

The Puppet Show

March 5–April 17, 2022

Opening
Friday March 4, 2022,
6 pm

Curated by
Mohamed Almusibli

With Jasmine Gregory, Nils Amadeus
Lange, Reba Maybury, Denis Savary,
Linda Semadeni, Ser Serpas & Latefa
Wiersch



Latefa Wiersch, detail of *Turn Up the Show*, 2021. Mixed technique installation, variable dimensions. Photo: Peter Baracchi

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The Puppet Show

**Curated by
Mohamed Almusibli**

March 9–April 17, 2022

The Puppet Show is a group exhibition curated by Mohamed Almusibli featuring the works of Jasmine Gregory, Nils Amadeus Lange, Reba Maybury, Denis Savary, Linda Semadeni, Ser Serpas and Latefa Wiersch.

Referring to the well-known tradition of puppetry, the exhibition explores the novelty of puppets within contemporary art and presents an array of practices that include performance, sculpture, and painting.

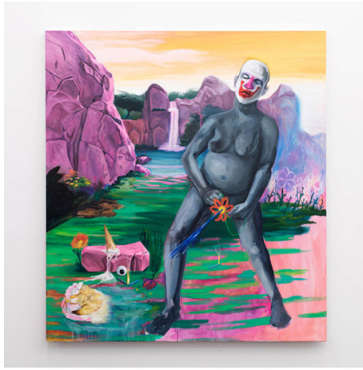
In this context, Mohamed Almusibli is interested in the relationship between the puppet and the puppeteer, with its characteristics of manipulation, control, and dramaturgy. A puppet only comes to life when the puppeteer decides so, in the form of a theatrical illusion that aims to make the puppet appear separate and autonomous from its 'master'.

In recent times, the use of puppets as an allegory has become less enigmatic and more politically relevant as it has taken on symbolism in visual critiques of authoritarianism and nationalism. Which begs the question: what value is there in returning to puppetry after its tricks and vocabulary have already become all too familiar?

The Puppet Show presents works which explore both the puppet as an object or caricature, and the imaginary universe that this form evokes. Whereas puppets appear in the work of some artists, in others they are nowhere to be found. All the audience is left with is suggestions with a resemblance to a theater play. Nonetheless, the works all allude to the mechanisms of puppetry, either as a theme or an already embedded relationship between the artist and their work, or even their interaction with the public. The puppet becomes a symbol of tension that reflects the dynamics of contemporary society.

The Puppet Show presents existing and newly commissioned works produced by the Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève. A puppet show will be performed by Nils Amadeus Lange on the opening and closing dates of the exhibition.

Artists



Jasmine Gregory (b. 1987, Washington, D.C, USA) is an artist living and working in Zürich, Switzerland. Gregory's work develops various sets of satirical motifs, artistic gestures as well as assemblages to explore the tensions of artistic production, history of painting as well as subjectivity in how it circulates in institutional and commercial contexts. Recent group shows include *Révolte de Pooky* at FriArt Kunsthalle in Fribourg, *Werkschau Kanton Zürich 2021* at Haus Konstruktiv, *Art For Black Lives, Round 4* (Online Exhibition), *FOTORMANZA* at Le Commun in Geneva, *Sommer des Zögers* at Kunsthalle Zurich. Recent solo exhibitions include *Mommie Dearest* at Istituto Svizzero in Milan, *Home Improvements* at Park View / Paul Soto in Brussels and *Trouble* at Casa Amor Karma International in Zurich.



Nils Amadeus Lange (b. 1989, Cologne, Germany) works as an artist, performer and choreographer in Zürich. After studying theatre at the Hochschule der Künste Bern (HKB), he expanded his theatre practice with a focus on dance and performance and developed numerous projects in collaboration with visual artists. At the center of his practice is the body, which functions as a means of deconstructing conventions, social models and gender stereotypes. His works have been shown at various locations such as Kunsthalle Basel, Kunsthalle Zurich, Manifesta Zurich, Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art in Warsaw, Istituto Svizzero Rome, Belvedere 21 in Vienna, Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, Swiss Dance Days, Zurich moves!, Gessnerallee, Frascati Amsterdam, ZÜRICH TANZT, Berliner Festspiele, Kunsthalle Bern, Les Urbaines in Lausanne, Südpol Luzern, Tanzhaus Zurich und CounterPulse San Francisco, Cabaret Voltaire Zurich.



Reba Maybury (b. 1990, Oxford, UK) is an artist, writer and political dominatrix sometimes working under the name Mistress Rebecca. Her work explores the tension between her perceived strength as an object of transactional fantasy and how, through the reality of sex work, she attempts to turn this power into something tangible. Capital, labour, sexuality, female perversion and gender are essential themes to her practice. Recent shows include *Faster than an erection*, MACRO in Rome; *Moralists at a Costume Party*, HKFD in Denmark, and *A-good-individual*, Luma Westbau in Zurich. Her first novella is named *Dining with Humpty Dumpty* (2017) and *Faster than an erection* is a new publication, a theory and methodology to her domination with a poem by Cassandra Troyan which was recently published by MACRO (2021).



Denis Savary (b. 1981, Granges-Marnand, Switzerland) lives and works in Geneva, Switzerland. He works across forms and media in his creation of dreamlike objects, images and installations. Often reinterpreting motifs and relics from throughout history, he twists them formally and psychologically through shifts in scale and material, craft and content, towards a contorted and piecemeal reimagination of culture. Recent solo shows were presented at GNYP Gallery in Berlin, Stiftung Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen, Musée des Beaux-Arts, La Chaux-de-Fond, Galerie Maria Bernheim in Zurich and London, Le Confort Moderne in Poitiers, Kunsthalle Bern, among others. His work was presented in various group shows, including at Casa Asger Jorn in Albissola, Museum Villa Stiassni in Brno, Istituto Svizzero in Rome, Leopold Museum in Vienna, Kunsthau Zurich, Kunsthau Aargau, Helmhaus Zurich, Kunstmuseum Bern

and Swiss Institute New York, Musée d'Orsay and Palais de Tokyo in Paris.



Linda Semadeni (b. 1985, Bern, Switzerland) lives and works in Zürich. She studied at the ZHdK and the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Movement is at the core of Semadeni's different practices in different media. Her work oscillates between the poles of self-limitation and limitation by others. She is interested in the area in between, which palpates the mental and formal boundaries from within and without. She intentionally stops herself while painting or performing, following an internal or external impulse. Her work has been featured in shows at Sgomento Zurigo; Kunsthalle Zurich; Kirchgasse, Steckborn; der Tank in Basel; Shanaynay in Paris, Bündner Kunstmuseum Chur, Karma International in Zurich, Forde in Geneva, Up State, in Zurich and Schloss in Oslo. In 2022 she will present a new exhibition at Halle für Kunst Lüneburg and at Kirchgasse. She will be a guest in the Sitterwerk studio in summer 2023.



Ser Serpas (b. 1995, Los Angeles, California, USA) is a poet and sculptor that lives and works in Tbilisi, Georgia. She studied at Columbia University in New York and HEAD – Genève. Primarily interested in death and legacy, her work is preoccupied with its own urgency in the face of fossilization. At the present, she's taken to sequestering the mundane while freely quoting art history. Serpas's multidisciplinary practice makes use of conceptual strategies of improvisations and interventions, often using free and discarded material, to stage critiques of value and identity. Serpas has had solo exhibitions at Ludlow 38 in New York, LUMA Westbau in Zurich, and Current Projects in Miami. She participated in group exhibitions at Pinault Collection, Punta della Dogana in Venice, Fri Art, Kunsthalle Fribourg; Swiss Institute New York and Performance Space New York. In 2020, she also took part in the Made in LA biennial at the Hammer Museum and the Huntington.



Latefa Wiersch (b. 1982, Dortmund, Germany) lives and works in Zurich. She studied at the Universität der Künste Berlin and the Hochschule der Künste Bern. Wiersch has received grants and awards from the Canton of Zurich and the City of Zurich, among others, and was nominated for the Swiss Art Awards in 2021. Her work has been shown at Museum Haus Konstruktiv, Swiss Art Awards/ Messe Basel, Stadtgalerie Bern, Zentrum Paul Klee in collaboration with Dampfzentrale (with Emma Murray), Mouches Volantes Köln, Kunsthau Langenthal, La Nef, Le Noirmont, Shedhalle Zurich, Dortmunder U, Zentrum für internationale Lichtkunst, Unna, Welterbe Zollverein Essen, and Galerie Adler, Frankfurt, among others. Since 2018, performances have increasingly taken center stage and could be shown in residencies and festivals at Schauspiel Dortmund, Theater Südpol Luzern and Dampfzentrale Bern. A dance piece in collaboration with the dancer Emma Murray will premiere in September 2022 at the Dampfzentrale Bern. In August 2022, there will be Latefa's first institutional solo show in Switzerland at the Kunsthau Langenthal.

Curator

Mohamed Almusibli (b. 1990, Yemen) is an artist and curator currently based in Geneva. He has curated exhibitions at Centre d'Art Contemporain de Genève, FriArt Kunsthalle Fribourg, Karma International and Truth&Consequences among others. In 2020 he was in charge of *Almusibli Panorama*, a year long online video program that was presented on the 5th floor, the digital platform of the Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, and concluded with the first edition of the Swiss Moving Image Award. Since 2019 he runs the art space Cherish together with James Bantone and Marguerite Mikanowski.

Annual partners



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