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Press Release

Windowlicker

An exhibition organized by Julie Beauflis, Ana Iwataki and Marion Vasseur Raluy

With works by Bogdan Cheta, Susan Cianciolo, Sean MacAlister and Paolo Thorsen-Nagel

April 26th | May 26th, 2018

To miniaturize is to make portable—the ideal form of possessing— things for a wanderer, or a refugee. Benjamin, of course, was both a wanderer, on the move, and a collector, weighed down by things; that is, passions. To miniaturize is to conceal. Benjamin was drawn to the extremely small as he was to whatever had to be deciphered: emblems, anagrams, handwriting. To miniaturize means to make useless. For what is so grotesquely reduced is, in a sense, liberated from its meaning—its tininess being the outstanding thing about it. It is both a whole (that is, complete) and a fragment (so tiny, the wrong scale). It becomes an object of disinterested contemplation or reverie.

- Susan Sontag, *Under the Sign of Saturn*

This act of miniaturization is one of making choices from the world to make manageable its enormity. It's at once the fragmentation of the world and the existence of a little world. Intimacy, not breadth. To make one work of art, or to collect certain objects, or to organize an exhibition of certain artists and artworks allows a partial possession of what can never be completely possessed or assimilated or conquered. There is an easing of the painful pangs of desire, of lack, and the need for more. A salve, not a cure.

Lèche-vitrine, the French for window shopping, literally translated as “window licking”, suggests the pleasure of possession via the act of looking at an ensemble of objects, forming a little universe of their own under glass. In an act of surveillance, Bogdan Cheta worked at a desk facing the vitrine in what served as the office in Balice Hertling Bellville. Taking on the double role of spectator-spectacle, subject-object, he confined himself to both the gallery's walls and his view onto the rue Ramponeau. A strange triangulation unfolded, a line of vision bouncing from Cheta and the gallery, to a surveillance camera pointing towards him, to a neighbor across the street on his balcony, and back again. This drama is recounted for us in a resulting text piece, and visitors are invited to take the place of the artist and the gallerist at the desk, to confront their own acts of voyeurism. Cheta further interacted with the gallery by tracing a horizon line along its walls at the height of his outstretched arm.

His explorations offer a distant echo to Susan Cianciolo's “kits”. Installed on quilts, tapestries, or other small works by the artist, and here presented on simple school desks, these kits are composed of miniature paintings, annotated photographs, notes, post-its, diaries, bits of fabric, paper, and other “painfully personal” remnants of the artist's life and career. These portable works, touching in their intimate size and content, are at once small universes, time capsules, archives, reliquaries, tool kits for transformation. In the 90s, Susan Cianciolo came to prominence as a fashion designer, particularly for her critically-acclaimed collection RUN. She quickly became interested in the context of creation and in 2001, she transformed the Chelsea Gallery into a teahouse, fashion boutique, and exhibition space. She continues today to work at the border of fashion and contemporary art.

Paolo Thorsen-Nagel's sound work permeates and travels around the gallery in such a way that suggests the viewer likewise become a flâneur within the space. His piece—suggestive of many auditory diasporas—insists that there is not one ideal vantage point for listening, that one position should not be privileged over any other, and that instead one might listen to the room playing itself. We hear sounds from his metro ride to the airport in Athens, recorded by a sound coil that picks up a limited range of electric frequencies. A capturing of the world, yes, but in a decidedly constrained manner: miniaturization via electromagnetic

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isolation. Other channels of sound intervene at various intervals, creating a narrative that juxtaposes the Greek field recordings with sounds from the artist's domestic life: sonic samples of his activities at home, snippets of Skype conversations with a curator. Sampling miniaturizes the artist's own world to the point where it can be shared without risk of overexposure, as the personal becomes abstracted in an auditory mise-en-abyme.

Sean MacAlister's *Relief* drawings punctuate the space. These floating, elusive works are the result of a long and intensely personal process of erasing *The New Yorker* magazine covers until only the forms we see remain. A homeschooled and self-taught artist, MacAlister's first glimpses of the possibilities of the world and how to exist in it were formed by reading magazines at the local 7-11. These reliefs are "life capsules", capturing his physical engagements with the material as well as his reconciliations with our present socio-economic and political situation, its representations, and an intimate approach towards art-making and the building of an identity.

And so we find ourselves at the scale of the body—the hand, the eye, the ear. In bringing the vast into our own bodily space, we come to terms with our incapacity to have and to hold all. It's a fleeting glance through the window towards what it might be like to soothe the frustrations of desire.

Bogdan Cheta (b. 1983, Ploiesti, Romania) is currently based in Calgary, Canada, where he is finishing his MFA studies at the Alberta College of Art & Design, with a particular focus in Craft. Drifting between the surface of the printed page, the looseness of improvisable walks, or the meandering movements of large-scale installations, his projects usually gather in a search for the act of writing. Recent presentations of his work include solo shows at 67 Steps, Los Angeles and at Stride Gallery in Calgary, Canada. His writing has been featured both in gallery contexts (The New Gallery, 12th Havana Biennale) or in literary anthologies that are especially queer in orientation (*Out Proud: Stories of Pride, Courage, and Social Justice*, 2014 and *Knock on Any Door*, 2012). His experimental walks have been presented by the Mountain Standard Time Performative Festival, The New Gallery, Stride Gallery, and as part of Unlearning Weekenders, in Canada.

Susan Cianciolo (b. 1969, Providence, RI) lives and works in New York City. From 1995–2001 Cianciolo produced her critically-acclaimed collection RUN. More recently, her work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Bridget Donahue, New York, NY, USA (2017); Yale Union, Portland, OR, USA (2016); and 356 S. Mission Road, Los Angeles, CA, USA (2016); ; and Alleged Gallery, New York, NY, USA (2001). Her work has been included in group exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, USA (2017); The Swiss Institute, New York, NY, USA (2016); Interstate Projects, New York, NY, USA (2016); White Columns, New York, NY, USA (2016); MoMA PS1, Long Island City, NY, USA (2015); and Portikus Museum, Frankfurt, Germany.

Sean MacAlister (b. 1987, Calgary) is a self taught multidisciplinary artist who believes that art has no beginning or end. As such, he conducts his work through a series of ongoing projects that rely on an experimental coverage of preexisting situations, forms, and experiences. He has shown his work in solo and group exhibitions at numerous artist run spaces in Vancouver, Calgary, Halifax, Toronto, Montreal, and Sao Paulo. His work has been reviewed by C Magazine and Color Magazine and published by Swimmers Group and JMS Press. MacAlister is the founder and director of 67 Steps, an exhibition space where he lives and works in Los Angeles.

Paolo Thorsen-Nagel (b. 1985, Chicago) is a German-American musician and artist. In his sound, performance, and moving image works, he concentrates on the materiality of sound and its relationship to physical and psychological space, as well as

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their visual dependency.

Recent projects include *Interiors II* (Athens), *Listening Space*, documenta 14, Athens (2017); *Interiors* at Mavra, Berlin, and *Measures* at Taylor Macklin, Zurich (2016); a performance with Tobias Spichtig, at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2015); (Untitled) Hannah Weinberger, with Jannik Giger, Kunsthau Bregenz (2014); *Words on Pictures–Puns and Punishment*, for Avery Singer, Kunsthalle Zurich (2014); *Orchestra*, with Calla Henkel, Max Pitegof, and Tobias Spichtig, New Theater, Berlin (2014); *S.S.O.R.*, for Adriana Lara, Kunsthalle Basel (2012); and a featured performance in Alexandra Bachzetsis's *Etude*, dOCUMENTA 13, Kassel (2012). He was Sound and Music Advisor for documenta 14, as well as the curator of *Listening Space*, Athens, and co-curator of the documenta 14 concert series at Megaron, the Athens Concert Hall.

Julie Beaufile (b. 1987, Sèvres) lives and works in Paris. Co-curator of the exhibition *Windowlicker*, Julie Beaufile is above all an artist. After studying at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris, she continued her studies with an MFA at the University of South California (USC). Using mostly painting as medium, she is interested in representation of feelings and the communication of emotions through her works. Recent presentations of her works include solo shows at Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo, Brazil (2017), Kunsthalle, Mulhouse, France (2016), Overduin & Co., Los Angeles, USA (2016), Balice Hertling, Paris, France (2014 and 2016). Her works have also been presented in group shows for the Palais de Tokyo (extra-muros), Zurich, Switzerland (2016) ; Neil Beloufa's studio, Villejuif, France (2015) ; Shanaynay, Paris, France (2015) ; at Fondation d'entreprise Ricard, Paris, France (2014). She is preparing a new solo exhibition at Balice Hertling Gallery which will open in June 2018.

Ana Iwataki (b. 1989, Los Angeles, California) is a curator, writer, and translator who lives and works in Los Angeles. She co-directed Shanaynay, Paris, from 2015-2017. Recent work includes *A Lover's Guide to the Package Factory*, a publication accompanying Benjamin Reiss's *Package Factory* (Natural Marriage of Natural Resources) at Bel Ami, Los Angeles.

Marion Vasseur Raluy (b. 1989) lives and works in Paris. She co-directed the project space Shanaynay, Paris, from 2014-2016. She will be the co-curator for the next session of *Orange Rouge* (2018- 2019), a project that brings together artists and disabled teenagers. She is an art critic and is currently writing a short fiction novel.

Recent exhibitions organized by **Ana Iwataki** and **Marion Vasseur Raluy** include a solo exhibition by Luca Francesconi, *67 Steps*, Los Angeles, California; *Beloved in the Landscape*, Bel Air, Essen, Germany; *Nothing Recedes Like Failure*, Mortadelle, Arles, France; and *Some of My Best Friends Are Germs*, le Doc, Paris. An anthology of their Art Viewer Screen program was published by Hololoholo Books in April 2018.



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