

# FORMES BRÈVES, AUTRES, 25

Curator : Anja Isabel Schneider

27 JANUARY – 8 APRIL 2012

49 NORD 6 EST - FRAC LORRAINE, METZ



PRESS CONFERENCE: THURSDAY 26 JANUARY AT 11 AM

PUBLIC OPENING: THURSDAY 26 JANUARY AT 7 PM

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In the presence of artists and curator

With a performance by Ewa Partum



Digital book, electronic book, or e-book, are all terms designating the new forms given to the book, paperback, printed matter, or the manuscript. The creation and distribution of new reading tools undermine traditional modes of writing and reading which are facing a great challenge today.

To enter a three-dimensional book: this is what Anja Isabel Schneider invites us to do. She sees her exhibition as a reading in itself, subject to interruptions and suspensions generated by the architecture of the space. The selected works examine the relations and interactions between the text and the reader, the condition, the act, and the process of reading which give rise to meaning.

From the *formes brèves*<sup>1</sup> in the space occupied by Ján Mančúška to Ewa Partum's conceptual poems, from Amélie Dubois' sound palimpsest to the taxonomy of words invented by Fabio Kacero, from Anna Barham's wordplays to Charles Sandison's ballet of words, these works foreshadow the changes in the reader's behaviors in the digital age. Inscribed within the spaces of the 49 Nord 6 Est - FRAC Lorraine, this exhibition invites the audience to discern, decipher, construct... and imagine!

## ARTISTS

Anna Barham, Nina Beier & Marie Lund,  
Alejandro Cesarco, Amélie Dubois,  
Dora García, Fabio Kacero, David Lamelas,  
Ján Mančúška, Helen Mirra, Claire Morel,  
Tania Mouraud, Ewa Partum and  
Charles Sandison

## CO-PRODUCTION

MARCO, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de  
Vigo (Spain)

## WORKS ON LOAN FROM

Billarant Collection; the galleries Ruth  
Benzacar, Buenos Aires; Acarde, London  
and Murray Guy, New York; and the  
artists.

Anja Isabel Schneider's project questions the notion of reading in its various modalities of experimentation, experience, and structure. This exhibition explores the question of "fragmentary" or elusive reading—that is, reading which resists and unsettles the reader. Every reader/visitor is thus given an essential role—that of an active reader. As a secular literary form, the *forme brève* privileges certain artistic genres: dedication, poem of circumstance, index, news flash, word play, witticism, haiku, fragment, maxim, etc. It solicits the imagination of the reader who is no longer a passive audience but becomes a producer. Between the texts and their readers, the spaces generated by *formes brèves*—blank or latent spaces—thus become a pause, a reflexive moment, a break for inspiration, an invitation to create...

1- The genre of short written form.

FORMES BRÈVES, AUTRES, 25

**PERFORMANCE : EWA PARTUM**

The exhibition *formes brèves, autres, 25* will be enriched with a live performance by Ewa Partum, taking place at Frac Lorraine at the show's opening. Known for her pioneering conceptual and feminist work, the renowned Polish artist uses words and letters—taken from literary texts—as a starting point for her performance pieces. In her ephemeral actions from the 1970s, Partum employed white cut-out letters from paper-alphabets (sold at the time for propaganda uses in Polish shops) to create her own language, a visual and 'conceptual poetry'.

For her performance at Frac Lorraine, Partum will be using re-produced letters to create a text installation, which will be visible during the entire duration of the exhibition.

**ANJA ISABEL SCHNEIDER**

Anja Isabel Schneider (born in Reutlingen, Germany, in 1976) is an art critic and independent curator based in London. She studied Art History in the United States (UCLA, Brentwood, California), in Germany (Eberhard-Karls-Universität, Tübingen) and in the UK (Courtauld Institute of Art), and is finishing her MFA in Curating at Goldsmiths University of London.

**MARCO/FRAC LORRAINE AWARD FOR YOUNG CURATORS 2010**

The common interest in supporting new generations of professionals who wish to start out into the world of institutional curatorship has inspired this edition of the Award for Young Curators. The jury evaluated 120 proposals on the base of their quality, viability and suitability to the characteristics of the first floor at MARCO and exhibition spaces at Frac Lorraine. Anja Isabel Schneider is the latest recipient of the MARCO/FRAC Lorraine Award. She spent a residency at FRAC Lorraine in Metz in the Summer 2011 in order to adapt her curatorial project to the spaces and the spirit of the place.

*formes brèves, autres, 25* will be presented at MARCO from 1<sup>st</sup> June to 16<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

**EXHIBITION BIS au Frac****Guillaume Barborini & Marianne Mispelaëre**

*Respectively, born in 1986, works in Metz (FR)  
And born in 1988, works in Strasbourg (FR)*

Echoing the *formes brèves, autres, 25* FRAC Lorraine invites two young artists to produce a graphic artwork combining words and drawing. Recent graduates of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Epinal, they both incorporate a complementary textual research into their personal artistic practices, and use it either as raw material or as a tool, as a means or an end, through fiction or instructions.

**PAST EXHIBITIONS :**

*La Part manquante / Group show / Galerie Michel Journiac, Paris / March 2011  
Un livre éclate / Solo show / Théâtre Gérard Philipe, Frouard / January 2011  
L'un nourrit l'autre / Group show / MJC Lillebonne, Nancy / December 2009*

**PRACTICAL INFORMATION****ACCÈS :**

49 NORD 6 EST - Frac Lorraine / 1bis rue des Trinitaires, Metz  
FREE ADMISSION  
TUE - FRI: 2-7 PM & SAT - SUN: 11 AM-7 PM

**> FREE GUIDED TOURS**

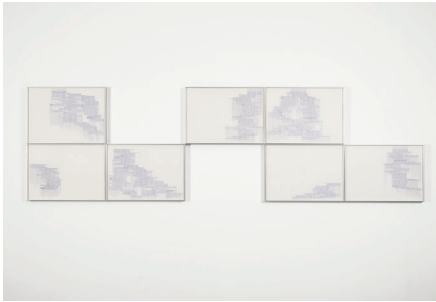
Every weekend at 5 PM (in French). Tours are available in English, Italian, and German upon request.

**NOTA BENE :**

*formes brèves, autres, 25* finds its pre-text (or fore-text) in Felisberto Hernández (1902-1964), an Uruguayan writer and musician, who, as an anacrusis, recommends the reader:

*"Incidentally, I will ask you to interrupt your reading of this book as often as possible: what you think during those intervals may be perhaps, or most certainly will be, the best part of my book."*<sup>1</sup>

1- Hernández, Felisberto, *Philosophie d'un gangster* in: *Oeuvres Complètes*, Paris: Seuil, 1997, p. 484.

FORMES BRÈVES. AUTRES, 25  
EXHIBITION

## ANNA BARHAM

Born 1974 in Sutton Coldfield (UK); works in London (UK)

### *Narrate Lotus Pigment*, 2010

Description : 7 drawings, biro on paper in aluminium frames, 315 x 91 x 4 cm  
Loan from Anna Barham, Arcade Gallery, London

A twofold reading is at play in Anna Barham's *Narrate Lotus Pigment*, a multi-panel drawing. From a distance, it is perceived as a group of abstract forms, reminiscent of maps. A close reading, however, reveals a cascading composition of anagrams held in place by a grid.

The anagram, a recurrent motif in Barham's work, is subject to variations. These include series of drawings, video projections, audio works as part of an installation, as well as a recent book-publication '*Return to Leptis Magna*' written exclusively from anagrams. A visit to an English folly of architectural treasures brought to England from Leptis Magna—an ancient Roman city in today's Lybia—might be considered central to Barham's fascination with anagrams. The folly's architectural fragments (or building blocks) that were taken from the original ruin were then rearranged—similar to letters in an alphabet—and given a new name. However, it is not so much the place per se that is of interest to the artist, rather, the fragmentary construct that it represents: to fill into what is not there, hence to activate one's imagination.

*Narrate Lotus Pigment* employs the letters 'return to Leptis Magna' as its source and starting point. This phrase holds the potential to construct a seemingly infinite number of newly configured anagrams and lines, systematically written and drawn with biro pen on paper. According to the artist, their rule is simple: "(...) each line must contain at least three letters in the same order as the one that proceeds it. These repeating letters are then lined up with each other and so the drawing zigzags across the page and may also split", allowing for interruptions to the reading flow. In addition, 'gaps' or blank spaces are created through the work's overall installation in which individual lines read together may be considered fragments of a narrative.

Anna Barham, *Narrate Lotus Pigment*,  
2010. Photo : Andy Keate  
© the artist and Arcade Gallery, London (UK)

FORMES BRÈVES. AUTRES, 25  
EXHIBITION**NINA BEIER & MARIE LUND**

*Born respectively in 1975 (DK) and 1976 (UK); work in Berlin (DE) and London (UK)*

***The Imprint, 2009***

Oral performance  
Collection Frac Lorraine

Nina Beier and Marie Lund collaborated together between 2003 and 2009. Among the artists' joint practice which includes, among others, events, performances, films, and installations, *The Imprint* (2009) presents itself as a short text written on a label in the exhibition space, as well as a performed intervention:

*The Frac staff have memorized the descriptions of the artworks that the curator wanted to include in the exhibition but chose not to for various reasons. If any visitor inquires, they will transmit these descriptions.*

In this way, *The Imprint* becomes activated through the viewer by reading the work's label and by interacting with the institution's mediator. On the viewer's demand, a Frac Lorraine mediator orally transmits descriptions of those artworks which did not find their way into the exhibition—for reasons of which might only be guessed! Hence, Beier and Lund's work turns itself self-referentially towards the institution (including its staff, artists, curator and audience). In addition, *The Imprint* seems to explore (the) art (of) mediation, while stressing the exhibition's discursive spaces in which dialogues are created.

Understood as a mode of discourse, the work's descriptions—given to the mediator solely once—may invoke 'alternative histories' to be transmitted. In line with oral tradition, this chain of transmission is thus subject to possible transformations and misreadings. Despite its initial resistance for a narrative to unfold—dependent on both visitor and mediator—*The Imprint* generously provides us with artworks to be imagined. The reading of the label, however, is vital to the work's enactment. Unread, the work remains 'invisible'.

Nina Beier and Marie Lund, *The Imprint*, 2009. View of exhibition *À l'ombre d'un doute*, Frac Lorraine, Metz (FR), 2010  
Collection 49 Nord 6 Est - Frac Lorraine, Metz (FR). Photo: Rémi Villaggi © the artists

FORMES BRÈVES. AUTRES. 25  
EXHIBITION**ALEJANDRO CESARCO**

Born 1975 in Montevideo (UR); works in New York (US)

**Footnote n°7, 2008**Vinyl wall text, variable dimensions, Edition of 5  
Loan from the artist and Murray Guy Gallery, New-York (US)

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**Index (a reading), 2007-08**Ten digital c-prints, 76 x 61 cm each, Edition of 5  
Loan from the artist and Murray Guy Gallery, New-York (US)

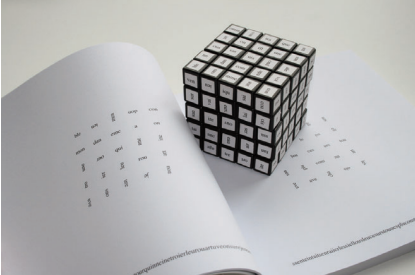
"7. It is a voice that often interrupts me to confuse me." Alejandro Cesarco's *Footnote n°7* (2008) inscribes itself directly onto the wall that functions here as support for the above phrase. The text, however, to which the footnote refers to is absent—despite the note's attachment to a numeric code or asterix as in *Footnote #5* (on view at MARCO): "To me, this has always been the heart of the mystery, the heart of the heart: the way people talk about loving things, which things and why." This undeniable link associates the note to a larger (con)text, i.e. one to be imagined by the reader. Contrary to an 'endnote', a 'footnote' violently interrupts the flow of reading. The use of footnotes in literary works may be considered in itself an artistic strategy and literary device<sup>1</sup>. However, while Cesarco's work follows in the legacy of conceptual art, many of his text-based installations and videos are strongly influenced by literature.

*The Two Stories* (2009), presented as a video installation at MARCO, might be considered a poignant re-reading of Felisberto Hernández' short story *Nadie encendía las lámparas* (*No one turned on the lamps*, 1947). In Hernández story, the narrator recalls his thoughts and observations which occurred to him while reciting a story in front of an audience, without disclosing the actual text being read. Rather, it is a recollected public reading in an old parlour and its reception that become centrestage. The distractions, interruptions and thoughts that occur to the narrator during his recital are further animated through detailed observations and descriptions, and generously shared with the reader. In contrast, Cesarco's *The Two Stories* provides us with a 'silent' image, that of an empty room, while the original story is being recited 'voice-off'. The artist thus readresses the mise-en-abyme at play in Hernández' narrative, while offering his very own.

For Maurice Blanchot, literature sets out at the moment it becomes a question (*Literature and the Right of Death*). Alejandro Cesarco refers to Blanchot's *Livre à venir*, in his *Index (a reading)* (2008) which might be understood as an "index of a book I haven't yet written, but probably never will" (Cesarco). *Index (a reading)* (2008) is composed of ten individual sheets, alphabetically ordered. These start with 'A' as in *absence* and conclude with 'W' as in *writing*. *Index (a reading)* thus refers - albeit with some clichés - to keywords, works and authors/artists as well as to Cesarco's own practice. It may be read as a narrative in its own right.

Alejandro Cesarco, *Index (a reading)*,  
(detail), 2007-08. Ten digital c-prints,  
76 x 61 cm each, Edition of 5  
© the artist and Murray Guy Gallery,  
New-York (US)

1- For some literary examples in which footnotes are emphasized or in which narratives are composed almost exclusively of footnotes, see Gérard Wajcman *L'Interdit*; Enrique Vila-Matas *Bartleby y compañía*; J.G. Ballard's *Notes Towards a Mental Breakdown*; and Mark Z.Danielewski's *House of Leaves*...

FORMES BRÈVES, AUTRES, 25  
EXHIBITION**AMÉLIE DUBOIS**

Born 1983 in Corbeil-Essonnes (FR); works in Paris (FR)

***Philosophie d'un gangster [A Gangsters's Philosophy], 2011***

"Palimpseste sonore" (sound palimpsest)  
46 seconds  
Commissioned by Frac Lorraine  
Coproductio ENSA Bourges

-

***Aléa, 2010***

Edition, 156 pages 21 x 21 cm, 50 copies  
Rubik's Cube 7x7x7 cm, 10 copies  
Co-produced by Les Verrières - résidences-ateliers de Pont-Aven

Specially conceived for the exhibition *formes brèves, autres, 25*, Amélie Dubois' Commission takes the form of a sound palimpsest, audible at different points throughout the course of the exhibition. All the sentences comprising Felisberto Hernández' short story "Filosofía del gángster" are superimposed on a single audio track, read by Dubois herself from the French translation. Diffused randomly into Frac Lorraine's stairways and corridors, the work features pauses varying in length between each recording. In this condensed form which results in a reversed reading, it is only gradually that a word may be deciphered.

A Spanish version of the sound palimpsest will be produced by Dubois for the exhibition's second venue at MARCO, taking as its starting point original recordings of Hernández. Both palimpsests underline the oral nature in these literary works, while at the same time rendering the text 'illegible'.

Both works inscribe themselves in the artist's practice which interrogates language as such by exploring its signs, symbols and codes, and how meaning is constructed. Influenced by the literary group 'Ouvroir de Littérature Potentiel' (OuLiPo), Amélie Dubois explores creatively the OuLiPian contrainte (restriction), while embracing the fragmentation and transformation of a text. Computer programs may assist the artist to 'translate' the found or selected material into another medium. Dubois' works give way to poetic installations, photographs, drawings, and artist books, which stimulate the viewer's imagination.

Amélie Dubois, *Aléa*, 2010  
Edition, 156 pages 21 x 21 cm, 50 copies.  
Rubik's Cube 7x7x7 cm, 10 copies. Work  
co-produced by Les Verrières -  
résidences-ateliers de Pont-Aven

FORMES BRÈVES. AUTRES. 25  
EXHIBITION

## DORA GARCÍA

Born 1965 in Valladolid (ES); works in Barcelona (ES)

### *All the Stories*, 2001–ongoing

Performance

Loan from the artist

"A man / a woman recites all the stories of the world in a loud voice. When she is done, all the stories, all men and women, all time and all places will have passed through her lips." (from Dora García *All The Stories*).

Counting more than 2,500 stories in 2011, the collection of *All the Stories* is growing every day. Anyone wishing to contribute to Dora García's participatory online-project (from 2001–ongoing) may enter a story's summary in preferably no more than four lines on the artist's weblog: <http://doragarcia.net/allthestories/>

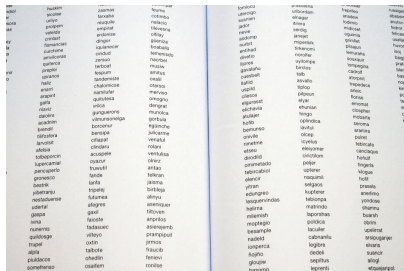
Subsequently, these fragmentary stories are classified in different categories, similar to the entries of an encyclopedia. Every second a new contribution may be added which presents a further challenge to the reader. As García has succinctly pointed out, the Spanish word 'contar' has a two-fold meaning, i.e. 'to count' and 'to tell'. In addition, the weblog invites the reader to be both writer and commentator—and vice versa.

On view at Frac Lorraine and MARCO, the performance *All the Stories* follows a specific protocol. In an attempt to recite the stories—extracted from García's archive of contributions—from beginning to end, a person may read until near exhaustion... *All the Stories* raises questions of agency and authorship. Moreover, the different works which compose *All The Stories* (weblog, book publications, performance, etc.) explore notions of a private versus public reading (space) in which there is room for doubt: what is 'real' and what is fiction; what is improvised and what is staged? These telling lines account for recurring themes and obsessions, here multifariously composed.

Several books, distinct from one another, have been published since the project's inception. A recent publication brings together the English contributions from 2001–2011 which will be available for consultation at Frac Lorraine and MARCO<sup>1</sup>.

1- Dora García, *All the Stories*, (book publication), 2011 co-published by Book Works and Eastside Projects as part of 'Book Works Again, A Time Machine' project. Printed by Lightning Source in an unlimited edition, 526 pages, soft cover with dust jacket. Designed by James Langdon with Robin Kirkham, 215 x 140 mm.

Dora García, *All The Stories* (2001–ongoing). Exhibition view, Birmingham, 2011. Photo de Stuart Whipps.  
© the artist and Eastside Projects, Barcelona (SP)

FORMES BRÈVES. AUTRES, 25  
EXHIBITION

## FABIO KACERO

Born 1961 in Buenos Aires (ARG); works in Buenos Aires (ARG)

**Nemebiax, 2003**

Installation, paper, sound, variable dimensions

Loan from the artist and Galeria Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires (ARG)

"*Nemebiax*: a universe as empty as the words it lacks. [...] The invention of names. The task of repopulating the world with new entities simply by speaking them into being. Before they appear, in inanimate suspension, in the dream of nothingness, they wait to be called into existence. They arise or wake like someone answering their name. And they say nothing more. They are not yet beings, characters, places, objects, or states. [...]" (Fabio Kacero)

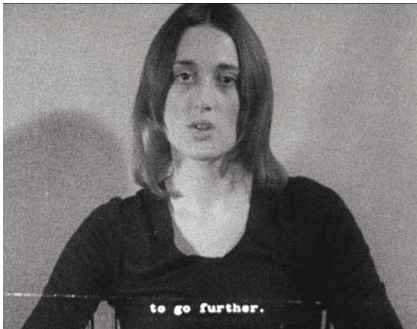
Fabio Kacero's inquiry into writing and reading is at the heart of his installation *Nemebiax* (2003) which features an archive of invented words written by the artist during several years, from 2000 onwards. Kacero's interest lies both in the 'illegibility' of these words and their potential to come into being. Presented as a continuous band of words—spanning over two of Frac Lorraine's distinct exhibition spaces—*Nemebiax* includes an audio recording in which Kacero reads his writerly inventions out loud. Here, the sound and silences separating each word contribute to the experience of space—which may be seen as an integral part of the reading activity. If its existence is inaccessible and infinite, *Nemebiax* may be read as bordering on the void.

A list of words; word lists. Frequently employed by conceptual artists, a list invites continuation. Understood as a 'catalogue consisting of names in a row or series', the words wait for a meaning to be bestowed upon them. In a rhetorical question, the artist wonders whether these words belong to a Salon des Refusés, "a hall for those rejected from existence?"

In his practice, Kacero explores/interrogates language and the creation of meaning, e.g. in the artist's text and video installations, as well as in his short stories. Kacero's fiction *el viaje en trineo* (the sledge trip, 2010) is conceived as a chain of translations: from Spanish to English as well as to other languages, it is heading towards an infinite translation. Although bound to the materiality of the book—in the artist's publication *Nemebiax* (2004)—Kacero's work reaches far beyond the limits of a page. *Nemebiax* finds its fragmented existence in the very attempt to withstand a 'whole of meaning'.

Fabio Kacero, *Nemebiax*, 2004 (detail)  
Installation, paper, sound, variable  
dimensions @ the artist and Galeria Ruth  
Benzacar, Buenos Aires (ARG)



FORMES BRÈVES, AUTRES, 25  
EXHIBITION**DAVID LAMELAS**

Born 1946 in Buenos Aires (ARG); works in Buenos Aires (ARG) and Los Angeles (US)

**Reading of an Extract from "Labyrinths" by J.L. Borges, 1970**

3'52", 16mm, b&amp;w transferred to DVD

« David Lamelas Films 1969-1972/2004 », Bureau des vidéos, Paris, 2005

"Then I wanted to finish with objects. And that's how I came around to light, which allowed me to produce sculptural forms without any physical volume. This way, I did away with the object's material aspect. I wanted to work with ideas, with concepts. Above all I wanted an active viewer." (David Lamelas, from the booklet *David Lamelas Films 1969-1972/2004*, interview between the artist and Pascal Beausse/Pierre Bal-Blanc, p. 17)

In David Lamelas' *Reading of an Extract from 'Labyrinths' by J.L. Borges* (1970), a young woman reads out loud passages from 'A New Refutation of Time'—an essay that is part of Jorge Luis Borges *Labyrinths: selected stories and other writing* (New York: New Directions Publishing, 1964). Yet, the woman's reading 'aloud' in front of the camera is only visible—rather than audible: Lamelas' film is silent, the sound being substituted by subtitles. These enter and leave the image's frame slightly 'off synch' to the woman's lip movements. The viewer thus alternates between a reading of text and image (i.e. the woman's lips) in an attempt to follow the reading speed and information, dictated by the image.

Centrally positioned, the woman makes one think of a television news reader; her shadow is projected onto a white wall. She looks either straight at the camera or glances downwards to her text which is outside the camera's angle. Here, text is perceived as evasive—resisting itself partly to the reader in a given time frame. Within Lamelas' practice, this work thus further explores the relationship between (filmed) image and text. Just as Borges final piece 'A New Refutation of Time' comprises a prologue and two essays (one re-written after the other) i.e. a variation of the original essay in an abbreviated version, Lamelas provides us with yet other readings, provoked by the separation of image and sound. « The limits of our capacity to perceive is made manifest through this separation, which finds its equivalent in Borges denial of both succession and simultaneity, that is, the concatenation of facts.» (See *David Lamelas Films 1969-1972/2004*, p.41).

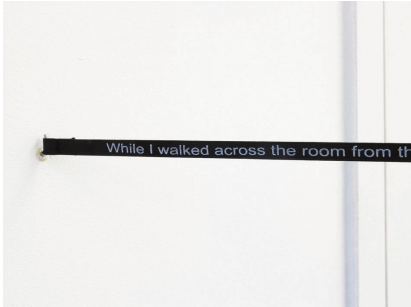
David Lamelas, *Reading of an Extract from « Labyrinths » by J.L. Borges*, 2004  
3'52", 16mm, b&w transferred to DVD  
« David Lamelas Films 1969-1972/2004 », Bureau des vidéos, Paris, 2005  
© the artist

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FONDS RÉGIONAL D'ART CONTEMPORAIN  
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FORMES BRÈVES, AUTRES, 25  
EXHIBITION



## JÁN MANČUŠKA

Born 1972 in Bratislava (SK). Died in 2011 in Prague (CZ)

### *While I Walked,...*, 2004

Silkscreen on elastic tape, variable dimensions  
Collection Frac Lorraine

The installation *While I Walked* implies the spectator's movement in space, which is the very condition of the work being 'read'. Two elastic textile bands cross each other, touching the wall at different points. Stretched and suspended at eye-level in the exhibition space these ribbons bear a text to be read, printed in white letters (written in Arial; font size 24) on a black surface, reminiscent of typewriter ribbon bands or film strips. Through the act of reading the spectator is directed to follow the compository lines, yet at his/her own reading rhythm and pace. Thus, the act of reading does not only ask for an interaction between text and reader, but also for a physical investment. A personal narrative, the work is self-reflexive pointing not only to the artist's solitary activity in his studio—at the time located in New York—but also to the viewer's own act of reading in a given time and space.

Ján Mančuška practice encompasses installations that imply textual descriptions, such as *The Space behind the Wall* (2004) or multiple narratives with a strong reference to cinema. His work *True Story* (2005) consists of three different yet parallel accounts which interrogate distinct narrative perspectives, formally presented through suspended wires cutting through the space onto which the letters are fixed. These wires cross each other at moments, according to the intersections within the narrative itself. Despite its very choreographed installation, *While I Walked...* does likewise offer intersection points, allowing for additional possibilities of reading. Installed anew on the occasion of *formes brèves, autres, 25* the work functions here as both 'obstacle' and 'pointer' to discover the space (and additional works) 'behind the wall'. A re-reading of *While I Walked...* is intrinsically implied. The ribbon bearing the text's ending point is installed not far from its starting point, creating a loop as it were in order to read it 'again'.

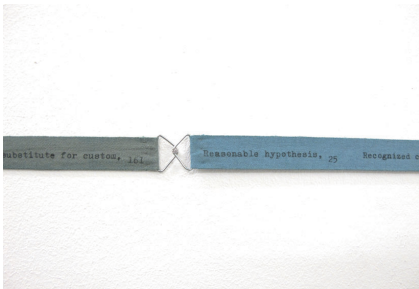
Ján Mančuška, *While I Walked.. In my studio in ISCP, 323W 39th Street #811, New York, 2004. View of exhibition Pratiques du (NON) visible, Frac Lorraine, Metz (FR), 2007. Collection 49 Nord 6 Est - Frac Lorraine, Metz (FR). Photo : Rémi Villaggi © the artist*

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FONDS RÉGIONAL D'ART CONTEMPORAIN  
DE LORRAINE

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FORMES BRÈVES, AUTRES. 25  
EXHIBITION



## HELEN MIRRA

Born 1970 in Rochester (US); works in Cambridge, Massachusetts (US)

### *Rearranged incidents, 3, 2005*

Ink and milk paint on cotton, 1,6 x 200 cm  
Collection of Frac Lorraine

*Rearranged incidents, 3*, presents itself as a straight line of dyed fabric bands. Tinted in hues of muted green and sky blue, these cotton bands are connected to one another by use of wire triangles that interrupt the line's continuity. On closer inspection, one discerns a typewritten black text on its surface. Sections are created; a chain of words is interspersed with commas, numbers and spaces. A linear reading of the text requires displacement of the viewer, following the line which is pinned to the wall. These rearranged textual fragments constitute part of an index, created by Mirra from John Dewey's *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (1920).

An index offers segmented reading, by making one's way through a book, in an attempt to find its precise point of reference. In its very nature, an index is above all associative. Associations are sparked not only from reading the text, but also from reading the line formally. Its colors and soft texture may—at times—evoke the line of the horizon. At other times, the work references a palpable film strip, drenched in colour (the cotton bands feature the width of a 16 mm film). One may think of strips or cuts pasted together in an editing process; bits and pieces brought together to form a poem or narrative (as if saved from Dewey's waste paper basket). In addition, the work points self-referentially to Mirra's own practice, i.e. her 16 mm films. Mirra thus seems to reconstruct Dewey's writing, by pointing to its inherent poetical stance. In Helen Mirra's book *Cloud, the, 3*, (2007) the complete index offers itself to the reader and follows her previous two poetry-based artist books *Names and Poems* and *Alow* (1999). For Mirra, literature and writing seems to reference a 'found' inspiration, one that one stumbles upon while on a journey.

Mirra's poetic text, read in the exhibition's space, invites a rereading of Dewey's writing. According to Dewey, "description when it occurs is but a part of a circuitous method of pointing or denoting; index to a starting-point and road which if taken may lead to a direct and ineffable presence." (from John Dewey's *Experience and Nature* (1925) as quoted in one of Helen Mirra's exhibition pamphlets).

Helen Mirra, *Rearranged incidents, 3*, 2005. Collection 49 Nord 6 Est - Frac Lorraine, Metz (FR). Photo : Florian Kleinfenn @ the artist and Nelson-Freeman Gallery

012

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FORMES BRÈVES. AUTRES, 25  
EXHIBITION



1-



2-

## CLAIRE MOREL

Born in Gerardmer 1980 (FR); works in Paris and Mulhouse (FR)

### *Constellations*, 2010

36 x 51 cm, silkscreen prints on vellum paper, series of 10 «constellations», titled «CI to CX», numbered 0 to 20, censorship of 200 pages of the original manuscript of Mallarmé's Book.  
Loan from the artist.

-

### *L'image [The image]*, 2008

10 x 18 cm, silkscreen cover, bound edition on vellum paper, 90g, limited edition, 80 numbered and signed copies.  
Loan from the artist.

Beyond its materiality, the book is first and foremost considered as a 'space', one in which Claire Morel poses questions and within which she finds room to experiment. *L'image* (2008) is conceived after a 1988 publication of Samuel Beckett's *L'image* (1950) respecting format, typset, layout, and paper. However, the content of the book is reduced by Morel to its originally missing element: Beckett's text is void of any punctuation mark. Morel reverses this process and inserts all missing symbols, colons, full-stops, brackets and exclamation marks, yet leaves out the text itself, which takes on a phantom-like existence<sup>1</sup>.

In *Constellations* (2009) Morel turns Mallarmé's original handwritten transcripts for *Livre* into a series of serigraphies, implying censorship, auto-censorship, illegibility, and erasure. For Mallarmé "the world exists in order to end up as a book." In Morel's Practice, other literary inspirations include her rereading of Jorge Luis Borges' "La biblioteca de Babel" (1941), which serves the artist as raw material. Morel's poetic works evoke examples of concrete poetry in which linguistic devices (words, punctuation, lines, etc.) are used as visual and phonetic means of presentation, further explained in Eugen Gomringer's manifest *Vom Vers zur Konstellation* (1955). The artist's imaginative renderings of the original, question at the same time its very own subject-matter and materiality (not unlike conceptual artists, such as Douglas Huebler). A close reading of the original literary sources thus intrinsically precedes and conditions Morel's work.

1- Claire Morel, *Constellations* (détail), 2010. 36 x 51 cm, silkscreen prints on vellum paper, series of 10 «constellations», titled «CI to CX», numbered 0 to 20, censorship of 200 pages of the original manuscript of Mallarmé's Book. © the artist

2- Claire Morel, *L'image* (detail), 2008. 10 x 18 cm, silkscreen cover, bound edition on vellum paper, 90g, limited edition, 80 numbered and signed copies. © the artist

1- For literary examples of texts exclusively written with punctuation marks, see *Against Expression An Anthology of Conceptual Writing*, notably Elisabeth S. Clark's *Between Words*, p. 142-147. The introductory text to Clark's writing also points to Carl Fredrik Reuterswärd's *Prix Nobel* (Stockholm: Bonniers, 1966), among others.

FORMES BRÈVES, AUTRES, 25  
EXHIBITION**TANIA MOURAUD***Born 1942 in Paris (FR); works in Paris (FR)****Frise II: percevoirdiscerneridentifierreconnaître*  
[Perceivediscernidentifirecognize], 1992**Acrylic on wood, frieze, series: Black Continent  
29,5 x 888 x 20,5 cm  
Loan from the artist and Dominique Fiat Gallery

When Tania Mouraud encountered a photographic negative of one of the black and white posters bearing the word "NI" (neither) that composed her *City Performance n°1*, 1978 (written in giant letters on 54 publicity posters of 3 x 4 metres and spread throughout Paris), she discovered in that image the inspiration for the subsequent series *Black Power and Black Continent*. Created from the counterform or 'negative' form of a word or a sequence of words, these series consist of painted black geometric forms on canvas or on wood relief, varying in depth and typography. The spaces in between and around the black shapes thus become constitutive of the work and its reading, reversing at the same time the hierarchical order of the painterly forms with regard to its support. Presented at Frac Lorraine and MARCO, Mouraud's *percevoirdiscerneridentifierreconnaître* (1992) is composed of 39 elements, i.e. created from the counterforms of four words (the verb's infinitives) strung together. The experience of 'perceiving', 'discerning', 'identifying', and 'recognizing' is not only suggested through the work's title, but also through its linear reading of black volumes in lower case writing. It rhythmically engages the viewer and incites him or her to decipher its message.

In contrast to the speed-reading one is subject to in an era of image and information overflow, Mouraud's work invites a contemplative and critical reading. Commenting on her *Wall Paintings* composed of elongated giant letters (with an often critical/political reading), Tania Mouraud challenges the viewer, yet at the same time speaks for them: "The very elongated writing has adopted a character of illegibility, but there is always a person to decipher it. I am speaking for this person; it is a confidence."<sup>1</sup>

1- Tania Mouraud in an interview with Anne Tronche, in *Tania Mouraud: fait main*, exhib. cat., Tourcoing, École régionale supérieure d'expression plastique, 1992, p.28

Tania Mouraud, *frise II : percevoirdiscerneridentifierreconnaître*, 1992.  
series: Black Continent. Acrylic on wood,  
frieze, 29,5 x 888 x 20,5 cm. Photo :  
Philippe Bernard  
© the artist and Dominique Fiat Gallery.  
ADAGP, Paris, 2011.

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EXHIBITION

## EWA PARTUM

Born 1945 in Grodzisk Mazowieck (PO); works in Berlin (DE)

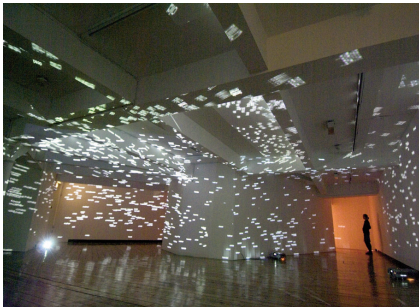
*Active Poetry, Poem by Ewa, 1971/73*8mm film transferred to DVD, 5'43"  
Collection Frac Lorraine

In her early performances, Ewa Partum dispersed letters taken from printed text in various public spaces. In *Active Poetry, Poem by Ewa* (1971/73) Partum scatters letters around branches; she tosses them down a hillside into the wind, and from the shore into the sea. Since the 1970s, the artist further explores her interest in 'poetry as art' (the title of her diploma thesis) or 'conceptual poetry' in works such as *Bureau of Poetry* (1971)—held in the apartment of her first husband, the poet Andrzej Partum—in which she disperses 24 letters of the alphabet. Easily acquired at the time by the artist, the white cardboard letters were mass-produced by the socialist state for propaganda usage. In her performance *Active Poetry* (1971) which took place in a pedestrian arcade, Partum strews the letters originating from a one-page extract taken from James Joyce's *Ulysses* onto the floor. In both works, the letters are moved and transported by the shoes of gallery visitors or passers-by.

In this way, Partum transforms literary works into her meta-poetry, including texts by Goethe, Proust, Camus and Kafka. For Partum "an act of thought is an act of art". The artist's large series of poems include her lip imprints (with red lipstick) in which she introduces text, such as the phrase: "My touch is the touch of a woman". In her mail art pieces from this time, Partum corresponded with artists from the West, inviting them to exhibitions which she organized in her gallery 'Adres'.

Her provocative performances or photomontages staged in public spaces, in which she appears naked in various locations e.g. in front of Warsaw's communist parliament, attests to a growing concern in social and political issues. Ewa Partum's early conceptual and feminist work may thus be described as an act of poetic resistance.

Ewa Partum, *Active Poetry Poem by Ewa*,  
1971-73. © the artist. ADAGP, Paris,  
2011

FORMES BRÈVES, AUTRES, 25  
EXHIBITION**CHARLES SANDISON**

Born 1969 in Haltwhistle (UK); works in Tampere (FI)

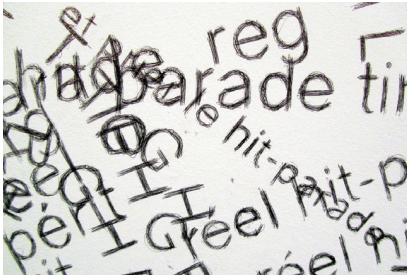
**Living Rooms, 2001**6 channel-video projections  
Loan from the artist  
Collection Billarant

In writing about the work of Charles Sandison, the above quote of Henri Michaux's writing comes to mind. It is a fragmented form of writing - a *forme brève*. Sandison's poetic 'writing with light' is achieved through technological means, i.e. computer programmed codes. Word fragments are in movement within a specific space (each of Sandison's work is adapted in situ, here to Frac Lorraine's architecture). *Living Rooms* (2001) employs a reduced language, limited to only a few words. Its existentialist vocabulary reads: 'Male', 'Female', 'Food', 'Father', 'Child', 'Old', 'Dead'. In a darkened space—an environment in which the viewer is literally immersed in—the projected words move on both walls and ceiling. They form clusters, overlap and pursue one another or drift away in opposing directions: the words act and react to one another. Its result is a complex visual narrative. The space between the words as well as their movement thus contribute to the story being written. In a play between signifier and signified, the words—understood as building blocks in a chain of associations—take on their own 'artificial life'.

While computer programmes simulate nature here, Sandison draws his inspiration for his pieces from varied sources, including literary, philosophical, scientific and political texts. These range from the integral 1911 edition of Encyclopædia Britannica to Raymond Roussel's *Locus Solus*. Despite their textual frames, Sandison's work undermines any fixed meaning: "Sometimes I try to visualize the journey of a word as it leaves the lips of a speaker and moves towards a listener, or imagine, when standing in a public library, that all the books are quietly talking. The vision that occurs in my mind is that of a vast flock of birds, which seem to move chaotically yet somehow, manage not to collide. Physical space and the void between the words stand in for pronouns and verbs. I use this articulation between meaning, words, and in between spaces as a way to escape the authoritarian power of language." (Charles Sandison)

View of exhibition. Charles Sandison,  
*Living Rooms, 2001*  
© the artist. ADAGP, Paris, 2011

N 016

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EXHIBITION BIS**GUILLAUME BARBORINI & MARIANNE MISPELAËRE**

Born in 1986, and works in Metz (FR)  
and born in 1988, and works in Strasbourg (FR) respectively

***Fabriquer des ruines [Building Ruins]***

Black ballpoint pen  
Production Frac Lorraine, 2011

Echoing the *formes brèves, autres, 25*, FRAC Lorraine invites two young artists to produce a graphic artwork rooted in words.

*Fabriquer des ruines... [Building Ruins...]* The title of the textual installation created by the artists seems to be an oxymoron. "Building ruins" through a verbal explosion of meaning, a break-up of sentences in space that produces debris as material for reconstruction. Composed based on anagrams of the letters of the title, a vast typographical design overtakes the walls. It engenders fragments of phrases, produces outbursts of meaning... These fragments also become a pre-text (or a fore-text) of writing of theoretical or fictional forms. Left at the disposal of the visitors, these reconstructions, investigations, divagations, and other textual visions may be taken away in order to be, perhaps in turn, dissected, decomposed, or even reinvented.

The cycle continues... Isn't this a question of reconstruction from a field of ruins... ?

Guillaume Barborini recently graduated from the École Supérieure d'Art de Lorraine in Metz, while Marianne Mispelaëre is pursuing her studies at the École des Arts Décoratifs in Strasbourg; they studied together at the École Supérieure d'Art in Épinal. Their shared interest in text, utilized as raw material and as a tool, led them to collaborate on a common practice nourished by their respective personal research.

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**PREVIOUS EXHIBITIONS :**

*La Part manquante [The Missing Part]* / Collective exhibition / Galerie Michel Journiac, Paris / March 2011

*Un livre éclate [A Scattered Book]* / Solo exhibition / Théâtre Gérard Philipe, Frouard / January 2011

*Festival Chaud les marrons [Hot Chestnuts Festival]* / Collective exhibition / MJC Lillebonne, Nancy / December 2009

Guillaume Barborini & Marianne Mispelaëre,  
*Un livre éclate*. (detail), 2011, Géo Condé  
Gallery - Gérard Philipe Theater, Frouard.  
© the artists

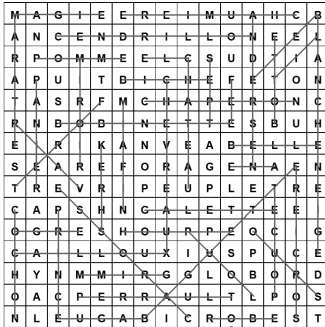


↘ 017

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FORMES BRÈVES, AUTRES, 25  
EXHIBITION



↘ DOCUMENT ROOM

## THE PLEASURE OF WORDS

A selection of games, puzzles, magazines, and video archives from the INA accompany the exhibition, bearing witness to our pronounced taste for words in all forms.

So, for example, the oldest French daily TV show, produced for over forty years, “Des chiffres et des lettres” (Ciphers and Words), resonates in our collective unconscious. Similarly, a number of word-puzzles are on sale in dedicated magazines or appear in the daily press: arrow puzzles, hidden words, crosswords. One French person out of three does crossword puzzles. Finally, let’s recall Hangman, portemanteau words, exquisite cadavers, or even such party games as Scrabble® or Scattergories...

Far from limiting us to linear reading, the practices of fragmentation, deconstruction, deduction, and divagation humorously invite us to experiment with literary practices!

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Partners:

INA Grand Est

FORMES BRÈVES, AUTRES, 25

## PARALLEL PERSPECTIVES

The events include eight invitations extended by FRAC and its partners to disseminators of passionate and fascinating ideas. They will make our heads spin, challenge our prejudices, and debunk our misconceptions!



1-



2-



3-

### AGENDA

#### JANUARY

#### TASTE - METZ AND THIONVILLE

> FROM 27 TO 29 JAN

#### INTERVENTION (FR)

SATURDAY 28 JAN / 9am-12am

Free Entrance - Indoor Market courtyard, Metz

*L'Épicerie des Gourmenteurs*

Alter Aleph

#### WORKSHOP (FR)

SATURDAY 28 & SUNDAY 29 JAN / Between 2:30pm & 6:30pm

Free Entrance - Frac Lorraine, Metz

*La Cuisine des Mots*

Alter Aleph

#### PERFORMANCE (FR/DE/EN)

SUNDAY 29 JAN / at 2pm and at 4pm

4€-3€ - Frac Lorraine, Metz

*Les choses simples [Simple Things]*

Marc Brétillot & Philippe Chatelain

#### INTERACTIVE TOUR (FR)

FRIDAY 27 JAN > FRIDAY 03 FEB (except 29 & 30 JAN)

TU-FRI : 2pm-6pm & SAT : 11am-6pm

Simply Market, METZ / Departs from : Frac Lorraine, Metz

*Wondermart*

Silvia Mercuriali, Rotozaza company

In collaboration with Matt Rudkin and Tommaso Perego

Partners : Arsenal-Metz en Scènes ; Centre Pompidou-Metz ; NEST Théâtre - CDN Thionville

#### DISCUSSION (FR)

> TUESDAY 31 JAN / 6:30pm

Free Entrance - ENSA, Nancy

*Pré-texte [Pre-text]*

Anja Isabel Schneider

Partner : ENSA, Nancy & Goethe Institut, Nancy

1- *Taste*, in Metz and Thionville  
2- *La Cuisine des Mots*. Photo : Mourad Frik  
3- Quiche Lorraine explosion (performance) - Tokyo 2009 - Photo : Institut franco-japonais de Tokyo

>>> AGENDA SUITE

↘ 019

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FORMES BRÈVES, AUTRES, 25

## AGENDA continued



1-



2-

### FEBRUARY

SCIENCE CAFE (FR)

> TUESDAY 07 FEB / 6:30pm-8pm

Free Entrance - Frac Lorraine, Metz

*Tweet, sms, informativ flow : anality vs briefness*

Partner : Service Culture Scientifique et Technique, Université de Lorraine

### MARCH

DISCUSSION (FR)

> THURSDAY 08 MARCH / 7pm

Free Entrance - Frac Lorraine, Metz

« *Ni palindrome se mord, ni lapin* »

Jacques Jouet et Carole Bisenius-Penin

Partner : Université de Lorraine, Metz

-

Literary Walk (FR)

> SUNDAY 25 MARCH / 11am

5 € - Departs from the tourist Office, Metz

*Le Bistrottoir des épopées anonymes*

Alter Aleph

Partner : Office de Tourisme, Metz

1- *Cent mille milliards de poèmes* of  
Raymond Queneau @ DR  
2- Literary Walk @ L'Etoile et la  
Lanterne