der Autorin gibt sie jegliche Erlaubnis zum Erfinden. „Lügenpresse“ auf eigenen Wunsch.



Auch in ihrer Kunst spielt die Turner-Prize-Gewinnerin von 2013 mit der Verführung der Fiktion. In ihrer preisgekrönten Videoinstallation „Wantee“, die optisch einer heimeligen Version von Kurt Schwitters’ „Merzbau“ ähnelt, erzählt sie die Geschichte ihres Großvaters, der ein enger Freund des deutschen Dadaisten gewesen sein soll. Ob das stimmt? Laure Prouvost zuckt vernünftig die Schultern. Die Verwirrung des Publikums gehört für sie zum Konzept. „Es geht nicht darum, ob es wahr ist oder nicht“, sagt sie. „Ich mag es, die Grenzen zu verwischen.“

Nur ein paar Hundert Meter entfernt von ihrem Studio ist im Antwerpener Museum für zeitgenössische Kunst (M HKA) noch bis zum 19. Mai ihre bisher größte institutionelle Einzelausstellung zu sehen. „AM-BIG-YOU-US LEGSICON“ lautet der Titel, den man zwei- oder dreimal lesen muss und der bereits die Hauptelemente der bunten Traumzimmerschau enthält. Laure Prouvost liebt Wortspiele, Versprecher und Verhörer. Deshalb findet es die gebürtige Französin, die in London studiert und lange dort gelebt hat, auch



„A WAY TO LEAK, LICK, LEEK“, 2016

LAURE PROUVOST
 schafft es, Dinge
 zu zerlegen, ohne
 dass ihre Kunst
 jemals die heitere
 Ausstrahlung
 verlieren würde:
 DADA mit weniger
 WUT und
 besserer LAUNE



„SWALLOW ME,
 FROM ITALY
 TO FLANDERS,
 A TAPESTRY“, 2015

ins Ungewisse. Das Schlagwort „Un-learning“, das derzeit durch die Kunstwelt geistert und den Abschied von hierarchischen Wissensstrukturen meint, fällt in ihren Ausführungen mehrmals. „Mein ‚LEGSICON‘ ist wie ein kleines Tier mit vielen sexy Armen und Beinen“, sagt die Künstlerin und lässt ihre Hand über die Sofalehne krabbeln. „Es tippt viele Dinge an, aber es will nichts erklären oder beantworten. Der Schlamm ist nicht weniger wichtig als der Computer, wir sind mit allem verbunden, und alles ist in uns.“

Der Ausgangspunkt ihrer spirituell angehauchten Arbeit sind oft Objekte, denen sie eine Biografie verpasst. In ihren Videos entfremdet sie Körper und Dinge. Sie schreibt Buchstaben mit einem echten Füllfeder-Tintenfisch und macht ihre Turnschuhe zum Schmetterlingslandeplatz. Aber auch die unspektakuläreren Dinge interessieren sie: „Was will diese Flasche sein? Was würde die Teekanne sagen?“ Sie rückt die Dinge auf dem vollgestellten Couchriss hin und her. „Die Materialien beweisen ihr Sein auf dieser Welt, und mich interessiert, was passiert, wenn ich diese Präsenz übersetze.“ Für sie sind die Objekte, die sowohl als Pixel auf dem Bildschirm als auch körperlich im Ausstellungsraum auftauchen, die Zeugen ihrer Geschichten – egal, ob diese stimmen oder nicht. „Stories sind so wichtig, um Bilder zu generieren“, sagt sie. „Ich bin Künstlerin geworden, weil ich nicht im klassischen Sinne gut mit Worten umgehen kann. Mit meiner Dyslexie funktioniere ich nicht auf die schulische Art und Weise.“

Nach einer guten Stunde im Studio findet man – umgeben von offensichtlich geliebtem Gerümpel – das Eigenleben von Dingen gar nicht mehr so unwahrscheinlich. Prouvosts Begeisterung ist hochinfektiös. Aber hat das Fabulieren ohne Rücksicht auf die Wahrheit nicht auch eine politische Dimension, wenn das beliebige Dehnen von Sprache und das Verbreiten von Fake News eine Waffe von Populisten sind? Um diese Frage mäandert Laure Prouvost herum. „Ich liebe es, dass Sprache manipuliert werden kann“, sagt sie. „Die Dadaisten haben das auf eine Weise getan, die wir heute gar nicht mehr wagen würden, ihre Sprache ist jenseits von Nationen. Ich finde es wichtig, dass wir weiter die Geschichte hinterfragen und uns trauen zu spielen.“

Laure Prouvosts Waffen sind ihr Humor und ihre Respektlosigkeit. Sie bedient sich überall, baut Brunnen aus Brüsten und Bäume, an denen kleine Hintern wachsen. Wenn man will, lässt sich ihre Kunst an allerlei Diskurse andocken: ein bisschen Körperkunst, ein bisschen Feminismus, ein bisschen Umweltbewegung, Awareness und Wertschätzung von nichtmenschlichem Leben. So richtig festlegen lässt sie sich aber nicht. Man kann das eskapistisch finden, wenn der Ernst so naheliegt – und befürchten, dass einen die Niedlichkeit irgendwann erschlägt. Oder man kann



»Ich bin Künstlerin geworden, weil ich nicht im klassischen SINNE gut mit Worten umgehen kann«

- Laure PROUVOST

VORBEREITENDE SKIZZE FÜR DEN FRANZÖSISCHEN PAVILLON, 2019





FILMSTILLS, 2019

Porträt.LAURE PROUVOST

»LAURE ist erst die dritte Frau in der Geschichte des französischen Pavillons, und ich hoffe, dass wir ein Türöffner für andere sein können«

- Martha KIRSZENBAUM

Oben und unten:
FOTOS VOM SET, 2019

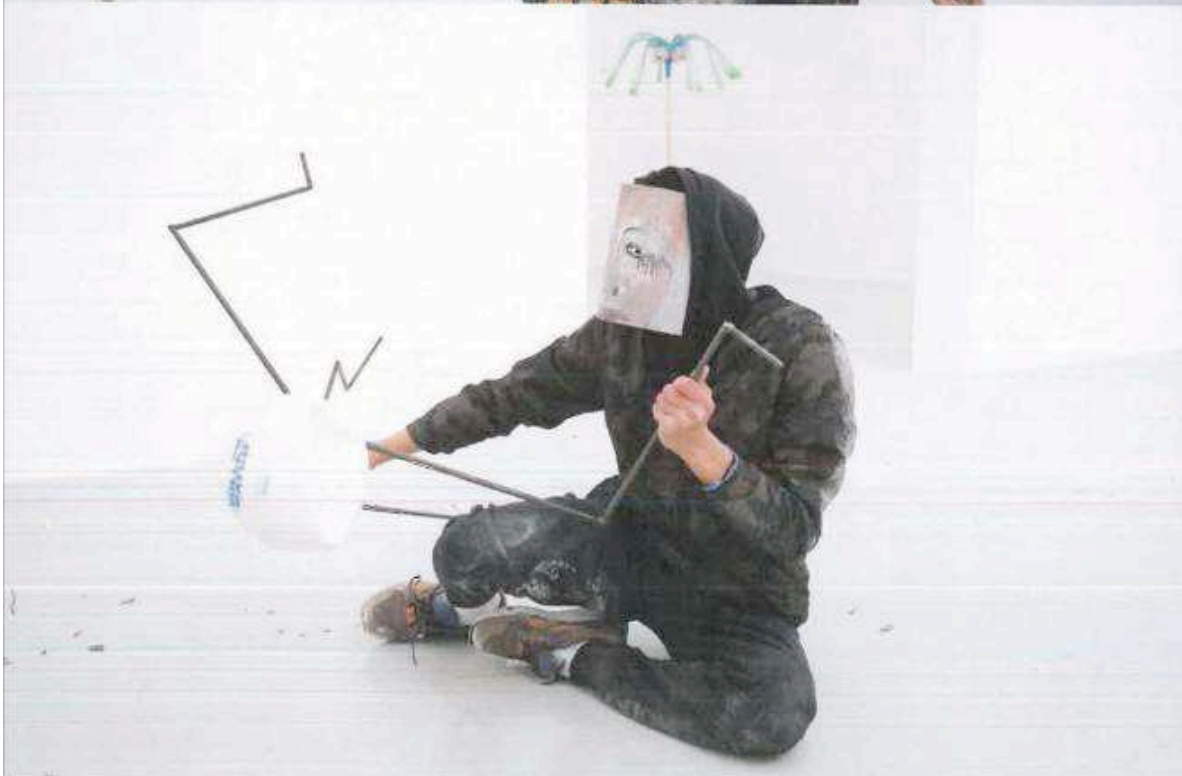


PHOTO: COURTESY OF ARTS; COURTESY OF ARTS AND CENTER; PHOTOS: BERLIN/STADT; JEROME GALEY, LONDON/NEW YORK; NASHVILLE/DALLAS; PAUL BRUNSWICK (6 FACHBEREITUNG); COURTESY OF ARTS AND MATHA KIRSZENBAUM

sich über den ästhetischen Eigensinn freuen. „Eine Künstlerin ist keine Politikerin“, sagt die Kuratorin Martha Kirszenbaum, die Laure Prouvost als Künstlerin für den französischen Pavillon in Venedig ausgewählt hat. „Sie kann uns anlügen, wie sie will. Sie stellt es uns frei, uns zu distanzieren oder mit ihr davonzufliegen.“

Zur Biennale mit ihren Länderbauten wird wieder über die nationale Repräsentationsfunktion von Kunst diskutiert. Für eine Künstlerin, die von den Franzosen, den Engländern und den Belgiern gleichermaßen als eine von ihnen gefeiert wird, ist die Rolle der Vorzeigefranzösin seltsam. „Wenn ich irgendwo in der Wüste wohnen würde, würde mich dort sicher auch jemand beanspruchen“, sagt sie. „Die Welt wird immer fluider und vernetzter, es ist komisch, dass wir an diesen Traditionen festhalten.“ Für ihren Venedig-Beitrag hat sich Laure Prouvost auf eine Art filmischen Roadtrip durch Frankreich begeben. Es ist einerseits eine Reise in ihre Kindheit im Norden des Landes, andererseits aber auch ein Eintauchen in die kollektive französische Psyche. „Wir möchten das Frankreich von heute zeigen“, sagt Martha Kirszenbaum. „Laure ist erst die dritte Frau in der Geschichte des französischen Pavillons, und ich hoffe, dass wir ein Türöffner für andere sein können.“ Im Film treffen die Insassen eines recht klapperigen Kleinwagens Menschen aus der ganzen Welt: Tänzer, Musiker, Lebenskünstler. „Wir haben lange darüber nachgedacht, was es heute heißt, Franzose zu sein“, sagt Martha Kirszenbaum. „Und all diese Leute, die hier leben, prägen heute das Land.“ Im Film soll es auch um den Niedergang der Textilindustrie und die sozialen Folgen im Norden des Landes gehen – und um einen Postboten, der über Jahrzehnte aus Kieselsteinen einen Palast gebaut hat (beide Geschichten sind zur Abwechslung wahr). Und auch ihr *spirit animal*, der Oktopus, wird in den Giardini in Venedig eine Rolle spielen: „Ich will, dass er die Leute in die Ausstellung zieht.“

Der vielarmige Meeresbewohner interessiert viele Künstler und Theoretiker vor allem deshalb, weil er Teile seines Gehirns in den Tentakeln trägt. Er ist sozusagen ein dezentrales Wissenssystem, in dem Denken und Fühlen dasselbe sind. Im Pavillon soll das Tier als konkreter Protagonist auftauchen, aber gleichzeitig auch eine Metapher sein. Der Film als Korpus, von dem künstlerische Ärmchen in Form von Skulpturen und Installationen abgehen. Durch seine Farb- und Formenwechsel ist der Oktopus allerdings auch ein Gestaltenwandler – was wiederum zu Laure Prouvost passt, die in Interviews schon mal mit einer selbst gemalten Maske oder einem Fisch auf dem Kopf auftritt. Anders als beispielsweise die Künstlerin des deutschen Pavillons, Natascha Süder Happelmann, sieht sie die Kostümierungen aber nicht als Verweigerung. Auch die Maskerade ist ein Spiel, in dem sie sich trotzdem noch zu erkennen gibt. Die Maske ist eine Möglichkeit, aber nicht die einzige.

Bevor Laure Prouvost ihre Besucherin zurück zur Miniaturtür bringt, erzählt sie noch, dass das imposant futuristische Gebäude am Ende ihrer Straße (ein Gericht) von ihrem Onkel erbaut wurde und im Keller des Studios ihre ganze Familie Werke für Venedig webte. Am liebsten hätte sie es gehabt – wenn die Unterhaltung schon nicht im Kraken geführt wurde –, dass am Ende dieses Textes wenigstens die Interviewerin und die Interviewte knochenlos-oktopusgleich vom Sofa glitschen würden. Ihr bevorzugter letzter Satz: „Und Laure schmolz in den Boden.“

LAURE PROUVOST „AM-BIG-YOU-US LEGISCON“, M HKA - Museum für zeitgenössische Kunst, Antwerpen, bis 19. Mai

I N N

ORLY ZAILER AHNEN. Neue Porträts

3. April bis 13. Juli 2019
BTV Stadtforum Innsbruck, FO.KU.S
Ausstellungseröffnung:
2. April 2019, 19 Uhr

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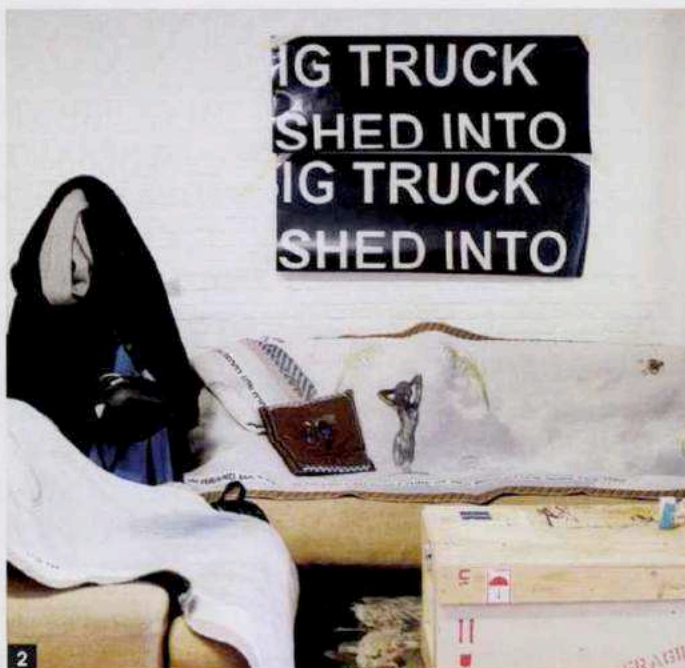


„Die Website dieses
Kunstmagazins gilt in der
Szene als Maßstab.“

MEDIENKRIKALISTIN ULRIKE SIMON IN „SPIEGEL, DAILY“



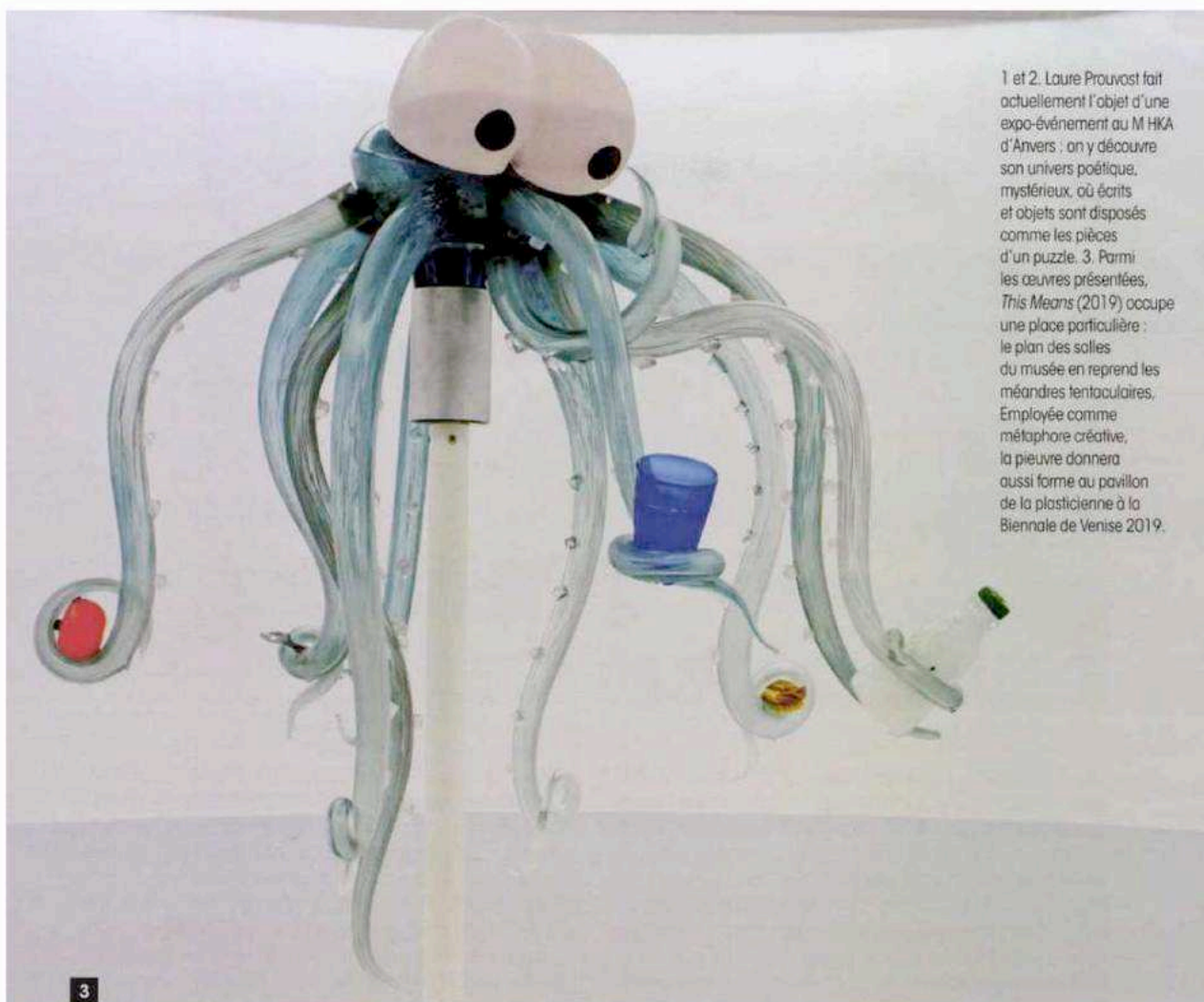
Magdécodage



LE DRÔLE DE LANGAGE DE LAURE PROUVOST

ELLE REPRÉSENTERA LA FRANCE
LORS DE LA PROCHAINE
BIENNALE DE VENISE. À 40 ANS,
ELLE EST L'UNE DES ARTISTES
LES PLUS INVENTIVES DE SA
GÉNÉRATION. SES INSTALLATIONS,
MICROCOSMES SURREALISTES
ET SENSUELS ASSOCIANT
FILM, OBJETS ET TEXTES,
SE LISENT COMME DES FABLES
CONTEMPORAINES.

B LONDE PIQUANTE, À LA SIL-
HOUETTE À LA FOIS GARÇONNE
ET FÉMININE, Laure Prouvost se
raconte avec une gouaille rieuse autour d'un thé, dans un
matin glacé d'hiver à Anvers. Ce feu follet talentueux joue
avec aisance de ses multiples identités : artiste, london-
nienne pendant presque vingt ans, anversoise aujour-
d'hui, française toujours. En 2013, elle remporte le Turner
Prize, le plus prestigieux des prix britanniques. Sa carrière
internationale est lancée. Elle a depuis exposé partout
dans le monde. Elle était l'été dernier au Palais de Tokyo, à
Paris. Le MHKA d'Anvers lui consacre en ce moment une
grande exposition rétrospective *. Installée dans la cité
flamande, elle a gardé un petit studio à Londres et dit



1 et 2. Laure Prouvost fait actuellement l'objet d'une expo-événement au M HKA d'Anvers : on y découvre son univers poétique, mystérieux, où écrits et objets sont disposés comme les pièces d'un puzzle. 3. Parmi les œuvres présentées, *This Means* (2019) occupe une place particulière : le plan des salles du musée en reprend les méandres tentaculaires. Employée comme métaphore créative, la pieuvre donnera aussi forme au pavillon de la plasticienne à la Biennale de Venise 2019.

3

qu'elle se partage entre ces deux villes et une caravane dans le désert croate... On n'est pas obligé de la croire, tant fiction et réalité se confondent dans ses récits échevelés. Ses installations sont des puzzles oniriques et sensuels, pleins d'humour et de liberté, qui parlent de désir, du monde tel qu'il est ou tel qu'il devrait être s'il s'autorisait un pas de côté, d'une nature luxuriante et fantasmée, de sensations et d'incompréhension... Il faut se perdre dans l'univers de Laure Prouvost, se laisser embarquer dans ses histoires à la complexité insolite et réjouissante.

ORIGINES DE L'ART

Dès son enfance, dans le nord de la France, elle invente des mondes. « Mes parents ont un grand jardin et j'aimais beaucoup bricoler, créer des environnements, des cabanes. Je n'avais pas tellement le droit de regarder la

télé, j'étais devenue obsédée par les images qui bougent, je voulais les questionner, les réinventer, les travailler. » Après une scolarité en partie à Tournai, en Belgique, où elle étudie déjà l'art, la voilà partie à 18 ans pour intégrer le Saint Martins College à Londres. Elle y apprend la vidéo expérimentale, qui la passionne. Elle en fait la base de son œuvre, avant de l'enrichir en la déployant dans les médiums traditionnels – dessin, céramique ou tapisserie.

AU COMMENCEMENT ÉTAIT LE VERBE

« Le langage est vraiment le fil rouge de mon travail. J'ai l'impression que les mots m'échappent, je n'arrive pas à les formuler, à les utiliser correctement. Je crois que j'ai fait de l'art parce que j'avais besoin de sortir de ce langage pour un autre, mais depuis j'utilise les mots tout le temps. » Elle les pose, en anglais le plus souvent, dans ses vidéos, où sa voix chuchote, interpelle et suggère, dans les textes de ses installations et les titres-fleuves de ses >

Laure Prouvost développe sa pensée à travers un langage artistique personnel. Ces mots et messages reliés à des images, mis en scène dans son atelier avec des créations insolites mais relevant d'une pratique artistique traditionnelle, sont les fragments de la fable qu'elle nous conte.



expositions. Elle leur invente des sens détournés, en souligne l'ambivalence, les (in)compréhensions, leur faculté à créer des images. « Elle maîtrise avec brio cette manière de jouer avec les mots, de les étirer, de les déconstruire avant de les assembler à nouveau et de les réinjecter dans le récit : ils sautillent et tourbillonnent autour de nous, ils nous font un pied de nez et nous échappent », dit d'elle la commissaire Martha Kirszenbaum, à qui elle s'est associée pour le pavillon vénitien. D'une langue à l'autre, elle triture les traductions – « ça devient amusant quand on se perd, qu'on mélange » –, comme dans cette tapisserie qu'elle a éditée pour Venise et qui dit « *We will tell you loads of salades on our way to Venice* » (« Nous vous raconterons un tas de salades sur le chemin de Venise »)...

CONTEUSE

Car des salades, elle en raconte, tout le temps. « C'est bien que la fiction intervienne dans la réalité, de complexifier. Ne pas avoir une narration donne beaucoup de liberté, la vie devient extraordinaire. » Elle convoque souvent, par exemple, dans son travail ou sans prévenir dans la conver-

sation, ses grands-parents imaginaires : « Mon grand-père est un artiste conceptuel, il faisait des tableaux minimalistes mais, derrière, il faisait des belles femmes avec des belles fesses... » Le même grand-père a décidé un jour de creuser un tunnel entre chez lui, en Angleterre, et l'Afrique, et s'est perdu. Depuis, sa grand-mère l'attend en faisant des tapisseries et en buvant du thé... Ces fragments de récits que l'on retrouve d'une œuvre à l'autre sont aussi un moyen pour elle de toucher nos histoires à tous, de « laisser chacun libre de son interprétation, en prise avec sa propre imagination ». Pour Nav Haq, le commissaire de son exposition anversoise, « son travail est profondément philosophique, il nous incite à comprendre que nous sommes un mélange de différentes impulsions, d'intuition et d'une capacité à apprendre. Je l'associe au livre de Simone de Beauvoir *Pour une morale de l'ambiguïté*, qui présente l'ambiguïté comme un chemin vers la liberté ». Martha Kirszenbaum y voit un lien avec l'Oulipo ou *Les Fleurs bleues*, de Raymond Queneau... Pour entrer dans son atelier à Anvers, comme dans son exposition au MHKA,

BIO EXPRESS ■ 1978 : naissance à Croix (Lille). ■ 2002 : diplômée du Saint Martins College, puis, en 2010, du Goldsmiths College, à Londres. ■ 2011 : Max Mara Art Prize for Women, Whitechapel Gallery, Londres. ■ 2013 : Turner Prize, Tate Britain, Londres. ■ 2014 : *For Forgetting*, New Museum, New York. ■ 2015 : *On ira loin*, Musée départemental d'art contemporain de Rochechouart (Limousin) ; *We Would Be Floating Away From the Dirty Past*, Haus der Kunst, Munich. ■ 2016 : *A Way to Leak*, Lick, Leek, FLAX Foundation Residency, Los Angeles ; *Into All That Is Here*, Red Brick Art Museum, Pékin. ■ 2018 : *Ring, Sing and Drink for Trespassing*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris ; *They Are Waiting for You*, The Bass Museum, Miami. Laure Prouvost est représentée par les galeries Nathalie Obadia (Paris/Bruxelles), Carlier/Gebauer (Berlin) et Lisson Gallery (Londres/New York).



Disposés sur un mur recouvert de branchages, des messages rappelant des textos, accolés à des objets, des écrans diffusant des vidéos... Dans le travail de Laure Prouvost se mêlent les éléments naturels, les faits, la fiction et la technologie moderne.

Magdécodage



Avec *Maquette for Grand Dad's Visitor Center* (2014), on rejoint la trame narrative empreinte d'onirisme construite par l'artiste à propos d'un grand-père imaginaire.

il faut se faufiler sous une porte basse et étroite. À Venise, elle entend détourner l'accès au pavillon. « le public devra passer par des petits trous, il faudra chercher » : comme le préambule d'une fable.

FÉMINITÉ

Ses œuvres débordent de seins, de fesses, d'odes aux sens et au corps. Elle entretient pourtant un rapport ambigu avec la notion de féminité. « Je me suis toujours considérée comme une artiste, pas une artiste femme. Je suis une éponge qui réagit aux situations. Mon travail est une relation entre mon cerveau, mon corps et le monde : je suis une femme, donc je viens avec ça. La naissance de mes enfants (une fille de 5 ans et un garçon de 3 ans, NDLR) a eu un impact aussi, évidemment. Je me rends compte néanmoins que dans la société d'aujourd'hui, c'est important de l'affirmer : il y a un enjeu, et puis il y a une nouvelle histoire de la femme qui commence en ce moment, c'est génial. »

SÉRÉNISSE

Ce n'est que la troisième fois, justement, qu'une femme représente la France à la Biennale de Venise – après Annette Messager en 2005 (Lion d'or) et Sophie Calle en 2007 – et le premier duo féminin, jeune de surcroît (Martha Kirszenbaum est née en 1983). Laure Prouvost y voit « un immense honneur et une grande responsabilité. Pour moi, c'est aussi un beau retour aux sources, assez émotionnel ». Pour imaginer son pavillon, elle est partie de l'idée d'une pieuvre, qui a son cerveau dans ses tentacules, comme mé-

taphore des origines de notre planète et de notre système nerveux. En son centre, un film aborde les notions de génération et d'identité, de langage, de fluidité et de liquidité, d'un monde d'échanges et de décalage. Pour le tourner, Martha Kirszenbaum et elle sont parties en voyage : du Roubaix familial à Venise, en passant par les tours Nuages d'Émile Aillaud à Nanterre, le Palais idéal du Facteur Cheval dans la Drôme, et à Marseille. Elles ont invité une douzaine de personnages talentueux – magicien, flûtiste, rappeur, instituteur à la retraite... – et jonglé avec plusieurs langues : français, anglais, arabe, italien, néerlandais... « C'est un road trip plus mental que réel, souligne Laure Prouvost. Qui est-on ? Où en est-on ? Je ne donne pas de réponses, ce n'est pas le rôle de l'artiste : il s'agira de sentir, comme la pieuvre. » Autour du film se déploiera une installation, encore un peu mystérieuse, qui masquera et transformera le pavillon, convoquera notamment le verre, cette liquidité durcie, travaillé avec les artisans de Murano. Et comme sa grand-mère a promis d'y faire une apparition en hélicoptère, dont elle descendra nue en se balançant suspendue à un fil, l'expérience promet d'être inoubliable... ✦

Laure Prouvost représentera la France à la 58^e édition de la Biennale de Venise et y présentera son exposition « Deep see blue surrounding you / Vois ce bleu profond te fondre », du 11 mai au 24 novembre, au Pavillon français. pavillonfrancais.com, labiennale.org.

* « AM-BIG-YOU-US LEGSICON », jusqu'au 19 mai, au M HKA, à Anvers. muhka.be

Vanity Fair France
 April 2019

VANITY FAIR

FANFARE

Naissance de la pieuvre

Un duo féminin, Laure Prouvost et Martha Kirszenbaum, représentera la France lors de la biennale de Venise, qui ouvre le 8 mai.

Texte Gaspard Dhellemmes
 Photographie Marion Berrin

ART

Une pieuvre géante : voilà la forme que Laure Prouvost compte donner à son installation à la biennale de Venise. Ce choix ne doit rien au hasard. Seul animal à contenir ses organes sensoriels et cérébraux dans ses tentacules, le poulpe « pense et sent en même temps, explique Martha Kirszenbaum, commissaire de l'exposition. Il en est de même pour Laure, qui pratique l'art de manière intuitive et sensible ».

Que verra-t-on dans cette exposition nommée « Vois ce bleu profond te fondre » ? Un film d'abord, carnet de bord du « road-trip liquide et utopique » entamé par Laure et Martha, qui ont sillonné la France de Roubaix à la cité Picasso à Nanterre, de Grigny au Palais idéal du Facteur Cheval dans la Drôme. Des sculptures, ensuite, construites dans les usines de verre de Murano. L'ambition affichée par l'artiste ? « Rendre le film sensible et que la lumière puisse infiltrer l'espace et la matière, envahir le pavillon. Je souhaite que chaque spectateur se sente devenir un tentacule de ce projet. »

Après Annette Messager et Sophie Calle, Laure Prouvost est la troisième femme à investir le pavillon hexagonal. La vidéaste et plasticienne de 41 ans, qui succède à Xavier Veilhan, a choisi Martha Kirszenbaum, 35 ans, comme curatrice. Ces nouvelles figures de l'art français ont pour point commun d'avoir percé à l'étranger. Née dans une famille d'industriels du Nord, Laure Prouvost s'est installée à Londres au début des années 2000 pour étudier au Central Saint Martins. En 2013, l'obtention du Turner Prize la propulse dans la

lumière. Depuis lors, ses vidéos immersives et cocasses sont montrées dans les grands musées, de New York à Istanbul en passant par Los Angeles, où elle a rencontré Martha Kirszenbaum en 2015. Celle-ci, fille d'immigrés polonais formée à Sciences Po et à l'université Columbia, dirigeait alors Fahrenheit, un centre d'art doté d'un programme de résidences pour artistes français en Californie. Là, Laure Prouvost conçoit une installation accompagnée d'un film. Le début d'une collaboration qui étend aujourd'hui ses tentacules jusqu'à la Sérénissime. □

▲ Martha Kirszenbaum et Laure Prouvost.

► *The Priest Did Not Believe Me*, œuvre de Laure Prouvost présentée à Gdansk en mars 2017, lors de sa première exposition personnelle « Wot Hit Talk ».





Laure Prouvost: AM-BIG-YOU-US LEGSICON

M HKA Antwerp 8 February to 19 May

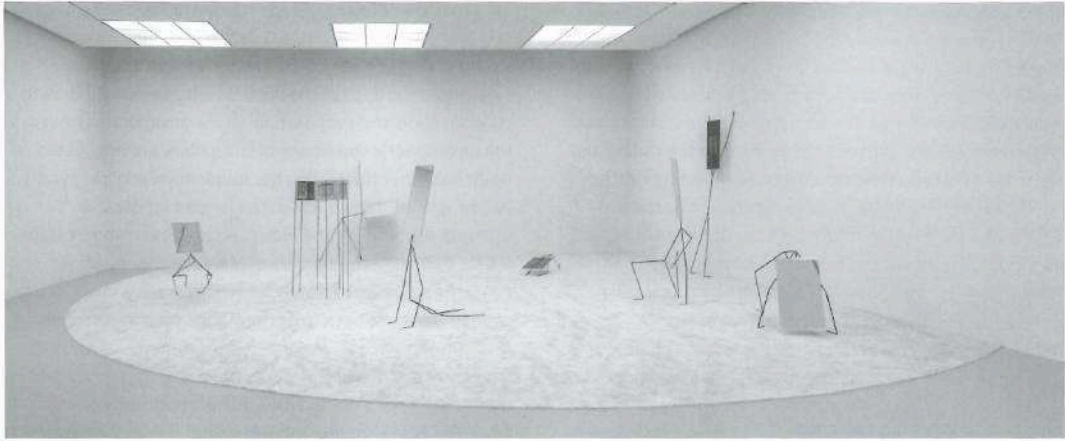
Although it may initially seem like a strange collection of clutter and debris, Laure Prouvost's practice relies on a meticulously constructed microcosm. Despite its vast scale, her first museum survey show, 'AM-BIG-YOU-US LEGSICON', is a delicate balance of her own ambiguous lexicon. Objects and symbols are given unfamiliar and varied meanings: an orange means 'love', a spanner 'your father', a blue cup 'mother', and broken eggs mean 'you're

late'. In her reimagining, Prouvost's objects rely on one another for relevance. Across installation, tapestry, text, sculpture and video they reappear: octopus, flamingo, boobs, half-smoked cigarettes, the (partly real) mythology of her grandad and grandmother. Together, they create a new, fluctuating 'legsicon', which establishes its own agency through repetition and adaptation.

Transforming the cavernous upper floors of M HKA, the show resembles a labyrinthine stage set. Designed by second-time collaborator Diogo Passarinho, the exhibition architecture relies on peep holes, openings you have to stand on tiptoe to see into and protrusions you have to duck under. It is full of corners, dead-ends and narrow, constrictive corridors. Temporary walls both support Prouvost's works and hide them. They reveal the underside and the backstage – the rear of projection screens visible through crudely cut holes, support beams always exposed. TV monitors face the wall, redundant and turned away from us as though undergoing punishment. The negative space between defined areas creates 'in limbo' rooms which are visibly inaccessible. In Prouvost's constructed theatre, you are placed in an environment that is impossible to navigate. It creates a framework for being watched as much as watching; it requires constant turning back, revisiting and second guessing.

Prouvost's floorplan, hand-drawn as creeping octopus tentacles, threads together a number of recent large-scale installations with approximately 20 early 'monologue' video works. Although compositely the exhibition defies direction, it opens with a waiting room. At first glance, the installation *They are waiting for you*, 2017, has all the typical signifiers: too many chairs clustered together, pot plants, outdated magazines, a table fan, informational signs. But the light in the room is dimmed to a point that just precedes darkness. A large tapestry spans the back wall, with a goat at its centre emanating light like a god

Laure Prouvost
'AM-BIG-YOU-
US LEGSICON'
installation view



or deity. Boobs are inconspicuously moulded onto nearly every surface: underneath the chair seats, on the side of the plant pots, the table, the mop handle. On the wall, a poster sorts Prouvost's lexicon into its French grammatical gender of *féminin* or *masculin*: a '*féminin*' spanner, a '*masculin*' flamingo.

Prouvost's off-kilter waiting room serves as an introduction, establishing the framework of her alternative vocabulary. This becomes immediately apparent in the neighbouring video installation *DIT LEARN*, 2017. Wearing a cylindrical, hand-painted mask over her face, the artist appears and disappears from the screen. In furtive, hushed tones, she delivers a monologue in the style of an earnest but eccentric psychoanalyst. As our teacher, she takes us through the 'de-learning' process: 'You are here, you are the now ... you are going to dit-learn in four parts.' We are presented with a series of flashing images – flamingo, spanner, iguana, blue cup, cactus – followed by their reassigned definitions. As the video increases in speed, it manifests as a hypnotic mind-control exercise, complete with affirmations ('You have done well so far') and tests ('What does this mean?'). Attacking our learned behaviours, Prouvost attempts to return us to a pre-verbal state – the fluid space before words and the attribution of meaning.

The exhibition floor at M HKA culminates in a large circular room which houses the most recent installation in the show, *This Means*, 2019 – a working fountain which is an octopus-boob composite. Water trickles from the nipples, collecting in a basin below before being pumped back through the system. Its extending tentacles languish and curve around now-familiar objects: orange, cigarette, blue cup. The boobs initially have the look of collapsing, crumpled milk bottles, but are in fact hand-blown Venetian glass bearing hallmarks of the handmade. Within Prouvost's index, 'boobs' and 'octopus' are not ascribed singular meanings. They are more slippery and malleable in their connotations – used over and over again, often made invisible or gigantic, like a beacon signalling complexity.

In the accompanying exhibition publication, an illustrated A-Z of Prouvost's symbolism, curator Nav Haq concludes with an assertion: 'We all deserve to create our own lexicon, as a polyvalent record of things filtered through our subjectivity.' Although it carries with it its own impending failure, Prouvost's deconstruction of objects, words and images is a compulsive process of undoing. At points it reads as a tactic to forget or recover trauma. At others, it simply appears as a way to revel in the arbitrary nature of language. But as she fluctuates between inner and outer worlds, she teeters on an impossible task: to retract what conventionalism has taught us while we (re)experience its own absurdity. ■

Kathryn Lloyd is an artist and writer based in London.

Artforum
25 April 2019

ARTFORUM



Laure Prouvost, *This Means*, 2019, mixed media, dimensions variable.

ANTWERP

Laure Prouvost

MUSEUM VAN HEDENDAAGSE KUNST
ANTWERPEN (M HKA)
Leuvenstraat 32
February 8–May 19

In less than a decade, Laure Prouvost has distinguished herself by making witty and seductive works, often presented in the guise of complex and immersive installations that

convert exhibition spaces into substructures. This could be seen in “Farfromwords: cars mirrors eat raspberries when swimming through the sun, to swallow sweet smells” (2013) at London’s Whitechapel Gallery, where she built a cylindrical environment paying sumptuous homage to Italian culture, and “GDM—Grand Dad Visitor’s Center” (2016–17) at Milan’s Pirelli HangarBicocca, where she devised a mini-museum dedicated to her grandfather.

Such a practice, while not exactly site-specific, evidently responds to the hosting architecture by augmenting it and, in certain cases, confronting it. It was therefore legitimate to wonder how “AM-BIG-YOU-US LEGSICON,” the first museum show to offer a comprehensive overview of Prouvost’s work, would turn out. Surprisingly, the exhibition proves cohesive, with each segment, proposed anew by curator Nav Haq, successfully dialoguing while shrugging off chronological order. Equipped with a map reproducing the artist’s sketch of the building’s floor plan, visitors can roam around her Gesamtkunstwerk and dip into her extraordinarily rich conceptual vocabulary, which includes twentieth-century philosophy, psychoanalysis, deconstructions of language, and imagined and existing personal memories. Emerging from this cacophony is Prouvost’s idiosyncratic sense of humor, most detectable in *This Means*, 2019, a new work consisting of an octopus-shaped fountain made of Murano glass and various found objects. Impishly and erroneously cited by the artist as having the oldest form of brain known to have existed on the planet and one with practically no memory, Prouvost’s octopus offers a poignant metaphor for the whole exhibition—engaging and dazing—while granting a sneak preview of the artist’s French pavilion at the Venice Biennale, where it has been announced that the mollusk will once again play a starring role.

—Michele Robecchi

Le Monde
22 March 2019

Le Monde

CULTURE

Se faire avaler à Anvers par Laure Prouvost

Le Musée d'art contemporain belge présente
une rétrospective de la plasticienne française

ARTS

ANVERS (BELGIQUE)

Laure Prouvost représentera la France à la Biennale de Venise. Dans l'intervalle, le MHKA, le Musée d'art contemporain d'Anvers, ville où elle réside actuellement, organise la première exposition rétrospective de cette artiste née en 1978. Seule Française à avoir obtenu le Turner Prize britannique, elle avait été récompensée pour un « travail [qui] mêle les faits, la fiction, l'histoire de l'art et les technologies modernes », allusion à l'utilisation simultanée de vidéos mais aussi d'une pratique de la terre cuite. A voir l'exposition d'Anvers, il va falloir élargir la palette.

Car si elle emploie des matériaux traditionnellement distribués par les fournisseurs de matériels pour les beaux-arts, de l'aquarelle à la tapisserie, elle puise également son inspiration dans les poissonneries, ce qui est pertinent dans un port comme Anvers, et le sera sans doute encore davantage à Venise. Non contente d'avoir posé pour une photo avec un poisson (un merlu semble-t-il, mets préféré du pape Adrien VI) en guise de chapeau, elle est aussi apparue coiffée d'une pieuvre fort seyante, hommage peut-être involontaire au regretté Pierre Desproges, qui avait créé « en 1976 », précisait-il lors d'une interview particulièrement déjantée (menée par l'actrice Tonie Marshall), l'« APF, asso-

ciation des poulpistes de France ».

Des angles inédits

Si Desproges militait pour le droit à exhiber son poulpe sur les plages, et à « poulper librement », la pieuvre est pour Laure Prouvost à l'origine de l'architecture de son exposition anversoise. Le plan des salles et des circulations, dû au Diogo Passarinho Studio, reprend les méandres de ses tentacules, ce qui la rend parfois particulièrement acrobatique à visiter, mais permet de découvrir les œuvres sous des angles inédits. On pense à certaines scénographies d'un autre grand talent prématurément disparu, le metteur en scène allemand Christoph Schlingensiefel, lesquelles tenaient souvent du parcours du combattant. On pense aussi à l'œuvre d'art totale du dadaïste Kurt Schwitters, le *Merzbau*, auquel Laure Prouvost se réfère explicitement depuis ses débuts.

Pour l'historien d'art, cette exposition est donc un cauchemar : allez dater les œuvres, esquisser une chronologie, dans un chalut/chahut pareil, où tous les poissons, gros et petits, s'entremêlent ! On y parvient toutefois avec celles des vidéos où l'artiste s'exprime en anglais : dans les plus anciennes, son accent est encore exotique, il s'affine et se fluidifie dans les plus récentes. La voilà qui oblige le chercheur à inventer de nouvelles méthodologies... Le catalogue ne sera d'aucun secours, il est conçu comme un réjouissant abécédaire.

L'antiquaire sera plus à son aise : certaines pièces tiennent du cabinet de curiosités, dont l'inventaire ferait rougir Prévert, sauf qu'à la place du raton laveur, Laure Prouvost a préféré un renard empaillé.

Il y avait aussi un chevreau, bien vivant, qui gambadait, en laisse, le soir du vernissage, en laissant quelques traces animales que son propriétaire nettoyait consciencieusement. Puis des vitraux, qui s'adressent directement au visiteur : « Je vois bien que tu regardes à travers moi »... Et une pieuvre, bien entendu, mais sculptée, celle-là, et formant une fontaine. Sa tête est en fait une forte poitrine rose : les attributs féminins abondent dans l'œuvre de Laure Prouvost, seins et fesses, montrés avec une belle humeur et une évidente bonne santé. Plus loin, des miroirs font du yoga et, à l'entrée, le visiteur est accueilli par une langue géante qu'il doit piétiner pour accéder aux escaliers, comme si l'artiste se préparait à l'avalier tout cru. C'est peut-être bien son intention... Tout cela ne présage en rien de ce qui sera montré à la 58^e Biennale de Venise, du 11 mai au 24 novembre, mais une chose est sûre, on ne devrait pas non plus s'ennuyer. ■

HARRY BELLET

AM-BIG-YOU-US LEGSICON,
de Laure Prouvost. MHKA,
Anvers. Jusqu'au 19 mai.
Muhka.be/fr

LISSON GALLERY

CURA
Spring 2019

156 VISUAL ESSAY TEXT BY MARTHA
KIRSZENBAUM

DEEP SEE BLUE SURROUNDING YOU

LAURE PROUVOST

VOIS CE BLEU PROFOND TE FONDRE





Let's question who we are, where we come from, where we go, and what links or distances us from each other: the eldest from the youngest, the neighbor from the stranger. Disconnection, incomprehension and discrepancy, through an exploration of language and its misappropriation. Finally, tinged with utopia and surrealism, let's disclose an escapist journey, both tangible and imaginary, towards an ideal elsewhere. It is an invitation to melt into a liquid and tentacular universe amongst the different unveiled and shared realities intermingling here.

Imagine the representation of a fluid and globalized world, made of exchanges, connectivity and discrepancies. Intertwining representations of desire, oneirism, and a fantasized description of nature, let's focus on language, wordplay and translation. The attention given by Laure Prouvost to her environment and to the natural and human elements that surround her calls to mind the immersive quality of her films, installations, objects, drawings and tapestries.

Take a fictional film as the cornerstone, in the form of an initiatory journey, a joyous

saga filmed over the course of a road trip on horseback through France—from the Parisian suburbs to the northern region, from the Palais Idéal du Facteur Cheval to the Mediterranean Sea—and, finally, to Venice. This film, full of dialogue and idioms, is based on a script in French and English with some Italian, Arabic or Dutch passages. Its scenes are performed by a dozen characters of different ages and backgrounds, with specific performance skills: magic, dance, music, etc. A sculptural *in situ* installation, taking as a metaphorical point of departure the octopus—a mollusk, which specificity is to carry its brains and sensorial members together in its tentacles—, enriches and develops the themes of the film, using typical processes of the artist's practice such as leftover objects from film, resin, clay, glass, plants or water vapor. The context of Venice—a floating city built on water and by water, a city of facade and backstage—and this of the Biennale through the notion of representation both appear as a source of inspiration. *Lâchons les chevaux!*

*I will draw you to the deep
Where you never dreamed to sleep
My heart in the blue
My arms wet with glue*

*I am me
You are you
You are me
Pass the shampoo*

*From the depths of my heart
To the depths of the sea
From high in the clouds
To my brain set free*

*From the tips of your toes
To the tips of your nose*

*I'll hold you tight
Swim through the blue
Paint my feelings
With arms that are glue*

*deeper than you
deeper than sea
arms like a thief / sieve
brain like a pea*

*feeling you, feeling me
drinking love, drinking tea*

*through and through
through and through
barbecue
more shampoo*

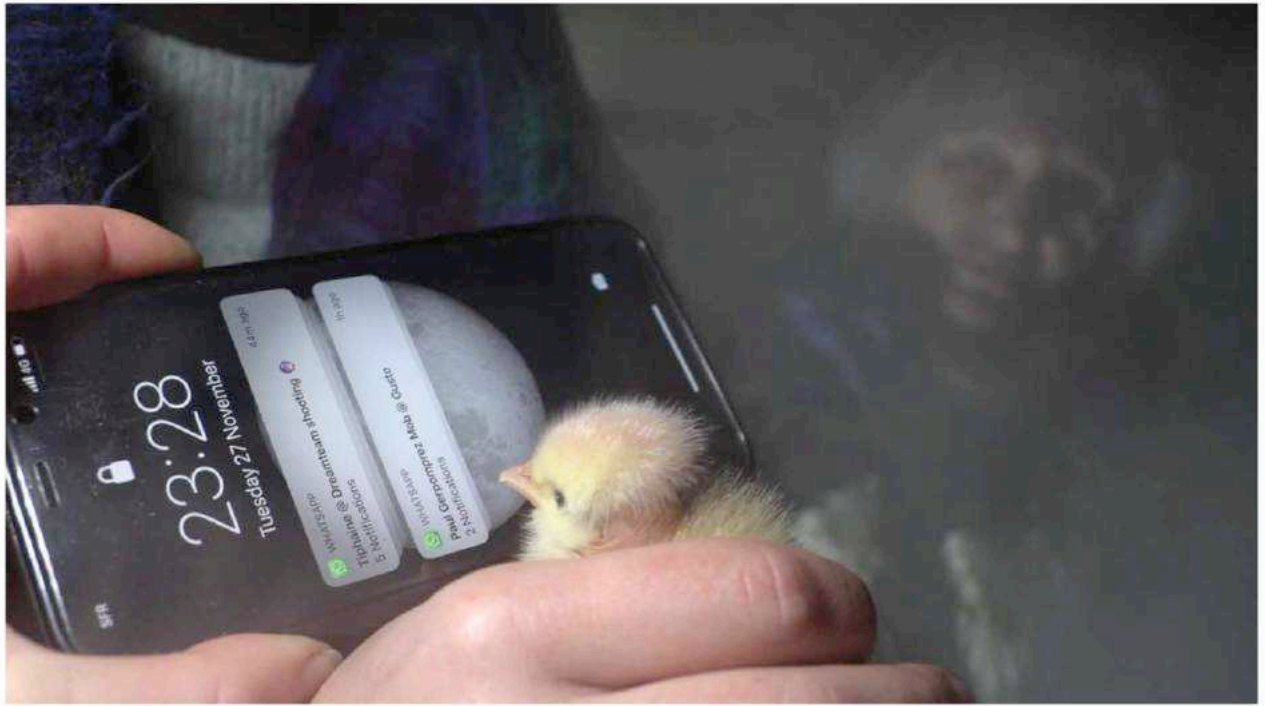
*breathing you, breathing me
breathing air, breathing sea*

*swallowing you, swallowing me
swallowing air, swallowing sea*

*holding you tight
never letting you go
tears in my eyes
and paint ready to throw*

*I think with my arms
I feel with my eyes
you touch my heart
I touch your thighs*







NICOLAS

Regarde! Ici les poulpes nagent le long des murs, et on utilise leur encre pour écrire des romans et trouver des fleurs qui poussent des fesses des cyclistes. Chaque pierre a été apportée par son chien, mâchée et recrachée à son arrivée au Palais. T'imagines, là-bas ça sera aussi un Pavillon idéal... Les oiseaux nageront dans une douceur inimaginable, les vers de terre nous masseront les pieds, les iPhones réchaufferont les petits poussins...

Là où on va, là-bas, les avions fonctionneront à la pomme de terre, le sol sera couvert de coquilles d'œuf sur lesquelles on marchera, ça fera crac crac...

RAMO

Dogs will bark salads, and lick you welcome. We will glue cooling systems to birds as they fly. We will dig tunnels... Une pluie de graines de grenade nous arrosera, derrière chaque pierre ici se cachera une framboise rapportée par des poisons.

This Palais will show us the way as a the light of a boat at night... we follow

On y va... Let's follow the light...

*SMOKE AROUND THEM /
FISHES SWIM AROUND*

JULES

Should we ring the bell? L'oncle sera surpris de nous voir arriver ainsi. Cher Facteur cheval...

GARANCE

Je me sens nue comme un vers ici.

JULES

Aussi nue que tes manies ?

GARANCE

Aussi nue qu'un fromage.

FRANÇOISE

With these stairs and columns that tickle our toes.

RAMO

Does anything happen in this place?

JULES

Yes, but not where you think.

NICOLAS

Moi aussi Je veux faire des purs trucs comme ça, sortis directement de la terre.

RAMO

But in the depth will it be pressing down on our neck?

GARANCE

No, we will float... but keep your eyes skinned.

FRANÇOISE

Ça, ça a dû être fait au Moyen Âge.

JULES

Pffff des salades !

*SALADS COMES OUT
OF HIS MOUTH*

FRANÇOISE

Moi je suis tombée des nues... sur ce sous-marin qui nous montre le chemin à travers les profondeurs des flots de pensées.

GARANCE

Toujours nue... Pourquoi ne réchauffes-tu pas un serpent avec tes seins ?

NICOLAS

Parce que mes orteils sont trop froids. Et le sol trop apaisant.

FRANÇOISE

On devrait boire du miel dans les rotules des abeilles.

JULES

Et attendre que les poules aient des dents ?

WALK ON EGG SHELL

GARANCE

Yes let's be slow slowwww and re-find the way...

JULES

Impossible, I have got ants in my pants.

*LOTS OF ANTS IN ONE HAND
GOING TOWARDS THE PANTS*

JULES

T'as toujours faim ?

FRANÇOISE

Yes like an anxious pear, putain.

GARANCE

Les oiseaux miauleront en atterrissant. Et nous, on volera sur des tapisseries, on racontera des salades et on utilisera des timbres postaux pour ne pas se casser la pipe.

JULES

Et on emmènera le Palais Idéal avec nous, pour montrer au monde ce que le désir pur peut créer. On traversera les pays et les expériences, les échanges.

RAMO

Et nous, on tombera dans les pommes !

LISSON GALLERY


ARTE

March 2019

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[Culture et pop](#) > [Arts](#)

Laure Prouvost




EXTRAIT

03:17 Laure Prouvost 04:21

Partager

5 min
Disponible du 01/03/2019 au 30/05/2019

Découvrez l'offre VOD-DVD de la boutique ARTE 

Lauréate du prix Turner, Laure Prouvost captive. Dans ses installations multimédia, la Française invente des mondes parallèles fascinants et explore à coup de jeux de mots les limites entre réalité et fiction. Rencontre avec l'artiste à Anvers où une exposition, la plus importante jusqu'à présent, lui est consacrée.

Production :	Kobalt Productions GmbH	Auteur :	Katrin Sandmann
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LISSON GALLERY

Artnet

February 2019

artnet news

Laure Prouvost, the Artist Representing France in the Venice Biennale, Wants You to Know She's a Big-Time Liar

Her largest exhibition yet opens today at the Museum of Contemporary Art.

Kate Brown, February 7, 2019



Laure Prouvost. Courtesy de Alexandre Guirkingier.

Before you begin reading, an important note: Laure Prouvost may not be telling us the truth.

The French provocateur is an art-world trickster, one who spins meaning, turns it on its head, and does so in funny, unconventional ways. At times, she can be shocking. Even *Page Six* was paying attention when, during an acceptance speech at an awards ceremony last November, she told a crowd that her grandmother used to tie herself naked to airplanes and float through the sky. Seemingly caught off-guard, New Museum artistic director Massimiliano Gioni had to reassure attendees that, for Prouvost, fiction and reality are blurred.

This year, the artist is representing her home country of France at the Venice Biennale, becoming only the third female artist to do so. But today is a busy day too, as she opens a solo exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Antwerp, her largest solo outing to date, and a survey of the past 15 years of her work (on view to the public from tomorrow, February 8, until May 19).



Laure Prouvost, *As Grandma Prayed For Grandad to Come Back This Cup Levitated For A Few Seconds*, 2014. Courtesy the artist and carlier gebauer.

From there, the marathon continues: in March, she will perform at Performatik19, the Brussels biennial for performance art, and is also preparing installations and performances in London, which will take over advertising posters, screens, and city maps around the city. She will also have works at Heathrow and Stratford airports and will commission a performance for the London Underground, which she's been working on with a choir for months.

The truth is that it's a busy time.



Preparatory image for the French pavilion.

A New Dictionary for a New World

Speaking on the phone from her studio, Prouvost sounds reasonably relaxed about her stack of tasks. “Ideas are welcome,” she says.

Born in Croix in northeastern France, Prouvost studied at Central St Martins and Goldsmiths College in London. Soon after finishing at Goldsmiths in 2010, she began to garner attention for her unique braiding of poetic humor with intimate—and maybe untrue—references to her own life. She currently works in Antwerp and, according to the press release for her Venice show, is also based in a caravan in the Croatian desert (though a quick Google search for the term brings up Croatian *desserts* first).

For her work, which stretches across performance, installation, and video, she won the Max Mara art prize for women in 2011 and the Turner Prize in 2013. She has had shows at the Palais de Tokyo, the Serpentine Sackler Gallery in London, and Witte de With in Rotterdam.

“We need to question everything in history,” Prouvost tells artnet news. Asked about her feelings on the current political upheavals in Europe, she sounds a note of optimism. “It’s an interesting moment. There are a lot of ideas and desires that we can hold on to, but there is a lot we can question and also re-invent.”

In that vein, for her show in Antwerp, which is called “*AM-BIG-YOU-US LEGSICON*,” she has released a dictionary-as-catalog that reads like a surrealist encyclopedia. For each word she includes in the publication (cheekily called *LEGSICON*), she has invited different authors to come up with new definitions, genders, and histories for the words.

Her practice can be traced back to this way of thinking. Boobs, which is one of the words in the dictionary, often crop up in her work, in sculptures and paintings and elsewhere (“All the very breast, Laure Prouvost,” she signs off in the book’s introduction). Most recently, breasts also figured largely in her show “Ring, Sing and Drink for Trespassing” at the Palais de Tokyo, as a fountains spraying water in hilarious arcs through many nipples.



Exhibition view of Laure Prouvost, “Ring, Sing and Drink for Trespassing,” Palais de Tokyo, 2018. Courtesy of the artist and Nathalie Obadia, Paris/Brussels; carlier | gebauer, Berlin; Lisson Gallery, London/New York. Photo: Aurélien Mole.

Another word, grandad, recalls her acclaimed video work *Wantee* (2013), based on a fictional narrative of her fictional grandfather. (The video helped her secure the Turner Prize.) *Wantee* will join other greatest hits, such as *DIT LEARN*—a rapid succession of words and images that breaks apart old meanings—in Antwerp. In addition, new works, layered together in a perfectly tangled mess of references, are also on view. The museum is calling it a “total environment.”

Prouvost says elements reappear throughout the exhibition in surprising ways. “It’s interesting to connect all these works; it can be quite intense,” she says. “It can be about building a sequence, but it can be also about building a labyrinth.”



Film still from a Laure Prouvost work to be included in French Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. Courtesy of the artist and Nathalie Obadia, Paris/Brussels; carlier | gebauer, Berlin; Lisson Gallery, London/New York.

What Prouvost Is Planning for Venice

Octopus, another word in the dictionary, signals things to come. From what is known of her French pavilion project, and based on Prouvost's preparatory images, the octopus will completely surround the building.

"I like this metaphor," she says "The octopus is the oldest mind or brain of this planet. With her arms, she's touching and thinking many things at one time. And could it be where we all come from? The only thing the octopus doesn't have is memory, so she cannot evolve so much. She cannot pass down knowledge." With a laugh, she adds: "I also often forget things, so I can connect to that."

The project's title, "DEEP SEE BLUE SURROUNDING YOU / VOIS CE BLEU PROFOND TE FONDRE," was announced in January. The core of the pavilion will include a fictional film based on a meandering road trip from the Parisian suburbs to the floating city of Venice, and will feature 12 characters, including a rapper, a dancer, a flutist, a priest, a karate master, and a magician.



Laure Prouvost's preparatory drawing for Venice (2019). Courtesy the artist.

"The film is in a way the head of my octopus," Prouvost writes in a conversation with the pavilion's curator, Martha Kirszenbaum. "The installation is alive because of the film [...] I would like for each spectator to feel himself/herself becoming a tentacle of the project."

To help finance it all, Prouvost has created a limited edition of 100 embroidered silk tapestries, which are available for €4,000 (\$4,535). The works feature a mistranslation of a popular French expression, "On va vous raconter des salades" (we will tell you lies), which foreshadows some of the trickery to be expected in Venice. To follow up on her Antwerp show's lexicon, Prouvost will produce an atlas, which will likely rework the world's geography.



Laure Prouvost, *We will tell you loads of salads on our way to Venice* (2018).

“My grandma has been making the tapestries,” Prouvost tells me. “She takes time to make them, and she knows a few ‘salads’ as well,” she laughs, punning on a French slang word for lies. “We are happy to have her in the family and get creative together.”

On the gallery website, I noticed a slightly different story, referring to a Belgian “specialist” who has been making the tapestries. I decided not to ask. Creative ambiguity, again, is Prouvost’s goal.

Asked if there are any other words floating around in her mind for her Venice project, the artist answers that “extremities” is a metaphor she is channeling into the show. What exactly it means in Prouvost’s lexicon is anyone’s guess. And knowing Prouvost’s propensity to surprise us, it may be “breast” to just forget what you know.

LISSON GALLERY

The Art Newspaper
December 2018



Laure Prouvost to bring Brexit song to London underground passengers as part of 2019 commissions

Ahead of UK leaving the European Union, Art on the Underground programme looks at what it means to be “on edge”

Gareth Harris



Laure Prouvost © Giorgio Benni. Courtesy of Lisson Gallery

The 2019 Art on the Underground programme, comprising commissions by established and emerging artists for platforms and other parts of London's tube system, focuses on the implications of Brexit prior to the UK's departure on 29 March 2019. The theme of next year's works, by artists including Laure Prouvost and Bedwyr Williams, is On Edge.

“As we approach the prospect of the UK leaving the European Union and edge towards an uncertain future, the 2019 programme will explore what it means to be ‘on edge’, individually, collectively, politically and socially,” according to a project statement.

The Turner Prize-winning artist Laure Prouvost has composed a song based on Brexit. “The details are still in development but Laure has written a song that will be performed with the Transport for London choir, as part of her commission,” a project spokeswoman says. Her works will be shown on digital screens and posters, encompassing large-scale installations at Heathrow and Stratford stations. [...]

LISSON GALLERY

WWD

November 2018

WWD

Alexander McQueen Supports New Museum NextGen Dinner
The dinner honored artist French Laure Prouvost.
Kristen Tauer



Alexander McQueen chose the New Museum's NextGen dinner on Friday night as its first event sponsored stateside. The annual dinner, which this year honored Laure Prouvost, exemplifies the museum's mission to highlight emerging contemporary artists.

"New Museum's mission is new ideas, and it's just so wonderful when we can celebrate the emerging voices," said Karen Wong, deputy director of the New Museum during cocktail hour at Studio Ten at Industria. "We're very proud that we've got this terrific platform for artists who are doing innovative, provocative, weird work, and that we're able to give them space and the right type of support."

The museum first showed Prouvost's work several years ago, before she went on to win the prestigious Turner Prize. Massimiliano Gioni described the sequence of events as "auspicious."

"It's been a nice ongoing conversation," he said, adding that one of the artist's videos is currently on view at the museum's offsite exhibition at The Store X in London. "I think she's one of the most interesting artists working today, but particularly, everything about her videos is strangely fluid between reality and imagination, and language and reality. And that also makes her particularly interesting to recognize tonight as representative of the next generation. I always think that you feel a

generation gap first of all through language and through words, and her work is very much about that. She is an artist who is a leader in inventing a new language and new work.”

The artist blurred reality during the evening, too, describing a dream-like sequence of events involving her grandmother while accepting her award.

“I don’t feel as new as the New Museum, but I’m getting newer and newer everyday,” said Prouvost, who was in town for one night only. “On my way here as I was flying, I was remembering how my grandma used to go on a little plane, she would ask my uncle to take her on a little plane, and she would undress, go totally naked, and attach herself to a little rope and just jump and float through the clouds.”

Maybe it was metaphor, but it did provide a moment of pause for the crowd, which included Maria Sharapova, Derrick Adams, and Aimee Mullins and Rupert Friend.

“A lot of my work is about the past, so the past and the new and the future is one thing — one big, organic thing that feeds from each other,” Prouvost had described earlier. “I guess what [New Museum] does is to support so many new brains to explore and provoke us, promote our future, promote the idea of me flying here for this new event. And that’s what art is supposed to do, is provoke and question.”

LISSON GALLERY

Vogue

November 2018

VOGUE

The New Museum and Alexander McQueen Honor Laure Prouvost With a Chic Dinner

Lilah Ramzi



Margot Norton, Laure Prouvost, and Emmanuel Gintzburger

Photo: Yvonne Tnt / BFA.com

An awards dinner on a Friday? The ever avant-garde New Museum seemed to think its guests wouldn't mind, and, of course, they didn't. Last Friday, an artsy crowd including Rupert Friend, Aimee Mullins, [Maria Sharapova](#), Alexander Gilkes, and Stacey Bendet Eisner gathered at Industria's Studio Ten to celebrate the Bowery museum's NextGen Dinner, honoring Laure Prouvost.

The evening was cohosted by [Alexander McQueen](#), and many guests paid homage to the evening's fashion patron of the arts (the brand's first-ever U.S. event sponsorship) by sporting their very own McQueen frocks. The label's signature Rorschach-like prints also decorated the walls, while tapestry panels doused color throughout the minimal space, which was enhanced by ikebana-esque floral arrangements by Flora Starkey.

Guests were welcomed at a generous cocktail hour. Selby Drummond mingled with friends Mark Guiducci and Nell Diamond. For New Museum director Lisa Phillips, the night punctuated a week filled with female-led programming. A couple days before, the museum hosted a reading with Rachel Kushner, but Friday night was all about Prouvost. As Phillips explained, it was just four years ago that Prouvost made her splashy stateside debut, "She had her first solo exhibition in the U.S. in 2014 at the New Museum." Since then, we've seen the Turner Prize-winning artist create immersive

mixed-media works that transform viewers into participants. Her reality-blurring moving-image installations were most recently on view at Miami Beach's Bass museum. On view now at the New Museum, as Phillips would proudly announce just before calling Prouvost to the stage, is "an entire museum filled with women, from top to bottom . . . the New Museum has a long history of supporting women artists, more than 50 percent of the artists that we've shown since we were founded in 1977 have been women."

Midway through a plant-based dinner of roasted beets and radicchio, Prouvost took to the stage to deliver a fantastical acceptance speech with a narrative not unlike those in her work. She spoke of flying to New York, the journey calling to mind memories of her grandmother, who would go flying with her grandfather in a small plane. Per Prouvost, her grandmother would get undressed and rope herself in a makeshift harness and swing from the plane, free as a bird. But back to the museum, "I think what they do is support a lot of young brains, young in all senses," said Prouvost at cocktail hour. "And hopefully, we're all still young at 95." So what's next for Prouvost? She's going to represent France at the 2019 Venice Biennale, making her NextGen award all the more appropriate.

Border Crossings
November 2018

BORDERCROSSINGS

ARTICLE BORDER CROSSINGS 2018

WAITING FOR PROUVOST

Close Encounters of a Poetic Kind

by Marianne Mays Wiebe

We are conceived and arrive, all of us, into a world already in existence. We arrive into our place in time, into the ongoing complex of objects and being and into families and societies, histories, cultures, social mores and language. Being born, we inherit the world. In Laure Prouvost's recent installation, "They are waiting for you," the story of this individual and wider inheritance is cast as a kind of performative comedy, an expectant grace into which we stumble as scarcely comprehending latecomers, innocent of time's elegant, knowing measures. Keep up.

The video at the hub of the large installation that showed at Minneapolis's Walker Art Center last winter is chock full of momentary images and sounds of sunny summer days that play like glimpses into idyllic childhood memories or proceedings. It theatricalizes our arrival and acclimatization into the world, illustrating the disorderly inundation of sensation and information.

Prouvost, who has been tapped to represent France at the 2019 Venice Biennale, is interested in that thin divide between knowing and unknowing, the real and the imaginary, the contemporary and the antiquated, and in all nature of ambivalence in between. She wants to dissolve boundaries between art, "what the artist does," and everyday life, she says. Deeply invested in what it means to be an artist—including the social, historical and economic implications—she is also attracted by the idea of the outsider, the novice and the amateur. (Last summer, she hung frisky paintings of bare bums and breasts all around Copenhagen in a street art exhibition.) Now she is living in Antwerp after 17 years in London, and the 40-year-old's installations and videos are messy and joyous, nebulously erotic, pensive, wildly referential and, oh, just a little bit intellectual. But it's the playfulness and charm that bring you in.

At the Walker we enter "They are waiting for you" through a door into a long, spare, all-white space, with a triangular structure at the far end: a room inside a corridor. Beside the main entry sits a metal trash bin with deflated boobs draped over the edge, looking simultaneously fleshy and like they have unfastened themselves from a painting. Drawn into the space and towards the structure, we encounter detritus epoxied into shiny floor-puddles on either side, under wall-affixed, real tree branches delicately adorned with pink nipples. A gunmetal table is attended by two cushionless chairs and the skeleton of a used, portable outdoor grill, the nearby ground littered with dirt, twigs, eggshells, ashes, a burnt-out tin, flecks of red (paint?), and scraps of paper (some with small paintings), foil and wrappers—traces of a campsite,

mummified in resin. Oranges and peel on the table infuse the setting with their aroma.

It's oddly enchanting, and faintly unsettling. Is it the remains of a party or a provisional home, now abandoned? A scene to scan for clues, a child's adventure scenario or the site of a trauma? A giant floor-canvas? A primal scene, a birthing spot? The glistening resin is redolent of bodily fluid. Or is it egg white? The possibilities swirl.

A door on the narrow end of the structure displays no visible handle, but a vertical aperture to one side invites us to spy in; our vista is a simple, built-in bench before a video in progress. Wandering around to the back of the structure reveals an entrance into a shadowy room adjacent to the screening space. Low-slung chairs and tables are arranged as a waiting area, similar to what might be found in a pediatrician's office, but dark like the interior of a theatre. As our eyes adjust to the dimness, we can make out the room's contents, which hover between ordinary and bogus: an eye chart and another chart-like poster with illustrations of colourful objects, appearing to be a code key or treasure map legend. The objects are divided into two rows identified under their French classification as *masculin* and *féminin*. In the corner is a houseplant; on a low table before us, a misplaced pair of gloves. A wilted Dali-esque clock hangs on the wall. Simple labels printed on plain white sheets cast incongruous display objects in unusual roles: "This green teapot will melt into you"; "This cake is so pleased to be here with you and not stuck in storage"; and "You feel really cosy and relax here."

Moving into the next room, we hear the artist beckoning. "You're late! They are waiting for you," she admonishes in a mellifluous, mixed accent. Before the camera now, she is suddenly very close, wearing a crookedly drawn paper mask, cartoonish and creaturely, looking slightly equine or like a satyr about to lead you on a forest frolic. She brings her hands together dramatically and pulls them apart, reopening the scene. "Let's start again," she says.

The video's evocative phrases and narrative fragments in voiceover and intertext combine with strong, sensual imagery from the natural world in flashes to present a floating wonderland, mischievous and mysterious, before language has fixed the frame. Images drift and flit by, lending the effect of moving through scenes, or of objects coming very near, sometimes suggesting potential integration with an object. Green grass, a babbling brook, juicy, ruby-red berries. A child's buttery skin in sunshine, a clementine being peeled and opened, a dead fish dangling by its tail. The fish waves back and forth, filling the screen. "Can you smell it?" she asks. Yellow flowers, a pink rose, a bumblebee. Text warns that



Page 95

Laure Prouvost, *We Will Feed You, Cooling Fountain (For Global Warming)*, 2018, painted metal, pump, blown glass, plastic tubes, aircraft cable, water and framed watercolour on paper, 183 x 75.8 x 75.8 inches. Courtesy Lisson Gallery, London.

Pages 96-97

1. *They Are Waiting for You*, 2017. Photo: Gene Pittman. Courtesy Walker Art Center, Minneapolis.

2. *Mirror Painting—A Story of Reflection, The Volcano Grandma fell into*, 2018, glass, painted wood, painted metal, 41 x 69 x 50 cm. Courtesy Lisson Gallery.

3. *They Are Waiting for You*, 2017. Photo: Gene Pittman. Courtesy Walker Art Center.



2



3



They Are Waiting for You, 2017. Photo: Gene Pittman. Courtesy Walker Art Center.

debris in circulation, and, under the surface, a lot of force, a lot of anxiety, a lot of feelings. Her work is conceptual, cheekily maximalist, defiantly, relentlessly experimental, always pushing a thing to become something else, trying this—and then that—unschooling the form, unspooling the meaning. If there's a poetics at play, it might be a compulsion to sustain a constantly shifting creativity, an endless assembling and dismantling of the self, or the self-as-artist—or the work-as-art, the world-as-art. It's an avoidance of foreclosure, a forestalling of any final word, an elusion of anything like "laying down the law." Even with all this "too much," the love for what she does is evident; and love, as we know, covers multitudes.

There's also love in her belief that her art doesn't exist without the audience. She's enamored of the direct address, extending to animation of, and seeming-communication by, objects. She wants art to reach into reality, for her artwork to spill over; she desires reality-as-relic; she wants to invest the object, the fleeting moment, the everyday, with a significance bordering on religious. This impulse or principle also reverberates with poetry.

And she wants you to participate. A floor-to-ceiling mirror outside the screening room in "They are waiting for you" wordlessly invites visitors to 'see themselves,' perhaps a playful alternative to Lacan's mirror stage, during which a child first constitutes himself as a subject separate from the world and his mother. (He punningly names the male subject *hommelette*, made once the eggs are cracked.) The process is not without ambivalence and anxiety. As you come into yourself, you're sent off into the wide world; as you leave behind the pre-linguistic phase and its joyful state of unity and immersion (and unawareness), there is also, along with the pleasure of discovery, a residual sense of loss echoed in further losses.

Perhaps the perpetual repetition of motifs and recycling of objects and tropes are ways to recoup on that loss, to pacify the inevitable forfeitures—the things, people, places, identities, possibilities we shed as we progress through life. Kinships exist with Louise Bourgeois's fixation on the breast to offer a uniquely female or maternal perspective and with Kurt Schwitters's self-invented personal collage style he dubbed *Merz*, a loving salvage of found snippets and personal bric-a-brac. Like Schwitters's *Merzbau*, the fantastical sculpture that continued his collage in three dimensions throughout his studio, Prouvost's artworks blur one into another, building from one into the next. She also braids her work to the legacy of art through time, clearly claiming artists as her society, invoking her tribe with each new work.

The line, "They are waiting for you," seems to be a holdover from a 2014 site-specific project entitled *Love Among the Artists*, after an early novel by George Bernard Shaw in the vein of Oscar Wilde. Prouvost invited other artists to join her in commemorating the closure of Walden Affairs, a temporary arts organization in The Hague housed for a six-year duration in a 19th-century canal house, in advance of its planned demolition. The event invitation quoted from Shaw's preface, which defends his book in a pitch somewhere between sincere acknowledgement of his failure as a novelist and the irony of a classic "apology" in a veiled appeal to the reader from the author, setting the appropriate context and tone for the tale to follow. Prouvost seems to espouse this same tongue-in-cheek deference about her own work in the name of her tribe. From the preface she quotes, "I am not a professional liar; I am even ashamed of the extent to which in my human infirmity I have been an amateur one," and goes on, "Your knowledge of the world must have forewarned you that no satisfactory ending was possible."

To these, Prouvost has added her own lines, poetic in their own right, inviting all and sundry to partake: "A long table where we sat, ate and drank and told stories as the light went through us. To finally bury the reminiscence of the broken pieces and the memories of time together in the garden of a house that will vanish after us and only remain in memory.... Please do trust me this time that it's for you that we made all this and that we are waiting for you." ■

Marianne Mays Wiebe is a poet and writer with an interest in the creative process. Her first novel will be published in 2019.

LISSON GALLERY

GQ UK

November 2018



LETTERS

Story by **Eleanor Halls**

FROM THE

Photographs by **Christoffer Rudquist**

HEART

Since 1966, from its unique vantage point in London's Soho, the 34-storey Centre Point tower has witnessed the ebb and flow of communities and customs, ideas and innovation - the glowing, three-metre high lettering at the top as comforting and orientating as a lighthouse signal. Yet when development began in 2015 to turn the building from office space to luxury flats, the letters had to fall and art consultant Patrick Morey-Burrows was approached to preserve them. Each was given to an artist to appropriate and photographer Christoffer Rudquist shot them at various stages of their reinvention. The finished letters will be exhibited at the foot of Centre Point this month, before being auctioned, with the proceeds going to the homeless charity Centrepoint. And so London's heraldic lettering lives on: no longer for a location, but for a powerful cause.

Photograph: Pawel Libera/Robert Harding



P

Laure Prouvost

"The letter 'P' is turning into a bust. I have added a nipple to the P, to symbolise our efforts to push forward with this new history in which women have an increasingly stronger place and where points of view are increasingly diverse."

ArtReview
October 2018

ArtReview

Laure Prouvost *Ring, Sing and Drink for Trespassing*

Palais de Tokyo, Paris 22 June – 9 September

In the basement of the Palais de Tokyo is a tunnel leading to a garden beyond the museum walls, or so the story goes. Laure Prouvost's site-specific installation is accessed via a curved corridor into a concrete space in the bowels of the museum that is reimagined as a private courtyard: an oval water feature is ringed by palm trees, a fence and benches, beyond which lies an overgrown hedge maze littered with paintings, sculptures and videos. This garden is at once familiar and alien, a bourgeois leisure zone unsettled by stick-figure sculptures with flat screens for heads, a fountain composed of a bundle of outsize female breasts and defunct fridges stocked with UHT milk and mouldering books, amidst other bewildering details.

Ring, Sing and Drink for Trespassing is the latest in a cycle of multimedia environments created by Prouvost dating back to her Turner Prize-winning 2013 exhibition *Wantee*, referenced here in a large tapestry showing a table set for a tea party. And as another tea-partier, Alice, plucked a jar of marmalade from the shelves lining the hole through which she falls into Wonderland, so the passageway leading into the topsyturvy world that Prouvost has built concludes in an arch of crosshatched branches tangled up with incongruous objects: ceramic breasts (above which the message: 'the new boobs

grandma ordered'), rearview mirrors, raspberries, declarative statements ('we are coming out') and newspaper clippings. Collectively they offer some clues about the latent contents transformed through the installation's dream logic into this curious landscape.

Chief among them are visions of ecological collapse – tropical overgrowth, floodwater from the pool, overworked fridges and hybrid creatures – and a more playful-seeming speculation on feminist utopia. The breasts crowding the centrepiece fountain (*We Will Feed You*, 2018) might recover the female body from the male gaze (a nearby video shows women splashing around in the basin like Diana without fear of Actaeon stumbling upon the scene) and celebrate women's fertility (the form suggesting an earlier incarnation of Diana as the many-breasted Artemis of Ephesus); their neoplastic proliferation might equally be read as monstrous. Yet revolutions are always represented as such by power, and the reclamation of this artificial space by (mother) nature seems here analogous to women's liberation from patriarchal systems.

Through a gap in the perimeter fence is a labyrinth of interlinked arenas resembling the forest clearings in which small-town adolescents gather. Videoworks depicting oblique rituals

on freestanding screens reinforce the sense of a fallen world, while across the faces of threatening stick-figures flash messages including, 'Together we could trespass all that you know and start a new story'. At the end of another branching corridor, past a small stage set for an absurdist recorded dialogue between a spotlighted can of pop and, on a facing plinth, a chocolate pastry, is a room that in its skeletal emptiness implies you've wandered backstage. Such trespass is actively encouraged: signs designed by Prouvost and dotted around different parts of the Palais de Tokyo instruct visitors to defy polite conventions like paying for a ticket, while gaps in the fence enclosing the garden offer visitors the opportunity to 'break into' it.

Which begs the question of what it means to transgress, and whether these witty and disarming speculations on the crossing of political, ecological and cultural borders are themselves capable of moving beyond the museum walls within which – for all the fictional constructs encouraging you to imagine otherwise – they are contained. The suspicion remains that, rather than cultivate a wider disrespect towards outside authorities, this garden of delights provides a playground for the safe satisfaction of visitors' rebellious desires. *Ben Eastham*



Ring, Sing and Drink for Trespassing, 2018 (installation view). Photo: Aurelien Mole. Courtesy the artist; Nathalie Obadia, Paris & Brussels; Carlier/Gebauer, Berlin; and Lisson Gallery, London & New York

The Art Newspaper
2nd October 2018



THE ART NEWSPAPER | FRIEZE ART FAIR | 3 OCTOBER 2018 ISSUE 1 | FREE EVERY DAY

SPECIAL ARTISTS' EDITION

Grayson Perry: the art fair as a rite of passage

Fresh from the success of his Channel 4 series *Rites of Passage*, the artist tackles the art fair

My first art fair was at Olympia in west London in 1986, which was a seemingly innocent occasion compared with nowadays; closer to the village hall than to Art Basel. I was showing with James Birch, who loaded his entire stand into a borrowed Citroën 2CV, with the shelves sticking out of the top. I was an innocent: I went to art school without ever having been to a contemporary art gallery, and I entered the fray of the market without knowing much about it. It's always been my practice to learn on the job. Showing at a fair just seemed like another thing that you do. It was when my work was



shown at Frieze with Victoria Miro in around 2004 that I really began to understand the potential and growing significance of art fairs. My two pots sold straight away, and I remember the instantaneousness of it—bang, the work goes up, it's sold and replaced by something else. There is something incredibly naked about that transaction compared with a gallery show, where you at least get the set-dressing that you're putting on a cultural event. At a fair, you might want things to look nice, but it's a shop—a sook.

Because of the nakedness and the speed of fairs, they are an opportunity for artists to embrace the commercial side and to find out if they're uncomfortable with it and whether they want to know about it. For me, it's a fascinating piece of anthropology to wander round the pre-, pre-, pre-opening, where you're confronted with the celebrities and the world's super-rich. Some [artists]—whom I won't call high-minded, but perhaps more intellectually orthodox—might struggle with it; they are making art about serious issues only to find that their political statements have noughts on the end.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

MASTHEAD BY
LAURE PROUVOST



Laure Prouvost took inspiration for her design from her grandmother. "Grand ma used to keep all The Art Newspaper to either put inside her coat to keep warm or to start a fire in the home chimney breast," she says. For her Frieze Live project, an opera singer will perform conversations overheard at the fair. A new tapestry called *Ahead of Us* (2018) and her film *DIT LEARN* (2017) are with Lisson Gallery at Frieze London.

INSIDE

DAVID SHRIGLEY

The UK satirist has designed an alternative front page to rival our own. More of his newspaper headlines can be found at Frieze London on Stephen Friedman's stand.



PLUS

Elmgreen & Dragset solve your art-world problems, **Pierre Huyghe** quizzes **Hans Ulrich Obrist**, **Paul Kinderley** does your make-up, **Tania Bruguera** explains how to fill the Turbine Hall, and much more...



Our artist takeover: letter from the editors

By **Julia Michalska** and **Emily Sharpe**, co-editors of The Art Newspaper's Frieze dailies

The art world would not exist without artists: most of us are at Frieze this week to buy, sell, enjoy, analyse and promote artists' works. But how do artists view the art world? What do they care about? We wanted to find out.

So we handed over our publication to 14 artists, who, over the course of a few weeks, took our places and our keyboards to create a special edition of The Art Newspaper's fair dailies.

At this year's edition of Frieze, the fair's organisers are marking

100 years since women were first given the right to vote in the UK. But like other industries, the art world still has a long way to go before gender equality is achieved. This week, you will find far fewer female artists than male in London's galleries and museums, and, on average, their works will be less expensive than those by male artists at the fair and at this week's auctions.

As our small contribution to current attempts to level the playing field, and to mark the centenary of women's suffrage, we

"This issue proves that artists can be journalists too"

asked four female artists—Laure Prouvost, Yayoi Kusama, Chiharu Shiota and Rachel Maclean—to redesign our masthead, the most prominent space we have available.

It has been said that everyone is an artist. This issue proves that every artist can be a journalist, too. But heaven help us if an artist ever asked The Art Newspaper team to pick up a paint brush.

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WEST

FRIEZE MASTERS
BOOTH H1

Vogue
26 September 2018

VOGUE

ART

Frieze London 2018: What You Need To See

As the art world descends on the capital, *Vogue* breaks down the masterpieces everyone should see in Regent's Park this year.

Frieze Live

The 2018 Frieze Live programme, "Control ~", takes its name from the command to reveal all formulas in a spreadsheet, so it's no surprise that the majority of the performances here will engage with the digital sphere in some way. Take Turner Prize-winner Laure Prouvost's contribution, which involves an opera singer listening to deeply private conversations around the fair then repeating them at top volume - an eye-opening meditation on the deceptive nature of privacy in the 21st-Century. Also of note? The five public telephones that will be installed as part of a work by French artist Camille Henrot, described as self-help hotlines for those seeking answers to life's most ridiculous (and pervasive) problems.



Intoxicated ascetics by Periji Opague, late 18th century | Courtesy of Francesca Calloway.

The Guardian
20 September 2018

**The
Guardian**

Frieze art fair

Frieze London art fair returns with gossiping opera singer

Series of talks, performances and film screenings will also feature at event next month



▲ Self-Loathing Flashmob by Hardeep Pandhal, at Frieze London. Photograph: Courtesy of Jhaveri Contemporary

Visitors to one of the world's most important art fairs may want to be careful what they say to their friends this year: the conversations could be repeated in public by an opera singer.

The Turner prize-winning artist Laure Prouvost will present a live work at Frieze London that will explore and comment on the increasing scrutiny of personal data.

Diana Campbell Betancourt, the curator of this year's Frieze Projects, said Prouvost would work with an opera singer "overhearing intimate conversations and performing these in an outburst of song in different places throughout the fair".

Other live events will include a piece by Liz Glynn involving dancers moving in response to sales, rumours of sales and volumes of people at the fair; and Camille Henrot installing five public telephones as self-help hotlines answering some of life's "most absurd problems".

The artist Julia Scher will employ two older women dressed as roaming security guards in vivid pink uniforms at the giant marquee in a piece that "explores a theme of elderly women being some of the most invisible people in society", said Campbell Betancourt.

The Frieze art fair first pitched its giant marquee in Regent's Park, central London, in 2003. It has grown massively, with versions in New York and next year, for the first time, at Paramount Studios in Los Angeles.



▲ Uriel Orlow's *Bounds (#2)* (2015), a chromogenic photograph mounted on diasec. Photograph: Courtesy of the artist and Laveronica arte contemporanea



It is primarily commercial but has a blizzard of other strands - including talks, performances, films, live works, free-to-view sculpture - which make it one of the most important events in Britain's visual arts calendar.

Tim Marlow, the artistic director of the Royal Academy of Arts and curator of this year's talks at Frieze Masters, said Frieze "changed the landscape of London and the art world", bringing an energy and sense of common purpose to this time of year.

"It is very interesting that there are certain artists who in the past wouldn't touch an art fair with a bargepole," he said. "There is never a problem asking an artist to get involved with the talks programme, or any form of curated projects."

Marlow said it showed how boundaries were increasingly blurred between the institutional and the commercial. Examples of that might include the first year of an emerging artist prize, funded by a group of young collectors, in which the winner will be rewarded with an exhibition at Camden Arts Centre. Tate will once again get £150,000 to spend at the fair on works for its collection.

Other events include the Frieze Debate at the Royal Institution where a panel of museum directors will debate museums in the 21st century.

At the heart of Frieze will be the 160 commercial contemporary art galleries selling works by artists including David Shrigley; and the 130 galleries at Frieze Masters selling works which might include bronze vessels from ancient China, medieval sculpture, or works of art by Degas, Kandinsky or Derek Jarman. The Dickinson gallery will recreate Barbara Hepworth's sculpture garden from St Ives, complete with pond.

● Frieze London and Frieze Masters take place in Regent's Park, London 5-7 October with previews on 3-4 October.

LISSON GALLERY

The New York Times
20 July 2018

The New York Times

THE STORY OF A THING

An Artist on the 'Magical Importance' of a 15-Year-Old Tea Bag



The artist Laure Prouvost in her Antwerp studio. Mieke Verbijlen

By Emily Spivack

July 20, 2018



In this series for T, Emily Spivack, the author of "Worn Stories," interviews creative types about their most prized possessions. Here, the Turner Prize-winning artist Laure Prouvost explains the role of tea in her work and life through a 15-year-old tea bag once used by her grandparents (partly fictional characters central to her practice). Prouvost currently has solo exhibitions at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris and The Bass in Miami Beach, and will represent France in next year's Venice Biennale.

My grandfather would use tea bags and then dry them on the heater to reuse them. He'd have four or five on the radiator at once. This one is a bit special. It was a tea bag my grandma put in her bath. She'd make a tea bath after the bags had been used a few times and the tea didn't taste so good. She just enjoyed it, the color. This tea bag is turning colors; it's a greenish color with pink. I asked my grandmother for it about 15 years ago. I keep it in a little box, a relic of my grandparents' lives.

A lot of my work starts around tea. One of my videos is called "Wantee." It's the name my grandfather's friend, Kurt Schwitters, used to call his girlfriend because she kept asking him, "Do you want tea?" So calling her *Wantee* was playful but it was also patronizing.



The tea bag Laure Provoust has held onto for 15 years. Mieke Verbijlen

I once showed a tea bag in an exhibition on a heater. It was the domestic entering a public space. People would tell someone working at the gallery, "Oh, someone's left their tea bag on the heater." It was a subtle work — it took time for people to notice it, and at the same time, they were like, *why is this there?* I've got a tendency to be attracted to the little things we're used to having around us that we may not notice, and to give them a kind of magical importance.

A tea bag is meant to be thrown away. Why would you dry it and reuse it? It makes me question how much we consume. I like that you can look at something that seems like nothing, like a very, very boring object, but it's got so much history — about colonization, migration, wars ... the whole history of tea is very complex.

In France, where I'm from, you don't drink much tea. In London, where I live now, it's every two hours. It's like having a cigarette. It's quite dominant. And a welcoming gesture. "Would you like a cup of tea?" is the first thing you ask when someone comes over. Living in London, I drink a lot of tea. You turn into what you surround yourself with, so sometimes I feel a little like a tea bag myself.

This interview has been edited and condensed.

A version of this article appears in print on July 22, 2018, on Page ST3 of the New York edition with the headline: Tea and Memory. Order Reprints | Today's Paper | Subscribe



Les Inrockuptibles
11 June 2018

les Inrockuptibles

La vidéaste Laure Prouvost au Palais de Tokyo : invitation à l'aventure

La vidéaste Laure Prouvost investit le Palais de Tokyo tout l'été avec son exposition *Ring, Sing and Drink for Trespassing*. Une invitation à la découverte et au retour de l'imagination dans l'art. Avec un je-ne-sais-quoi de british.

Viens, on s'échappe. Où ? Peu importe, pourvu que ce soit l'inconnu et l'aventure. Tout, dans l'univers de Laure Prouvost, invite à faire l'école buissonnière de la réalité. A 40 ans, l'artiste déploie autour d'elle un univers à la fois loufoque et poétique. Combinées à des installations, ses vidéos ouvrent sur des environnements proliférants qui ne laissent d'autre choix que d'accepter de s'y perdre.

Sous nos pieds s'ouvre une trappe, trappe donnant elle-même sur un tunnel creusé dans le sol de la salle à manger, tunnel si long qu'il est peut-être infini puisque personne n'en est encore ressorti. Et surtout pas "grandpa", ce grand-père artiste qu'elle s'invente et autour duquel elle construit tout une série d'œuvres, sans doute la plus connue à ce jour.



Titiller le démon endormi de l'imagination

En 2010, Laure Prouvost est invitée à exposer dans l'atelier de l'artiste conceptuel anglais John Latham dont elle fut l'assistante. Fraîchement diplômée du Goldsmiths College après un *bachelor* à la Central Saint Martins de Londres, elle présente une série de cinq vidéos dont *I Need to Take Care of My Conceptual Granddad* et *The Artist*. Pour beaucoup, c'est une révélation. Filmant le chaos que laisse derrière lui ce fameux grand-père, artiste incompris s'étant un beau jour volatilisé par le tunnel en question, l'artiste pose son style.

Alors que l'époque fétichise les faits et craint le *fake* au point d'avoir étouffé la fiction sous sa pâle cousine l'autofiction, quelqu'un ose à nouveau aller titiller le démon endormi de l'imagination. Quelque part entre le *nonsenses* de Monty Python et le "réalisme hystérique" d'un Thomas Pynchon, la Française s'inspire du meilleur de la culture anglo-saxonne pour y injecter sa fantaisie personnelle.

Lorsqu'elle devient en 2013 la première Française à remporter le Turner Prize, c'est encore l'histoire de "grandpa" et de "grandma" que l'on retrouve dans *Wantee*, l'installation vidéo primée par le plus prestigieux des prix anglais. "*My grands-parents are so happy, ils adorent aller en Italie !*", s'exclame d'ailleurs l'intéressée lorsqu'on la rencontre au Palais de Tokyo. Incorrigible, elle n'ôtera aucun des mille masques de fiction qui lui collent à la peau.

"L'idée de représenter une nation, it's kind of weird"

L'Italie, Laure Prouvost s'y rendra bel et bien. L'été prochain, c'est elle qui représentera la France à la Biennale de Venise. "*L'idée de représenter une nation, it's kind of weird. Ça reste quand même le point de vue d'une personne !*", glisse dans son anglais caractéristique celle qui deviendra la quatrième femme seulement à investir le pavillon français, après Annette Messager, Sophie Calle et Camille Henrot.

Des échappées géographique et mentale

Après des expositions au Musée de Rochechouart en 2015 et au Consortium à Dijon en 2016, le Palais de Tokyo lui consacre son premier solo-show parisien. Aussi insaisissable et vive qu'une anguille, rien d'étonnant à ce que Laure Prouvost ait d'abord gravité autour de la capitale et de ses institutions mastodontes. Sans grande surprise mais pour notre plaisir décuplé, son exposition est explicitement construite autour de l'idée d'échappée géographique et mentale.

Dans une scénographie qui évoque "*tant un œil grand ouvert qu'un sein*", on se faufile à travers un grillage puis par un couloir recouvert de tapisseries et d'un agglutinement de bric-à-brac, où l'on distingue aussi bien des framboises, des vases-fesses que des rétroviseurs. Enfin, le visiteur-aventurier parvient

jusqu'à un terrain vague où l'artiste aurait découvert un laboratoire dystopique oublié – un panorama qui donnera naissance à une nouvelle vidéo.

“Les mutations de la nature sous l'effet des actions humaines

“Il s'agit de pure fiction, mais en arrière-plan se dessine aussi la cause de toutes ces hybridations : les mutations de la nature sous l'effet des actions humaines.” Un “show-chaud” sur le “réchauffement cinématique”, glissera-t-elle encore, laissant par ces jeux de mots en rafale entrevoir le fonctionnement de son esprit. *“Quand je suis arrivée à Londres, je parlais vraiment très mal anglais. Si tu penses que quelqu'un parle d'un arbre alors qu'il s'agit d'un mur, ça ouvre beaucoup de portes !”*

Immédiatement séduisantes, les images hybrides de Laure Prouvost sont aussi une façon d'échapper à la rationalité du monde logocentrique, *“de ne pas forcément devoir faire des introductions et des conclusions”*. Il n'empêche, et l'exposition au Palais de Tokyo le prouve, il n'y a pas chez elle d'escapisme. La ligne serpentine qu'elle poursuit ne quitte jamais vraiment le réel mais restaure le pouvoir heuristique de la fiction. Imaginer d'autres mondes possibles, c'est à la fois signaler son mécontentement avec la situation actuelle et ne jamais tomber dans le ressentiment.

Ring, Sing and Drink for Trespassing Du 22 juin au 9 septembre au Palais de Tokyo, Paris XVIe, été 2019 à la Biennale de Venise.

Les Inrockuptibles
6 June 2018

les Inrockuptibles

Laure Prouvost, de l'autre côté du
miroir (et au Palais de Tokyo)



Laure Prouvost, vue de l'exposition "And She Will Say: Hi Her, Ailleurs, To Higher Grounds...", Kunstmuseum Luzern, 2016. "Behind the lobby doors, the pepper is in the right eye", 2016. Photo Marc Latzel. Courtesy de l'artiste et Nathalie Obadia (Paris / Bruxelles), carlier | gebauer (Berlin), Lisson Gallery (Londres / New York)

Elle représentera la France à la Biennale de Venise en 2019. En attendant, Laure Prouvost transforme dès l'été le Palais de Tokyo en jardin des délices génétiquement modifié. Entretien.

La cabane au fond du jardin est l'un des exemples sur lesquels s'appuie Michel Foucault pour formuler sa définition de l'hétérotopie. Localisation physique de l'utopie, il s'agit d'un lieu où les règles du monde ordinaires n'ont pas de prise. Pousser la porte de la cabane, c'est s'abandonner à la poésie de l'absurde et pénétrer dans un univers où les fontaines-seins abreuvent des framboisiers poussant en pleine terre ; où il est toujours l'heure de prendre le thé pour Grandma, qu'elle accompagne en guise de biscuits de l'histoire de la mystérieuse disparition son mari, grand artiste conceptuel incompris.

Voilà du moins à quoi ressemble une hétérotopie bien précise, celle qu'imagine depuis presque vingt ans l'artiste Laure Prouvost. A quarante ans, la Française désormais basée entre Londres et Anvers a construit l'un des univers les plus loufoques qu'il nous ait été donné de rencontrer depuis longtemps. Le constat est frappant lorsqu'on pénètre dans ses environnements mêlant vidéo et sculpture : notre époque aurait-elle oublié comment raconter une histoire ? L'imagination serait-elle en train de dépérir, étouffée par le fétichisme du vrai et des faits ?

La capacité d'étonnement de Laure Prouvost est intacte. Elle la cultive même, s'amusant éternellement des incompréhensions qui ne manquent pas de surgir lorsque l'on vit entre plusieurs langues. Un humour absurde et une poésie des petits riens qui la propulsent en héritière barrée de Monty Python et Thomas Pynchon, sous le regard bienveillant d'artistes conceptuels comme John Latham, qu'elle assista un temps. En 2013, elle est la première française à remporter le Turner Prize avec une épopée à la fois intime et loufoque autour de ses grand-parents fictifs. Après des expositions solo au Musée de Rochechouart et au Consortium à Dijon, sa jungle mutante investit dès mi-juin le Palais de Tokyo. Avant la consécration : Venise, à l'été 2019, où elle représentera la France.



Laure Prouvost, "It's All Happening Behind", 2015. Courtesy de l'artiste et Nathalie Obadia (Paris / Bruxelles), carlier | gebauer (Berlin), Lisson Gallery (Londres / New York)

En 2019, tu succéderas à Xavier Veilhan pour représenter la France à la Biennale de Venise. Quelle a été ta réaction en l'apprenant ?

Laure Prouvost - C'est une surprise, un honneur et une joie. *My grandparents are so happy*, ils adorent aller en Italie ! Même si l'idée de représenter une nation, *it's kinda weird*. Une exposition, ça reste quand même le point de vue et les histoires d'une personne bien précise.

Tu travailles justement à partir des contre-sens féconds qui surgissent lorsque l'on navigue comme toi entre plusieurs cultures. Penses-tu que cela fasse encore sens représenter une nation ?

C'est vrai que je me sens extrêmement française à présent ! Pendant très longtemps, ça n'a pas été le cas. La nationalité et les appartenances en général me semblaient très loin. J'étais artiste, je me moquais bien d'où je venais, exactement comme je ne voulais pas être réduite à une artiste femme. Avec le temps, ma position a évolué. La nationalité, ce n'est pas l'appartenance mais la complexité. En vivant hors de son pays natal, on s'en rend d'autant plus compte. Maintenant, j'habite entre Londres et Anvers et je représente la France.

Cette complexité de l'appartenance, je vais en parler dans les œuvres que je vais concevoir pour Venise. Lorsque je travaille, je pars de sujets assez clichés. La nation donc, mais aussi l'idée de génération, de culture, de mélanges, de migrations et les effets que cela crée sur notre perception du monde. Quand je suis arrivée à Londres pour étudier à la Central Saint Martins, je parlais vraiment très mal anglais. Si tu penses que quelqu'un parle d'un arbre alors qu'il s'agit d'un mur, ça ouvre plein de nouvelles perspectives !

Le potentiel poétique et absurde de la déformation des mots a-t-il toujours été présent dans ta démarche ?

Très rapidement. Comment articuler une sensation ? Comment dépasser une frustration des mots ? Lorsque je reviens en France, avec la distance, tout devient plus amusant. Dans le métro pour venir ici, j'ai entendu quelqu'un dire : "Occupez-vous de vos oignons !" J'ai trouvé ça tellement intrigant ! Quels oignons ? L'expression doit venir du Moyen-Âge, mais s'est perpétuée jusqu'à l'ère des iPhone. La langue est un terrain de jeu fascinant, qui remet en question chaque petite chose du quotidien.

Qu'est-ce qui t'a poussée à transformer les mots en images, à devenir artiste plutôt qu'écrivain ?

Écrire, c'était impossible ! J'étais nulle, les mots me faisaient peur. Alors que naturellement, j'étais très visuelle. Être artiste était une façon de m'échapper, de ne être obligée d'en passer des introductions et des conclusions. Je voulais pouvoir raconter des choses sans devoir le faire de façon logique. A Londres, j'étais en section "Film et Vidéo" aux Beaux-Arts. Je fréquentais aussi beaucoup le LUX, un lieu indépendant où se réunissait tout le milieu du cinéma expérimental.

Le choix de la vidéo s'est imposé de lui même, et c'est toujours le centre de ma pratique. Comme tout médium, la vidéo a sa texture et nous repositionne constamment dans le monde. Les pixels, la réalité virtuelle montrent que la

vidéo est aussi le médium qui vieillit sans doute le plus rapidement. L'œuvre dans son temps m'intéresse aussi, la prise de contrôle en fait partie. J'aurais pu me contenter de faire de la peinture, mais le monde dans lequel on vit est fascinant ; il faut jouer avec.

Quels artistes ont marqué tes années de formation ? Il y a un nom que tu évoques souvent, l'artiste conceptuel John Latham dont tu fus l'assistante...

Effectivement, il a joué un grand rôle pour moi. Il y a un film de lui de 1962 qui est génial, *Speak*. Une expérience très physique qui prend forme à partir de flashes de couleur et de formes abstraites. J'ai aussi eu la chance d'avoir comme prof John Smith. J'aime beaucoup un de ses films très drôle qui s'appelle *The Girl Chewing Gum* (1976). En plein Londres, il filme un coin de rue et commente en voix off les allées et venues, prétendant donner les ordres pour que se produisent les événements. Peter Kubelka a aussi beaucoup compté pour moi. Ainsi que plein de femmes, dont la femme et collaboratrice de John Latham, Barbara Stevini - elle-aussi une artiste extraordinaire.

La mythologie de l'artiste est très présente chez toi, notamment à travers les personnages récurrents de Grandpa et Grandma (Grand-Père et Grand-Mère). Disparu un beau jour par un tunnel creusé dans le sol du salon, Granpa est aussi un artiste incompris dont les œuvres prennent aujourd'hui la poussière chez Grandma, qui s'en sert désormais pour ranger la vaisselle. Comment ces personnages sont-ils apparus ?

Les grands-parents m'ont occupé pendant assez longtemps. Je voulais parler du grand artiste et du processus de l'histoire, de ce qui est resté ou non avec le passage du temps. Et en même temps, tout le monde a des grands-parents qui aiment raconter des anecdotes et peut s'y rapporter. Cette série est close, mais les souvenirs dans la vie, ils reviennent parfois par la petite porte. J'ai toujours beaucoup travaillé avec des personnages, tout en ne les montrant pas vraiment. Des mains et des voix me servent à les suggérer.

Les personnages me permettent d'introduire un aspect domestique et personnel tout en restant dans la fiction. Cela aide aussi à perdre la conscience de soi qui nous retient d'aller vers l'autre lors de nos échanges sociaux. En se rendant vulnérable, on se rend aussi disponible au partage. Ma façon d'y répondre a toujours été d'emprunter des chemins de traverse, d'aller par-dessous et par-derrière. En 2009, j'avais montré à LUX une vidéo qui s'appelait *Monolog*. J'y parodiais mon propre rôle d'artiste, en retournant l'attention sur le dispositif de l'image projetée.

Ton souci des affects, de la domesticité et des anecdotes personnelles te rapprochent de la méthodologie féministe des années 1970. Est-ce une démarche consciente de ta part ?

Ça l'est. Je ne suis pas du tout contre ce que l'on considère habituellement comme féminin. L'intellect n'est pas au-dessus de tout, les sensations peuvent être tout aussi complexes. Avec la série des œuvres autour de Grandpa et

Grandma, je me référais beaucoup aux arts mineurs et à ce que pourrait être une histoire de l'art élargie. Pour *Ring, Sing and Drink for Trespassing* au Palais de Tokyo, c'est la raison pour laquelle je présente des tapisseries. Mais ici, la thématique est différente. Si les arbres se mettent à porter des seins comme des fruits, c'est que la terre est infestée d'hormones. L'exposition est joyeuse et sensuelle, c'est l'été ; mais elle parle aussi du réchauffement climatique et de la contamination de l'environnement par l'action humaine.

Tes expositions sont un formidable remède à la raison cynique. Elles transposent aux arts de l'espace l'opération mentale qu'exigeait de son lecteur le poète anglais Coleridge : la "*suspension consentie de l'incrédulité*" ("*suspension of disbelief*"). Faut-il croire pour bien voir ?

Pour moi, il est surtout intéressant que ce ne soit pas clair. Le rêve et le réel, la fiction et l'action ne sont pas séparés. Je suis aussi assez influencée par le cinéma de la Nouvelle Vague ou par les films d'Alain Robbe-Grillet, parce que ces cinéastes se posaient encore la question de comment raconter une histoire. Aujourd'hui, il me semble que nous sommes dans des narrations beaucoup plus linéaires. Je comprends que l'humanité ait par moments besoin de se retirer dans un cocon laineux. Mais je suis certaine qu'il y a encore beaucoup d'histoires à inventer pour rendre le monde plus fascinant – même s'il n'en deviendra pas plus sûr.

Laure Prouvost, *Ring, Sing and Drink for Trespassing* du 22 juin au 9 septembre au Palais de Tokyo à Paris et au Pavillon français de la Biennale de Venise à l'été 2019.

LISSON GALLERY

Artforum

May 21, 2018

ARTFORUM

LAURE PROUVOST TO REPRESENT FRANCE AT 2019 VENICE BIENNALE



Laure Prouvost. Photo: Laure Prouvost / Tate.

French video and multidisciplinary artist Laure Prouvost will represent France in the Fifty-Eighth Venice Biennale, which will take place from May 11, 2019 to November 24, 2019. The French minister of Europe and foreign affairs, Jean-Yves Le Drian, and the French minister of culture, Françoise Nyssen, who are both members of the pavilion's selection committee, said that Prouvost's work is a "reflection of the dynamism of the French art scene."

Born in Lille in 1978, the artist studied in the United Kingdom and now lives and works in London and Antwerp. Known for her immersive and mixed-media installations that often address miscommunications and how things get lost in translation, Prouvost was awarded the Turner Prize in 2013 for her video installation *Wantee*, which featured a fictional film about her grandfather that was displayed in a recreation of

her grandparents' living room. Two years earlier, she received the Max Mara Art Prize for Women.

A major solo exhibition of the artist's work, titled "Ring, Sing and Drink for Trespassing," will open at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris on June 22, and a selection of her moving image installations is currently on view in the show "Laure Prouvost: They Are Waiting For You" at the Bass Museum of Art in Miami, which runs until September 2.

LISSON GALLERY

artnet news
May 21, 2018

artnetnews

MULTIDISCIPLINARY ART SENSATION LAURE PROUVOST WILL REPRESENT FRANCE AT THE 2019 VENICE BIENNALE



French artist Laure Prouvost poses with her work *Wantee*, a video installation set in a mock tea party, after she was announced as the winner of the 2013 Turner Prize. Photo by Peter Muhly/AFP/Getty Images.

The French ministry of culture has announced that the Turner Prize-winning artist Laure Prouvost will represent France in the 2019 Venice Biennale.

The French minister of Europe and foreign affairs Jean-Yves Le Drian and culture minister Françoise Nyssen elected Prouvost after she was nominated by a selection committee. Her international career is “a reflection of the dynamism of the French art scene,” said a statement from the ministry of culture, which also lauded Prouvost’s ability to take on both intimate and universal subject matter in her work.

The French Institute is organizing the French pavilion at the 58th edition of the Venice Biennale, which runs May 11-November 24, 2019.

Hana Noorali, who has worked with Prouvost at Lisson Gallery since the artist joined their roster last year, says that the gallery is “delighted” by the selection. “It is a huge honor and one we know she will take in her stride,” Noorali told artnet News. “It’s been incredible to watch and be part of her career developing, and to witness the success of her recent exhibitions, including earlier this year at Lisson Gallery New York. We are very much looking forward to working closely and supporting her as she takes on this milestone in her career.”

Prouvost was born in Lille in 1978, though she studied in the UK and now lives and works in London, Antwerp, and out of a caravan in the Croatian desert. She is the third female artist to represent France on her own, following Annette Messager in 2005 and Sophie Calle in 2007. (The installation and performance artist Lili Reynaud-Dewar co-represented the country with Céleste Boursier-Mougenot in 2015.)

Prouvost’s videos, installations, paintings, and tapestries experiment with notions of language and translation. Her multidisciplinary practice is often driven by narrative as she proposes alternative visions of the world, intertwining contemporary realities with fictional landscapes. Before winning the Turner Prize in 2013, she earned the Max Mara Art Prize for Women in 2011.

Before her pavilion opens in Venice next year, Prouvost will take over Paris’s Palais de Tokyo, June 22-September 9, with a solo show titled “Ring, Sing and Drink for Trespassing.” She is currently the subject of a show of moving-image installations titled “Laure Prouvost: They Are Waiting For You,” which is on at the Bass Museum of Art in Miami Beach until September 2, 2018.

Naomi Rea

LISSON GALLERY

LE FIGARO
May 21, 2018



LAURE PROUVOST RÉPRÉSENTERA LA FRANCE À LA BIENNALE DE VENISE 2019

C'est une jeune artiste de la scène anglaise, déjà récompensée à ce titre par le Turner Prize en 2013 qui représentera la France l'année prochaine à la Biennale de Venise. Laure Prouvost, aux installations loufoques et touchantes dans le sillage dada et à l'autofiction onirique, succède à Xavier Veilhan qui avait transformé en 2017 le pavillon français, petit palais orné comme un boudoir, en laboratoire postmoderniste et en expérience musicale au long cours baptisée «Studio Veilhan».



Laure xx

Prouvost, *IDEALLY THIS SIGN WOULD TAKE YOU AWAY FROM HERE*, 2016. Huile, collage et vernis sur panneau (30 x 40 x 2 cm) © Bertrand Huet / Tutti images
Courtesy de l'artiste et Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris / Bruxelles. B.HUET-TUTTI

Voici venu le temps d'un elfe de l'art, plein d'humour et de contes. Née à Lille en 1978, Laure Prouvost s'est formée au Royaume-Uni et vit et travaille entre Londres et Anvers. C'est à Londres qu'elle a choisi de faire sa formation, de Central Saint Martins (1999-2002) à Goldsmiths College (2007-2010).

La qualité de son œuvre et de sa jeune carrière lui ont valu de remporter le Max Mara Art Prize for Women en 2011 et le Turner

Prize en 2013. Laure Prouvost est désormais représentée par les galeries Nathalie Obadia (Paris, Bruxelles), Lisson Gallery (Londres, New York) et carlier/gebauer (Berlin) et a exposé dans de très nombreuses et prestigieuses institutions culturelles internationales.



Laure Prouvost, savant désordre et humour provocant. *Courtesy de l'artiste et Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris_Bruxelles*

Juste pour 2017, elle a notamment enchaîné *The wet wet wanderer*, au Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, Pays-Bas, *They are waiting for you*, au Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis avec l'Experimental Media and Performing Arts Centre (EMPAC), Troy, USA, *Softer and rounder so as to shine through your smooth marbelein*, à SALT Galata, Istanbul, Turquie, puis à la Serpentine Sackler Gallery, Londres, et enfin *Wot hit talk*, au Centre for Contemporary Art Laznia, CCA, Gdansk, Pologne et sur la High Line Art, New York.

Le Palais de Tokyo lui consacrera une exposition personnelle du 22 juin au 9 septembre 2018, intitulée *Ring, Sing and Drink for Trespassing*. Après Camille Henrot l'automne dernier, jeune star couronnée à Venise avec sa vidéo *Grosse fatigue*, artiste cotée représentée par la Galerie Kamel Mennour et vrai phénomène depuis son exposition fleuve *Dog Days* qui enthousiasma le public et partagea les critiques, c'est donc

un deuxième tourbillon féminin qui devrait prendre possession de ce temple de l'art contemporain, même si l'espace qui lui est dévolu est plus classique: l'Argentin qui fait tisser des milliers d'araignées, Tomás Saraceno, prendra la succession de Camille Henrot...

«C'est le choix de faire confiance à l'artiste de la scène française la plus inventive de sa génération, qui a déjà un très beau parcours international et que le Turner Prize a distinguée, il y a 5 ans. Laure Prouvost est très fière de représenter la France en 2019 à Venise. Elle est déjà en pleine réflexion!», commente, depuis Tirana, sa galeriste française Nathalie Obadia qui l'a exposée avec *Looking at you looking at us* à Paris en 2017.



Loufoquerie et art conceptuel au programme avec *Insecure Metal Man*, 2015. Technique mixte, métal, écran, vidéo (05'02") 216 x 56 x 50 cm © Bertrand Huet / Tutti images
Courtesy de l'artiste et Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris / Bruxelles. *Laure Prouvost*
Courtesy Galerie Nathalie Obadia

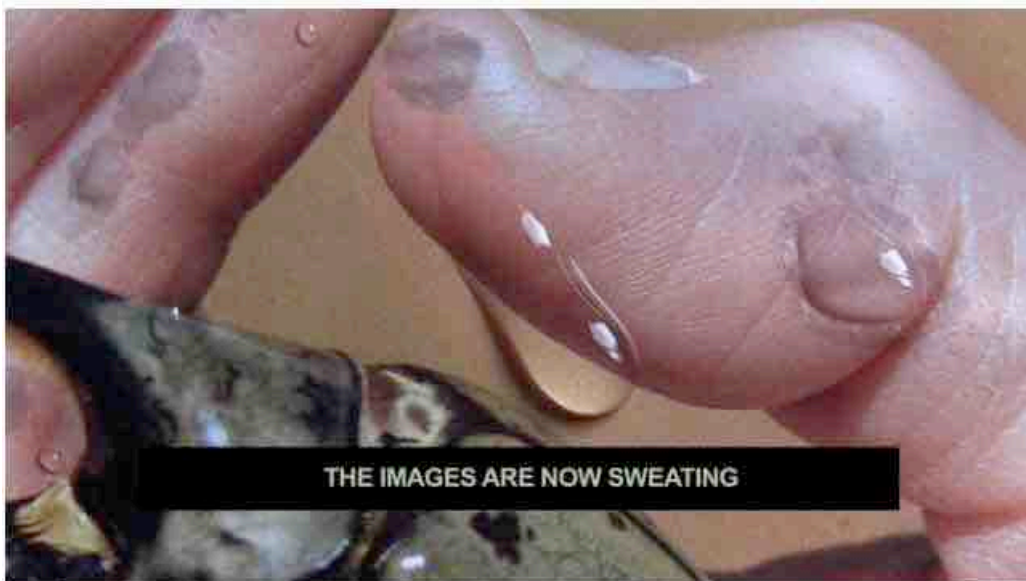
Laure Prouvost est un improbable mélange franco-britannique, une artiste à la fois conceptuelle et littéraire, un tempérament et un mystère. Il se dégage d'elle à la fois simplicité et sophistication. Décoiffée avec art, court sur les côtés comme un militaire, dru sur le dessus comme un zazou, riant à gorge déployée dans la Salle

des fêtes à l'Élysée, elle était la jeunesse incarnée au pays des costumes gris, lorsqu'elle fut décorée par le président François Hollande de l'ordre national du Mérite, en septembre 2016.

Cette fausse Anglaise, née en 1978 à Croix, aux portes de Lille, respirait l'assurance radieuse d'une fille de bonne famille, comme son patronyme, lié à l'histoire de l'industrie du Nord, l'indique.

Le comité a particulièrement retenu «sa capacité à se saisir de sujets aussi intimes qu'universels qu'elle déploie dans l'espace en usant de médiums extrêmement divers». Laure Prouvost joue, souligne-t-il dans son communiqué officiel, de la fiction et d'un rapport très personnel au langage et à sa traduction pour raconter avec humour et poésie son rapport aux choses, au corps et à la vie».

Le Pavillon français est mis en œuvre par l'Institut français, opérateur du ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères et du ministère de la Culture. Jean-Yves Le Drian et Françoise Nyssen «saluent le travail de Laure Prouvost dont la carrière internationale est à l'image du dynamisme de la scène artistique française dont elle sera l'ambassadrice pour la 58e édition».



Laure Prouvost, *Into All That Is Here*, 2015. Video HD 9'42" (Édition de 5 + 2 EA).
Courtesy de l'artiste et Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris / Bruxelles. *Courtesy de l'artiste et Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris / Bruxelles*

Valérie Duponchelle

LISSON GALLERY

connaissance des arts
May 22, 2018

connaissance des arts

LAURE PROUVOST REPRÉSENTERA LA FRANCE À LA 58E BIENNALE D'ART DE VENISE

Le Pavillon français de la prochaine Biennale internationale d'art de Venise, qui se tiendra du 11 mai au 24 novembre 2019, sera signé Laure Prouvost.

Jean-Yves Le Drian, ministre de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères, et Françoise Nyssen, ministre de la Culture, ont choisi Laure Prouvost pour représenter la France à la 58^e Biennale internationale d'art de Venise, qui se déroulera du 11 mai au 24 novembre 2019. Retenue sur proposition d'un comité de sélection, l'artiste aura pour tâche de concevoir le pavillon français en mettant à profit « *sa capacité à se saisir de sujets aussi intimes qu'universels qu'elle déploie dans l'espace en usant de médiums extrêmement divers* ».

Née à Lille en 1978, Laure Prouvost travaille entre Londres et Anvers. Diplômée du Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design (2002) et du Goldsmiths College (2010) de Londres, l'artiste développe une œuvre éminemment singulière, jouant « *de la fiction et d'un rapport très personnel au langage et à sa traduction pour raconter avec humour et poésie son rapport aux choses, au corps et à la vie* ». Représentée par les galeries Nathalie Obadia (Paris, Bruxelles), Lisson Gallery (Londres, New York) et carlier|gebauer (Berlin), elle expose régulièrement dans de prestigieuses institutions culturelles internationales (Walker Art Centre de Minneapolis, Whitechapel Gallery de Londres, le Centre Pompidou à Paris, etc.), tandis que ses œuvres continuent d'intégrer différentes collections publiques à travers le monde (MAC/VAL de Vitry-sur-Seine, Kunsthalle Luzern, Suisse, ou encore The Red Brick Art Museum de Beijing, Chine). Après avoir reçu le Max Mara Prize for Women en 2011, Laure Prouvost est la première artiste française à être lauréate du Turner Prize, en 2013. Comptant parmi les artistes les plus reconnus de la scène contemporaine internationale, elle a organisé sa première exposition personnelle en France en 2014, à la galerie Nathalie Obadia, et investit le Palais de Tokyo dès le 22 juin prochain avec sa nouvelle exposition « RING, DRINK AND SING FOR TRESPASSING ».

Anne-Sophie Lesage-Münch

LISSON GALLERY

The Art Newspaper
May 22, 2018

THE ART NEWSPAPER

FROM EVA ROTHSCHILD TO LAURE PROUVOST: WOMEN TO
MAKE THEIR MARK AT VENICE BIENNALE 2019
FEMALE ARTISTS ARE SET TO REPRESENT AUSTRIA, FRANCE,
IRELAND AND THE UK AT THE 58TH EDITION OF THE EXHIBITION



Laure Prouvost © The artist

More participants have been announced for the Venice Biennale 2019 (11 May-24 November), with female artists due to represent France, Austria, Ireland and the UK.

The multimedia artist Laure Prouvost, who won the Turner Prize in 2013, will fly the flag for France, the French Ministry of Culture has announced. The first solo exhibition of her work at a major institution in Paris launches at the Palais de Tokyo this month (22 June-9 September).

“As an artist, I often like to lose control, just allude to certain things, so that everyone can form their own interpretation,” Prouvost says. Her film *Wantee* (2013) featured a fictional grandfather who apparently befriended the German Dadaist Kurt Schwitters.

The artistic director of the 2019 Venice Biennale will be the director of London's Hayward Gallery, Ralph Rugoff.

Gareth Harris

LISSON GALLERY

Elephant

28 February 2018

ELEPHANT



Studio Visit: Laure Prouvost

“I am mostly looking to bring a bit of weirdness to the world. Humour can be a means of saying things that are harder to articulate: you can be provocative.” Former Turner Prize winner Laure Prouvost invites Jess Saxby into her Antwerp studio to talk word-play and social media delusion ahead of her Lisson Gallery show opening in New York.



Laure Prouvost is the dream interviewee. Despite diligently responding to my questions with serious and insightful descriptions of her working processes, and conceptually unpacking some of her more opaque works, she remains playful. One seemingly serious response is interjected with a wry digression from under a raised eyebrow: “As you know, I now live in the middle of the Croatian desert.” Reality shows otherwise. We are here in her Antwerp studio, where she has lived for the last three years with her partner and their two young children. But this diversion from the perceived truth is what underpins much of Prouvost’s practice; she is fascinated by the blurring of fiction and reality and, in the age of Donald Trump, what could be a more prescient topic?



If I’ve counted correctly, you had at least four institutional exhibitions last year, as well as other gallery shows, performances, screenings and talks. Can you talk about your rate of production and your rhythm of working?

The speed of the world is something that is quite overwhelming in some ways, but at the same time I think I run best on adrenaline: I’m kind of like a fox! There is nonetheless a lot of teamwork involved; I could never do what I do on my own. My work is always produced through interactions with curators, my assistants, and various other people around me. It can become a mode of production that is closer to the film industry in some senses.

A lot of preparation goes in before each show, but what really works for me is when I can spend time at the location before the opening in order to really respond to the space. A lot of my pieces are created in situ. I suppose it is another way of me dealing with such a quantity of work.

It's interesting to hear you compare your team to a film crew. How has your practice expanded over the years?

I used to be very scared of large-scale anything; I enjoyed intimacy, sharing ideas with people who came to visit, even if it was only fictional intimacy. But scaling up has become easier and I am enjoying it now. It helps to work with different people on different elements of a piece. For example, to produce a huge sculpture is to try and play with the ways in which people move around a space and the way the space itself is then perceived, which sometimes means that I work with a designer. On my side things are much more imaginary: I imagine how I could shift the dimensions of a space, but I also want to physically engage with occupying space.



Your work spans almost every single medium. How did you end up creating performances?

I don't really like making performances, but I was asked to create them a few times and they must have been good enough to have people wanting more! A lot of people think that my installations are very close to the performativity of the body and the way visitors interact with a space. But to make a performance is something else because people are sat and there is a strong division between performer and audience, and I found that tricky because my work is

all about pulling you in. I am trying to work out how to break down this divide.

“The speed of the world is something that is quite overwhelming in some ways, but at the same time I think I run best on adrenaline: I’m kind of like a fox!”

How has physical space become so important for you as an artist whose main domain is film and sound?

Film and video are still my main mediums, but it is the demands of society that have controlled me! When I began to exhibit, it was only really at festivals or in places like the Tate screening rooms, but then I got invited to exhibit in more three-dimensional spaces and the work had to change. I also began to take an interest in the barriers between video and what then remains—the relics. You are sat on one of the props that I filmed; it is the sofa on which my granddad met his first love... or something like that. These are relics of fiction that in their new life become more real and start to beg the question of where reality feeds in and out, like when dreams become more real than what we experience in reality.



This blending of reality and fiction is no longer just an artist’s concern; it is something that has become politicized, with Trump, with social media, with the advent of virtual reality...

I think it is all one thing. For me, it all blends. Social media is an interesting phenomenon: you create a character, like in a work of fiction, and you put forward an image you want to present. It is insecurity that morphs into a character. But it is at the same time

very creative. It is when you lose yourself in it that it becomes complex. I do think this is also something we've always done though, only now it's more visible. We imagine ourselves a certain way but we have no idea how others perceive us. We need others to realise this projection of our character, and then we lose control.

What is the importance of language for you? This idea of identity coming from observation by others reminds me of the title of your last Paris show “Looking At You Looking At Us” — how do these titles inform your work?

Words are something I struggled with a lot when I was younger. Language is not something I feel comfortable with, I suppose that's why I decided to make art, but I still constantly go back to words. With “Looking At You Looking At Us” it is about the critical power that the viewer (rightfully) has, but the anxiety that that induces. I often play with this idea of the object itself becoming as sensitive as a person, as if they are anxious about their history and their future—Will I be put into storage again? Am I going to be thrown out? What is my value in this world? — it speaks of direct exchanges between viewer and object as well as the vulnerability of the object. But at the same time as being philosophical and complicated, it is supposed to be cynical and funny: obviously human interactions are so much more gratifying than talking to a machine.



Yet these machines (wire sculptures with LED TVs for heads, broadcasting intimate messages) are able to elicit almost genuine emotion in the viewer.

I think the power of the voice is that it has a real intimacy. These sculptures are also very direct, they say “I love your trousers today”; it’s cheesy the way they try to please. It kind of corresponds to the way that we are building relationships with machines these days. The washing machine is a robot that we’ve had around for a long time, and we’re getting more used to their presence and getting more intimate in our relationships with them. These sculptures are also funny because they look so redundant compared to the talking gadgets that we really engage with.

“We imagine ourselves a certain way but we have no idea how others perceive us. We need others to realise this projection of our character, and then we lose control.”

Your work can be read as socially engaged, but you prefer to speak of humour. What is the role of humour in your work?

I am mostly looking to bring a bit of weirdness to the world. Humour can be a means of saying things that are harder to articulate, you can be provocative, or address things that you wouldn’t otherwise be able to deal with. Some of this humour comes from my relationship with language; because English is not my mother tongue, I question every word that I speak, and when you have this kind of distance with a language, you are able to play around with it more and question its form. You can be more creative with it and you can misuse it. It creates a kind of conceptual humour. I think there is another layer to this as well when you are a foreigner in a different country, there is a further degree of separation, and you are slightly removed from society. This space can be creative; you can observe from the outside. I think it’s interesting to bring into view things that you might have been misunderstood, or are in the process of understanding.

It seems like you are trying to subtly subvert the space that the art world is handing to you.

Yeah, it’s an elitist place, and I enjoy bringing misunderstanding and complexity to that.



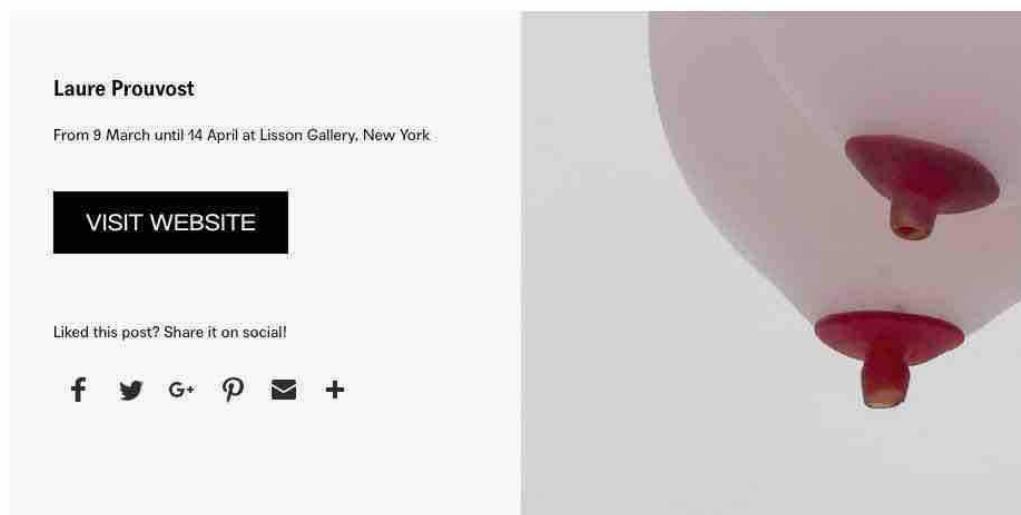
Do you see it as your role as an artist to enact these small subversive gestures?

People might not think that my work is at all political but I think that the imagination is political; freedom of speech is political in the way I'm reinterpreting things and re-transcribing things. The most important thing in my work is to provoke the way of the world, to question the norms, to try and understand why we think a certain way. Maybe my work is also supposed to confuse a little bit rather than just give answers. I'm happy if there is a little bit of provocation, if I've questioned the way you've been thinking, or even if it just provokes a feeling; if you feel extremely liberated or happy or confused then I am happy. Activism in art doesn't have to be literal. I think if our activist act can be something that engages the imagination then that's great. I think that even the act of bringing people together in an art space to grow these questions can be very liberating.

What about the act of creating, do you personally find that a liberating force?

No. But I love creating. I don't think I could live without questioning the world in this way. But it is also really hard work. Ideally this interview will make visible what you have misunderstood.

Photography © Estelle Parewyck



Laure Prouvost

From 9 March until 14 April at Lisson Gallery, New York

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The photograph on the right shows a white teapot with two red spouts, one above the other, against a light background.

LISSON GALLERY

art agenda
Spring 2018

art
agenda

Laure Prouvost

LISSON GALLERY, New York

March 9–April 14, 2018
by ALAN GILBERT

Eager to see the art in Laure Prouvost's first solo exhibition at Lisson Gallery in New York, visitors might breeze through its central installation: *Uncle's Travel Agency Franchise, Deep Travel Ink. NYC* (2016–18). Situated at the entrance to the gallery, it looks like an unkempt and outdated version of an art gallery's normally pristine front desk featuring a guest book, a stack of press releases, and a 3-ring binder containing an artist's curriculum vitae and relevant press materials. Instead, Prouvost has surrounded the gallery attendant with promotional airline posters, maps, a bookshelf lined with travel guides, a coat rack and umbrella stand, an outmoded printer, a dirty water cooler, and even the requisite framed family photo on the desk. To the right of this configuration is a table with two chairs and a ceramic teapot in the shape of a pair of buttocks that is the first explicit clue to the whimsy and weirdness of Prouvost's art.

The exhibition's conceit is that all the work on display—including installation, sculpture, painting, textile, and video—is connected to this travel agency. Three other workstations feature stacks of plane-ticket receipts and travel magazines with the company name, "Deep Travel Ink," printed on white labels affixed to their front covers. (Born in France, but currently living in London and Antwerp, Prouvost's work revels in these kinds of puns and misspellings in English.) But in fact some of these pieces have been repurposed for the exhibition: one of the workstations is from 2012, and *Uncle's Travel Agency Franchise* had a previous iteration at Museum für Moderne Kunst in Frankfurt am Main in 2016. While everything aims to fit within the rubric of a fictional office catering more to the imagination than actual destinations, at times the exhibition feels like a conglomeration of mini installations.

Also tying the show together are works featuring Prouvost's fictional family. Prouvost won the Turner Prize in 2013 for a film and installation (*Wantee*, 2013) dedicated to her grandfather, a conceptual artist and friend of Kurt Schwitters who lived in England's Lake District in a shack under which he dug a tunnel, crawled into it, and disappeared forever.

This grandfather makes a cameo appearance at Lisson, as does his wife, who turns out to be a conceptual artist herself with two cheeky paintings—one featuring more buttocks—partly hidden behind heavy curtains. Then, of course, there is the uncle who supposedly runs the travel agency. None of these people are real; and despite this male presence, the female figure—and anatomy—predominates.

One of the exhibition's central pieces consists of a cluster of blown-glass pink breasts with red nipples that stream water into a basin in which small goldfish swim and two smartphones are sunk (*We Will Feed You, Cooling Fountain [For Global Warming]*, 2018). More discreet breasts are attached to the metal stick figures with flat-screen heads sitting behind two of the travel agency workstations. "We can take you to different places," utters one of these screens in a female voice, signaling the metaphoric intent of Prouvost's vision. The tension is between staying on the surface and going deeper. There are numerous small details for the patient viewer to discover and plenty to be read on screens and more traditional materials: "IDEALLY HERE BE SOME STAIRS TO GET HIGHER" proclaim white letters on a black wood panel titled after its text (2016). This dynamic between surface and depth is best represented by the two video installations. Overtly Freudian in referencing her grandfather's tunnel, *Into All That Is Here* (2015) features footage of moving through dirt and soil accompanied by audio urging "dig deeper" before bursting into a sunny montage of flowers shot close-up to resemble female genitalia that in a few instances bees come to visit. The floor of the back gallery space housing this projected video is covered in soil, which may feel fecund, dirty, or something else, depending on one's response to the work's sexualized imagery.

This is in contrast with the pale blue walls and neatly carpeted floor of the space containing the projected *Monteverdi ici* (2018). It features a naked woman outdoors with her back to the camera (more buttocks) making gentle movements with her arms. Flowers appear in this video as well, although this time they aren't eroticized, and it ends with footage of a small child on a swing—perhaps the offspring of *Into All That Is Here*. *Monteverdi ici* moves away from the earlier video's hetero-genital focus to return to the skin's surface, with its long shot of the woman from behind. It also confirms a maternal element within the exhibition's mix of female figures. Together, the two videos track a different trajectory than the travel agency's fantastical journeys, while sharing their fragmenting approach to the female body.

Alan Gilbert is the author of two books of poetry, *The Treatment of Monuments* and *Late in the Antenna Fields*, as well as a collection of essays, articles, and reviews entitled *Another Future: Poetry and Art in a Postmodern Twilight*.

LISSON GALLERY

Star Tribune
February 2018



STAGE & ARTS

Walker Art Center closes Laure Prouvost exhibition with world premiere performance



February 09, 2018 - 12:00 AM

'They Are Waiting for You'

Last October, the Walker Art Center opened an alluring, humorous and sometimes baffling exhibition featuring French artist Laure Prouvost's conceptual installation work. With the exhibition closing this weekend, the Walker presents a companion performance for which Prouvost teamed up with dancer/choreographer Pierre Droulers and filmmaker/photographer Sam Belinfante. Also featuring musicians from New York and Minnesota, this promises to be an enticing, mysterious and infectious show filled with video, choral music and dance. (8 p.m. Fri. & Sat., Walker Art Center, 725 Vineland Pl., Mpls., \$15, 612-375-7600, walkerart.org.)

Sheila Regan

L I S S O N G A L L E R Y

Sleek
Summer 2017

SLEEK

Damn
May 2017

DAMN°

The fantastical world of
Laure Prouvost

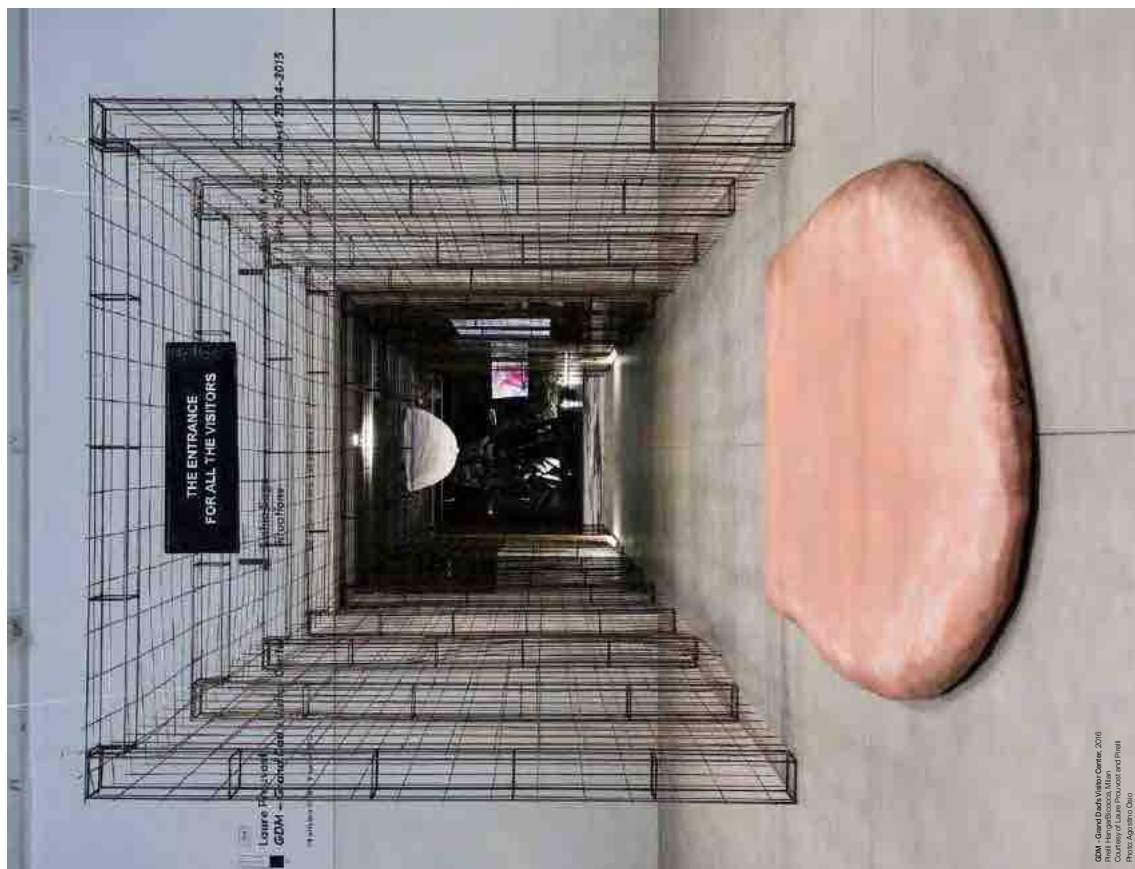
Setting tongues wagging

95

56

Since winning the Turner Prize in 2013, French visual artist Laure Prouvost has familiarised the world with the quirky universe in which she combines film and installation in a most idiosyncratic way, which is as alienating as it is humorous. This is certainly the case with the immersive installations she's currently showing at the HangarBicocca in Milan and the Witte de With in Rotterdam. For the latter, the artist has translated a sequence from her video *The Wanderer* into a post-apocalyptic landscape where not only does it rain indoors but the fountains also spout vodka. *DAMN°* had a chat with Prouvost to survey her creative imaginings.

Text SAM STEVENS/YNCK



DAMN°, Grand Palais, Paris, France, 2016
Photo: YNCK
Courtesy of Laure Prouvost and Phyllis
Press/Agostino Gibo

use a dictionary, hence exercising his poetic license to the full. Continuing this game of layering and miscommunication, Prouvost decided to put the sequences of her film into a series of immersive installations. She has presented these in various venues in the world from Toronto to London, and now also in Milan and Rotterdam. "My work is about translation and miscommunication", she says, with a rather strong French accent. "I went into art because I felt I was inarticulate and unable to use words. I thought that this way I could fully express myself. But then I realised I use a lot of text in my work and I talk non-stop. I love playing with language and I use it as a tool for the imagination. Being a foreigner in London, I'm an outsider who doesn't speak the "right" English, which creates miscommunication." With her personal story as a backdrop, it was no surprise that Prouvost was intrigued by Maebeth's mistranslation of Kafka. "As his translation was already quite surrealistic, I decided to take it a step further by adding another mistranslation. I placed the main characters in everyday life, sometimes using lines from his book."

In Prouvost's world, Kafka's protagonist, Gregor Samsa, has become an alcoholic writer who writes his texts using a real squid and – surprisingly enough – makes a living working in an African hair salon. "It is all about the clash of cultures and about misunderstandings", Prouvost informs. The artist shot the entire film three or four years ago over a course of a couple of months. "It consists of seven sequences, for each of these, I followed another concept and used another location. You have the Wet sequence, the Drunk sequence, and the Time sequence. For the Drunk sequence, it is not only the people who appear drunk but also the shaky camera. In Witte de With, I am showing the Wet sequence, which was filmed in a pub in Balston (London) where it was constantly raining, and the characters sitting inside are soaked. When Witte de With commissioned me to make an exhibition, I decided to use this sequence, as I had never put it into an installation before. I thought it might be great to do a very wet show in this current situation where everything is falling apart. And Trump is not really helping. In it, the carpet is full of water and there is water dripping from the windows. It's raining inside instead of outside, which creates a semi-apocalyptic landscape. It's not the most joyous installation but there's a lot of humour. It's quite a sad show, in a way, as if the room is crying and saying: 'What have we done to the world?'"



the wet/wet/wet, 2017
Witte de With, Rotterdam



The Wanderer, 2013
Galleria Scenarium
Galleria d'Arte Moderna
Punta Arenas, Chile, 2013
Photo: Agostino Ottio

THE FRENCH artist Laure Prouvost, based in London and Antwerp, is known for her wacky videos and installations. Like Wanteee, about the life of her fractious grandfather, a conceptual artist said to be a close friend of Kurt Schwitters and who allegedly disappears one day while digging a tunnel that links his studio to Africa. As if the video in itself was not crazy enough, Prouvost added an installation to complement it, consisting of, amongst other things, a long table with pottery and teacups sculpted in the shape of bottoms alongside plenty of other awkward items, all beckoning visitors to attend this bizarre tea table. Much to her own surprise, the piece was not only shortlisted for the Turner Prize in 2013 but even won it. In 'The Wanderer', a feature film in seven sequences, Prouvost adapted a motion picture very loosely based on a translation from German into English of a novel by Kafka made by her artist friend Rory Maebeth. This was not just your average translation, however, as the friend does not speak a word of German and did not

IDEALLY
HERE WOULD
BE A PORTRAIT
OF THE ARTIST

Courtesy of Laura Prouvost and artist gallery, Berlin



Wet, 2013
Witte de With, Rotterdam
Dimensions variable
Schwitters-Bühneninstallation
Photo: Lucy Dawkins / Tate

ArtReview
April 2017

ArtReview

Laure Prouvost: the wet wet wanderer

On misinterpreting Kafka, 'translating' a film into an exhibition... and vodka
By **Dominic van den Boogerd**



Laure Prouvost, the wet wet wanderer, 2017 (installation view). Photo: Aad Hoogendoorn. Courtesy Witte de With Center for Contemporary...

Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, 27 January – 2 April

From the street he is clearly visible: the man-size cleaner, a stick figure fashioned from wire with a monitor for a head, mopping the floor on the other side of the window. His screen shows text flashing past. 'I need to clean the floor,' it says, 'cleaning the mess of Gregor and his octopus.' He seems to want to entice passersby inside. 'Come and join us / come to the bar / have a glass of vodka.' Act upon the invitation and you enter a thoroughly drenched environment, as if it were somehow raining indoors. Water streams down the windows (and runs to a gutter, from where it's pumped around the system again). The white carpet is wet. The walls have been sprayed with diluted ink. Sogginess abounds.

Where have we ended up? Who is this Gregor? A video on a screen under a glass water tank gives a clue: Gregor Samsa turns out to be a tortured writer, frantically trying to write in octopus ink freshly obtained from the market. The black liquid splashes in all directions. Then we see the writhing arms of an octopus and hear pitter-pattering raindrops and a woman's groans, lending the images a suggestion of sultry eroticism. Splayed out beside the tank is the flaccid body of an octopus, cast in bronze.

Samsa is the protagonist of Prouvost's six-part film *The Wanderer* (2012) – an excerpt from which is on show, and which the rest of the exhibition 'translates' into installation. The film is based on a curious translation of Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis* (1915): curious because the work was translated from German into English by someone with no knowledge of German whatsoever, resulting in all kinds of absurd misunderstandings. What can be confidently ascertained is that Kafka's original tale has been completely lost. Prouvost, a French artist who has lived in the UK since she was nineteen, loves this kind of communication breakdown.

This obviously does nothing for the story's intelligibility. On several areas of the carpet, pools of synthetic resin – in which all manner of rubbish has coagulated: rusty beer cans, halved gherkins, shoes, mussels, many twigs and leaves – have been deposited. Like the large branch with a soaked scarf hanging from it, attached high onto the wall, and the two dripping suits suspended from the ceiling, the pools appear to mark a place where something dramatic has happened. The suggestion of death by drowning raises its head, but never takes concrete form. Two drawings on panels, smudged with wax, show ghostly figures breathing through a tube.

The eye-catcher in the installation is the vodka bar, bathed in black light. Resting on two tables are fountains spraying diluted ink, surrounded by numerous vodka glasses in which the ink has already sunk to the bottom (and there's no vodka in there). White neon letters on the wall read: 'Citizens or gods, men are truly stuck'. Samsa's lamentation also resounds from speakers, alternated with shards of conversations and the instantly recognisable guitar intro from Prince's *Purple Rain*.

Words transform into images, images into sounds; it's a multiple collision of signs and meanings. The staging is intriguing, rousing one's curiosity but hard to get a handle on. 'Slippery when wet' would be an understatement here. The existential angst manifest in Kafka's novella, the sense of alienation and exclusion, have made way for a steamy interplay of forces around drinking and drowning in which the problem of writing, of the imagination itself, comes floating to the surface. *La Pluie (projet pour un texte)*, a short film by Marcel Broodthaers from 1969, springs to mind. The artist sits outside at a low table, writing in a notebook with a fountain pen while rain comes down in torrents, washing the words away; the man continues to write regardless. Both Broodthaers and Prouvost consider the translation of one language into another – literature into film, film into sculpture – and everything that can get lost in the process. Every translation is inadequate, gets out of hand, leads to absurd misunderstandings, but is carried out with tenacity nonetheless, imagination running riot. 'One last shot of vodka?' the cleaner asks. Sure, why not?

LISSON GALLERY

The Guardian
15 November 2015



Laure Prouvost
Seven ages of an artist

Laure Prouvost, 37: 'I feel I have lived many lives'

The London-based French artist who won the Turner prize in 2013 is glad success didn't find her before her 30s



Laure Prouvost in her east London studio: 'The older generations know things. They have lived.' Photograph: Antonio Olmos for the Observer

My art is about blurring the boundary between fiction and reality. It is about audience - about digging deeply and, maybe, getting lost. I am 37. I am interested in the way we humans love to organise things age-wise. It is interesting that we want to say: you belong in that decade, yet emotions are ageless - timeless.

It was difficult starting my career. I studied at St Martin's where I focused on film and video. I learned to be independent, although after leaving art school I struggled financially. My dad was more a dreamer than a businessman, the sort of man who was always trying to invent things and work out how we would survive. My mum was a teacher.

The older generations know things. They have lived. They have a sense of peace within age. I have had a mentor who was important to me: John Latham, a British conceptual artist in his 80s. I used to assist him and the great thing about working with someone of that generation was that he had no need to prove himself. He had lived through the war and had a different way of consuming - in a good way. We'd dry teabags out on the heaters and reuse them. It was nice to have, through him, a distance on the art world. He was very focused.



A visitor passes Laure Froux's sculpture *It's All Happening Behind* at the Grand Palais in Paris, October 2015. Photograph: Theo Duval/Xinhua Press/Corbis



For at least eight years, I had little time to focus on my art. When I won the Turner prize [2013], it was a surprise because I did not know people would care about the story I was telling. When people outside England got interested, the French were suddenly saying: "Oh, she's French, she's got a French history as well." They were quick to claim me. The Turner prize means I show a lot more internationally. I am a bit more focused now. I love London. I have been here 17 years. I feel this is my home and that it is everybody's home in some way.

I have a two-year-old daughter and a baby son: Celeste and Isidore. Lucky! Ticking boxes! I have become more efficient. I use my time well. I need to make sure I make enough money to pay for nannies and creches. I have to be really on it when I have the time. But it is also important in art to have time in which to get lost - I'm missing moments of that sort. Luckily, I'm at the stage where I know my practice, so I can make decisions quickly. Sometimes, you can question things forever. Since Isidore was born, I have had two shows - one in a French castle in the middle of nowhere, the other in Vilnius, where they dug an amazing tunnel to show one of my videos. It has been a busy time and you need help when you are a mother. When you have really bad nights, you think: Oh God, how am I going to manage?

Do I think about my age? I feel I have lived many lives. I see Celeste growing so quickly and think: how is it possible that in a year and a half when I seem to stay the same, this child is changing constantly? In the art world, it sometimes seems you are either very old and established or in a middle time when it is a bit quieter. I'm lucky my work started to be supported in my 30s - it is hard to be picked up really young, because you have not tried enough and have not got lost enough.

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The New York Times
20 October 2015

The New York Times

ART & DESIGN | ART REVIEW

Laure Prouvost, an Artist of Theories and Influences

By MARTHA SCHWINDENSKY / OCT. 20, 2015



In her [current show](#), [Laure Prouvost](#), a French-born artist who won the Turner Prize in 2013, combines the punchy urgency of movie trailers with ideas derived from film and literary and psychoanalytic theory. The central work, "It, Heat, Hit," is a six-minute movie screened in a small, trapezoidal theater built for this show. The film starts with an announcement: The characters are glad you are here; they "need you to exist." But if you don't "collaborate," you'll be asked to leave. The film then hurtles into a series of jump-cut images that veer from the sensual (a feather grazing the camera lens) to the bucolic (horses and landscapes) and the suggestively violent (objects being chopped).

On the wall opposite the mini-theater is a row of texts offering fictional viewer responses. The butcher's wife thought the film was "modern and different," and the priest felt "apprehensive, nervous and deeply unsettled." The ironmonger responded by making a twisted metal object, while the psychoanalyst observed that "the provocation of the gaze provokes sexual satisfaction."

All of this feels familiar. Freud and Lacan are cited in the texts, and the film owes a clear debt to theorists like Roland Barthes, Laura Mulvey and Teresa de Lauretis, and particularly the filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard. (There are also echoes of Surrealism, the Situationists, Sophie Calle and Bernadette Corporation.) Nonetheless, the work is seductive — that is, until the last seconds of the film when the pictures disappear and the narrator commands you to leave the room. Suddenly the liberated reader proposed by Barthes in essays like "The Death of the Author" (1967) is banished, and Ms. Prouvost reminds you who's really in charge of the artwork.

The Evening Standard
10 October 2014

EveningStandard.

Art scene queen: Laure Prouvost

Everyone wants a piece of Laure Prouvost since she won the Turner Prize for her virtual world videos. She talks to Ben Luke about her new state-of-the-digital-art group show, her baby daughter and why Tracey Emin is wrong about mothers and art

[WEB LINK](#) | Friday 10 October 2014 14:35 | [0 comments](#)



Smashed it: Laure Prouvost (Picture: Adrian Louie) [Adrian Louie](#)

When Laure Prouvost won the Turner Prize last year it was impossible not to smile. The French-born artist was utterly astonished to have won, kissing her then 10-week-old baby on stage and making an ecstatic and heartfelt speech with exclamations – “Oh my God, I’m not ready!” – along with thanks to her child, partner and “everyone I have loved and love”. She also expressed gratitude to the British nation: “Thank you for adopting me.”

Prouvost’s immersion in Britain’s art world, and especially London’s, is reinforced next week in an exhibition that’s among the highlights of the annual contemporary art explosion around the Frieze art fair. Mirrorcity will fill the Hayward Gallery with work by more than 20 artists and collectives based in London, from upstarts Lucky PDF to senior figures such as Susan Hiller.

It’s a state-of-the-art show about artists making their way in the increasingly digital world, trying to make sense of our real and virtual existence.

Prouvost, who creates pacy, intense, colourful and atmospheric videos set in cluttered, visually chaotic installations, exemplifies this new spirit. And she's drawing huge attention: since her Turner win she's been ridiculously busy, with a show at New Museum, New York's most dynamic gallery, as well as exhibitions in Paris, Antwerp and Naples.

She is still installing the Hayward show when we meet. It's a beautiful morning so we wander out on to the South Bank and perch on a low wall with the sun on our faces and a chilly breeze from the Thames at our backs ("It's like the feeling of skiing," says Prouvost). I ask about her adopted city, where she still lives, though she has to divide her time between here and Antwerp as her partner, Nick Aikens, a curator, works over the Dutch border in Eindhoven.

"London is my home, I always want to come back," she says. "I feel it's really London that's let me explore and try things." She moved here from her native Lille to study at Central St Martins in 1999, where she started using film and video. It took her more than a decade to achieve any real success – including several years doing an MA at Goldsmiths – but she was able to tap into an experimental energy with artist friends and collaborators. "There are a lot of amazing brains here," she says. "I call them adventurers: they come to London to try things."

She feels that the early struggle helped her. "The good thing is that it pushes you, you always have to try a bit more." Her experience of being an outsider among other foreigners has also affected her work. Her texts, with their quirky misspellings and voiceovers in her lilting French accent and slightly wonky syntax are a feature of the films.

"London is full of people seeing things in their own way, from their own culture," she says. "Often the characters in my films are foreigners; they spell everything wrong or they misunderstand, and that has a lot to do with where I live."

Her Turner Prize-winning work was *Wantee* (2013), the story of her fictional grandfather (though she protests he's real), a conceptual artist who lived in a Lake District cabin and eventually built a tunnel underneath it, down which he's disappeared and still dwells. The cluttered cabin, filled with Granddad's artworks and Grandma's wildly impractical teapots, was built by Prouvost and filmed for the work.

Then, for the Turner Prize show, she reconstructed the cabin interior in the gallery and showed the film alongside it, thrusting the audience into the heart of her surreal story.

The Artist, her reworked 2010 installation going on show in Mirrorcity, is the prelude to Wantee, featuring her grandfather's studio at an earlier stage. "The idea of The Artist is playing on what we expect the artist to be," she says. She mocks the idea that there's now a Citroën Picasso. "[Picasso] would never have planned to have a Picasso car," she laughs. "So, it's how society takes your work and takes what they want, and makes mugs from it."



Show girl! Laura Prouvost with her installation *The Artist* at the Hayward Gallery (Picture: Adrian Lounie)

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Again, the work is a mixture of video, painting and sculpture. In the film she gives a behind-the-scenes tour of the studio. Surrounding it are objects including her grandfather's paintings, reflecting his fetish for bums, and her grandmother's adjustments to his works, adding suns and flowers to what she sees as inscrutable minimalism and conceptualism.

"It's playing on the situation of a couple in art," she says, and particularly the dominant male artist and subservient woman. She's interested in artistic clichés, the idea of artists as figures of God-given genius – and what happens if you don't have it. "Then you're always the loser," she says. "With my family, when I was studying art, it was like, 'Oh, she's an artist, she's never going to do anything, she's the loser of the family'. Of course, they were also supportive but the bigger image was 'She's never going to make it'."

How did they respond to her winning the Turner? "My grandma is constantly watching the prize on a loop," she says, proudly. "But she's in hospital now because she broke her leg."

I express sympathy as she says this. "She was trying to get in the tunnel," she adds.

Ah. So we're not talking about her real grandmother, but the one in her work. "She's a bit too big, she just eats crisps all the time," she deadpans, "because since he's gone she just gets deliveries of crisps from Tesco."

In Prouvost's interviews, as well as in her work, you're never sure where fiction and reality begin and end. "In everyday life it's like that as well," she says. "We think we know what's what, but it's all very constructed."

But her aim to foster confusion and misunderstanding isn't aggressive – there's something of the old-fashioned yarn-spinner about her, wanting to send us on flights of the imagination. "I'm interested in how film could be smelly, how it stinks," she says. "How do you translate the sun on our face now? How do you make that feeling?"

With this desire to immerse her audience in a sensory rush, her videos often include written or narrated instructions – she admits she can be bossy. But this is what makes her work an antidote to the experience we've all had of walking into a contemporary art gallery and wondering what you have to do. "You feel like you're being judged: 'What are you doing here?'" she says. And while she likes "sharp and minimal" works she is "attracted to emotion and sharing", she says. "I love how brains interact and how art is a tool to communicate anxiety or happiness, and I use it quite straightforwardly – I talk and I point. It's maybe a reaction to that kind of distant art that's being made."

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In the past two years she has clearly caught the imagination of curators across the world, and she admits that it has been a rollercoaster, especially with her daughter, Celeste, arriving amid it all.

So I wonder what she feels about Tracey Emin’s assertion this week that mothers don’t make the best artists? She doesn’t want to get into a scrap with Emin, but says, “You just use your time better, you have to really be focused and also have enough support there, financial or whatever. Here, there’s a big problem with childcare, it’s just far too expensive and so a lot of people – a lot of women – stop work. And if women stop work then they’re out of the loop and when they come back four years later they’re not even connected to their work. I’m talking about artists but I think it could be anyone. It should change – in Europe childcare is four times cheaper.”

She admits she’s lucky to be able to afford for someone to look after Celeste. “I need my day, because it’s true you can’t work with a child,” she says. “She’s not interested in the videos!”

A lot of people are, though. After the Hayward show opens she will busy herself recreating one of her fictional sets at Frieze, where she is being represented by one of London’s discreet but powerful galleries, MOT. Then she moves on to shows in The Hague, Mexico City and Berlin. But despite this clamour for her work and having a Turner Prize, Prouvost is at pains to remain an adventurer. “I still feel I’m not sure what I’m doing, I’m always trying,” she says. “Hopefully, I will never know and I can always try more.”

Mirrorcity is at the Hayward Gallery, SE1 (020 7960 4200, southbankcentre.co.uk), from Tuesday until January 4, £12, concs available