

BERGAMO

Lars Laumann *Season of Migration to the North*, 2015
Selected by Tromsø Kunstforening, Tromsø, Norway

Season of Migration to the North is a refugee story, told from the perspective of a young, gay Sudanese asylum-seeker, Eddie Ismael, doubly ostracised through homophobia and Islamophobia. The protagonist reads his diary entries from just before his arrest in Khartoum to his departure for Norway, where he was sent to a refugee camp in the north before moving to Oslo. Ismael's arrest occurs at a fashion show in Khartoum that he helped organise and took part in. The police raided the event, arresting all "the boys whom they thought looked gay." Original footage from this fashion show provides the visual backdrop. The work draws its power from the gulf between the benign images and their role in the narrator's exile. At one point, Ismael brings in a historical parallel, mentioning the diaries of Ruth Maier, an Austrian girl who came to Norway as a refugee from World War II, and fell in love with a Norwegian girl. History repeats itself, and the struggles faced by Jewish homosexuals during mid-20th century fascism now find their echo in the experiences of Muslim homosexuals – minorities within a minority group.

Yên Summersiesta, *6th hour counting from dawn*, 2017
Selected by Hanoi DOCLAB, Hanoi, Vietnam

Summersiesta: 6th hour counting from dawn by the Vietnamese artist Nguyen Hai Yen is a reflection on time passing. On a midsummer's day, in a tropical region, a number of people wearing oval mirrors on their faces, are having a siesta in the midst of nature, which they appear to melt into through the reflections produced by the mirrors. The identity of the various people is denied: their faces hidden by the mirrors that reflect the images of a lush natural setting. The words sporadically uttered by the actors are verses by the Vietnamese poet Bùì Giáng, whose poems evoke a mythical, timeless nature, and yet one thriving and enveloping, charged with sentiment and emotions. Verses and images, mankind (without distinctions of gender or culture) and nature blend together to restore a suspended atmosphere on the edge between dream and reality.

Mwangi Hutter *Eastleigh Crossing*, 2009
Selected by NBK, Berlin, Germany

Since 2005, Ingrid Mwangi (*1975 in Nairobi/Kenya) and Robert Hutter (*1970 in Ludwigshafen/Germany) have signed their works as the collective individual Mwangi Hutter. Mwangi Hutter's work blends the exploration of cultural heritage with questions of gender roles. Ingrid Mwangi concerned herself with the reflection of clichéd gender roles in early works. *Eastleigh Crossing*, 2009, is somewhat reminiscent of that earlier work. Filmed in the flooded streets of Nairobi, in a part of the town mainly inhabited by Somali refugees, Ingrid Mwangi is seen trudging through muddy water. In what Mwangi Hutter calls a 'Guerilla Action', she breaks with the conventions of social conduct and confronts the public with irrational behaviour.

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ROOM 1

Theresa Traore Dahlberg *The Ambassadors's Wife*, 2018
Selected by Bonniers Konsthall, Stockholm, Sweden

The video portrays the everyday life of the wife of the French ambassador in Ouagadougou. As an antidote for an only apparently privileged life, the woman dreams of becoming a famous opera singer. The setting, in a beautiful house surrounded by a lush garden, seduces the onlooker, who finds him/herself examining close up the domestic intimacy of the ambassador's wife. The artist states: "I wanted to do a situation portrait rather than a personal portrait. A film about a person within a structure." The video, starting from the portrait of the woman, investigates and reflects in a subtle and seductive manner on power relationships and power structures, on post-colonialism and on feminism.

Senem Gökçe Oğultekin *Dun (Home)*, 2017
Selected by Istanbul Modern, Turkey

The video was shot among the ruins of the historical town of Ani (10-11th century AD) next to the closed border with Armenia. The lands on two sides of the border meet and dialogue through the bodily interaction of two dancers, one from Turkey and the other from Armenia. The video takes its starting point from the idea that when we give space to our sensuous bodily existence, we are able to transcend cultural borders and refrain ourselves from dissecting and calculating worldviews. The choice of the city is not casual: an ancient commercial hub, the city was in the past a center for exchanges and meetings between people of different origins. That is when abstract identities such as gender, nationality, style and ideology disappear, revealing concrete living beings in bodies that sweat, shiver and breathe, adorned with a heart that loves, mourns and hopes.

Evelyn Taocheng Wang *The Interview*, 2017
Selected by KWM Art Center, Beijing, China

The Interview is a remake of an interview for the Volkskrant Beeldende Kunst Prijs (Volkskrant Visual Art Award) which Wang won in 2016. This work was created in response to the limiting format of the mass media. The original interview did not afford Wang the time to address subjects such as ideas about body culture. To enable her to elaborate on this, Wang created *The Interview*. In it, she talks in the museum depots of the Frans Hals Museum about her artistic practice in Europe and about the differences between Western and Eastern art, while occasionally accompanied by a nearly naked man with 'ideal proportions'. The work highlights the issues faced in today's society in accepting new understandings both of cross cultural and body identity within art from the past and from the present.

ROOM 2

Fannie Sosa *I need This in My Life*, 2016
Selected by Fundacion PRÓA, Buenos Aires, Argentine

The title of the video cites the words uttered by the roommate of Fannie Sosa, who after having tried the vibrator lent to her by the artist, called 'the womanizer' – a hollow cylinder that evokes the uterine cavity rather than the usual phallic form – stated: "I need this in my life." This experience appears like a revelation to the artist who reflects on how there is a need for these technologies in our lives. The video constitutes the canalisation of her reflections following this experience. In particular, the artist defines the video as a crystallisation of several threads: "the healing and evolutionary power of khunt orgasmic experiences, the blatant disregard of Black dance and song, and their technologies as healing devices in scientific and epistemological racism, the amount of research and resources that go into weaponing these same technologies against the very people that first conceive them, this experience that I had a couple of years ago when I literally felt bass fill my womb and make it vibrate into orgasmic release... A lot."

ROOM 3

Jacopo Miliani *Deserto*, 2017
A project realized in collaboration with E.M.M.A and Matadero
Selected by GAMeC, Bergamo

ROOM 4

Raju Rage *Techno Gender: "Pyramid Revealed By A Sandstorm"*, 2017
Selected by Project 88, Mumbai, India

Techno Gender: 'Pyramid Revealed By A Sandstorm' is an audio-video sonic collage which starts out from the theories on sexuality and gender by the thinker Paul B. Preciado to investigate the emotional impact of hormones on the body. Images that document of injecting hormones into oneself with a syringe are placed alongside written texts in which transgender people from around the world exchange information about the use of hormones, describing in detail the bodily reactions that follow their administration. Bridging the gap between science, health, politics and art, the video questions the role of hormones in the social determination of sex and gender, binary ideas of gender and sex; and the innate inequality created by separating people into sexes.