

## CANTOS

**Nobuyoshi Araki, Olivier Foulon, Pierre Klossowski,  
John Murphy, Willem Oorebeek, Joëlle Tuerlinckx, Eric Van Hove**

opening on Friday 14 January 2005 at 7 p.m.  
exhibition from 15 January to 10 April 2005

### Press release

From 15 January until 10 April 2005, the Casino Luxembourg – Forum d'art contemporain is presenting, on the first floor, **Cantos**, a group exhibition devised by Michel Assenmaker with works by Nobuyoshi Araki, Olivier Foulon, Pierre Klossowski, John Murphy, Willem Oorebeek, Joëlle Tuerlinckx and Eric Van Hove.

"In his preface to his work *Cantos*, Barnett Newman wrote how lithography is an instrument to be played. It is like a piano... and as with an instrument, it interprets... creation is to do with 'playing'.

Artists (like pianists) deploy energy in playing, that is, interpreting their creation. This energy (and its variations) in connection with a certain work object was the main reason behind the choice of works and artists.

Then comes the object of this energy. Something incomprehensible that leaves us gasping faced with the elusive force of what needs no justification. A compulsion that finds its purpose only in the work. A compulsion to the work.

By *Nobuyoshi Araki*, there will be a wall of flowers facing a few nudes, but with no opposition between the two. There will be a cat sticking its tongue out and Araki himself thumbing his nose.

*Olivier Foulon* will have two rooms: one for *Models*, the other for *Copies*. Rubbing shoulders in these two rooms there will be, among other things, the story of art, the story of hats, the story of wolves (not forgetting that hats are sometimes for pulling rabbits out of, a rabbit being also synonymous in French with standing someone up). The models may be female or artworks. The copies show interest in the models. There will be drawings, slides, books and stories.

*Cantos* will show—and this is quite an event—four large drawings by *Pierre Klossowski*. Scenes that are barely imaginable, that question and disturb, where the image is of the order of the *idée fixe*, that is to say frozen in a pose. That Pierre Klossowski was a great writer as we know serves as a reminder that the exhibition is partly based on literature, i.e. fiction.

On display by *John Murphy* there will be three large paintings depicting a dog (of the same breed as dogs by Vélasquez, Watteau and Courbet). But the dog is only a tiny fraction of a much greater whole, which is painting. A fourth work shows two postcards of works by Yves Klein. Here painting is linked to the body and to death.

*Joëlle Tuerlinckx* will be reminding us that images cast shadows in an installation showing up the absence of the white walls in the Casino Luxembourg's largest room. The pictures carried by the walls will recall how one of the origins of pictures was a tale of shadow, that of the body of the loved one setting off into battle. In the only room with windows, the only room looking out onto the city, it will be remembered that the picture is also a kind of window.

This again is why there will be an extra display in the old newspaper kiosk near the Adolphe bridge, where the windows will be turned into grids, once more raising the question of how we look at things. This work will be an installation produced in collaboration with *Willem Oorebeek*.

Lastly, *Eric Van Hove* brings to us nineteen scrolls of calligraphs from Japan. There are not many westerners around practising an Oriental style that is still foreign to us. The very brushstrokes of Chinese or Japanese writing paint a picture.

A 40-page colour catalogue, produced in close collaboration with the artists, traces one of several possible paths through the exhibition. For it I wrote a text that works as a metaphor for the exhibition.

What, one may wonder, is the theme? *Cantos* suggests singing, singing suggests the voice, the voice suggests polyphony. Singing is not song. Singing is poetry. In poetry there are images and abstractions. Poetry is the articulation of that paradox. *Cantos* aims at that too. But in addition to singing, the French word 'chant' also means the edge of an object. So maybe *Cantos* is also objects placed on their edge, expressing the fragility of today's art." Michel Assenmaker, 17 December 2004

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