

Boris Nikitin

Asylo Aniaton Athen, uncut
fire extinguisher, cut
video, sculpture
2015

> Villa Renata, upper floor

Boris Nikitin (1979, Basel) plays with the boundaries between performance, installation and theatre. His work for Villa Incognito is a video documentary and installation. The video *Asylo Aniaton Athen, uncut* is a 15-minutes single cut of a town-house 2400km away from Villa Renata in Athens. The Asylo Aniaton is a hospice for the severely disabled and the dying, where Nikitin spent two weeks. The viewer is submerged into the dichotomy of being both voyeur and recipient. The subject matter of the video loop counteracts the uncut character of the movie, lending it the uniqueness of documented reality. The sculpture *Fire extinguisher, cut* interrogates repetition: three fire-extinguishers, identical in both Villa Renata and Asylo Aniaton. The seemingly continuous loop is interrupted, however. A fire-extinguisher is smashed into pieces, revealing itself as an imitation in plaster.

Suxession

Jari Antti + Andrea Tortosa Vidal

> concert / performance: opening 11.15 pm
(Schwarze Erle)

Best-known as the undisputed frontman of alternative rockband Navel, Jari Antti – currently working in Berlin – is constantly searching for new, experimental formats. *Suxession* is one such project, and anything is possible. Only performed three times previously, this crude mash-up of vocals, guitar and live beats results in a sound somewhere between a lost singer-songwriter and an entire band. As if to mitigate his fear of the transitory nature of this puzzling work, Antti draws with black paint on white as he plays, and Spanish dancer Andrea Tortosa Vidal joins him on stage from her ballet rehearsals at Theater Basel. Late night, spontaneous, open-minded.

Harvey Rushmore and the Octopus

> concert / video: opening 12 pm
(Schwarze Erle)

Harvey Rushmore and the Octopus is yet another project resulting from the band Navel. Octopus categorises their sweaty galactic jams alternately as psychedelic massacre pop or retro shoe-gaze garage space blues. However you want to interpret them, Harvey Rushmore and the Octopus are lo-fi and real, so we love to save the last dance for them. For Villa Incognito they contribute site-specific video-collage visuals from homemade Villa Renata footage, and other videos. This last makes them the perfect match for Deli Project's after-party program.

<3

Villa Incognito Curated by Deli Projects

14 November – 6 December 2015, Villa Renata Basel

Deli

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Villa Incognito Curated by Deli Projects
14 November – 6 December 2015,
Villa Renata Basel

Taking place in an old town house called Villa Renata, the works shown in Villa Incognito have been developed site-specifically by the artists in collaboration with Deli Projects. Villa Incognito includes installation, video, performance, dance and live music.

Ten years ago, American author Tom Robbins published *Villa Incognito*, the bizarre and tangled tale of a group of soldiers who go missing in action. They build themselves a gaudy villa, their refuge from the unbearable reality of the Vietnam War. Deli Projects named its exhibition at Σ, the exhibition of Basel's independent art spaces, after the house these tragi-comic anti-heroes built for themselves.

Deli Projects has been formed in 2015 by Jenny Baumat, Benedikt Wyss and Philippe Karrer. Each time the collective curates a new exhibition, they invite artists from varied disciplines to explore new places, resulting in unexpected collections of site-specific thoughts. This time, Deli Projects united an old town house, including its cellar and garden, with Icelandic performance, video and installation artist Unnur Andrea Einarsdóttir, Lausanne-based collage and installation artist Maya Rochat, contemporary dancer and choreographer Bastien Hippocrate of La Chaux-de-Fonds, and local installation artist and theatre director Boris Nikitin.

The works of these four very different artists have been installed throughout Villa Renata. The preponderance of video in the resulting mix was a happy coincidence, while other commonalities were deliberately introduced to create cohesion. Einarsdóttir's multifaceted work *It's there but it isn't* oscillates between individual and shared perception of so-called facts. Rochat takes us into her own private universe - *A Plastic Tool*, a mysterious collage of both fiction and reality. Hippocrate generates a convoluted reality with *Peeper/looted glass* where the viewer is positioned as a voyeur of the artist's intimate interior. This perspective is echoed in Nikitin's *Asylo Aniaton Athen* with its singular setting of a hospice, vibrating between authenticity and falsehood, earnestness and subversion. Each artist raises

his own questions about the representation of reality, and we find our comparisons falling short, serving merely as a sketch to help you in your first encounter of Villa Incognito.

Deli Projects is also presenting a program of live performance and music at the 13 November opening with Bastien Hippocrate and Unnur Andrea Einarsdóttir, continuing at the After-Party at Schwarze Erle with Prince Heka (Unnur Andrea Einarsdóttir), Suxession (Jari Antti) with Andrea Tortosa Vidal and Harvey Rushmore and the Octopus.

*"You may tell the greatest lies
And wear a brilliant disguise
But you can't escape the eyes
of the one who sees right through you.*

*In the end what will prevail
Is your passion not your tale.
For love is the Holy Grail,
Even in Cognito.*

*So better listen to me, sister,
and pay close attention, mister:
It's very good to play the game,
Amuse the gods, avoid the pain,
But don't trust fortune, don't trust fame,
Your real self doesn't know your name
And in that we're all the same:
We're all incognito."*

Tom Robbins, Villa Incognito, Epilogue 1

The works in the exhibition
Villa Incognito:

Unnur Andrea Einarsdóttir
It's there but it isn't
video, installation, performance
2015

> Villa Renata, ground-floor & upper floor
> performance: opening, from 6 pm ongoing
> concert: opening 10.30 pm (Schwarze Erle)

Performance, video and installation artist Unnur Andrea Einarsdóttir (1981, Reykjavík) is interested in the absurdity of human experience. Those things that we see as the outside world are really nothing more than our brain's interpretation of something that might be described as solid reality. Our physical senses transform our bodies into a kind of particle filter made of flesh in order to experience it. Einarsdóttir's work oscillates between our personal universes and this shared external 'reality'. The work *It's there but it isn't* is made up of homemade videos and an installation with a tarot performance at the opening. The piece focusses on various themes, such as our modern-day relationship with mysticism, and how we have created machines and technology in order to replicate natural environments. *It's there but it isn't* includes footage of an elderly woman sitting in her living room (filmed in a village close to Basel) as it fills with smoke from a smoke machine, and a parody of social media footage where the artist imitates a character that has caught her attention. Alongside her work as an artist, Einarsdóttir's passion is music. She has performed with numerous bands and musicians over the years, and as *Prince Heka*, she sings at the Villa Incognito opening After-Party.

Maya Rochat
A Plastic Tool
mixed media collage, installation
2015

> Villa Renata, garden

Multidisciplinary artist Maya Rochat (1985, Lausanne) works in the fields of photography, collage and installation. Rochat takes the viewer into her own universe, tinging her immediate surroundings with mystery, and blurring the boundaries between fiction

and reality. Her use of anachronistic making methods reflects a concern with craft, introducing the hand of the artist even into those mediums usually associated with mechanical reproduction. Her work forms a vast web of intertwined images, the energy of which disturbs our habitual codes of interpretation and perception. In *A Plastic Tool* Rochat mixes her own video footage of Villa Renata with modified photographs and shared images. With further images (by Nagi Gianni, U5, Victoria Corà, Pernelle Rochat, Carmen Jaquier and Aamen family) and music (by Bermudaa) Maya creates a poetic and contemplative universe. As we look more closely, the images begin to merge, forming a mutated and highly-saturated collage.

Bastien Hippocrate
Peeper/looted glass
performance, installation, video
2015

> Villa Renata, cellar
> performance: opening 8 pm

Performer and choreographer Bastien Hippocrate (1990, La Chaux-de-Fonds) experimented with theatre and ice-skating before devoting himself to contemporary dance and performance. In Hippocrate's pieces lyricism merges with the abstraction of the danced movement. He plays with convoluted universes of comfort and discomfort where there is no place for modesty; everything is live and performed without restraint. By challenging morality Hippocrate offers the viewer a moment from which to access the interior viewpoint of the protagonist. *Peeper/looted glass* generates a convoluted world, immersing the viewer in distinct levels of staged intimacy. In this intimate interior the viewer is positioned as voyeur, observing this monologue of the body. The resulting piece is close, anti-academic and eschews pre-established codes. Hippocrate's site-specific live performance for the opening of the exhibition will be documented and then later exhibited as part of Villa Incognito.