

**EMPORIUM
OF
BENEVOLENT
DATA**

09.07.-05.08.2016

Opening Saturday, 9 July, 18:00h

Corner College
Kochstrasse 1
8004 Zürich

**AN
EXHIBITION PROJECT
BY
ADRIEN GUILLET
AND
QUENTIN LANNES**

EMPORIUM OF BENEVOLENT DATA

An exhibition project by **Adrien Guillet** and **Quentin Lannes**

curated by **Dimitrina Sevova** and **Alan Roth**.

Vernissage: Saturday, 09 July 2016, at 18:00h.

Saturday, 09 July – Friday, 05 August 2016

Sunday, 10 July 2016 at 16:00h: Artist Talks, presentations and discussion.

Finissage: Friday, 05 August 2016, at 18:00h.

Emporium of Benevolent Data is an exhibition project by Adrien Guillet and Quentin Lannes, in collaboration with Corner College, based on the two artists' long-term friendship and discussions. It puts on display their recent works *Citracit*, a site-specific research-based installation by Adrien Guillet, and the two video installations *#IamRebekah* and *The Next Round* by Quentin Lannes.

The title of the exhibition project is inspired by the story "The Analytical Language of John Wilkins." The latter is a scientist from 17th century enlightenment whose "ambiguities, redundancies and deficiencies remind us of those which doctor Franz Kuhn attributes to a certain Chinese encyclopaedia entitled 'Celestial Empire of benevolent Knowledge'" with its taxonomy of animals. The exhibition especially considers the distinctive character, listed in this encyclopaedia under the letter "(f)", of being "fabulous," as a method of fabulation on historical materials, modern ruins, commodities, and the recent rapid move of

virtual-reality technologies into the medium mainstream, revealing a new geopolitics of the virtual and a crisis of representation of the body that inevitably follows from it. The dialogical format of the exhibition invokes a benevolent methodology that breaks with genealogy and linear narrative, détournant 'cognitive technologies' to actively speculate and generate deviated narratives that remain open in their "inherent formlessness," providing the viewer with a "groundless basis of the aesthetic experience." This methodology is both anachronistic and futurist, which come together in a live structure, in what Shklovsky describes as a "ludic ruin/construction site that lays a foundation for the subversive practice of estrangement." The connecting principle of the works on display is the interplay of de-coding and encoding of the technological dispositifs, colonial history, and material knowledge. As their collective motto, the artists refer to the Red Queen scolding Alice about not remembering events before they happen as well as events that have happened: "It's a poor sort of memory that only works backwards."

The *Celestial Emporium of Benevolent Knowledge*, to which *Emporium of Benevolent Data* refers, was an important inspiration for Michel Foucault when writing *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, for his fabulation on epistemological models out of "the laughter that shattered" and its echo "continuing long afterwards to disturb and threaten with collapse our age-old distinction between the Same and the Other." This echo shall be heard from the depth of the exhibition, rather than forms of mediation of the ambivalent.

Excerpt from the curatorial text by Dimitrina Sevova and Alan Roth.

Citracit is a uchronia, a dystopian and anachronistic fiction that explores the problematic relations weaved by the automobile constructor Citroën with the African continent. The project takes shape through the creation of a number of modified advertising products, sculptures and accessories of African artisanship. These two types of productions respond to the following statement: "Citracit souvenir gifts have been found that were to be sold in the boutiques of the Citroën bordjs hotels. They escaped André Citroën's order that they be destroyed!"

(Adrien Guillet)

In the video / sound installation *#IamRebekah* (2015), the artist developed an anticipatory fiction on the basis of two true public characters – Zoltan Istvan, transhumanist candidate to the US presidency in 2016, and Rebekah Marine, differently able fashion model and ambassador to the prosthetics company Touch Bionics – of which he imagined the political trajectories for the years to come, on the backdrop of an electoral campaign and cyber-activism.

The video and sound installation *The Next Round* that the artist developed for Corner College is situated in the prolongation of the installation *#IamRebekah* presented at the City Grants in December 2015 to January 2016 at the Contemporary Art Center in Geneva. In it, the artist continues his research on the relations between human body and new technologies. Once again, he proposes an anticipative fiction anchored in a near future, proposing a view on the evolution of our current practices.

(Quentin Lannes)

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Corner College wird unterstützt von Kultur Stadt Zürich,
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