WILLIAM ANASTASI



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BIOGRAPHY

William Anastasi was born in 1933 in Philadelphia, PA (USA). He lives and works in New York, NY (USA).

Anastasi is one of the very first conceptual artists whose earliest works display solid connections to Minimalism. Anastasi's practice is interdisciplinary, informed by physics, music and social philosophy. His sculptures, paintings, photographs and drawings have helped to define the mediums themselves, delicately dissecting the differences between seeing and perceiving. He confronts the issue of presentation and exhibition itself, exploring the question of the «self-sameness» of objects with tautological truths and perceptions. He embraces the practice of drawing as performance, with an obvious reference to the body in each of his various drawing strategies. Like his close friend John Cage, the artist is fascinated by the element of chance in the creative process.

In the 1960s, he was invited to present his work by important galleries of the decade in New York such as Betty Parsons', Virginia Dwan's and Paul Cooper's Galleries. Between 1966 and 1970, he presented four ground-breaking solo exhibitions at the Dwan Gallery, New York, USA - Sound Objects, 1966, Six Sites, 1967, Three Conic Sections, 1970 and Continuum, 1970. Since 2015, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff has revisited three of them in a unique way at the gallery space in Paris.

Anastasi has presented his work in numerous international solo and group exhibitions: two solo exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New-York, USA, Re-Visions, 1979 and Coincidents, 1981; Drawing Sounds: an installation in honour of John Cage, solo exhibition at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, USA, 1993; William Anastasi 1961-2000: A Retrospective, at the Nikolaj Contemporary Art Center, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2000; William Anastasi, Raw, solo exhibition at the Drawing Center in New York, USA, 2007; a solo exhibition for John Cage Award, New York, USA, 2010; A trip from here to there, drawings galleries, group show at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, USA, 2013; Sol Lewitt collectionneur: un artiste et ses artistes, group show at the Centre Pompidou Metz, France, 2013; Los Angeles to New York: Dwan Gallery, 1959 – 1971, group show at the Los Angeles County Museum (LACMA), USA, 2017; Blind Drawings: 1963-2018, solo exhibition at Marlborough Gallery in London, UK, 2019-2020.

WILLIAM ANASTASI

SOUND OBJECTS

April 25 – June 25, 2022
Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France

William Anastasi's Sound Objects premiered in 1966 at the Dwan Gallery in New York. It was the first of his four ground breaking exhibitions at the gallery from 1966-1970 that defined Conceptual Art and helped to launch the movement. A year later the second exhibition was titled Six Sites, 1967, consisting of six photo-silkscreens on canvas images of the walls at a ten-percent reduction that hung upon each wall that had been its subject. Anastasi had introduced the "site," the space itself that he had referred to as, "the sacred burial ground of art." The third of the Dwan exhibitions titled Continuum, 1968, a series of large-scale in-situ photographs of what a "mirror would see" was again about the presentation space itself. Galerie Wolff had uniquely revisited it in 2015, by incorporating life outside the gallery in a ground floor space that had an exterior glass wall. Thus the images on display included the cars and the buildings across the street.

Three Conic Sections Dwan's exhibition of 1970 also shown at Galerie Wolff in 2018, consisted of rebars that form a section of a Mobius strip. With a series of steel reinforcement rods each the height of the ceiling, the first of which is set on the floor perpendicular to and touching a wall, sequentially rise to vertical for the length of any given wall until they last touches the ceiling. Again this work is contingent upon the space in which it is executed; for instance, a long sweeping curve occurs on a long wall, a short "sail" furls along a short wall.

Sound Objects, is the third of the Dwan exhibitions that Galerie Wolff now revisits in Paris. It is the first time that fifteen of the seventeen original works are shown together since their premiere fifty-seven years ago, demonstrating their relevance to art history.

With Sound Objects, from 1963-1966, Anastasi had introduced the concept of tautology, a strategy of Conceptual Art that a year later would also be exemplified with Six Sites. The term "Sound Objects" was the artist's coinage. They consist of sounds made by ordinary things such as an electric fan, an inner tube, a radiator, shovel, pick, pneumatic drill, power saw, among them, that were recorded while in use and presented as sculptures with speakers that remember their sounds. For instance, Anastasi recorded the sound of an inner tube inflated and then deflated, each presented with its opposing sound. Similarly the tools, the shovel, pick, pneumatic drill, power saw, and so on, each was recorded and presented along with their various attacked debris with the sound of the various actions either shoveling up sand, picking rocks, drilling macadam, or sawing wood. The first and the most reductive of them, Microphone, 1963, a Tanberg tape recorder that had recorded itself in action was presented playing back that recording.

Anastasi would readily agree that Sound Objects owe everything to Duchamp. His introduction came at age fourteen when he and his younger brother had hitchhiked from their Italian enclave of South Philadelphia to visit the Philadelphia Museum of Art. They had never been in a museum before. Seeing Duchamp's work, that he himself had carefully installed there, was a revelation to the young viewers, who though not understanding it, as Anastasi said years later "was like drinking a pure glass of water" compared to the otherwise representative masterworks.

Anastasi had met Duchamp when the elder artist had visited during Six Sites at Dwan Gallery because In Advance of a Broken Arm was on display in her back room. When Virginia had offered him to sign the guest book, he turned to the next blank page, then another and on the third page he wrote, "Yes" adding his name. Later Virginia put the book in a drawer and set out another. No better endorsement could be had than from the man who had ushered in 20th Century art.

In January 1966 Kienhotz' Beanery, Dwan's first exhibition in New York, surprised Anastasi since he had no idea other artists were working with sound. Seven months earlier at Castelli Gallery, Rauschenberg's Oracle, 1962-1965

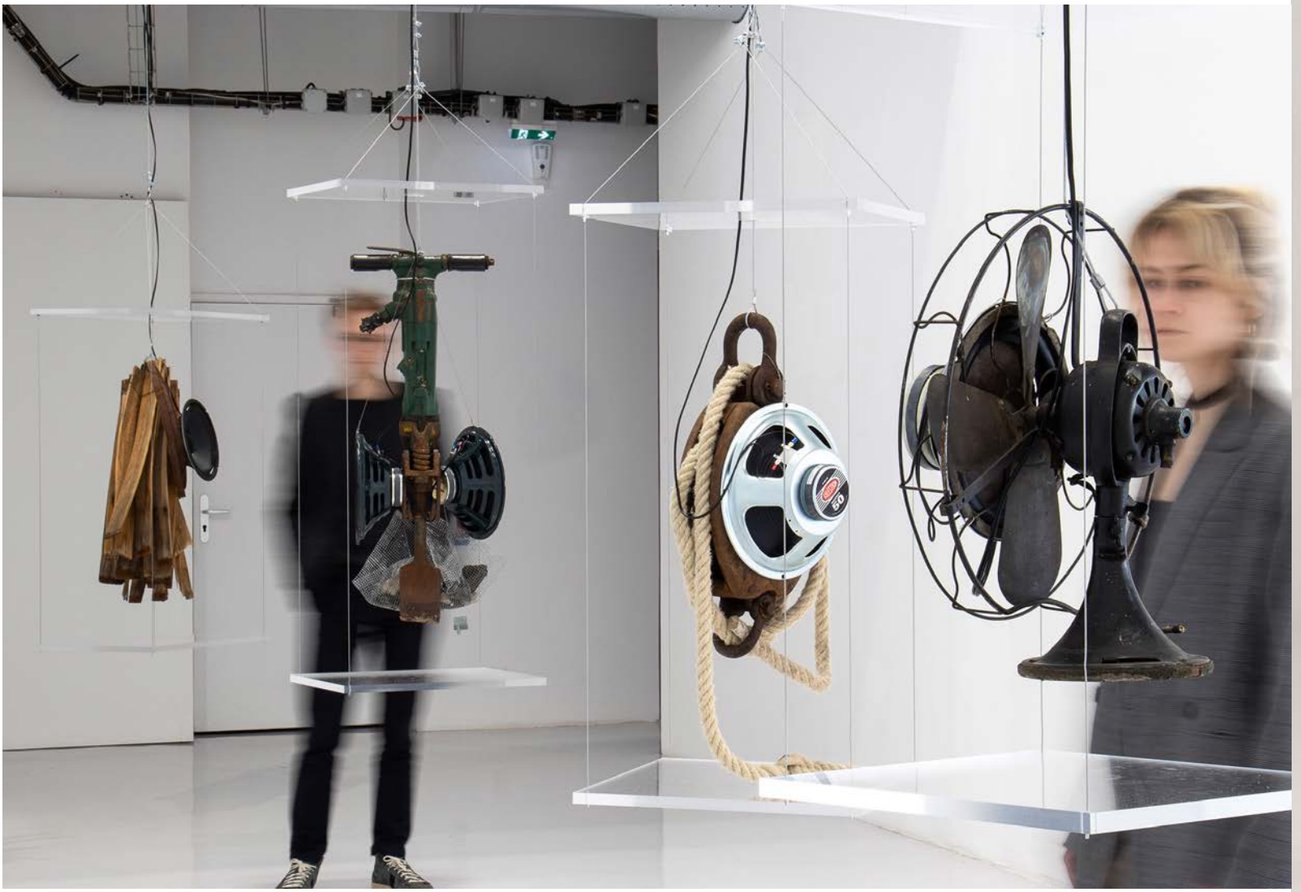
had opened, though Anastasi had not seen it. Neither of these works were Conceptual Art or tautological in nature. The Beanery was a recreation, including sound, of a seedy California bar with Surrealist touches of clock faced patrons each set at ten after ten, while Rauschenberg called his a musical sculpture "all of [which] material with the exception of the technology were gifts from the street. The attempt was to make all instrument[s] that could be performed on with or without sophistication."

Equally unaware at that time and intrigued that an artist was using sound in a work, in 1965 for the first time John Cage visited Anastasi at his Soho loft while he was preparing Sound Objects. Cage had suggested that all the sounds should occur together randomly, however Dwan had wanted to underscore that each was a unique work. In 2013 at Hunter College's William Anastasi: Sound Retrospective 1963-2013, all of them sounded together, including two in windows that had outdoor speakers arresting passersby to the ubiquitous assault of a pneumatic drill, this time surprisingly presented in a gallery as art.

Anastasi wrote at the time that as a policy about making art, «One, just one. And simple. As simple as simple. Even dumb.» Being self-referential the Sound Objects are simply about themselves, not representing something else, as much art before and after has been and still is. They are as much about the present moment, the here and the now, another Conceptual strategy, along with the erasure of boundaries, yet another, as they are about tautology. As Gertrude Stein said long ago no adjective can stand in, no metaphor can explain other than that things are what they are–"a rose is a rose is a rose."

Dove Bradshaw is an American artist living in New York and life partner of William Anastasi since 1974.






Esso
OTOR OIL
40
EXXON
ESSO STANDARD


CELESTION
ROCKET
50







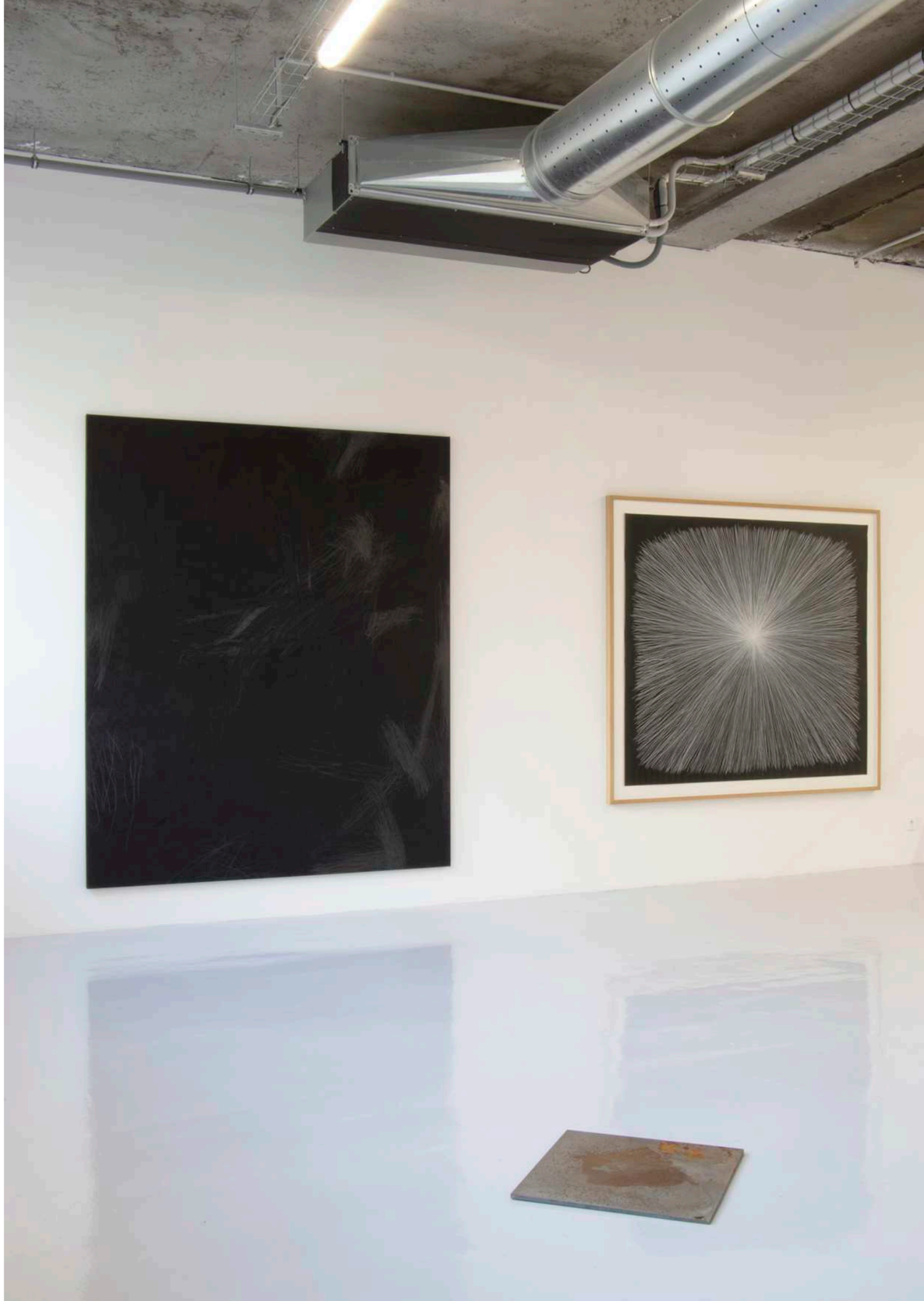
WILLIAM ANASTASI

WORK IN PROGRESS

November 28 – December 23, 2020

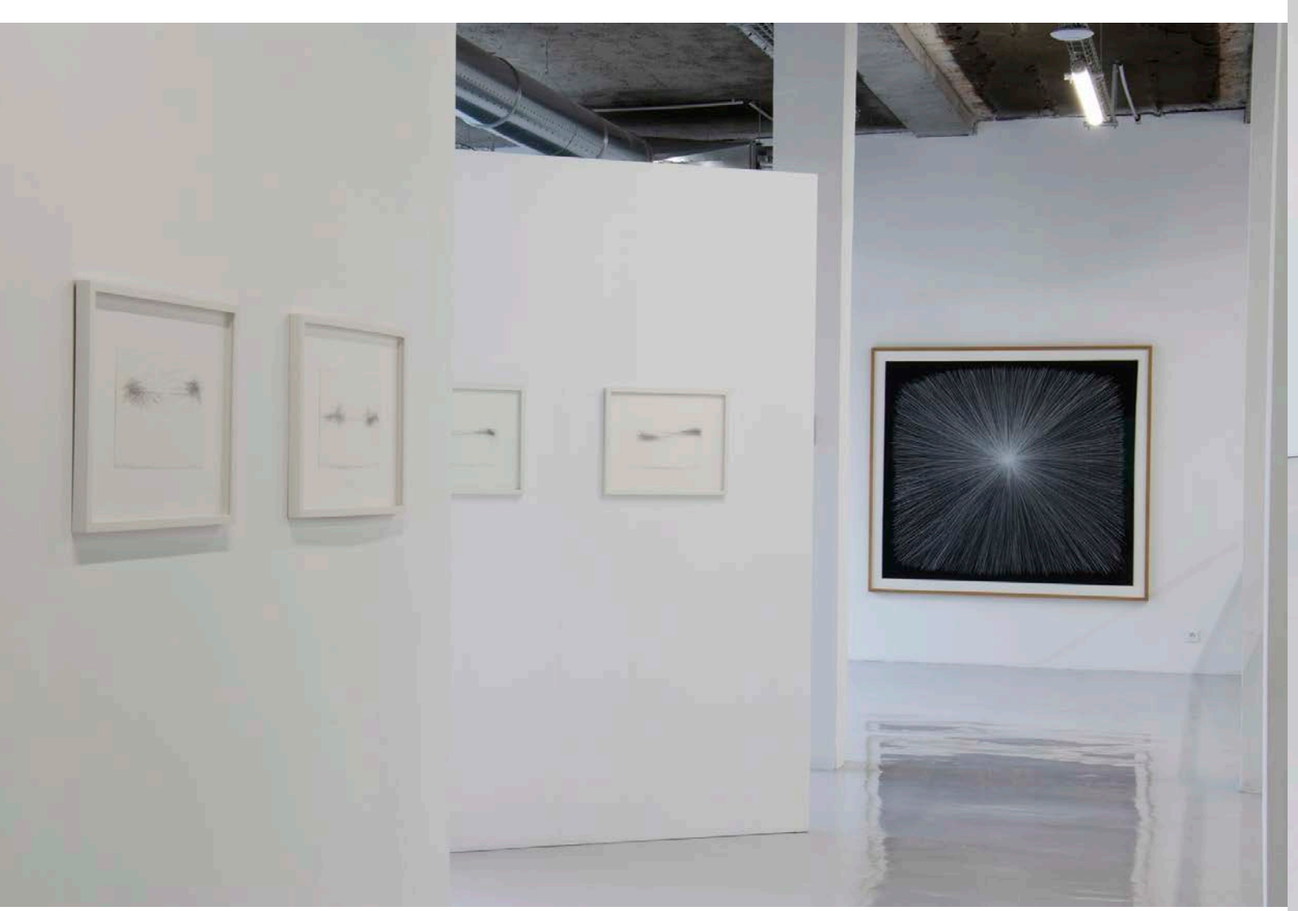
Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France

This exhibition by conceptualist William Anastasi adopts the original title of Joyce's FINNEGANS WAKE. This novel has been an ongoing object of fascination for the artist.
The exhibition features rarely seen seminal works by the artists, from the 60s onwards.









WILLIAM ANASTASI

THREE CONIC SECTIONS

April 28 – June 16, 2018
Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France

Conic Section, a monumental work from the late 60s, comprises rods used in reinforced concrete construction, the first remaining on the floor while the others lean one upon the other following a diagonal strip on the wall, so that the rods progress from horizontal to vertical.

Until 2018, this work has been shown just once, during the exhibition titled Three Conic Sections at Dwan Gallery, New York, USA in 1970.

William Anastasi, A conversation between William Anastasi and Thomas McEvilley in August 1989, Extract from the catalogue titled William Anastasi A selection of works from 1960 to 1989, Scott Hanson Gallery, New York, 1989:

« WA : Steel Rods is a sculpture made of reinforced rods that are not welded together but held together by an engineering principle ; they lean on each other and move in tiny gradations from horizontal to vertical. In concept it's close to a piece that Klaus Rinke did sometime in the 70's, with strings holding each piece up going from horizontal to vertical.

T.M.: It also bears a mild relationship with some Michael Heizer works. He has a piece, for example, in which a huge stone is lying flat, then another similar one at a 45 degrees angle to the ground, then a third one standing upright. I'm fascinated by how much reality there is to the idea of a generation. I mean Rinke and Reizer must both be about your age.

W.A. : I think they're both somewhat younger than I am. Anyway, it was exhibited in 1970. Because Virginia wanted to show this as well as the photographs, we decided to do it in two shows back to back.

T.M.: It's interestingly different from the other works we've been looking at. It's more sculptural. It doesn't involve photography or sound recording. It doesn't involve the themes of solipsism and tautology, or the question of representation. Yet it does involve this conflation of up and down, and the theme of inverting meanings. And the theme of which way are you going is more than hinted at. It must have been very sensual in the gallery ; the look of it is kind of hypnotic. So we've glimpsed the four Dwan shows. But I know that since that time you've done other works on the same themes, still developing possible ramifications of the wall on the wall. »













WILLIAM ANASTASI

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*ANASTASI, WILLIAM / NYC

September 9 – October 14, 2017
Thomas Rehbein Gallery, Koeln, Germany







WILLIAM ANASTASI

THROUGH THE LISTENING GLASS

August 25 – October 23, 2016
Total Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul, South Korea

Curators: James Giroudon & Nathalie Boseul Shin

Press release by James Giroudon (extract):

The exhibition Through the Listening Glass gathers about ten artworks pierced by light waves and sound vibrations, creating various listening situations and offering active visitor participation. The idea of this exhibition suggests broad multiple meanings. In constant variability and relativity, it characterizes many areas of social, political, moral and aesthetic fields, with the objective of fantasy of full transparency. Consisting of a kind of filtering of reality, it induces at once a world of connections and transformations between multiple expressions, particularly between music and the visual arts.

This exhibition draws an intinerary on three levels, and integrates the architecture of the place, respecting and highlighting the qualities of volumes, alternating dark and luminous spaces, with the perspectives of the large windows opened in the surrounding environment. The exhibition assures the principle of considering the sound material as a constituent material of an artwork designed for a visual space, developing the idea of sound plasticity, and even amplifying the idea that any work of art, painting, sculpture... has its own sound dimension providing us, in silence, with some rustlings of the world. To watch and to listen... The concept of «transparency» is fully involved in this process of listening and stimulates the inversion of perspectives insofar as the sound can be the initiator of a plastic space. The title «Through the glass listening» is an evocation of the book «Through the Looking-Glass» (1) written by Lewis Carroll in 1871, where the act of crossing the mirror allows the young heroine Alice from entering imaginary worlds , to move in unheard spaces. For the exhibition, this crossing, from the transparency and its multiple reflections, becomes sound and is diffracted in countless echoes.

« Through the listening glass » gathers about twelve art works pierced by light waves and sound vibrations, creating various
listening situations and offering an active visitor participation. The idea of «transparency» that motivates this exhibition suggests a broad multiple meanings. In constant variability and relativity, it characterizes many areas of social, political, moral, aesthetic..., with the objective of fantasy of full transparency. Consisting rather in a kind of filtering of reality, it induces at once this world of connections and transformations between multiple expressions, and in particular this interconnection between music and visual arts. In “Les Fleurs du Mal” (1861), Charles Baudelaire wrote : « Comme de longs échos qui de loin se confondent... Les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se répondent » . This idea constantly vibrating in the heart of the unconscious aesthetics of modernity Today the music and the visual arts have acquired this proximity dreamed by the protagonists of «total art», by interferences, crossings, impregnations. If the optical qualities of some materials, glass, liquid, lights ... constitute a breeding ground for these interpenetrations, the transparency has also extended to other areas of investigation, it is central to the effervescent world of communications and networks, to proliferation of virtual spaces. The sound, purely vibratory and totally transparent space, has become the link of this exhibition. Translucent, it remains imbued with a true materiality like the «Words frozen» described by Pantagruel in the book by François Rabelais : beautiful and poetic premonitions of the concept of «sound object», announced by Pierre Schaeffer, emanating from voices, clamor and din of battles frozen by the Glacial Sea. Music, through the constant synergies, over the centuries, maintained by technology and a scientific spirit, occupies a central place in the construction of these mixed territories. Music went on developing as an art linked to technology through complex and innovative mechanisms. From the eighteenth century, for example, several machines were invented, such as “ocular harpsichord”(clavecin oculaire) of Abbé Louis Bertrand Castel, intended to create «colored music». The twentieth century is full of these new musical instruments factories. In the 50s, music has become the first «digital» art, by the use of the computer for composition and synthesis. The digitalization process focused and accelerated a process of dematerialization of the work of art, to the interoperability of each of its elements. Everything becomes lighter, disembodied, mobile and transparent. The artistic work, as an installation, has became polymorphic, and can be both tactile, immersive, interactive, mobile. So, visual and audio, at the same time, can strengthen, «increase» or erase each other: mobility, which meddles in between various artistic expressions, and the shift from a perception to another, both create a multitude of in-between states and unusual situations, just like an architecture made out of invisible threads. So, the sound can be fully or partly the spine of this interdisciplinarity: this is the common theme of the whole path of «Through the listening glass».

The technological and sound device is an integral part of the work, it is enterly involved in the configuration of this dynamic and vibratory intangible space. It can be decisive in the writing of the artistic project. If the idea of immateriality has always beenpresent in the history of art, it had never been manifested by the absence of matter. Paradoxically, it is the emergence of sound as material, recordable, which will have the effect of generalizing a «vibration» approach to multidimensional space where the boundaries between artistic expressions are dwindling. Recently, the digital motion capture technology, have reintroduced the presence and power of gesture, (concept of «increased instrument» in the music environment), and helped to give their «body» to art objects in the process of dilution. More than the representation of movement, it is a question of energy and action that is «picked up». The interactive process is based on these invisible energies to include the presence of the public at the heart of the artist’s project.

Thus, the path of « Through the listening glass » induces this thinking on the artistic object: this one can disappear, it becomes light and sound trajectories (« 72 Impulse», «Time - Passing Through - Travel»), it reflected incessantly on itself («Coleslaw», « D’Ore et d’espace »), it spreads into countless broken («Walking through a line of neon lights») or it freezes into a waiting position («Retenue d’eau»). « Coleslaw » introduces also a notion of timelessness: playing with innumerable variations of interpretation of Cole Porter’s music, William Anastasi films himself throughout a game of mirrors.





WILLIAM ANASTASI

CAMÉRA(AUTO)CONTRÔLE

June 3rd –-July 31 2016
Centre de la photographie, Geneva, Switzerland

Press release:

The thematic exhibition for the 5th triennial 50JPG (50 jours pour la photographie à Genève), CAMÉRA(AUTO) CONTRÔLE, presents artists conceiving art works by diverting devices for (auto)control optical recording.
At the beginning of this year, Apple celebrated the 30th anniversary of its Macintosh series. The commercial for its launch in 1984 ended with this text scrolling up the television screen: On January 24th, Apple Computer will introduce Macintosh. And you'll see why 1984 won't be like «1984". Apple was promising us that the vision of a totalitarian world monitored by
cameras on every street corner that had been described in 1948 by George Orwell, the writer and fervent champion of the republic in Spain during the civil war, had no foundation" And indeed, 1984 was not "1984"!
30 years later (not far off the interval between 1948 and 1984), the entire world learnt, through the revelations of Edward Snowden, that Apple, Google, Facebook, Yahoo! and Microsoft were giving the US secret services, the NSA, free access to their servers! So here we are a bit closer to "1984"!
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The exhibition takes us right into the burning issue of drones and all other monitoring systems that use photo and video cameras. We can indeed "celebrate" a quarter of century of the monitoring of public space by automated cameras worldwide. These cameras quite often bear a sticker with a smiley asking those being recorded, whether in a car park, at a supermarket check-out, or on public transport, to smile.
A number of artists, hackers and political activists have refused to smile, instead appropriating these surveillance devices momentarily. Their actions have remained isolated, because never before has a grassroot movement fought against the increasingly invasive presence of depersonalised cameras in public spaces. It has also been a quarter of a century in which street photographers, both amateur and professional, have met with hostility, or even aggression from citizens, the same citizens who submissively accept being recorded 24 hours a day, wherever they may be. This schizophrenic attitude might be interpreted as an internalisation of the passive acceptance of one's image being monitored by unknown agents. The master stroke of this internalisation might well be the Selfie, where the citizen willingly smiles in front of his smartphone and shares this image of himself on social networks, and, in doing so, subjects himself to the most obvious social monitoring.
Here we are in the era of "happy-selfexploitation" observed by philosopher Byung- Chul Han, who suggests that cognitive capitalism has brought about a paradigm shift. He replaces Michel Foucault's bio-politics with the concept of psycho-politics, in which we, the "users", participate with our own consent, not to say enthusiasm, in our own exploitation, by giving our images and other personal informations willingly to the giants of the Internet. Our informations is what forms their capital.





WILLIAM ANASTASI

PORTRAIT DE L´ARTISTE EN ALTER

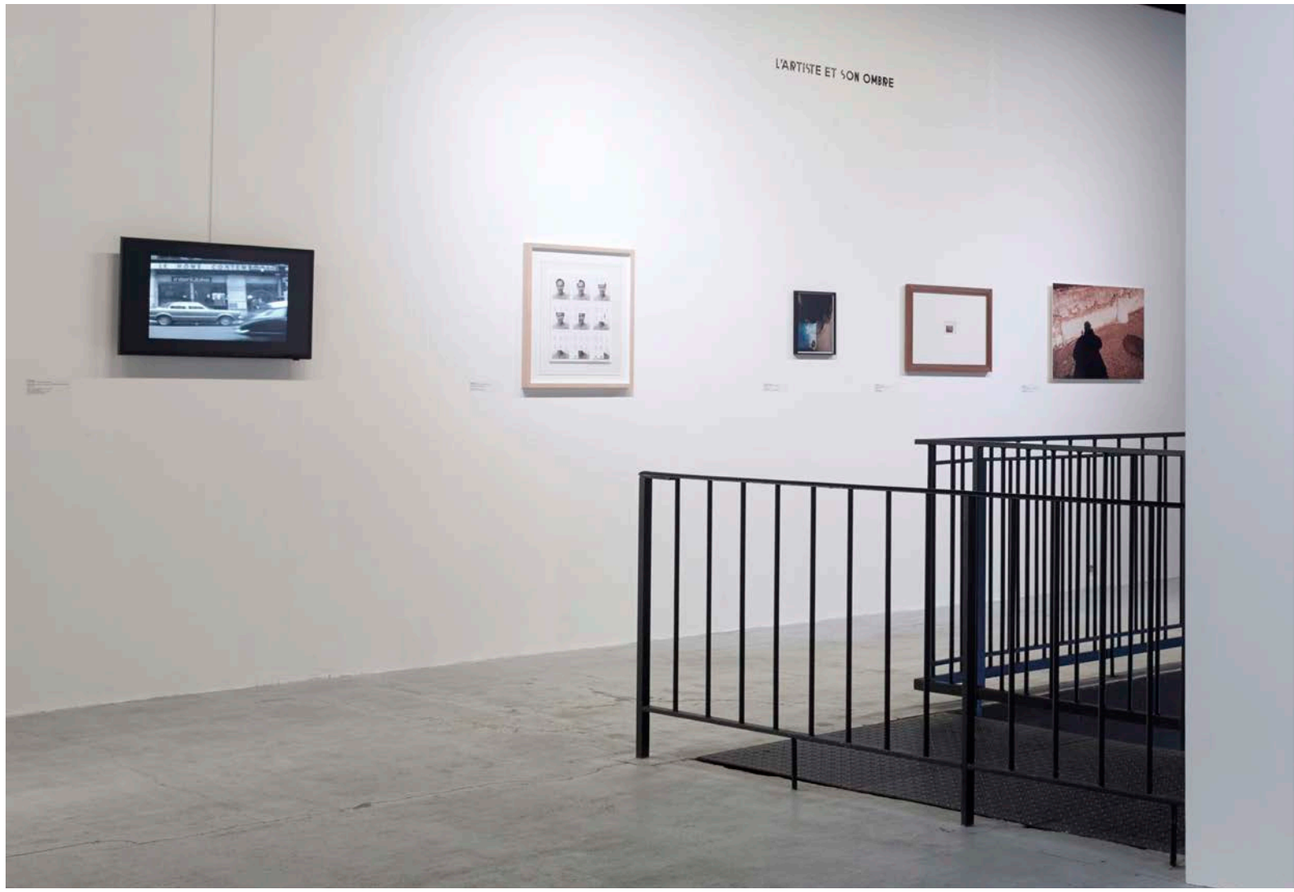
28 avril - 4 septembre, 2016
FRAC Haute Normandie, Sotteville-lès-Rouen, France

Communiqué de presse:

Prenant pour point de départ une maladie mystérieuse appelée «Trouble de la personnalité multiple» apparue aux États-Unis dans les années 80, l'exposition «Portrait de l'artiste en alter» cherche à étudier comment les artistes aujourd'hui ne cessent de se confronter au genre de l'autoportrait, tout en le réinventant, recourant à de nouveaux modes et codes de représentation.

Sur la base de la collection, complétée par des prêts d'envergure nationale et internationale, le corpus réuni par le Frac s'attache à rendre compte de la grande diversité des modes de représentation aujourd'hui. Il ne se limite pas à la peinture, au dessin et à la photographie, genres traditionnellement attachés à l'autoportrait. Les pratiques populaires et l'influence de la société des mass-médias, notamment avec le photomaton, la vidéo, internet et plus récemment le selfie, ont institué de nouvelles pratiques sociales et de nouveaux gestes qui ont contribué, en partie, au renouvellement de l'autoportrait.
Les revendications féministes et la question du genre ont également donné lieu à un vaste mouvement d'interrogation de l'identité, traduit par des mises en scènes dans lesquelles les artistes endossent des personnalités variées. Dans la lignée des préoccupations modernistes, certains artistes se sont emparés de l'autoportrait pour expérimenter et interroger les propriétés des différents médiums artistiques. Enfin, l'intérêt grandissant pour les archives et le documentaire a concouru à installer durablement certains modes de représentation tels que la photographie d'identité et le portrait robot dans le champ de l'art contemporain .

La galerie de portraits constituée par le Frac regroupe des positions actuelles mises en regard avec des œuvres plus anciennes, datées de la fin des années 70 jusqu'aux années 90. Elle rassemble peinture, dessin, photographie, vidéo, édition, installation et performance. L'exposition tend aussi à montrer des propositions d'artistes qui ont fait de l'autoportrait une recherche systématique et des propositions plus confidentielles. Dans ce cas, il s'agit ainsi de faire un pas de côté et de montrer comment des artistes engagés dans une autre démarche, conceptuelle, abstraite ou sociale, se représentent.





William Anastasi
Nine polaroids of the artist
1995, polaroid photograph, 40 x 33 cm

Exhibition views: Portrait de l'artiste en alter, FRAC Haute Normandie, Sotteville-lès-Rouen, France

WILLIAM ANASTASI

C:
JAN DIBBETS ON ANOTHER PHOTOGRAPHY

March 25 - July 17, 2016
Musée d'Art Moderne de la ville de Paris, Paris, France

Curators: Jan Dibbets and François Michaud

Press release:

«In the course of photography's brief history we can see how this diabolical, hybrid medium began to insist increasingly on its place in the arts, especially since the 1960s and the coming of Conceptualism.» Jan Dibbets.

The Musée d'Art moderne has called on Jan Dibbets – whose own contribution to Conceptual art was decisive – for a reinterpretation of the history of photography from its invention up to the present day. Rejecting a conventional approach in what is his first venture into curating, Dibbets sets out to pursue the line he has been following since the 1960s, and which marked his exhibitions at the Musée d'Art Moderne in 1980, 1994 and 2010.

Jan Dibbets has addressed this project radically. For him the power of the photographic medium lies in its specific characteristics and technical possibilities, rather than in its content and subject matter. At odds with the ongoing institutionalisation of the documentary image, he quotes Duchamp's reply to a question from Stieglitz in 1922: «You know exactly what I think about photography. I would like to see it make people despise painting until something else will make photography unbearable.» ("Can a Photograph Have the Significance of Art", MSS, no. 4, December 1922, New York).

Breaking with the standard museum codes while adhering to a more or less chronological framework, the exhibition investigates the nature of the photograph in the digital age and photography's relationships with the visual arts. Although the discipline quickly became a competitor for painterly realism – think Ingres – it is the scientifically oriented photographers of the 19th century who emerge here as the true visionaries, paving the way for entire output of the 20th century. Nicéphore Niépce, Gustave Le Gray, Etienne-Jules Marey and Eadweard Muybridge are on show here, alongside other photographers less well known – but for Dibbets just as crucial – including Wilson A. Bentley and Etienne Léopold Trouvelot. Their direct successors are Karl Blossfeldt, Man Ray, Alexander Rodchenko, Paul Strand and Berenice Abbot – in a line that continues on to Bruce Nauman.
As an apologia for photography's reproducibility, the «Pandora's Box» the discipline represents for Dibbets is a recipe for total freedom: side by side he shows two similar images, or a positive and its negative, or a copy of a famous work made by a later photographer.



William Anastasi
Nine polaroids Photographs of a Mirror, photogravure, 2000

Exhibition views: La boîte de Pandore, Musée d'Art Moderne de la ville de Paris, France

WILLIAM ANASTASI

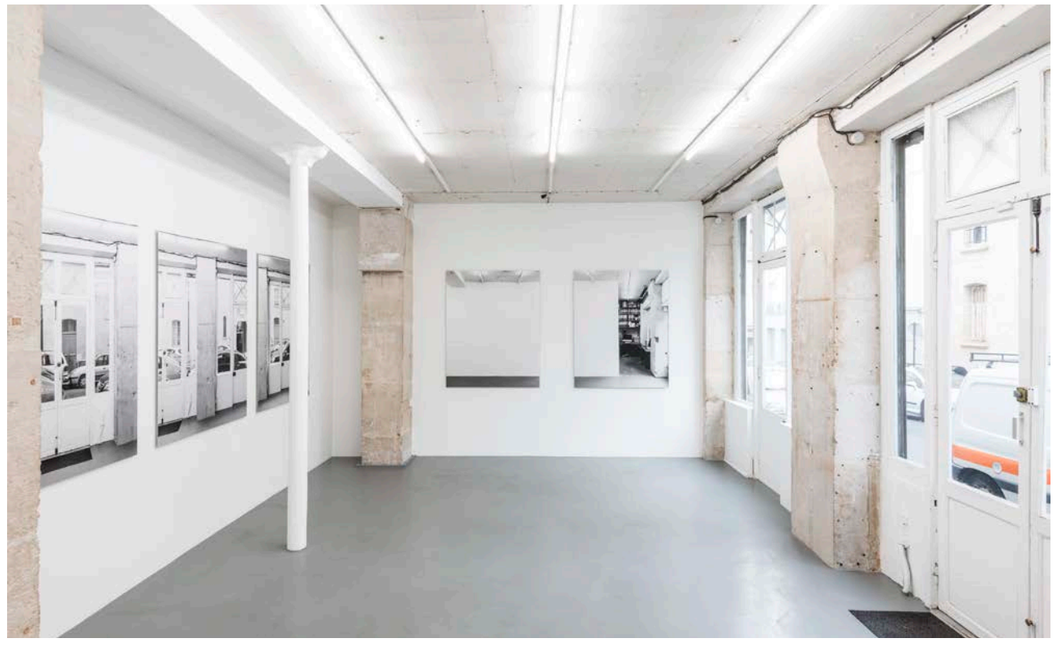
CONTINUUM

October 23 – December 24, 2015

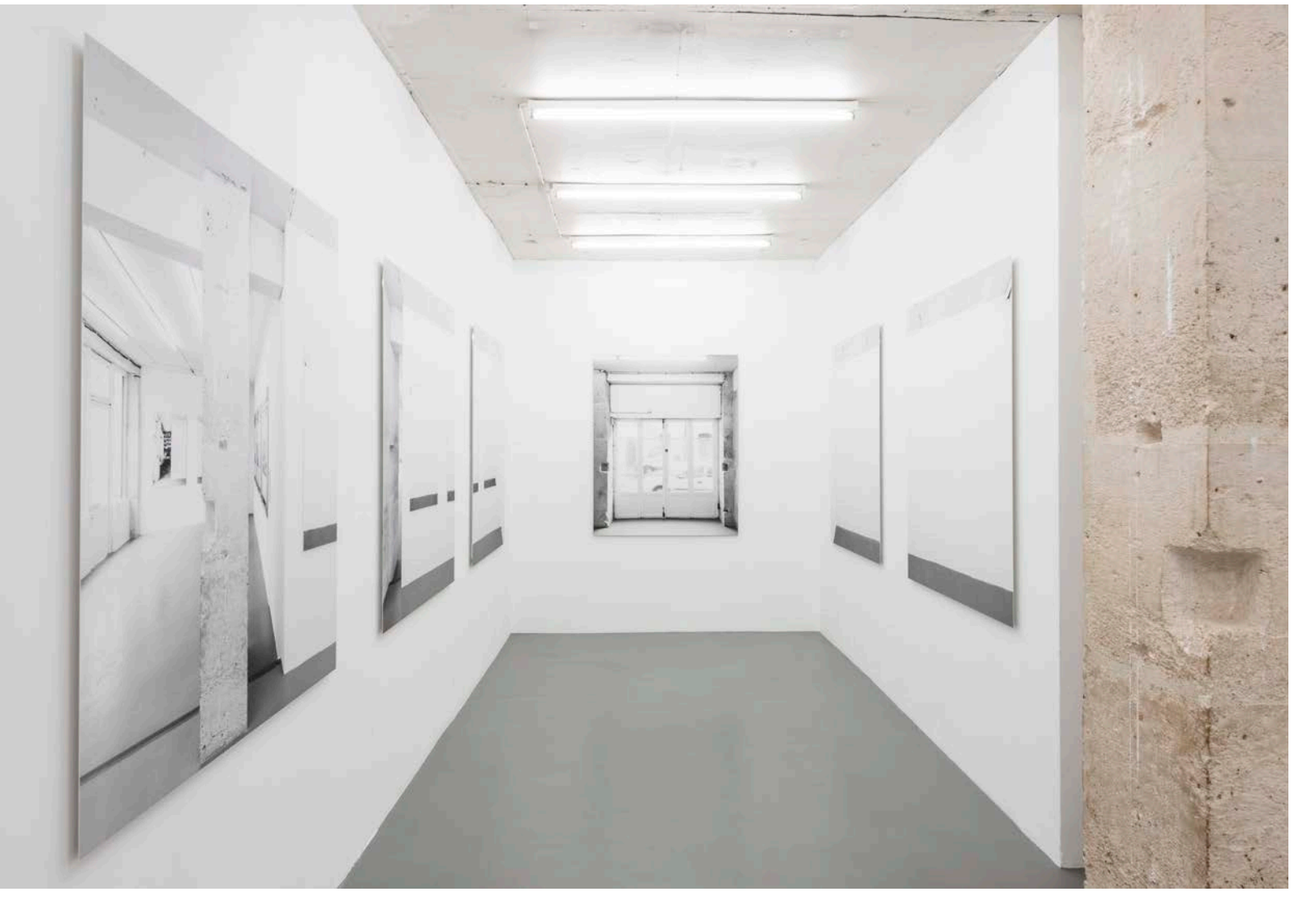
Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France

Press release:

Continuum represents a seminal installation in the history of photography. The site specific installation lays out the coordinates of temporal impermanence and the immaterial, phenomenological basis of experience. Anastasi explores these issues by rendering problematic the photograph as instrument of knowledge and objectification. Hung upon each wall of a space, a series of twelve photographs show the space directly behind the viewer as he or she looks at the photograph. Each wall reflects the one opposite it; since each photograph was mounted before the next one was taken, the early ones show a blank wall opposite them; the later ones show on opposing wall with a photograph of the first wall already hung on it. Anastasi metaphorically engages the reflective properties of mirroring by photographically inverting the space, placing the area behind the viewer in front of him. The viewer entering the gallery space and looking behind himself sees the same thing as in front of him. Thomas McEvelly a close friend and Anastasi's devoted art critic, described Continuum as an "infinite regress", somewhat like two mirrors facing each other, a space of silence in which the viewer is rendered invisible or immaterial or transparent.
Anastasi notes in a conversation with McEvelly in 2005 that the work involved with space itself in the 60ies is an allusion to the discomforting fact that there existed sufficient nuclear weapons sitting in the U.S. and the (former) USSR to essentially bring human life to an end on this planet – that it might be a bit late for art to continue pointing to this or that corner of reality as was once its habit – that here and now had taken on a meaning beyond its meaning to past generations. Anastasi's interest in pure presence which also manifests itself in his signature "works", his blind drawings is expressed here clearly.
The umbrella under which the early works by Anastasi such as his sound objects, his wall removals and site related installations, all the way up to Autobodyography and Nine Polaroid Photographs of a Mirror bow to is the tautological. These works can be seen as an attack of representational art while simultaneously expanding a genuflection to the hear and the now.
It seems that Continuum sums up the preoccupations of classical art: the relationship of the context to the thing; the dichotomy between presence and representation, dematerialization and tautology.
Continuum was first presented to the New York galerist Virginia Dwan in 1970, in the form of a drawing by Anastasi dating from 1968. It was then shown in Anastasi's third solo show at Dwan Gallery. In 1977 Alanna Heiss presented Continuum in a slightly modified version at PS1, NY. Galerie Jocelyn Wolff is now presenting this seminal site specific installation in its original idea of 1968.

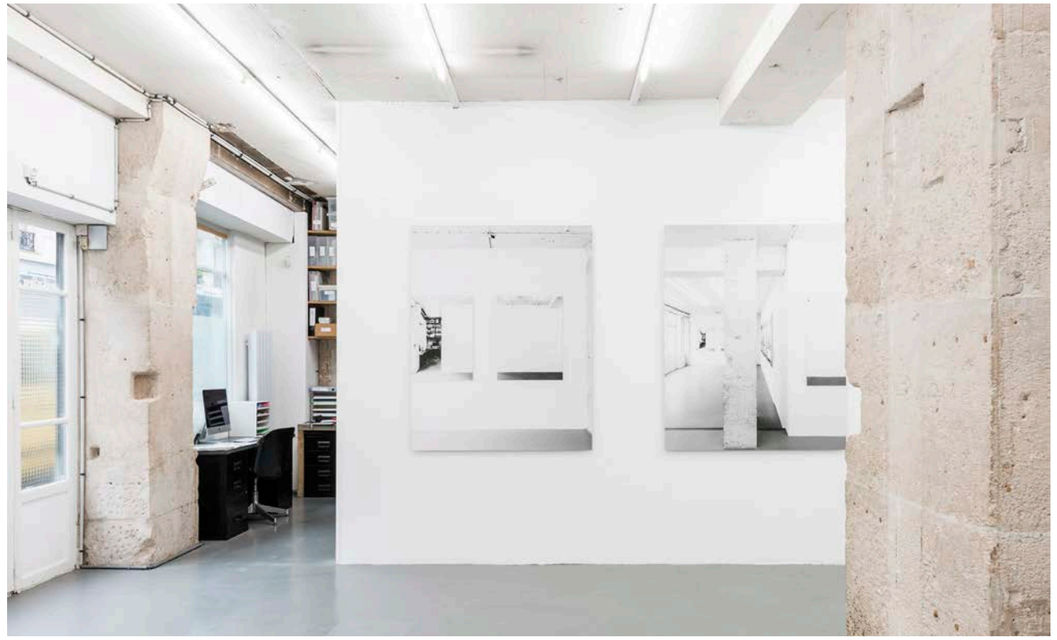






William Anastasi
Continuum; Gelatin silver prints mounted on aluminium, 1968-2015

Exhibition view: Continuum, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France, 2015





WILLIAM ANASTASI

ALFRED JARRY ARCHIPELAGO
LA VALSE DES PANTINS - ACTE II

October 18, 2015 - February 14, 2016

La Ferme du Buisson, Centre d'art contemporain, Marne-la-Vallée, France

curated by Keren Detton & Julie Pellegrin

press release:
All most people remember of Jarry is the King Ubu furore, which overshadows a complex body of work marked by radical experimentation and an unmannerly blending of genres. In bringing together a remarkable group of one-of-a-kind international artists, Alfred Jarry Archipelago demonstrates that an entire register of current art and performance is shot through with potent, «Jarryesque» transgression.
«Because this boy – who wore size 36 shoes and who, brokenhearted, went to his friend Mallarmé's funeral wearing a lemon yellow pair stolen from his lady friend Rachilde; who, when he was born at the age of 15, was already the child he would be when he died at 34; who knew at once that «To live = To cease to exist»; who spent his life yo-yoing at up to 300 km/h between the lands of «shitr» and the absolute; who left behind wonders that would knock you flat; who staked his entire existence on literature and played with a revolver, claiming that it was «as beautiful as literature» – completely escapes the clutches of literature.» Annie Le Brun"

In his poetry, plays and drawings Alfred Jarry (1873-1907) shattered the boundaries of the social, moral and aesthetic order of the late 19th century. Like a thunderclap, his King Ubu's famed «Shitr!» paved the way for for the modernity that was waiting in the wings: from Marcel Duchamp to Harald Szeemann, and including the Futurists, the Surrealists, the Conceptuals and all the many others indebted to this «proto- Dadaist». Between the turn of one century and that of its successor Jarry's work and ideas seem to have breathed new life into society and art. The abolition of limits – to disciplines, identity, good sense, good taste – that he explored in his life and his work, led him to a totally new approach to drama, the body and language; as well as issues of domination, whether related to desire, knowledge or power.
Homing in a selection of Jarryesque motifs, Alfred Jarry Archipelago sets out to pinpoint their reappearance in the visual arts, on the cusp of theatre, dance and literature. In his celebrated 'pataphysical manifesto Exploits and Opinions of Dr Faustroll, Pataphysician' Jarry
describes an initiatory island-hopping voyage that abolishes factual geography in favour of its artistic equivalent. Each chapter of Book 3 recounts a landfall on an imaginary island dedicated to a writer or artist of the time. If he were sailing through today's world, what kind of landscape of the last century would Jarry orchestrate? In the same spirit Alfred Jarry Archipelago invites him along as a posthumous curator: for a string of islands embodying the works of various artists and sketching an uncompromisingly subjective view of his heritage. Unfolding over several months, in different places and in different shapes and forms – group and solo exhibitions, screenings, performances, encounters – the project will be rounded off with a major catalogue.





William Anastasi
Du Jarry, 1991-94, facsimile of the manuscript, about 950 pages

Exhibition views: Alfred Jarry Archipelago, La Ferme du Buisson, Marne-la-Vallée, France









William Anastasi
Badabad (nn), oil, crayon, graphite on canvas, 226 x 187 cm, 2013
Badabad (o), oil, crayon, graphite on canvas, 226 x 187 cm, 2014

Exhibition views: Alfred Jarry Archipelago, La Ferme du Buisson, Marne-la-Vallée, France

WILLIAM ANASTASI

THÉÂTRE DES OPÉRATIONS / THEATRE OF OPERATIONS

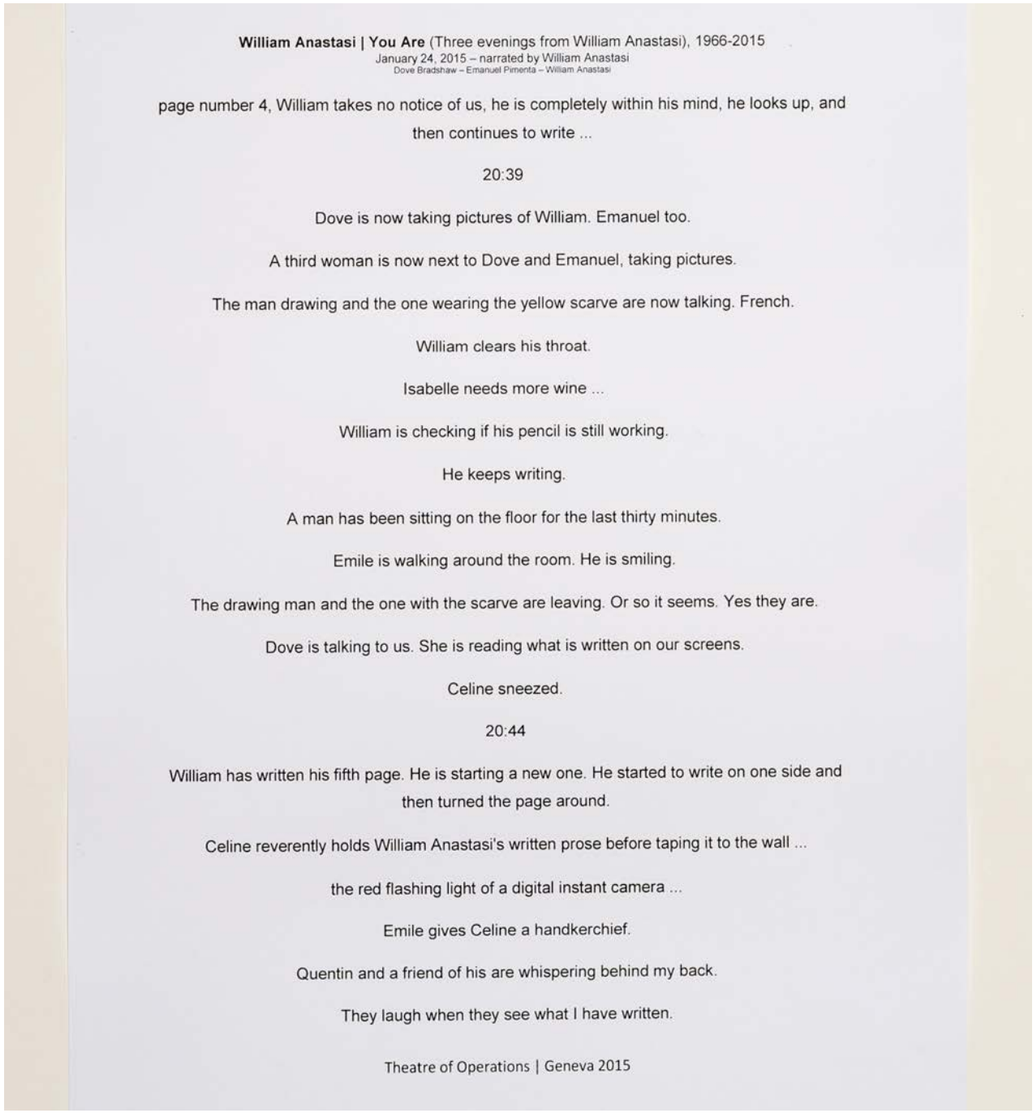
January 22-24, 2015

Théâtre de l'usine, Geneva, Switzerland

By Bénédicte le Pimpec & Émile Ouroumov in collaboration with Céline Bertin

In science and engineering, a black box is a device, system or object which can be viewed in terms of its input and output without any knowledge of its internal workings. Its implementation is «opaque» (black). Almost anything might be referred to as a black box: a transistor, an algorithm, or the human brain.The opposite of a black box is a system where the in-ner components or logic are available for inspection, which is most commonly referred to as a white box.Source: WikipediaA "theatre of operations" is a delimited geographical zone in which an armed conflict involving at least two adversaries is taking place. The related term "operating theatre" also describes the historical practice of surgery performed as a public spectacle.This project incorporates "operations" – artistic gestures of addition, subtraction, multiplication and differentiation – in the present, and not in an immutable conception of time. Over a three-day period, these operations are being deployed in the form of an exhibition punctuated by activa-tions, inside and outside the "black box", in an ongoing flow, and with parallel temporalities. The objects, films, readings, interventions and exhibitions arrange their own mediation tools within the theatrical model. Coming from the vocabulary of art, by way of a productive tension they negotiate the hierarchy of the elements of the theatrical edifice, over-exposing to better deconstruct the conflict between actor and spectator, and bringing forth common areas of sensibility between live spectacle and visual art.The interactions of the theatre with the other arts and the social space roundabout can be traced back to Antiquity. But prior to recent attempts at deconstruction, the idea whereby the theatre was the loftiest expression of any society encouraged the application of the notion of "total artwork", a construct envisaging the arts participating in a pyramidal and compartmental-ized way. This development is akin to capitalist accumulation: in the depths of the Middle Ages, perhaps earlier, with the decline of Rome and Judaeo-Christianity, Western society chose to accumulate rather than live. At the outset, the political nature of the stage space was more an emanation of the state apparatus – undoubtedly, there is a politics of space because space is po-litical – rather than a liberating implementation of the idea that it is by means of the body that space is perceived, lived – and produced (Henri Lefebvre).In a chronology that is subjective and incomplete, the imagination of the "Theatre of Operations" retains some dates. 1924, the ballet Relâche by Francis Picabia, Eric Satie and René Clair, at once transversal and undisciplined. 1970, Yvonne Rainer's WAR, a dance against the Vietnam war in which the movements are led by the vocabulary of military strategy. 1982, Fitzcarraldo, "con-quistador of the useless" from Werner Herzog's film of the same title, de-territorializes opera machinery in a boat in Amazonia. 2006, the pioneering exhibition The Living Currency by Pierre Bal-Blanc positions the issue of the body back at the centre of the curatorial economy. 2007, Il Tempo del Postino (Hans Ulrich Obrist and Philippe Parreno) attempts a spectacular transposition of artistic codes in the opera. 2012, with her Artificial Hells, Claire Bishop proposes a critical reading of "participatory art and the politics of spectatorship".Informed by these endeavours, the "Theatre of Operations" pursues an investigation of the place of the spectacle. Guy Debord's Nouveau Théâtre des opérations dans la culture puts forward the notion that the dissolution of old ideas goes hand in hand with the dissolution of old conditions of existence. Rather than seeing the theatre as the place of a spatial, temporal and corporal capitalization, the exhibition's intent is to compose a theatre that is inhab-ited, active, plastic and empirical, at opposite ends of the psychological notion of "learned helplessness", a behaviour in which the subject perceives absence of control over the events in his environment, and subsequently adopts a resigned or passive attitude.

press release



William Anastasi | You Are (Three evenings from William Anastasi), 1966-2015
January 24, 2015 – narrated by William Anastasi
Dove Bradshaw – Emanuel Pimenta – William Anastasi

page number 4, William takes no notice of us, he is completely within his mind, he looks up, and then continues to write ...

20:39

Dove is now taking pictures of William. Emanuel too.

A third woman is now next to Dove and Emanuel, taking pictures.

The man drawing and the one wearing the yellow scarve are now talking. French.

William clears his throat.

Isabelle needs more wine ...

William is checking if his pencil is still working.

He keeps writing.

A man has been sitting on the floor for the last thirty minutes.

Emile is walking around the room. He is smiling.

The drawing man and the one with the scarve are leaving. Or so it seems. Yes they are.

Dove is talking to us. She is reading what is written on our screens.

Celine sneezed.

20:44

William has written his fifth page. He is starting a new one. He started to write on one side and then turned the page around.

Celine reverently holds William Anastasi's written prose before taping it to the wall ...

the red flashing light of a digital instant camera ...

Emile gives Celine a handkerchief.

Quentin and a friend of his are whispering behind my back.

They laugh when they see what I have written.

Theatre of Operations | Geneva 2015

You Are (Three Evenings from William Anastasi)
1977/8
In 1977, You Are: John Cage, One of Three Narrators on Three Successive Evenings, 8–9:30 PM, in which a writer, a visual artist, and a composer were asked to describe the viewers coming to Anastasi's exhibition at the Cloc tower, New York. Anastasi chose Cage as the composer (the writer being Carl Kielblock, and the artist, Les Levine). In response Cage asked whether he could sit facing away from those gathered and describe the sounds instead. His observations were taken down verbatim by a court stenographer, and then a speed typist's phonetic transcript (containing errors) was mounted on the wall every couple minutes. The collaboration initiated Anastasi and Cage's friendship. This led to daily chess games over the next fifteen years until Cage's death.

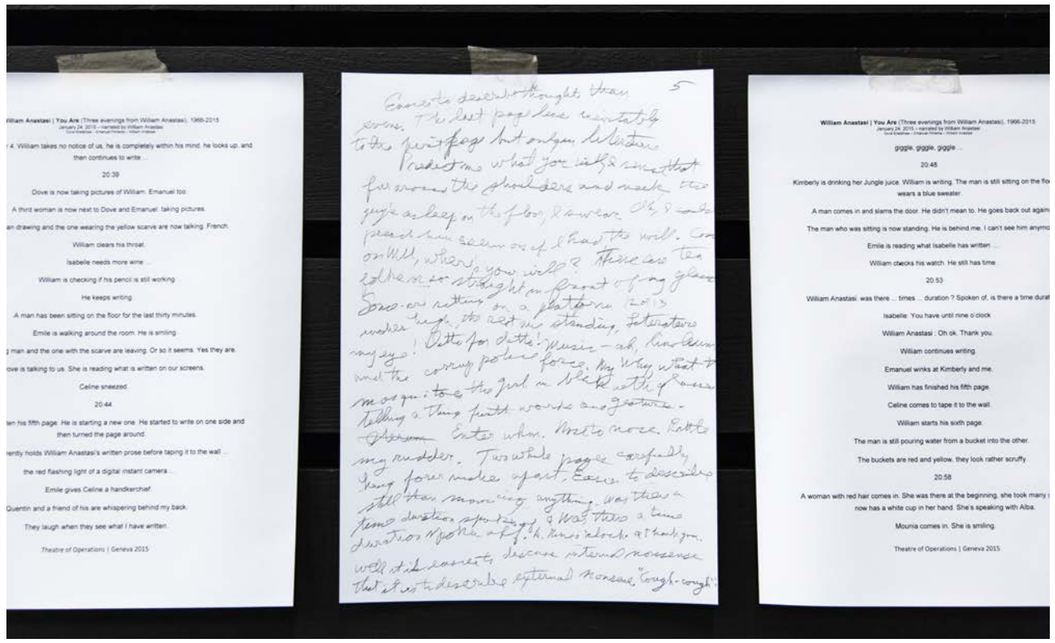


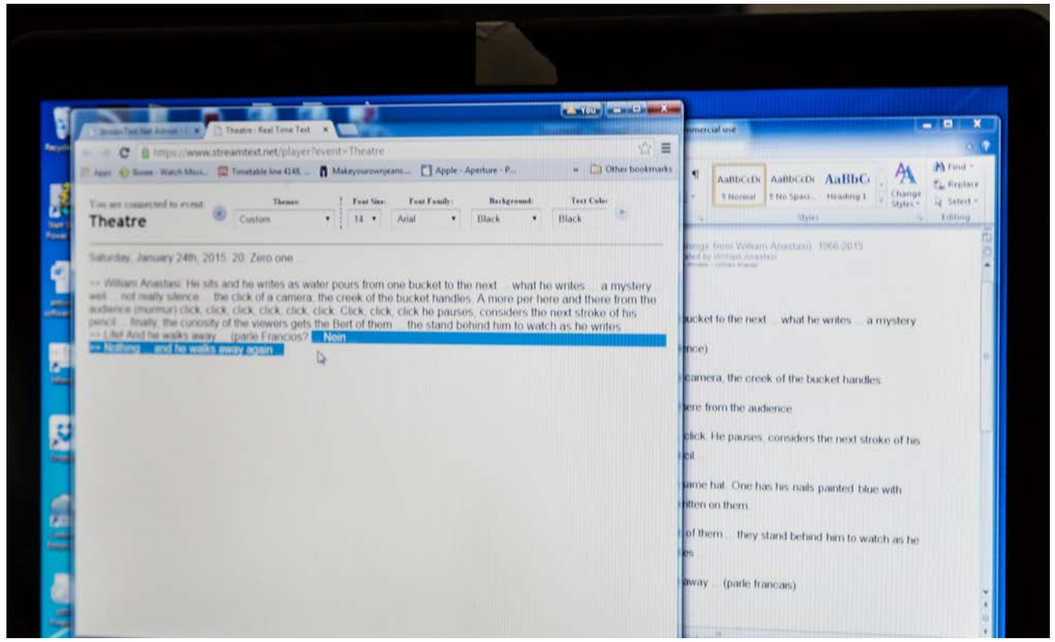


William Anastasi
You Are (Three Evenings from William Anastasi), 1977/8

William Anastasi

Exhibition views: Théâtre des opérations, Théâtre de l’usine, Geneva, Switzerland, 2015





William Anastasi
You Are (Three Evenings from William Anastasi), 1977/8

Exhibition views: Théâtre des opérations, Théâtre de l’usine, Geneva, Switzerland, 2015





William Anastasi
You Are (Three Evenings from William Anastasi), 1977/8

Exhibition views: Théâtre des opérations, Théâtre de l’usine, Geneva, Switzerland, 2015





William Anastasi
You Are (Three Evenings from William Anastasi), 1977/8

Drawings by William Anastasi

Exhibition views: Théâtre des opérations, Théâtre de l’usine, Geneva, Switzerland, 2015

WILLIAM ANASTASI

PASSION
WILLIAM ANASTASI - FRANCISCO TROPA - CHRISTOPH WEBER

April 10 – May 23, 2015
Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France

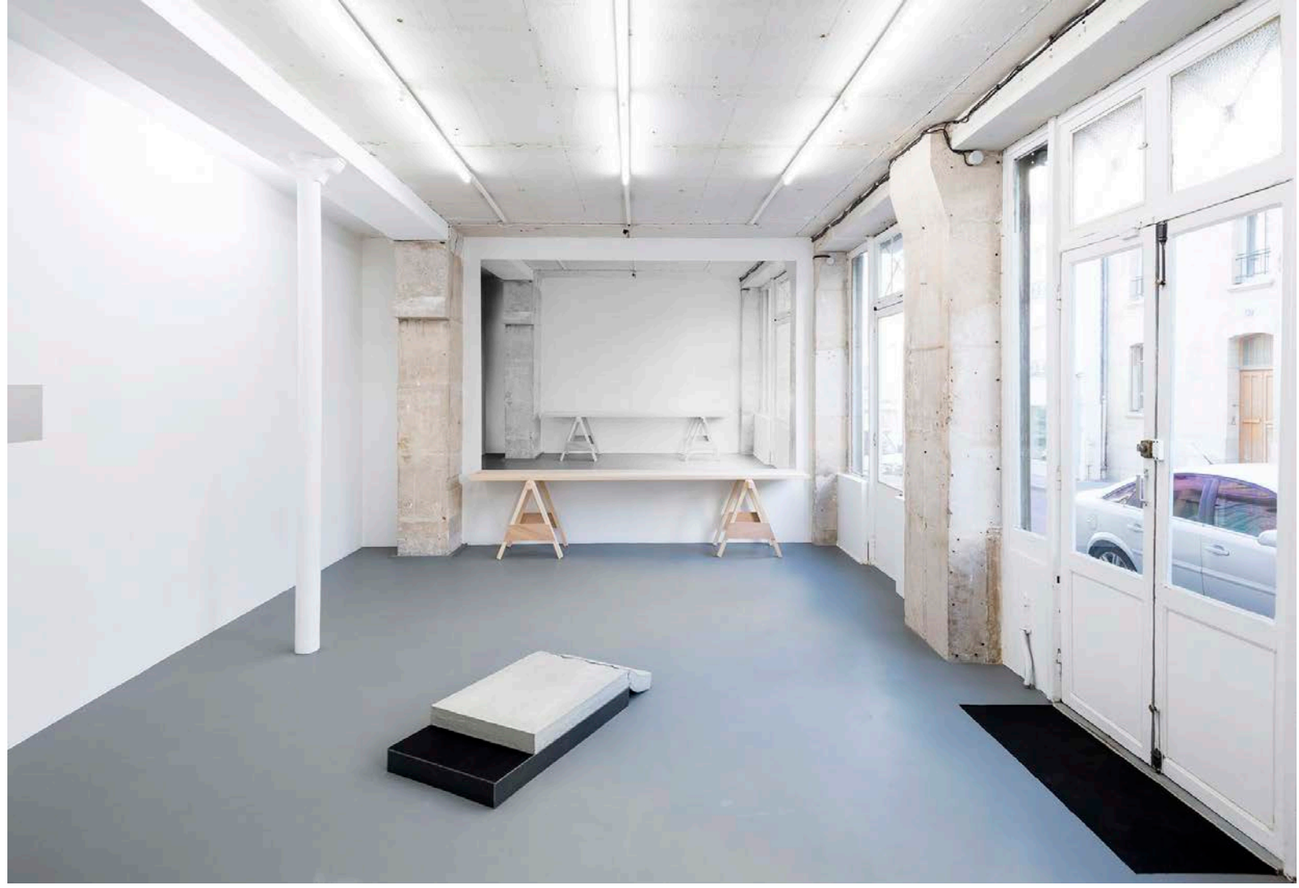
Centered around Passion by William Anastasi, this exhibition offers many lines of thought for themes specific to conceptuel sculpture and drawing: tautology as process at the origin of the work, the perspective, the relationship to materials, accidents and chance.

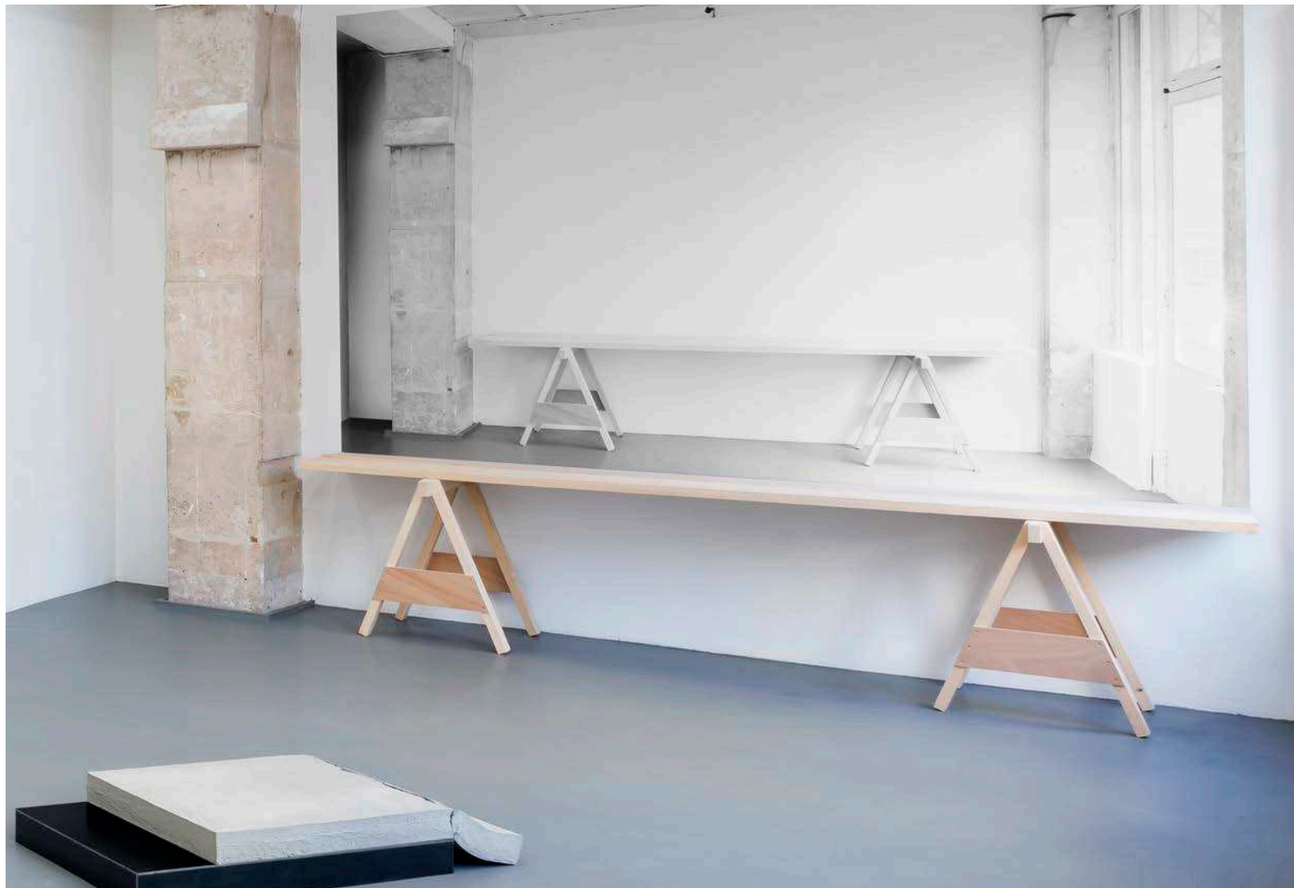
Working without leaving the «aesthetic prejudice of the moment», be it trying to free oneself from one's own cultural references via an objectivation process is at the heart of William Anastasi's practice. The origin of a serigraphy, Real Life, 2000, pencil on paper, 42.5 x 51.5 cm, was re-worked by the artist with pencil and felt pen using his two hands and a set of dice to intervene with one or the other color.

This effort for objectivation also lies at the heart of the series of works produced for the exhibition «Six Sites» at the Dwan Gallery in 1967 to which Passion belongs: the photographic print of the space with a scaffold/table is a 10% reduction of the place it is situated, a simple and precise protocol that calls for a redefining of the work each time it is presented in a different context. William Anastasi's work builds itself upon multiple processes, plays with enlargement and reduction, and utilizes text and language.

With Antipodes, 2015, white Estremoz marble, Francisco Tropa fixes an axel and two rails into the marble, metaphor for displacement on two continuous parallel lines; here the traditional sculpture material is that involving the ceasing of movement.

The two sculptures, Not yet titled, 2015, steel and concrete, 18.5 x 130 x 60 cm and Not Yet Titled, 2015, concrete, 120 x 44 x 22.5 cm proceed from Christoph Weber's systematic research on this material's reaction to folding to the point of breaking, and as a ceasing of movement that is characteristic of the life of the material before it stiffens like a homologon of rock.





WILLIAM ANASTASI

DANS MA CELLULE, UNE SILHOUETTE

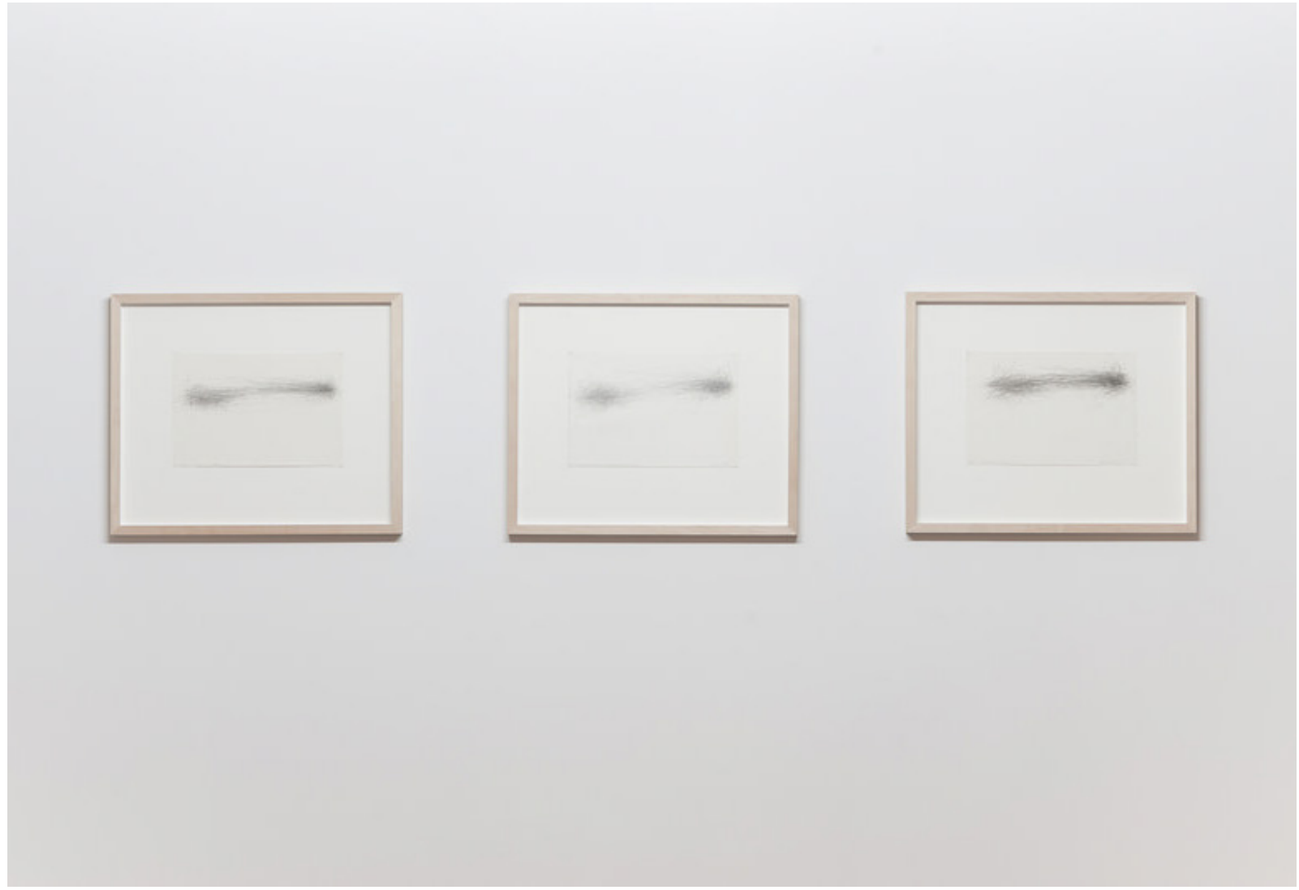
February 1st – April 20, 2014

Centre d'art contemporain de la Ferme du Buisson, Noisiel, France

« Il y a dans ma cellule la trace d'un homme mort. […] Cela fait presque cinq ans qu'il est enterré, pourtant son ombre
perdure. Il n'était rien ni personne. Tout ce qui reste de lui c'est une poignée d'accusations pour viol et un dessin exécuté au crayon. Ce n'est peut-être qu'une superstition mais je ne peux m'empêcher de penser que l'effacer reviendrait à effacer jusqu'à son existence. Ce qui ne serait peut-être pas une mauvaise chose finalement, mais ce n'est pas moi qui m'en chargerai. » Extrait de Life After Death, une autobiographie de Damien Echols, condamné à mort par l'État d'Arkansas en 1994 et relaxé en 2011

Proposant une exploration du dessin dans son rapport au geste, au corps, l'exposition revient sur l'histoire de Dibutade, la fille du potier de Sycione, qui, la veille du départ de son amant, « entoura d'une ligne l'ombre de son visage projetée sur le mur par la lumière d'une lanterne. » Si ce geste séminal que relate Pline l'Ancien dans son Histoire naturelle est considéré par l'auteur, et à sa suite par nombre d'historiens de l'art, comme l'origine de la peinture et de la sculpture, elle est aussi une invitation à renouveler notre rapport au visible. Par son geste, la jeune fille nous renvoie en effet à la
part d'invisible que recèle le visible, en l'occurrence à son désir qui ne peut se résoudre dans l'image. Ce que nous voyons est ainsi toujours habité par l'absence de ce que nous ne pouvons voir, absence qui non seulement structure notre vision mais permet l'avènement d'une potentialité, d'un événement, d'un dévoilement. Réunissant une sélection d'oeuvres de Abdelkader Benchamma, Mathieu Bonardet, Geta Brătescu, Maryclare Foá & Birgitta Hosea (Performance
Drawing Collective), Jean Genet, Dennis Oppenheim, Santiago Reyes, Till Roeskens et Carla Zaccagnini, l'exposition envisage ainsi la relation du dessin au corps, où le corps n'est pas seulement ce qui génère le mouvement mais révèle avant tout ce qui se soustrait au regard et que l'on cherche pourtant à rendre visible de notre rapport à l'autre et de notre rapport à soi.





WILLIAM ANASTASI

SOUND WORKS 1963-2013

October 4 - November 30, 2013

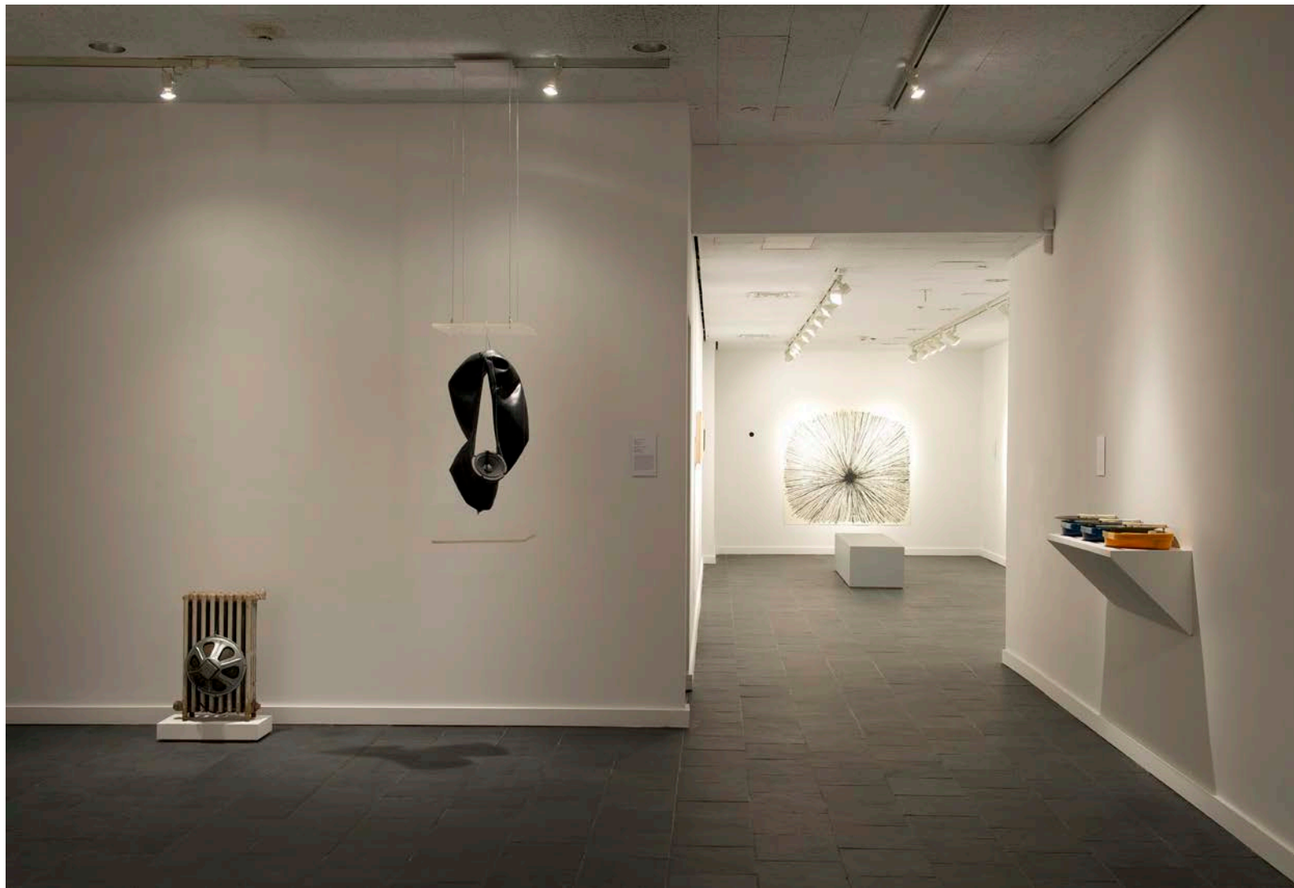
Hunter college, New York, USA

Sound Works examines the importance of sound in the work of William Anastasi (b. 1933), one of the key figures in the development of Conceptual, Process, and Minimal Art. Since the early 1960s, sound has played a central role in Anastasi's relentless investigations into the status, autonomy, and representational function of the art object. Bringing together works from 1963 to the present, Sound Works marks the first comprehensive exhibition to focus exclusively on William Anastasi's varied use of and engagement with sound. By showcasing sound as a consistent thread in his pioneering efforts to question aesthetic norms, this exhibition provides a unique lens through which to consider Anastasi's artistic innovations and contributes to the ongoing critical reappraisal of his oeuvre.

This ensemble of objects and drawings explores the complex relationship between sound and image, and yields a range of conceptual and phenomenological tensions: between active and passive, presence and absence, creation and destruction. In so doing, Anastasi raises important questions about site and medium specificity, the dematerialization of the aesthetic object, and the dynamic nature of sense experience and perception. Cumulatively, Sound Works offers visitors an unprecedented opportunity to consider both the importance of sound to Anastasi's broader artistic practice as well as Anastasi's significance to the emerging art movements of the 1960s and beyond.

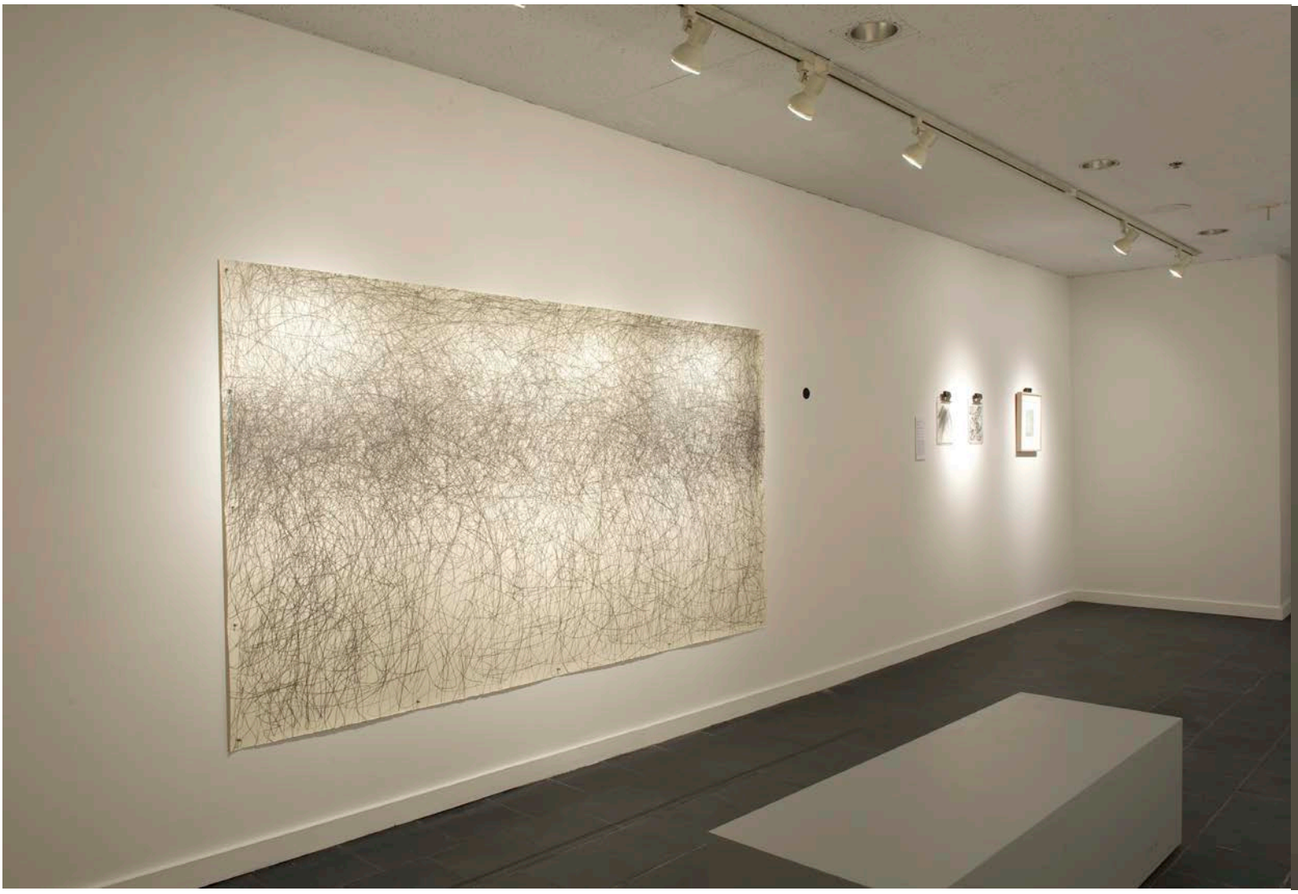
William Anastasi: Sound Works, 1963–2013 opens at a pivotal moment in the artist's career—in the year of his eightieth birthday—and coincides with a resurgence of interest in sound-based art. This unique timing opens the door for critical discussion of the development of sound art and Anastasi's pivotal role in its history.













WILLIAM ANASTASI

QUELQUE CHOSE DE PLUS QU'UNE SUCCESSION DE NOTES

May 22 - July 20, 2013

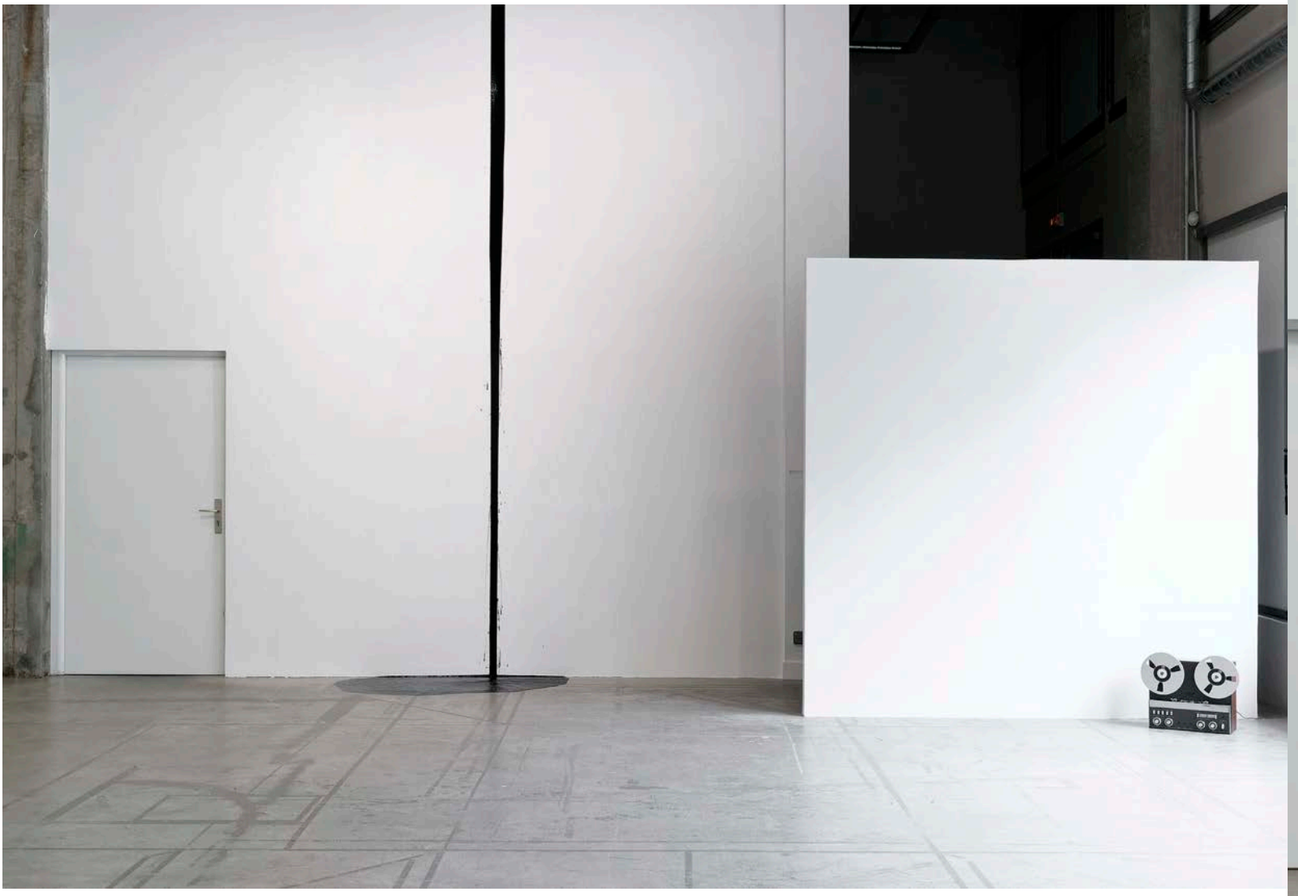
Beton Salon, Paris, France

group show curated by Melanie Bouteloup

Press release in french :

En 2003, l'Unesco établissait une Convention pour la sauvegarde du Patrimoine Culturel Immatériel, offrant une reconnaissance institutionnelle inédite à des pratiques de l'ordre du savoir-faire, de l'oralité, du geste ou du rituel. Selon cette convention, la notion de « patrimoine culturel immatériel » désigne les « pratiques, représentations, expressions, connaissances et savoir-faire - ainsi que les instruments, objets, artefacts et espaces culturels qui leur sont associés » - transmis de génération en génération par une communauté. Il est en permanence recréé en fonction de l'interaction du groupe avec son milieu, son histoire, et lui procure « un sentiment d'identité et de continuité, contribuant ainsi à promouvoir le
respect de la diversité culturelle et la créativité humaine ». Cette convention témoigne d'une évolution du concept de « patrimoine » vers une définition élargie, non plus strictement monumentaliste et occidentale. En dehors du bâti et des textes, elle inclut désormais l'oralité et les gestes pour reconnaître la diversité des formes d'expressions culturelles à travers le monde. L'ambition d'en assurer la préservation pose cependant question. Comment envisager la représentation de pratiques immatérielles ? Comment entreprendre leur « sauvegarde » sans pour autant les figer en un inventaire, et les réduire à une transcription ou réactivation nécessairement partielle et subjective ? Faut-il en définitive « conserver » ces pratiques immatérielles ou laisser libre cours à leurs mutations ?
À l'occasion des 10 ans de cette convention, l'exposition « Quelque chose de plus qu'une succession de notes » propose d'interroger les enjeux soulevés par la patrimonialisation de données culturelles par définition vivantes et en perpétuelle évolution. Tenter de classer et perpétuer les pratiques culturelles immatérielles, n'est-ce pas aller à l'encontre du mouvement organique qui les sous-tend, propre à la constitution, à l'évolution voire à la disparition des formes d'expression d'une communauté humaine ? Dans la mesure où les pratiques d'un groupe naissent et se métamorphosent toujours en fonction d'un contexte socio-économique précis, leur fixation en une forme atemporelle supposée représentative (au moyen d'enregistrements sonores, photographiques, vidéos, mais encore de témoignages ou d'éléments
collectés sur le terrain) ne peut rendre compte de leurs variations et de leur labilité profonde.








FROST PAGES
H
CARNIVAL

WILLIAM ANASTASI

JARRY: DU / JOY
BLIND DRAWINGS
WALKING, SUBWAY, DROP, VETRUVIAN MAN, STILL

November 10 – December 22, 2012

Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France

At the occasion of his first solo exhibition at Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, William Anastasi presents a series of «Blind Drawings», some of them produced in situ. One relief, «Displaced Site» (1966) and a sculpture «1904 S.Ninth St. (1964) along with archives, notes and drawings related to his delving into Jarry's effect on Duchamp and Joyce. One can observe how the division between artworks and archives are permeable.

For William Anastasi the starting point is the idea. His ideas typically arrive with a curiosity regarding their realization. His practice merges with the quotidien. After initiating his "Running drawings", series in the 60's, he builds a corpus where drawings accompany his motion ("Walking Drawings", "Subway drawings", "Taxi Cab Drawings", etc.), or organizing a system embracing space for chance ("Drop Drawings"), in coherence with his ethics of the aleatory.

communiqué de presse:

Pour sa première exposition personnelle à la galerie, William Anastasi articule un ensemble de "Blind drawings", dont certains réalisés in situ, deux sculptures «Displaced Site» (1966) et «1904 S.Ninth St.» (1964) et un ensemble de notes et archives lié à ses recherches sur l'influence de l'oeuvre d'Alfred Jarry chez Joyce et chez Duchamp, où les frontières entre œuvre et document se dissipent.

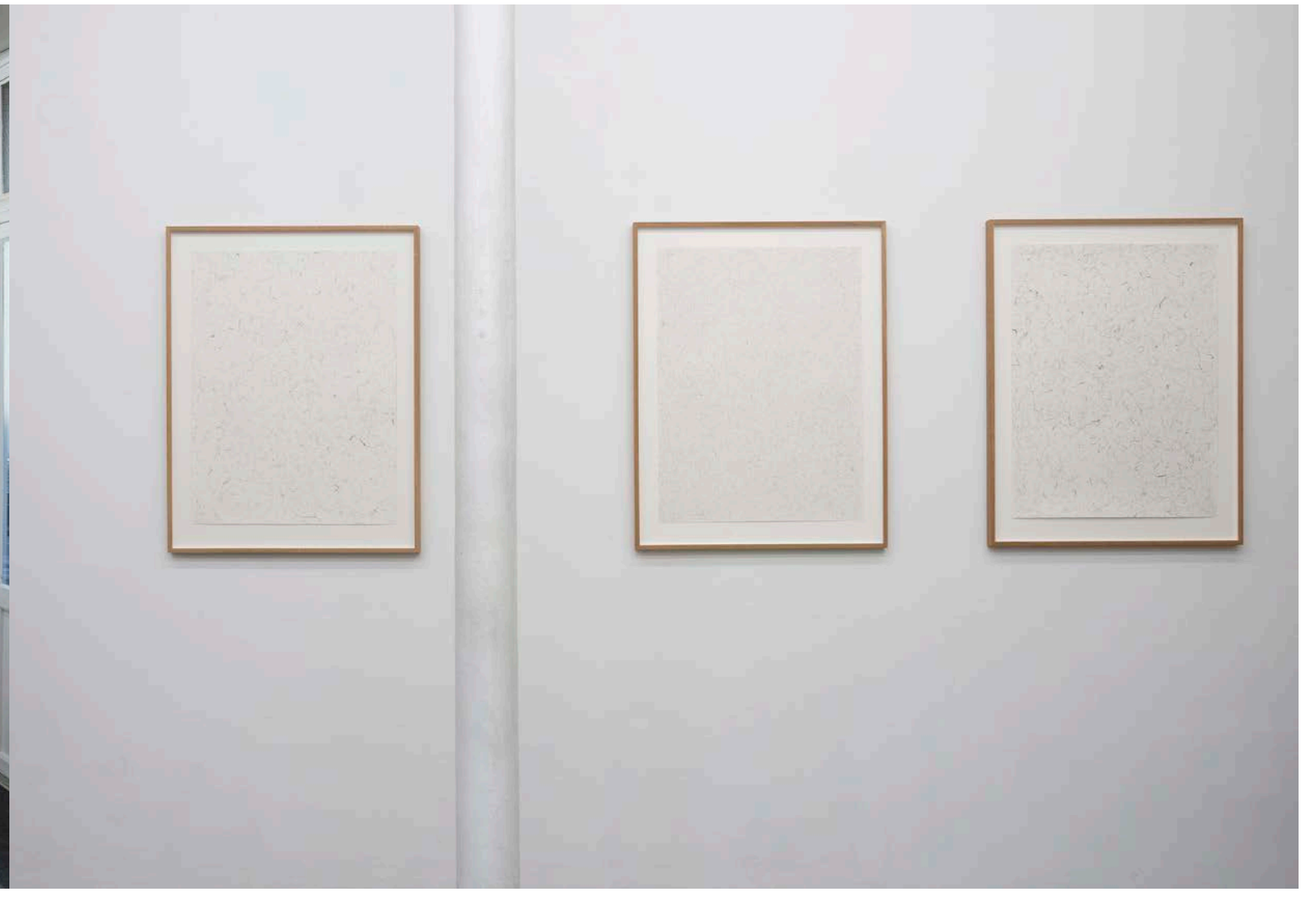
Pour William Anastasi, il s'agit toujours d'avoir une idée et de voir ensuite ce que cela produit, transcrit dans la réalité d'un passage à l'acte (avec comme leitmotiv : "I have an idea and want to see how it looks like").
La pratique de William Anastasi s'inscrit dans son quotidien; à la suite de la série des « Running drawings », initiée dans les années 60, se construit un corpus où le dessin apparaît accompagnant ses mouvements et déplacement (« Subway drawings », « Taxi cab drawings » etc.), ou en mettant en place un système libérant un espace au hasard (« Drop Drawings ») en cohérence avec son éthique de l'aléatoire.

SOURCE / PRESS RELEASE





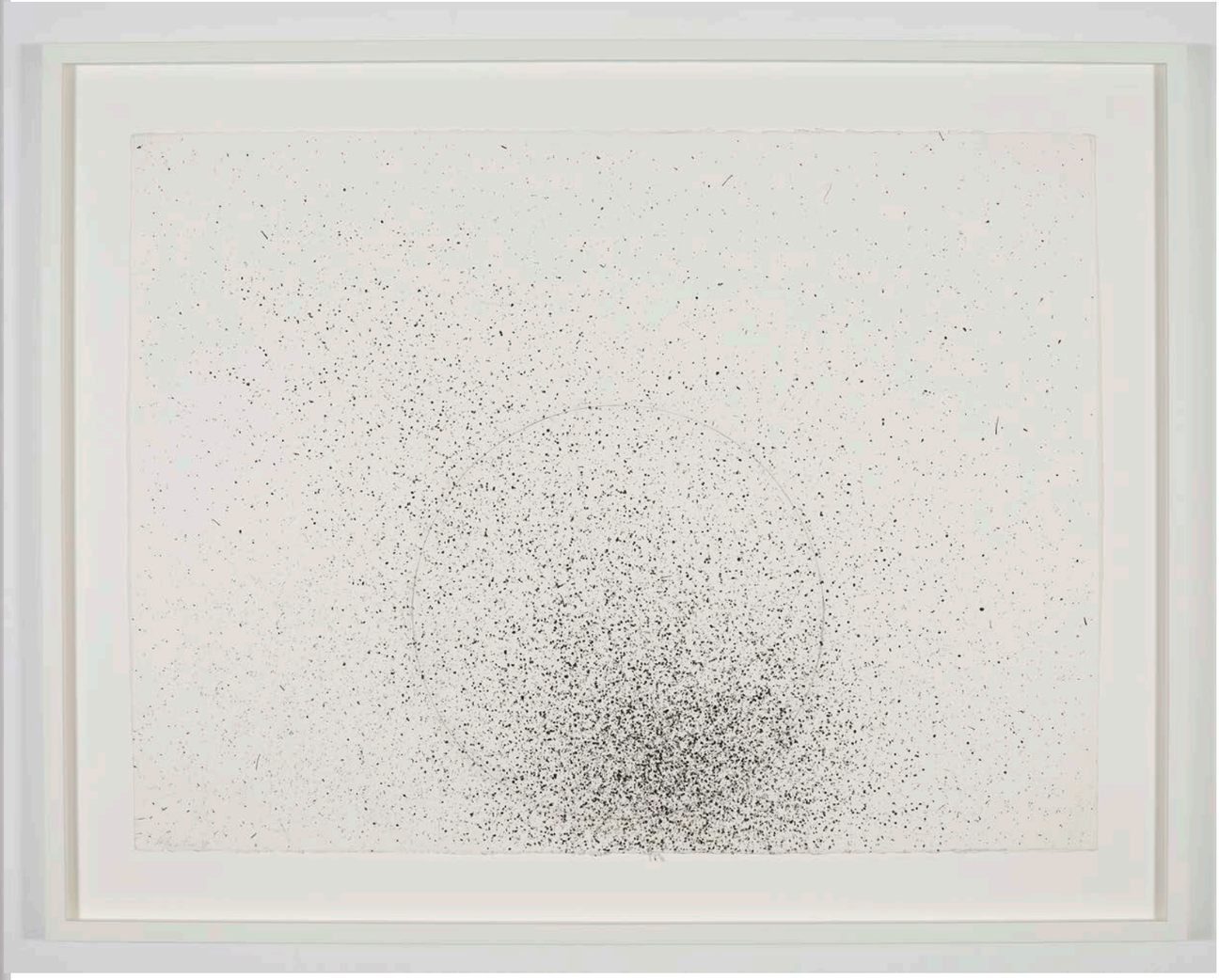






William Anastasi
Still drawing
2011
graphite on paper
76.5 x 57 cm

Exhibition view: Jarry: Du/Joy, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris



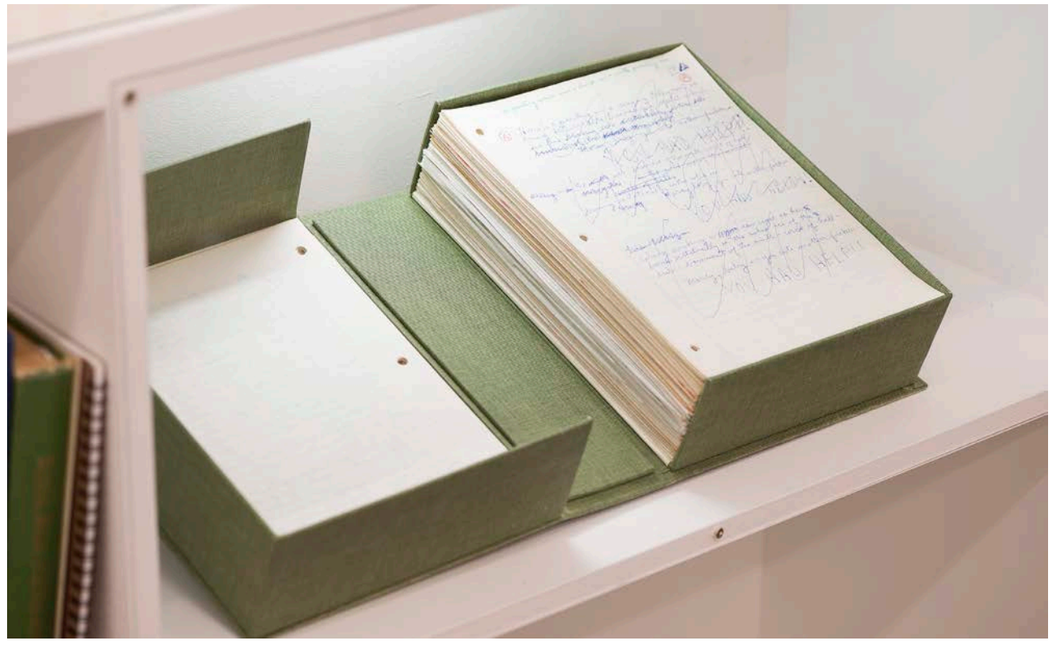
William Anastasi
Drop drawing
2012
graphite and incision on paper
57 x 76.5 cm

Exhibition view: Jarry: Du/Joy, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris



Exhibition view: Jarry: Du/Joy, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris



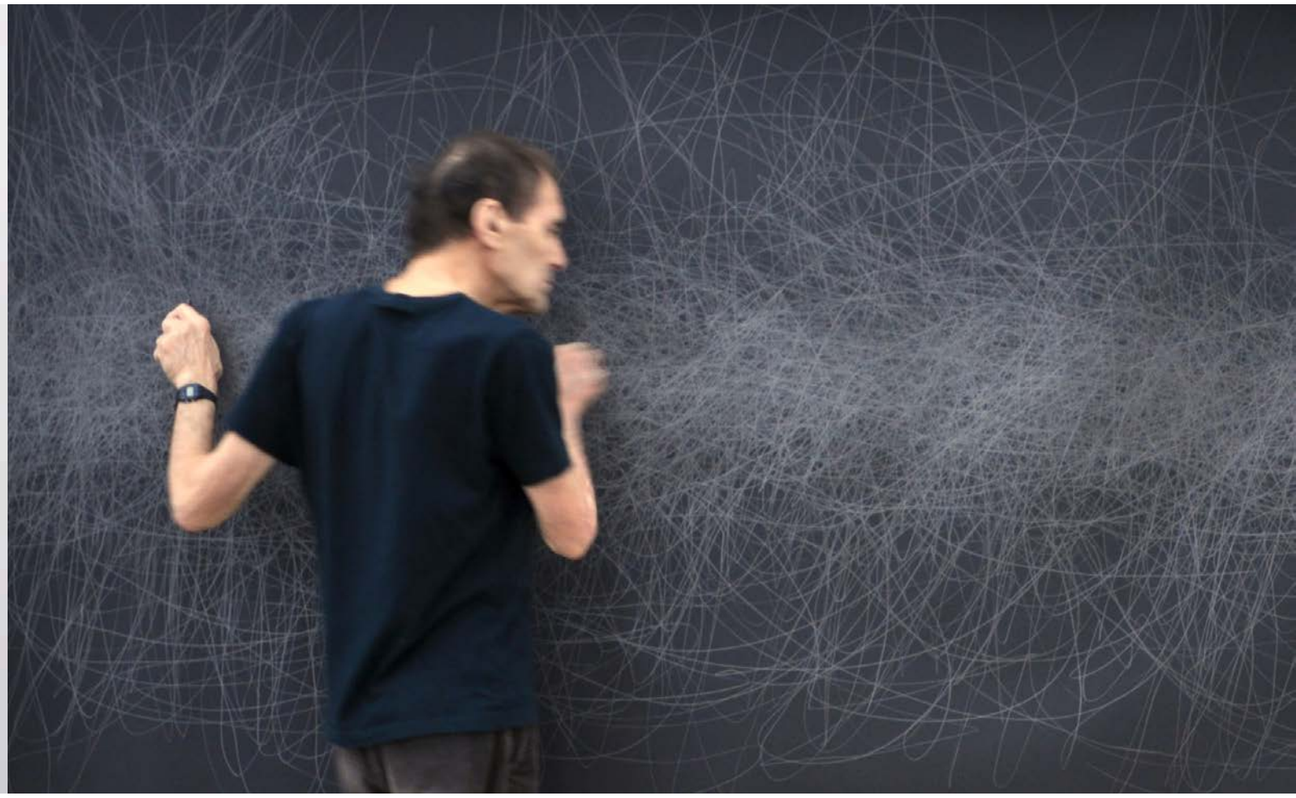


Exhibition views: Jarry: Du/Joy, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris



William Anastasi
Without Title (One hour blind drawing)
2012
pencil on paper
150 x 274.3 cm

Exhibition view: Jarry: Du/Joy, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris



William Anastasi
Making of Without Title (One hour blind drawing)
2012
pencil on paper
150 x 274.3 cm

Exhibition view: Jarry: Du/Joy, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris

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