

# SCOPING SCAPES

SCREENING PROGRAM, 18<sup>th</sup> Street Arts Center, Los Angeles, 21<sup>th</sup> May 2016, 12 – 3pm.  
Curated by Andrea Rodriguez Novoa

In his work 'Kassel does not call for logic', written at the Documenta12 in Kassel, the Spanish writer Enrique Vila-Matas reflects on contemporary art through the precept of Mallarme's poetic: 'we do not paint the thing, but the effect it produces'. This aphorism comprises the contemporary conception of art as a genuine process of creation or re-creation. It comes as an essential rupture where any representation becomes an intellectual exercise, a reflection. The representation of landscape has long been perceived as an act of reproduction of nature throughout the History of Art. Employed by Plato and Aristotle to designate the arts of imitation and representation of reality, the accurate meaning of the Greek term *mimesis* or *mémée* would be 'the action to reproduce or figure and imagine things.'

*SCOPING SCAPES* explores processes of (land)scape representation considering them as an 'heterotopia of compensation' - as defined by philosopher Michel Foucault - which create a real space, a space that is other. In 1966 Foucault takes part in a radio broadcast devoted to the theme of utopia and heterotopia in which he defines heterotopias as 'sites which are embedded in aspects and stages of our lives and which somehow mirror and at the same time distort, unsettle or invert other spaces'. The videos on show examine the several layers of meaning of the landscape, and the depiction of the latest as the ultimate space of *otherness*, which is neither here nor there, simultaneously physical and mental.

By means of framing the territory and using landscape interpretation as a starting point, the artists convened for this screening use the moving image to reflect on such various topics as language, time, faith or geo-political conflict. Their approach range between the intimate to the political, and representation becomes a tool in their hands, which permits to consider hypothesis in order to imagine new scenarios. The image, witness of political, social and economical transformation acquires its very own value and identity contributing to contemporary scape's construction. While scoping out the scape, they are genuinely shaping it.

## LIST OF ARTISTS AND FILMS

**Fleur Noguera.** *Devonian Levels*, 2011. Video Super 8 transferred to DVD, 6' 08".

**Felicia Atkinson.** *Faith and/or Indeterminacy*, 2014. Music / field / recordings / images / 5' 17"

**Agnieszka Polska.** *Talking Mountain*, 2015. Video HD 16:9 / colour / sound / 9'46".

**Edouard Decam.** *Volva*, 2016. Film 16mm transferred to HD / 4:3 / colour / sound / 24' 39".

**Elena Bajo.** *(Isle of Innocence -After Fordlandia)*, 2016. Video 4K color, B&W / sound 11'

**Louidgi Beltrame.** *We are also aliens*, 2014. 38'.

**Carolina Caycedo.** *Spaniards Named Her Magdalena, But Natives Call Her Yuma*, 2013. HD video 26'07"

**Teresa Solar Abboud.** *All the things that are not there*, 2014. Video HD 16:9 / colour / sound / 41' 33".

## Devonian Levels (2011)

The title of the film *Devonian Levels* is a direct reference to the shooting location and to the Devonian geological system, associated with the primitive period when South America saw very important development of its fauna and flora.

Like an explorer, Fleur Noguera documents her stay in Argentina in a cinematic work composed of a succession of low-angle, wide-angle and panoramic shots that evoke a new geography. The film, with its archival appearance, offers a montage without effect, a transition through colour and light, a genuinely reinvented logic oscillating between natural science and a geological field trip. (Arlène Bercelet Courtin)

**Fleur Noguera** was born in 1972 in Belfort (FR), and lives and works in Barcelona (ES).

She obtained the diploma of the Ecole Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Strasbourg (FR) in 1997. Recently the on-line gallery of the Drawing Center in New York presented her animated film "Smoke".

Recent solo exhibitions: *Momento magnético...en rotación*, 2013, Casa del Lago, Mexico (MX), *Istmo y mesmerismo*, etHall, 2012, Barcelona (ES), *Devonian Levels*, 2011, Oficina 26, Rosario (AR).

## Faith and/or Indeterminacy (2014)

Film shot with a iPhone 4 in the Petrified Forest, Arizona, Joshua Tree, California and St Martin, Massif des Bauges, France. The music with the Fender Roades Piano is composed, played and recorded by Felicia Atkinson in Pacific City, Oregon at The Sparkle with a zoom.

or  
Indeterminacy  
Or the deers  
Or the goat's bells  
or  
Testify  
wood consuming  
a  
It's a mess  
Or Several  
and  
Faith  
could be the name of the horse  
Or the wind  
That i can't control  
(ears moving)  
a ringtone  
it would rather be  
p a r a l l e l   p l a y  
An email  
It's a minute  
Love / evol

**Félicia Atkinson** (born 1981 in Paris) graduated with Honors from l'Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris and has also studied anthropology and contemporary dance (at BOCAL project with Boris Charmatz in 2003). She is a visual artist, an experimental musician and the co-publisher of the independent imprint Shelter Press/curatorial platform Argument with Bartolomé Sanson. She has exhibited her work worldwide, including at Komplot (Brussels), Bozar (Brussels), MUCA ROMA (Mexico D.F), Overgaden (Copenhagen), Lieu Commun/ Printemps de Septembre (Toulouse), Rinomina (Paris), Land and sea (Oakland), Chert Gallery (Berlin), and Joseph Tang Gallery (Paris), Last Resort Gallery and Kunsthalle Charlottenborg in Copenhagen.

## The Talking Mountain (2015)

The film describes a journey that Polska and her friend Sara van der Heide made, with the aim of finding The Talking Mountain: a legendary hill able to answer any question. In their dialogue, the ubiquitous travellers focus on a human's need to look for the spiritual essence in inanimate objects, as well as on the notion of name giving as an act of creating reality.

**Agnieszka Polska**, born in 1985 in Lublin, Poland, lives and works in Berlin and Warsaw; studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow and the Universität der Künste Berlin. Works with film, animation, video installation and performance. Her works were presented in: "Suspended Animation", Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, D.C. (2016), "You Imagine What You Desire", 19. Biennale of Sydney, Australia (2014); "Mom, Am I Barbarian?", 13. Istanbul Biennial, Turkey (2013); "Future Generation Art Prize", Pinchuk Art Centre, Kijev, Ukraine (2012); "Early Years", KunstWerke Center for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany (2010). Her solo shows include: "I Am the Mouth", Nottingham Contemporary, Great Britain (2014), "Pseudoword Hazards", Salzburger Kunstverein, Austria (2013); "Aurorite", CCA Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw, Poland (2012).

## **Volva** (2016)

Volva is the name the German mathematician, astronomer, and astrologer Johannes Kepler gave to the earth when seen from the outer space in his text 'Somnium', considered to be the first sci-fi book.

The astronomical observatories study a remote past, suspended in an indefinite time, without paying attention to his surroundings. Focused on the astronomical observatory of the Pic du Midi de Bigorre (a peak at the French Pyrenees) - technological architecture preserved of any noise or light pollution – this 16mm film reflects on the space-time relationship established between architecture, science and landscape.

In a solar chronology, the machines try to capture the surrounding environment as well as a series of waves that seem to be transmitted through the mountains and landscape in the distance. The absence of human form, the succession of mechanical movements, the direction of telescopes' gaze suggest a place artificially controlled, robotic. Views of both interior and exterior spaces confront the scene to a parallel and expanded space/time where it appears to be coming from. This is a new territory arising in between the architecture of the Peak and the surrounding landscape. The film is assembled around the possible movement of this space that would shift in different temporalities - past-present-future - and spaces at once. Captions on site and radio broadcasts of unknown provenance compose the film's soundscape. By combining representations of reality, this experimental work explores the construction of the contemporary landscape and the role of the image in it .

**Edouard Decam**, born in 1978 in Frances, he lives and works in Barcelona and Bordeaux. Architect by the School of Architecture of Bordeaux, his artistic practice focuses on the relationship established between space and time through the prism of art and science. Artistic research become in his work a process in which personal experience and direct confrontation with the territory is essential. Some of the solo and group exhibitions in which his work has been shown include The forgotten territories, Le 104 Art Center, Paris , 2009; 50 000, Arc en Rêve Center for Architecture, Bordeaux , 2012; La sombra del viaje, Photo España Festival , Madrid, 2013 ; It's About Time, Quartair Den Haag Art Space , The Hague, 2013 ; Ondes intermedias, French Institute , Barcelona, 2014; Vues de l' esprit , Pixels of paradise BIP 2014 Biennial, Liège, 2014; Presente continuo, Sant Andreu Contemporani Art Center, Barcelona, 2015; Plagiar o future, HANGAR Artistic Center for Research, Lisbon, 2016. Ha has been artist in residence at the Casa de Velázquez and Matadero Madrid.

### *(Isle of Innocence -After Fordlandia, 2016) Work in progress*

Urania's Mirror expands on Bajo's latest projects 'With Entheogenic Intent (Burn the Witch)', focused in Los Angeles local mythologies of american indigenous cultures and its global political resonance, and 'Isle of Innocence (Fordlandia)' a project dealing with the artificial city of Fordlandia, built by Ford in the middle of the Amazonian forest, now abandoned since 1930's.

This film is a work in progress, which investigates, through both real propositions and imaginary speculations, the articulation of negative spaces left by post-Fordist capitalism's social forms. In the video, real footage, historical and literary texts, ethereal participatory elements, anarchist secret codes, digital encounters, and indigenous cosmologies are articulated into an amalgamated theatre-composition of repetition and simultaneity. It proposes an extended exploration on global environmental, social and political issues as the base to address local, ancient knowledge, mythology, ethnobotany and cosmology. Mediated messages received from some unknown artifact from the future appear throughout the video in the form of text. From the point of view of a cosmic artisan's research the video investigates the image and its double, the theatre of absence, and the issues of exhaustion. It points out the choreography created by star's trajectories in the space, and how this generates images and thoughts about the past and future of the land. Part of the video's soundtrack consists of one of the frequencies of the earth vibration, 285MHz, which tends to push the synchronizing of the human body. The situation of parallel /universes and the metaphysical dimension is both imagined and experienced, by means of subliminal images which are used to prompt a diversity of connections.

**Elena Bajo** was born in 1975 in Madrid, and lives and works in Berlin and Los Angeles . She received an MA in Fine Arts from Central Saint Martins School of Art, London in 2005 after obtaining a MA in Architecture from ESARQ, Barcelona in 2002. She was a co-founder of EXHIBITION, NY (2009). She is coinitiator of the LA collective D'CLUB (Divestment Club) engaged in fossil fuel divestment activities, and climate action. Elena Bajo's practice explores the intersection of anarchist thought, social ecology, and metaphysics. Her concept-generated and research based practice is concerned with the social and political dimensions of everyday spaces, the strategies to conceptualize resistance, the poetics of ideologies, and the relationship between temporalities and subjectivities. She works individually and collectively across installation, sculpture, performance, painting, film, text and writing. She has had recent solo exhibitions at Kunsthalle Sao Paulo, Brazil and Annex14, Zurich, and group shows Mardin Biennial, Turkey and Trust, Kunsthall Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark. Forthcoming exhibits for 2016 include a solo exhibition at D+T Project Gallery, Brussels and group exhibits 'Aun' Salon de Artistas, curated by Inti Guerrero, Pereira, Colombia, and Kai 10 Arthena Foundation, Dusseldorf.

## **We are also aliens** (Nosotros también somos extraterrestres, 2014)

Initially, there were two pieces by Robert Morris: "The Observatory", an earthwork aligned with the sun on equinoxes and solstices, produced in Holland in 1971 (dismantled and then rebuilt in 1977) and "Aligned with Nazca", a piece published in Artforum in October 1975 which combines text and images taken at the famous Peruvian Nazca site by the artist. Two works that Louidgi Beltrame, who has an interest in architectural and artistic utopias seeks to connect to other times, prolonging the rereading undertaken by Morris.

Beltrame's film intercuts footage of Observatory during solstices and equinoxes with scenes of the artist Victor Costales reciting excerpts from Morris's essay that links the Nazca desert's ancient geoglyphs, known as the Nazca Lines, to his own generation's Land art. Effectively collapsing a thousand years and many more miles, Beltrame's elegiac images of the dusty landscape and an overgrown Observatory emphasize the shared otherworldliness of both sites.

**Loudji Beltrame** was born in Marseille in 1971. Currently residing in Paris, he studied at Villa Arson in Nice and at the École supérieure des beaux-arts in Marseille. Since 2003, his works have been shown in numerous exhibitions. His work was notably featured in personal exhibitions at the Palais de Tokyo (Paris, 2016), Frac Basse-Normandie (Caen, 2015), Kunstverein Langenhagen (Langenhagen, 2015), Jousse Entreprise gallery (Paris, 2008, 2012, 2014), Fondation d'entreprise Ricard (Paris, 2010), Strasbourg Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (2008), and at the Jeu de Paume (Paris, 2006). His works have been shown in collective exhibitions including Plagiar o Futuro, Hangar (Lisbon, 2015), Michelangelo Antonioni, Cinémathèque française (Paris, 2015), Double Jeu, Frac Centre (Orléans, 2014), Mutatis Mutandis, Secession (Vienna, 2012), Número tres, de la casa a la fábrica, La Virreina (Barcelona, 2012), Video, an Art History (1965-2010): A Selection from the Centre Pompidou and the Singapore Art Museum Collections (Singapore, 2011), Prisonniers du Soleil, Le Plateau, Frac Île-de-France (Paris, 2010). Loudji Beltrame is represented by the Jousse Entreprise gallery.

## **Spaniards Named Her Magdalena, But Natives Call Her Yuma** (2013)

Carolina Caycedo is involved with a group of activists working against the »El Quimbo« dam construction project in western Columbia, which will prove massively invasive and damaging for the Rio Magdalena region. While a guest of the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program in 2012 she focused on the history of dam construction in Germany. Film footage of numerous research trips to dam sites in the Harz Mountains, Saxony, Westphalia and the Black Forest is linked to images of the Rio Magdalena region and its inhabitants via this two-channel video installation titled »Spaniards Named It Magdalena But Natives Call Her Yuma«. Extending beyond these concrete documentary aspects, the film illuminates social power structures and control mechanisms, particularly in connection with the activities of multinational corporations – for example, by placing images of controlled bodies of water alongside footage of urban crowds. The sound track, the narrator's voice whispering in Spanish and English, tells of the artist's personal perspective, her own experience with a river she has known since childhood, as her family lived by its edge.

**Carolina Caycedo** (1978, lives in Los Angeles) transcends the studio, gallery, museum and institutional space to work in the social realm where she participates in movements of solidarity economies and territorial resistance. She is currently researching the effects of extractivist economies and policies over rural public space such as rivers, and social and natural territories in various bio-regions of the Americas. Her practice engages with issues and contexts that affect a broad public on an everyday level; in her work, art functions as a tool for offering alternative models to inhabit a world in which individuals and communities are increasingly subject to commodification, exploitation and discrimination. She has developed publicly engaged projects in Bogota., Madrid, Lisbon, San Juan, New York, San Francisco and London. Her work has been shown by Creative Time, the Queens Museum, Vienna Secession and Palais de Tokio amongst other venues. She has participated in numerous international biennials, including Berlin (2014), Havana (2009), Venice (2003) and Istanbul (2001). In 2012, Caycedo was a DAAD Artist-in-Berlin resident. In 2013 she received a Prince Claus Fund grant for Rethinking Public Space, and in 2014 an Art Matters grant. She is a 2015 Creative Capital Visual Arts Awardee.

## **All the things that are not there** (2014)

All the things that are not there" tells the story of a young woman who travels from the East coast to the West coast of the USA following the steps of the American engineer and photographer Harold Edgerton. Her voice will lead us through an evocative and rather uncertain road trip, telling tales built upon Edgerton's experiments and deviating from his crystal-clear images.

Harold Edgerton was the inventor of the strobe light and the first high-speed pictures. He was also the inventor of the underwater photography and the camera used to record the first developments of the atomic bombs. The starting point of the movie is the paradoxical relationship between his photographs, that rendered visible the invisible, and the spaces where these pictures were taken, that remains forbidden and obscure to us. The film walks along the thin line between the images of the unknown darkness and the abrupt blindness caused by the radiant, revealing glare of the flash.

Our character will find herself confronted with the impossibility of entering the forbidden places where Edgerton worked. The movie wonders if these frustrating frontiers, the ones that make their vision impossible, are the key to thinking them differently, gaining access to these classified places through fictional reconstructions in which different characters will have to deal with blindness, non-existing sounds and imaginary limbs.

**Teresa Solar Abboud** was born in 1985, she lives and works in Madrid. Amongst other projects she has exhibited as a solo artist at La Panera Lleida, Matadero Madrid, CA2M and Formato Cómodo Gallery. She is currently finalist of the Rolex Mentorship Program. She has been recently awarded the "Generaciones" prize, the production grant CAM, and the production grant Fundación Marcelino Botín, which has enabled her to produce her latest movie, "Al haggara", that has been shot between Cairo and Madrid.