



Word is round

35th International Workshops
of the Frac
des Pays de la Loire

Guest artists

September to november 2024

Mads Lindberg

Kirsten Mosher

Martin Vongrej

Anna Wittenberg

Curator :

Marie de Brugerolle

Frac 

des Pays de la Loire

Site de Carquefou

La Fleuriaye,

24 bis boulevard Ampère

44470 Carquefou

Exhibition

from November 17, 2024

to March 2, 2025

Mads Lindberg

Kirsten Mosher

Martin Vongrej

Anna Wittenberg

and with the works of

Marie Bourget

Jordan Derrien

Lili Dujourie

Press meeting

Friday, November 15th

at 12:30 p.m.

The project of the residency of the 35th International Workshops:

For the 35th International Workshops, the Frac invites Marie de Brugerolle, exhibition curator and art critic to bring together four artists for *Word is round*. They design singular works, not isolated units but in vibration with each other.

Residencies

Since 1984, in parallel with its mission of collecting and promoting the art of emerging and established artists, the Frac des Pays de la Loire has offered an artist residency program called Ateliers Internationaux where contemporary artists are invited to stay and create works on site.

This period of research and creation is followed by an exhibition and accompanied by the production of a catalog.

Benefiting from a dedicated location with three workshops, five studio-accommodations and a living and meeting space, the Frac – which is located in Carquefou, in a green setting – brings together the ideal conditions for setting up an artist residency and carrying out a unique joint project.

les résidences d'artistes du Frac, site de Carquefou



Events

Sunday, January 19, 2024 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

→ *Flash Performance*

Cally Spooner, *Warm up*

In the frame of Festival *Trajectoires*

→ *Flash Launch*

Launch of the MuMo x Centre Pompidou tour in Pays de la Loire

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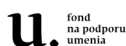
The Frac des Pays de la Loire is co-financed by the State and the Pays de la Loire Region, and benefits from the support of the Loire-Atlantique Department.

This exhibition received support from the Sodebo Corporate Foundation, Etant donnés, a program of the Villa Albertine, the Carlsberg Foundation, the Danish Arts Fondation, the Slovak Arts Council and Tatra Banka.

Warm thanks to Galerie Houg, Lyon, as well as to Yves Bourget and Richard Veyssaud.

Marie de Brugerolle sincerely thanks Fluxus Art Projets for its assistance with curatorial research.

Visual: Marie Bourget, *La bulle*, 2016.
2021 edition, multiple. Painted metal. Photo ©Jules Roeser



Word is round

by Marie de Brugerolle (extract)

As part of the XXXVth edition of the Frac des Pays de la Loire international artist-in-residence program in Carquefou, Marie de Brugerolle invites four artists : Mads Lindberg, Kirsten Mosher, Martin Vongrej, Anna Wittenberg, for *Word is round*.

In dialogue with works from the Frac collection by Marie Bourget and Lili Dujourie, and works by Jordan Derrien, *Word is round* is an invitation extended to artists with different styles, backgrounds and nationalities to assert the roundness of words (and of the world).

Through playing with spheres, be they social, physical or political, from the inside to the outside, micro/macro, representation/illusion, shapes and poetry are mixed together. The International Workshops 35th edition is an ode to the poetry of the round, its geometry and open sound ; bubbles, spirals and snow balls will punctuate the exhibition space.

Word is round is a twist in language, a haiku, a koan, a project that plays with consonance and homophony. One can think of *The World is round* as the title of a children book by Gertrude Stein and as the common assertion that the Earth is round. World is round, and pictures are squares.

Jordan Derrien's numbers 8 (*Untitled 8*, 2023-2024) offer potential infinity symbols made from door numbers. The white discs repeated upon Mads Lindberg's surfaces (*Snow Paintings*, 2024), systematic solid-colours upon a variety of found landscapes and the slowly spinning dome (modification) by Martin Vongrej (*Thought Space-Spinning Convex Mirror*, 2024) generate centrifuge and centripetal motions. Between reflection and obliteration, surfaces are multiplying.

Word is round plays around with twist and turns, like a spinning top falling back onto its letters. The Earth spins and one does not realize it, to the point that some still doubt it does. As platist theories develop in conjunction with a form of obscurantism, asserting « and yet, it turns" becomes a political act.

Kirsten Mosher *Antartica, Surveillance Mirror* (1992) reminds us of Big Brother's eye, potentially everywhere, but also of the potential misappropriation of surveillance means, by turning them into objects of art and humour. *Untitled (Mirror)*, 1986, by Marie Bourget is an enameled white board crossed out with oblique lines, referring to the image of mirrors in comics. This artist, whose art we are rediscovering, has

developed in France in the 1980^s complex works stemming from system and fiction. With humour, Marie Bourget questions the limits of frames and plays with optical illusions, anchored in a deep spiritual quest. Her series *Six paintings*, 1991, establishes a dialogue between seeing and reading, volume and plane. The *White Bubble*, 2012-2021, exhibited for the first time, is emblematic of an aesthetic of doubt and visual play on words. Likewise, the *Floating Body* expresses the ambivalence of two shapes, circles and squares, and the resolution of their opposition on the canvas.

Partly put together in Taddei's Room fake white cube, the works also occupy the corners. Martin Vongrej's pink alphabet (*Consciousness into Alphabet*, 2024) falls, its letters spreading like Lucretius' clinamen.

Words from Kirsten Mosher's poetry book *Zero (minutes to) Home*, published by Selektion, Frankfurt 2021 (with a new edition for the Frac exhibition), become the title of her new series of paintings made during the residency : « First they said, don't forget to breathe. Then, breathe your body. Finally, your body starts to breathe your car. After that, it just depends on how fast you're going. »

Painted on frosted metal, orange lines form an open net, breaking strict linearity. Working with urban objects, most of the time borrowed or exchanged, the artist negotiates breathing spaces between constraint zones. Her landscapes contain the experience of a singular body, in real scale, from the hyper global land art angle. Her poetry breathes, between cars, elevators, metallic boxes for humans and breaks at the parking lot.

The trajectories of Martin Vongrej's dots trouble the perception of a circular surface played again and again on an infinitely small scale. A photograph of a double stem of garlic placed under a circular mirror invites us to question reality and its double. (*Principles of repetition*, 2020). Is the painting a mirror of the world ?

Word is round guides its visitor into oblique moves, round trips and about-turns. He becomes himself the actor of sensitive bounds, invisible and each woven by the other : he sculpts space. One thinks one recognizes a shape, one comes back upon one's footsteps, one imagines other forms of stories. Video art pioneer in Belgium Lili Dujourie questions the female body's modes of representation with her films thanks to classical painting references. *Sonnet, Madrigal, Sanguine*, as many titles borrowed from poetry, music and drawing. Lili Dujourie sculpts bodies by filming them, playing with shadow and light, in the foreground. Her video systems in turn model space with filmed bodies, most of the time embodied by the artist. Anna Wittenberg occupies the Mario Toran Room

and exhibits for the first time *Pierrot in the Air Horn*, (2023-2024) : a trilogy in three acts. Her immersive work invites us to consider how sound is emitted, before becoming speech, and to feel what drives us. Two film projections *Act I : Wind Tunnel*, 2023 and *Act III : Pneuma*, 2024 frame a sound sculpture made of found objects « frankensteined » by the artist – *Act II : Valve Chamber/Larynx*, 2024.

Word is round offers us to listen to the world's polyphony, to which we belong, from the inside. It is an invitation to perceive it like a polysphere.

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1/ First exhibition of the *Polysphères'* cycle, following *Post-Performance Future*.

A polysphere is a shape in a diffracted movement that can be perceived from a different angle. At first sight puzzle and fractal, it seems to appear and disappear depending on time and space. Inspired by this 360° mode of perception, *Polysphères* is meant to be a multigraph that binds together several letters or signs. It also is an echo to polyhedrons and the interweaving of the notions of polyform and polysemy in a constant movement. It is a structure coming from the periphery and the margin that reverberates in the slits between conscious and unconscious things.

2/ An absurd and aporetic question or enigma asked by a zen master to his disciple, meant to help him progress on his way to awakening, by forcing him to abandon reason and any intellectual issue.



Marie de Brugerolle

Guest curator

Marie de Brugerolle is an author, art historian and curator.

After working at the MNAM-Centre Pompidou, the MoMA (New York) and the CNAC Magasin (Grenoble), she becomes an independent curator.

Her research *Post Performance Future. Methode* has been the subject of several publications (T&P Publishing, 2023-24) and celebrated at the Centre Pompidou (October 2024). As a specialist of the California art scene, she initiated the rediscovery of Guy de Cointet, for whom she organizes his first global exhibition at MAMCO, Geneva. She then works for retrospectives of John Baldessari (2005) and Larry Bell (2011). In 2014, she is the curator of All that falls at the Palais de Tokyo 2015 ; RIDEAUX Blinds at IAC (2019) ; at LAXART, Los Angeles, she organizes CBARET What Not Speak Easy and in 2022 she conceives the exhibition *Post Performance Vidéo, Prospective 1: Los Angeles* at Carré d'Art, Nîmes.

She is preparing Marie Bourget's monograph and an homage TRANSATLANTIQUE to John Baldessari with E.R. Editions (2025) as well as a reenactment of Jack Spicer's works : *Staging Poetry, Spicer's Shadows* (San Francisco, Marfa). Her social science fiction short story *Polyspherus* has been published in 2021 by Ishtar editions (Bruxelles).

Mads Lindberg

Guest artist

Born in 1984 (Copenhagen, Denmark), Mads Lindberg studied at the Royal Danish Academy and the HFBK, Hambourg Fine Arts University).

The starting point of Mads Lindberg's practice is found imagery, which he appropriates and re-elaborates in order to question its material, formal, symbolic and economic meanings. The act of transforming abandoned paintings, retrieved from thrift stores and flea markets, into his own works is a way for Lindberg to address the canvas from an analytical and detached point of view. This allows him to pursue a systematic study of painting as a means of expression, while avoiding the implications bound to the mystical aura surrounding « the artist at work ». In Lindberg's vision, each picture has a right to exist beyond its aesthetic quality and for this reason they should belong to a circular economy that exceeds parameters set by an elitist and hierarchical art market.

He had many solo exhibition in Copenhagen since 2012, including at Simian, C.C.C. Gallery, Minuit Vernissage, Danske Grafikere, ApArt and Toves Galleri. He also took part in group exhibitions in the entire world, from Germany (Catherine Zeta, Cologne) to the United States (Museo de Los SulAes, New York, Uffi Oi, Garrison), from Mexico (Local 1, Mexico City) to France (Shivers Only, île d'Yeu, Le Cœur, Paris).



Kirsten Mosher

Guest artist

Kirsten Mosher is an American artist and author based in Western Massachusetts. Her multidimensional practice mixes together video, writing and graphic arts. Kirsten Mosher examines the fragmentation process of territories, including big cities. Far from being a consistent space inviting you to linger, the city, with its roads, posts and subway lines, setting a real-flow regulation system; Mosher's work interrupts traffic patterns and displaces urban elements out of their utility context.

Her installation *Soul Mate 180°* for which she won the LACMA Art+Technology Award has been exhibited at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 2020. Kirsten Mosher exhibited her work on a national and international scale since the 1980s, in particular at Aperto'93 at the Venice Biennial in 1992, at the Villa Arson in Nice in 1994, at the MoMA in 1997 and at the Villa Merkel, Bahnwarterhaus in 1999.

Two of her works (*Barrièr*, 1990 and *Portal*, 1998) are part of the Frac des Pays de la Loire's collection.



Martin Vongrej

Guest artist

Martin Vongrej is an artist born in 1986 in Bratislava, Slovakia. He studied there at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design.

He explores the relationship between the visitor and art through a minimalist and conceptual approach. Martin Vongrej uses simple geometrical shapes to question the concept of representation and reality.

Martin Vongrej's work has been exhibited in solo shows in Bratislava (Gandy Gallery, Julius Koller Society, HIT Gallery, Open Gallery), in Czech Republic (Fait Gallery, Galerie 35m2) and in Italy (amt-project). He also took part in the Manifesta 8 in 2010.



Anna Wittenberg

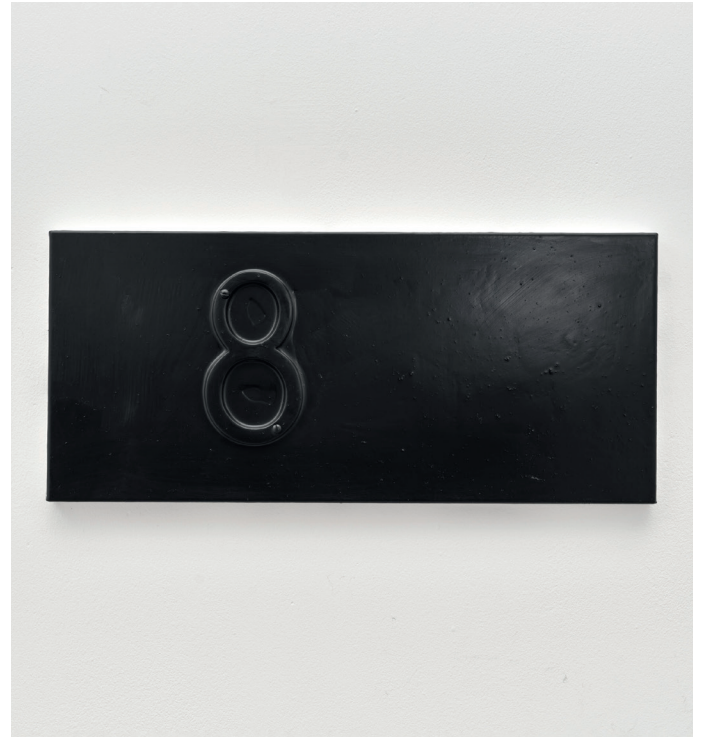
Guest artist

Anna Wittenberg is an interdisciplinary artist living and working in Los Angeles. She obtained an art degree at the University of California, Riverside and a bachelor degree in media studies at Pitzer College. Working with video, sculpture and drawing, her works explore human and animal bodies, junk and discarded objects.

Thought of as charged matters that include cultural customs, Anna Wittenberg changes them. By dismantling and deconstructing these found objects, she « Frankensteines » them in order to rethink our relationships with conscious and unconscious entities that share your world.

Anna took part in solo shows and group exhibitions at the California Museum of Photography, Phase Gallery, BozoMag and Roger's Office in Los Angeles, as well as group exhibitions et projections at the Carré d'Art in Nîmes, LAXART, Tin Flats, Contemporary Museum of Modern Art in Austin (TX), Human Resources and SOSM in Los Angeles.

Pierrot in the Air Horn is a three-part project that imagines an interior space derived from a discarded object, a toy horn. The horn functions as a building, a protagonist that foregrounds the idea of enunciation. But in this case, it is a mechanical speech that also serves to alarm or disturb. Each of the three parts of the horn houses an act, and each act serves as an analogue to a part of the anatomical system responsible for speech production: the mouth, the larynx, and the lungs.



Jordan Derrien

vit et travaille à Londres

Jordan Derrien lives and works in London

Jordan Derrien (born in 1994 Caen) develops a pluri-disciplinary practice that implies an exploration of a closed and frontal space. At the intersection between object and painting, he is interested in notion of obstruction and concealment through processes of series and repetitions, often borrowing a domestic language.

The « eight » paintings series, started in 2023, takes the door number out of its usual context, presenting it at the same time as subject and object. Painted in black, the brass number evokes the idea of a door in an opaque and frontal manner. The number 8, made of two fused circles, is the bearer of many meanings : lucky number, symbol of infinity or of fortune-telling. This symbol has accompanied me in several personal experiences, culminating in this latest series.

Exhibited for the first time in its entirety, the *Untitled series (8 ###...)*, 2023, is an echo to the notion of infinity and sequence. Act of painting and counting, the reversing of the pattern and of the primary function of this sign-object is part of a movement. Going from vertical to horizontal, the 8 defies gravity and becomes a loop. At the same time marker of an address and of an estate, the metallic number comes from a mass production and yet, presents variations. Moebius strip et mere clue, it is usually fixed on a door. Here the painting becomes threshold in turn, portal and window. The opacity of the matter and the reflection of the surface points all of the ambiguity of a shape that seems so familiar, the frame of a painting as a window on the world. Here, it becomes a mirror in sequence that foils the transparency, yet reflects otherwise. Positionned in dialogue with the *Six Paintings series*, 1986 and *Untitled (Mirror)*, 1986, both by Marie Bourget, the whole echoes several notions such as tautology and partition, which can be found in the exhibition.



Marie Bourget

Born in France in 1952, deceased in 2016.

Marie Bourget's works invests space and explore with humor and poetry the interfaces between language, representation and the objects it offers to see. Marie Bourget uses sober colours in limited number and elementary materials : iron, wood, glass and paper. Her works also inscribe themselves in the surrounding space graphically, using walls as surfaces for inscriptions, or even as projection screens, all of it in a great stylisation.

Marie Bourget's work is at the same time simple because of its sculptural literalness and complex through its multiple meanings born out of the crossings between picture and language. The artist succeeds in trapping the eye in enigmas that are impossible to solve.

She starts exhibiting in the middle of the 1980s in Lyon, at the Galerie Verrière, before taking part in the Venice Biennale in 1986. She is one of the artists (among Jacques Vieille, Gloria Friedmann, Kate Blacker, etc) who, according to Pascale Cassagnau, « have reinvented a new space of sculpture in contemporary art » during the 1980s.

A sculpture who would have gained independence from any referent, be it abstract or real, et whose main issue would be to put in tension the stereotypes bound to a distinction that is too obvious between nature and culture, that modernity has moreover definitely challenged. For this reason, landscape seems to be the notion that sums up the artists's research ; but « landscape » is to be understood in a sense as much mental as physical, that puts the work, its title and the spectator in a codependency et codetermination relationship through which each visitor is invited to reassess their relationship to language and the object it describes.



Lili Dujourie

Lili Dujourie, born in Belgium in 1941.

The Pays de la Loire Frac compiles the early works of artist Lili Dujourie, a work then mainly developed in the form of collages and sculptures. Between 1970 et 1980, her relationship to the new video medium establishes the conditions of a practice rather than a form. The artist experiments several modes of direct recording, without cuts, of scenes where she exposes herself for a long period of time in simple frames, seemingly without style.

If this body's presence moving slowly refers to several choreographic or performative practices, the whole seems to address the tradition of a real time capture cinema. Like a surveillance video in a painter's studio, the body crystallize in a fleeting manner in romantic pictorial compositions, or even in certain modernity icons.