

TEXT //  
ROHWAJEONG

LE TEMPS DES POMMES

with Louis-Cyprien Rials, Marcos Avila Forero, Jenny Feal, Sun Choi, RohwaJeong,  
Paula Castro, Charlotte Seidel, Kihoon Jeong, Yangachi, Afour Rhizome

Collaboration between the Dohyang Lee and the contemporary art space ETE 78, Ixelles, Belgium

September 15th - October 06th 2018



ÉTÉ 78

The title of the exhibition **Le temps des pommes** refers to the song *The time of cherries* \*, written by Jean Baptiste Clement ( 1836 - 1903 ) in 1867. This song sings originally the summer, the beauty of the nature and the nostalgia for a lost time. It is then associated with the Paris Commune \*\*, because of its author, who participated in.

“ Change the world, change the life for the happiness of all ”, such was the dream of the people who participated in. For the exhibition *Le temps des pommes*, the artists think over from past to present about the world and the social, political, economic, ideological history while having a visionary analysis.

Born in 1981 in Paris, **Louis-Cyprien Rials** attended theater lessons at the conservatory, in France, before discovering photography in Japan, where he lived for many years. He is the winner of the SAM PROJECTS 2017 Prize.

His work documents through photographs and videos a world devoid of humans. All that remains are the forms and terrains conducive to disorientation and contemplation. Through an exploration of the possible representations of landscapes from micrographics to satellite imagery, by changing the scale of these studies, he proposes to the viewer a space as free to the imagination as to pareidolia. In this universe of the retreated and forgotten being, this documentation of abandoned scenography, of monuments - natural or not - of ruins , traces recorded in geography, reveals a piece of humanity as seen through the prism of his absence.

Graduated in 2010, from the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts of Paris, **Marcos Avila Forero** (born in 1983, in Paris) is invited to the 57th Venice Biennial (2017) Viva Arte Viva by the curator Christine Macel.

The curator Daria de Beauvais, said : “ Videos, frescoes/murals, objects, sculptures, performances or installations, the work of Marco Avila Forero always seems to evoke an off-screen : a meeting, a story or a process it keeps track of. His micro-fictions made of bits and pieces seek to build up a colusion between times and places that seem at odds rather than demonstrate or document. The richness and poetry of this work come from the visit and the diversion of the boundaries... At times of increased and dematerialised flaws, Marcos Avila Forero broaches the duration and materiality of movings/shiftings and migrations, provides meaning and substance that are too often neglected... The human being is also central in his work. It is the one who paradoxically waits at the edges waiting forever “ the good moment ” to jump ahead/lead the way. ”

**Jenny Feal** is born in 1991 in Havana, Cuba, and obtained a Master from the Ecole Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Lyon in 2016. The sale year, she won the Renaud prize for the installation *Te imaginas*.

For her, objects are part of our daily life and they testify not only a physical or functional trajectory, but also symbolic. Through her work, the artist takes existing objects with proper lives that belong to a specific context. Because of its reproduction or transformation, a distance and a feeling of strangeness are caused in the spectator's experience. The thin line between personal and collective items is determined by the introduction of super cial and daily objects, loaded with symbolic, historical, social and political dimensions. Cuba is a reference and an endless source.

**Sun Choi**, born in 1973, lives in Seoul, South Korea. He graduated from the Hongik University in Séoul in 2003. He won the grand prize of the SongEun Award in 2013.

For Sun Choi “ the artist had vague questions about art. And he made efforts to make those vague questions more clear and tried to put those efforts into practice. Leaving behind the past irrationality of contemporary Korean art, which overlaps with his time, he found it difficult to figure out what on earth art is and what we can call artistic. In front of the vagueness created by Western-oriented conventional wisdom about art, the misery of reality that you and I can clearly witness is paradoxically artistic enough. There are two conflicting factors existing at the same time in his “work” that is presented as art: visible and invisible, material and immaterial, clear and unclear, and artistic and inartistic. He is creating artworks in hope that “ art ” will vanish.”

**RohwaJeong**, made by **Yun-hee Noh** (Seoul, 1981) and **Hyeon-seok Jeong** (Seoul, 1981), is a visual artist couple from Seoul, South Korea. More than a duo, it is a unique and unsplitable being. Their work observes and pays attention to relations changing in various times and spaces, and makes efforts to capture them effectively in their works. In particular, they try to probe into diverse relations among individuals and the individuals' detailed conflicts arising from their roles in the relations. This is a movement to get away from the majority's subjective and violent eyes that interpret all phenomena around in somewhat lazy and stereotyped judgment. Accordingly, it sometimes appears to be a situation or state that may induce various interpretations of a certain relation through works. In 2019, the duo participates in the 12th Gwangju Biennale, Imagined Borders, in South Korea.

**Paula Castro**, born in Buenos Aires in 1978) lives and works in the same city. She approaches the drawing through landscapes and imaginary concepts compound of points and lines. Representation of the realm of imagination and mind, the world is regarded as a " body " of infinite points on which the surface is in movement in the time and space. Things found everywhere (photos, words, places) are the origin of her works. Forms and thoughts constantly change and are transformed into an organic whole of lines and points, ideas and concepts, imaginary and real places. Her drawings are the result of a visual modification or a mysterious meeting between literature and line.

**Charlotte Seidel**, born in 1981, in Hamburg, Germany lives and works in Paris. According to Isaline Vuille, this artist harvests a sensitive art of the invisible, of the absence and ephemeral, often taking place in situ, poetically to magnify details. Creating small intensities emerging from the continuous stream of events and images surrounding us, Charlotte Seidel uses the reality as material, a sometimes banal everyday life, common histories, isolating familiar elements to which we do not necessarily pay attention. Encouraging people to take a closer look on our environment, the practice of Charlotte Seidel made, piece by piece, something that could be called *poetry of everyday life*.

**Kihoon Jeong** was born in 1980, and he is currently living and working in Seoul, South Korea. The world of Kihoon Jeong's artwork is about unique attitude/action which resists against huge system, standardized groups, unified culture and forced regulation. His work begins with the question that if we are not able to transform social structure and custom at the collective dimension, what would we do ? He goes counter to vanity, neglected things, irregular activity and the logic of market through attempting minute modification of microscopic units at a partial level and making a backward movement from the logic of power within social structure.

**Yangachi** was born in 1970 in Busan, South Korea and was graduated of a B.F.A in sculpture from the University of Suwon and a Master in media arts from the Yonsei University, in Seoul. He is interested in the screen, movie, surveillance. The artist accumulates episodes, collects information and transforms them into " signs " to edit them by sequence. He proceeds then in superimposing signs and puts them in a relationship of explanation. Yangachi spreads his reality and his experiences and reflects them in the contemporary Korean society to criticize it.

**Afour Rhizome** (or A4 Rhizome or A4rizm) is one of artist's names chosen by Kyoo Seok Choi (born in Seoul, South Korea, in 1976), graduated from the Paris VIII University. This name rather neutral indicates his work and his project of a construction of the archives of knowledges, works of art and oneself. The choice of the name questions : " what is an artist ? "

One of his works is named *Balls of Dictionnary* in which a sheet of the " recovered " Petit Robert dictionary is transformed into a ball by keeping the visibility of the number of page, it is tidied up in a "collected" jewelry box and is presented. Some balls are sold in separately with a price fixed freely by the buyer to the flea market. The routes of these objects, the sale prices, the dates and the places of sale, the names, the email addresses of the buyer and the details of expenses are documented. This document is integrated into the process of construction of this work and is also exposed as an element of the work.

Exhibition place address :

78 rue de l'Été, B -1050 Ixelles, Belgium

Saturdays 22.09, 29.09, 06.10 / 2pm - 6pm and on rendez vous

[www.ete78.com](http://www.ete78.com)

\* NB : [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Le\\_Temps\\_des\\_cerises](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Le_Temps_des_cerises)

\*\* NB : [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paris\\_Commune](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paris_Commune)

## STILL . . . LIFE

with **Julie Savoye, Laurent Fiévet, RohwaJeong, Ronan Le Creurer, Zohreh Zavareh, Timothée Chalazonitis, Thomas Wattebled**

June 30th - August 04th 2018

The theorist and painter of Symbolism Maurice Denis told that three apples changed the face of the world ; Eve's Apple, Newton's Apple and finally Cézanne's Apple. We could add the Apple of the Judgment of Paris or Steve Jobs's Apple. The contribution of Cézanne and his still lives is decisive in the evolution of art and after him, the notion of object adapts to the modernity of the time as well as to the technical possibilities available. Today, photography, performance, new media, conceptual art are the privileged modes of expression, in a society dominated by consumerism and finally the objects.

Born in 1987, **Julie Savoye** lives and works in Paris. In 2010, she is awarded a diploma by the Regional School of Fine arts of Rouen with the congratulations of the jury. In 2012, she integrates the association La Couleuvre and then the association Jeune Création 2 years later. She regularly exposes in Paris and its neighbourhood. Her work is centred on the sensibility contained in geometry. She makes series on various supports and tries to highlight all the possible line movements, as literally than figuratively through paints, volumes, drawings and videos. The video *Still Life*, realized in 2011, gathers the corpus around the orthonormal and the sensitive line.

**Laurent Fiévet** lives and works in Paris. He creates montages and video installations using images, mainly extracted from the great classics of the cinema. He confronts, works them rhythmically and redeploys them for his exhibitions. Organized in thematic series, his works propose various types of reflections upon the Image and its ways of perception. Fundamentally ambivalent and giving to many registers of interpretation, they contain numerous aspects of historic, sociological and political critics, while moving our view on daily life, question the dysfunctions of our individual and collective memory.

The series *Whistle* (2012-2015) and *New Whistle* (2017-2018) gather more than a hundred and twenty loop videos. They constitute so many variations around a common motive, extracted from the film pantheon of the twentieth and of twenty-first century : a woman in the presence of a bird in a cage. If the works, can be shown, individually or in sets, approach frontally the questions of gender and representation of the feminine in the contemporary society, they also lift those of the sight of the spectator and his attitude in front of the artwork.

**RohwaJeong**, constituted by **Yun-hee Noh** (Seoul, 1981) and **Hyeon-seok Jeong** (Seoul, 1981), is a duo of visual artists from Seoul, South Korea. More than a duo, it is a unique and inseparable being. Their work observes and pays attention to relations changing in various times and spaces, and makes efforts to capture them effectively. In particular, they try to probe into diverse relations among individuals and the individuals' conflicts arising between them. This is a movement to get away from the majority's subjective and violent eyes that interpret all phenomena around in somewhat lazy and stereotyped judgment. Accordingly, it sometimes appears to be a situation or state that may induce various interpretations of a certain relation through works. The duo will participate in the Biennial of Gwangju 2019, in South Korea.

The word *still life* is as weaved by a thread of white cotton on a mosquito net. It tells a different story whether we are in daytime or night, and between two different hours. In daytime, it is the story of a person beyond the mosquito net, but at night without any luminosity, it is the story of you who are looking at this word.

Born in 1988, **Ronan Le Creurer** lives and works in Paris. He graduated from the School of Fine Arts of Angers in 2012. He joins during one year the cooperative and research program of the ESACM, Clermont-Ferrand and has been an artist in residence in the CAC of the synagogue of Delme in 2015. He then created the exhibition space of L'Agence in Paris. Since then, he joined the collective workshops/Artist-run space ChezKit in Pantin. In 2018, he takes part in the 63rd Salon of Montrouge, where he receives a production grant from the Fondation Française for the contemporary art.

Marie Cozette, director of the CRAC OCCITANIE says that " Ronan Le Creurer practises the sculpture as a science of assembling : the secret mechanics that oversee the elaboration of his works testify of this art of collage and montage, where the elective affinities between images, objects, tales, gestures and techniques distil a latent confusion".

Born in Tehran, in 1985 and after studies at the Azad University of Tehran, **Zohreh Zavareh** decides to continue her formation in France. Sharing her time between France and Iran, she is now resident of the workshops of Grand Large in Décines-Charpieux (workshops of the ADERA). What she pursues through installations, drawings, videos and sculptures, is the *invisible*. The constant appeal to words and to its play comes from there : to have a chance to seize things in their fragility. Sowing the silence of interrogation marks, the floating, the indecision which is their – to be this and not be it – can occur then freely.

The sound installation, called *Nâkojâ*, (that we translate into French by non-where, non place) questions the relationships between a thing and its world, the background from which it comes off, by means of a fictitious story. The question remains unanswered and turns in a loop.

**Timothée Chalazonitis** was born in 1989, in Paris. He studied Art History and Archaeology, and then was graduated from the National School of Applied Arts of Paris and from the National Superior School of Fine Arts of Paris. He is the winner of the Pierre Gautier-Delays Prize (Cité des Arts), in 2017, he participates in collective exhibitions in the Ricard Foundation, the Georges Pompidou Centre, the Episodique gallery, in Mons, once European Capital of Culture, in the Foundation Spinola Banna per l'arte, in the Vis à Vis Festival of contemporary art in Paris, in the Hippocrène Foundation (Villa Mallet-Stevens), in the Bazaar Compatible Program in Shanghai, \*c.

He is interested in the tracks left by man and in his desire to keep memories of stories. His practice is literally often connected, to the act of writing, as a need to have a dialogue with a space, architecture and the city-dwellers. The wandering in public space is deeply present in his work. This is when Timothée Chalazonitis analyses and collects some involuntary art (Gilles Clément) and when he operates as an urban archaeologist. He catches the poetry of the moment, of a tension, of an exchange, which is going to be the trigger of a plastic creation.

Born in Dieppe in 1990, **Thomas Wattebled** lives and works in Orléans. With a Master's degree in theory and artistic practice at the University of Amiens and a National Superior Diploma of Plastic Studies in the School of Fine Arts of Angers, his work was exposed in several collective exhibitions, in the art centre of L'ONDE (Vélizy), in the gallery Vasistas (Montpellier) and as well in the Cac Meymac. He also took part in the Salon of Montrouge, in 2018.

Thomas Wattebled seizes the emblems of our society of the sport and leisure to highlight the unproductive gestures, the figure of the loser and the forms at rest. Through drawings, installations, videos, the artist lingers over details, questions objects, gestures, and rickety things we do not notice. He humorously, fills in the cracks of a society where the word that prevails is PERFORMANCE.

## REFLECTIONS OF EVERYDAY

In the spring 2017, artist couple RohwaJeong visited Helsinki International Artist Programme (HIAP) residency. During their time in Helsinki, RohwaJeong worked with pieces dealing with everyday of being an artist: RohwaJeong studied the artistic processes and the way new environment affects to the artistic routines. In their work they used found, and sometimes even banal objects. The found artwork connects the artist to the site he or she is working in. Indeed, the site specificity seems to be crucial for RohwaJeong. The history of the specific place makes an intervention to the conceptual and sometimes even absurd artworks of the artist couple.

The name RohwaJeong was established in 2007. Behind the name are Noh' Yunhee (b. 1981) and Jeong Hyunseok (b. 1981). The aim of the name RohwaJeong is to create a sense of one artist instead of two; for Noh' Yunhee and Jeong' Hyunseok using one name instead of two, is about merging the boundaries between the two individuals and studying the dynamics of the creative process within one name.

The couple met in the early noughties while studying art in Kookmin University in Seoul, South Korea. Noh Yunhee, a freshman of 1999, started her studies a year before Jeong Hyunseok. Both found their major in sculpting. Jeong Hyunseok describes the school as a traditional Korean art university: the students learned from their masters the essential skills of sculpting, such as how to mould constitutive materials like stone.

Since their time in Kookmin University, RohwaJeong has drifted further away from traditions of sculpting and towards more conceptual line of work. Their mixed media includes painting, installation, video and photography. The unifying theme for their often light-structured pieces is process. The process, for RohwaJeong, means on the one hand studying the artistic processes between two individuals and how they merge into one, and on the other hand, producing light structured conceptual pieces that draw the attention towards the history of different human conditions such as childhood and growing up, as well as changes in our everyday living environment.

Site as a wish list

During the past ten years, RohwaJeong has returned over and over again to examining the everyday life of an artistic collaboration. In the spring 2017, they turned their shift towards studying routines. For RohwaJeong, routines are basis of an artistic work. Routines structure the process of becoming an artist as well as becoming an artwork.

The change of location changes one's routines. In Helsinki, RohwaJeong worked at Cable Factory, an urban site close to the city centre. The residency extended every now and then to Suomenlinna, an island that can be reached after a short trip with ferry from the mainland.

RohwaJeong draw a map on their location in Suomenlinna: the surroundings of the gallery Augusta are sketched lightly with pencil to a paper. On this map, RohwaJeong placed their art works. Four pieces realized during the three-month residency discuss the site and the routine that took place in it.

Each piece emphasises the banal and everyday aspect of being an artist. For instance, a piece titled *chair chair egg* (2017), is a found sculpture where two chairs are placed embracing each other, leaning lightly on a boiled egg. The chairs were found outside the gallery space, on the opposite sides of the building, and brought to meet each other in the middle, inside the gallery space. The egg is an intervention to the counterpoint of the two chairs. According to RohwaJeong it resembles the everydayness and routine in the residency: each morning begins similarly, by bowling an egg.

Another piece on the Suomenlinna map, *grocery list* (2017), continues similar themes. The piece consists of writings on a wall. "Grocery list", which is written with letters cut from paper, can be read as a wish list: "milk", "egg", "apple", "coffee", "insight" and "structure" are among the ingredients that are needed in everydayness of an artist life.

## Poetics of dualism

The ongoing discussion and reflection between two artists is evident when looking at three self-portraits done between years 2008 and 2016. The first portrait consists of a gun case with two open-cell cores. One core is in a shape of a hairdryer and the other of a water pistol. The duality of the shapes reflects the dynamics of the artist couple. *Another self-portrait* from the year 2013, was realized while in the residency in Paris. It is a video of a bucket that is filled – drop by drop – by water leaking from the ceiling. Bucket is standing next to a window which reflects its image. Looking closely, one can notice that it is raining outside. This time the water is not filtered by the ceiling but seems to fall straight into the reflection of a bucket.

Both of the before mentioned self-portraits resemble poetic expression, typical for RohwaJeong. Similar focus on small scale ideas is present, for instance, in RohwaJeong's pieces that deal with childhood and growing up.

In Seoul, in the 1980s, it was a custom that during schooldays all the children had to buy a small carton of milk. The same routine took place every day. In a piece called *Good Answer* (2015) the title of the piece is sewn with a brown rope to a canvas. On the end of the loosely sewn rope is a milk carton. The weight of the carton pulls the rope down, crumbling the text and making it almost unreadable.

The pieces of RohwaJeong may be sometimes hard to read. The artist couple tends to give as little information as possible to the viewer. However, the pieces can be seen as visual poems, treating short lived moments and particularities of mundane.

## Reflecting the two

Looking at the line of work of RohwaJeong reveals a reoccurring theme of reflections and dualism. In 2014 RohwaJeong placed two identical plants on the windowsill of a gallery. The similarity of *Twins* was, in fact, artificial, as the other plant was made of plastic. The artificiality was revealed in time when the other plant started to lose its shape and colour. Similar mirroring of the two seemingly identical objects is present in multiple pieces of RohwaJeong.

The latest self-portrait of RohwaJeong was realized in 2016. The piece is a mobile sculpture, consisting of brass bars and chains. The piece folds down as a family tree: in the top of the mobile there is a long brass bar. To the both ends of the bar are attached smaller bars, which in their turn hold even smaller bars in each end. The pattern continues and ends eventually with empty chains reaching towards the floor. As a self-portrait, the piece resembles two sides of an idea or two individuals of artist couple merging into one, as well as another, open-ended process, waiting to be completed.

Sini Mononen

## FRAGMENTS OF ARTISTIC THOUGHTS ON MANAGERIAL

In the art world, where much collaboration occurs in the form of exhibitions, the collaborative group RohwaJeong is well known as a unified persona. It almost feels awkward to find out each member's name. RohwaJeong is a fictional character whose gender-neutral name is a combination of the names of a male and a female artist, JEONG Hyunseok and NOH Yunhee. These two artists, who are the same age of 35, have known each other from their early twenties until the present. However, they claim that working collaboratively does not mean twice the efficiency. In fact, it takes more time to work together, even though each member has his or her own strengths. In other words, it requires a considerable amount of effort to adjust and compromise to each other's differences in order to make decisions for each step in the process, from the initial idea to the realization of the work. To give an extreme example, they have made a piece in which they fight until their four limbs become disembodied in the process. *Fighting* (2008) shows the brutal battle between the two, the "ladies first" rule is out the door, ruthlessly breaking the illusion of a harmonic collaboration. There are lots of paired objects or images in RohwaJeong's works, and these pairs or doppelganger images function as their self-portraits. They often use everyday objects such as real and virtual buckets, hair dryers and watering pot, erasers and pencils, canvases of different sizes, and underwear, as metaphors of their relationship.

Their work is solid, as it is created by mutually interdependent subjects, rather than a single subject alone. Instead of a circle with a single center, it is well balanced like an elliptical orbit with two pivotal points. Their negotiation of different perspectives is not a waste of time, since it provides the solid basis for the work that prevents one another from being lost. The conversation between the two is a discourse that can be reenacted in the relationship with the audience in the future, including careful verifications of each procedure from the initial idea to the actualization of the work. Compared to a single artist who works in solitude — one who might be at a complete loss in spite of working hard, not being able to get feedback — the couple's collaboration seems to be an alternative working method. The artist aims for clear and simple works by removing unnecessary details, however, the works do not limit themselves merely to logic and intention. RohwaJeong's style is unique in that its personal realm relates to the public realm, different from the reality that many art works face where they are still self-indulgent in general. The conversation, unlike a monologue, aspires to universality. It ceases to be a truth that only belongs to one, but becomes a sharable fact.

RohwaJeong's works are conceptual but not lifeless nor overly complicated, like what is commonly found in other forms of "conceptual art." Through their connotative works or objects, inspired by real conversations and conversational imagination they suggest fragmentary reflections on something worth seriously thinking about. Their recent work created at Nanji Studio is related to the memories of school days, which is the cornerstone of current power relationships. The work *Good answer* is made by pulling out the thread after having a text embroidered. Due to the physical force of pulling out the thread, the letters are crumpled and the wooden frame of the canvas is partly revealed. The precedent of this piece is *The thing* (2014), where the artist pulls out the threads that write the English phrase, "THE THING THAT YOU KNOW, I DO NOT WANT TO KNOW" and allows it to hang in the air like a piece of crumbled paper. The letters no longer become legible, the flat becomes three-dimensional and the virtual becomes real. This work transforms the transparent delivery of the message into an opaque process. The white milk that all elementary school students are obligated to drink, having already passed its expiration date and decomposed, adds weight to the assigned gravity on the string.

Standardized education, which is no more than a mechanical process of distributing information from one place to another, causes the unification of individual preferences, like controlling one's appetite. *Good answer* deals with a common childhood memory, that of smelly milk that every student had to line up in order to drink. The work implies the process of pedagogical instruction, wherein we expect a fixed answer for a pre-assigned question — we learn that this is not limited to childhood. The act of crushing the neat fabric boldly reveals a festering wound that has quietly rotten. The work, variable dimensions shows how the various potentiality of a child gets fixed into a socially expected direction. In the black and white picture projected onto the wall we can see the different sizes of black nails stuck in children's heads. The varied sizes of nails in the image with shown in various perspectives implicate what is happening in the symbolic universe these children have been brought into without choice. There are metaphoric expressions in the piece as the fixed nails in perspective imply the fixed ideas and the rigidity of a hierarchical ranking system. The classroom is a place where social order is represented. Appearing as an old black and white photograph is a modification of an image — a present day classroom — downloaded from the web.

Even though we idealize the vague memories of school days the work implicates the ranking system and stereotypes that are actually initiated, then fixed. The work frame is a frame made out of reclaimed wood found in a landfill near Nanji Studio. The frame is filled with sand paper, used to polish the old wood into the finished frame. The monochrome plane inside the frame appears like an abstract painting where the artist's soul is nestled. Polished is the frame, not the content. Inversely, the frame turns even a trivial thing into something that looks good. Complicating content and the form, the work focuses interest on the periphery rather than the center, or on the variability of the center-periphery relationship. Is it possible for an education system to aim to go beyond being merely instrumental, like the sand paper carefully preserved in the frame? Could trivial objects, such as sand paper or thrown away wood gain the same attention as a work of art? Frames often appear in RohwaJeong's recent works, assuming the meaning of education as ultimately a framing process.

In the work, *Drawing*, a monitor playing cartoons is almost covered by the artist's black drawings and installed on a children's school desk. Even though it says "drawing" in the title, the result is more like an erasure. Living through the shared memories of children all over the world, the cartoon characters in animated movies from Walt Disney Pictures hide extremely cruel ideas and behaviors behind their cute appearances. This shared cultural product of Disney, in which children access before the language fully develops, trains the senses and attributes. To become global citizens, equates to the representations (like a survival strategy) depicted in the content of the cartoons (shown in the erased screen). The work is positioned in the middle of the desk, like a textbook or an exam paper, which must be filled with the contents of the textbook. However, it is well known that the process of being immersed in the one-directional information that pours out of the media causes learning disabilities. *Mit-guerim* (Under the drawings) is a piece of drawing on a draped roll of paper that records the process of the artist's drawing while moving. Like a seismometer the work attempts to grasp the impossible gestures in order to represent an unfixable existence. Here, representing the subject becomes a gradually fading trace. Regarding the process of socialization that fixes a subject onto a single point of representation, is this impossibility of representation a fortune or a tragedy?

As shown in the term the "politics of representation," systems of representation are not merely a style of art, but also the mode of power that divides and reproduces the subject/object. Departing from classicism and realism, where education and enlightenment played important roles, contemporary art is deeply related to the discourse around the impossibility of representation. RohwaJeong's message is most directly expressed in *live and let live*, written in cursive handwriting with black electric wires on a wooden board. The announced message "Let me live the way I want," is the outcry of an individual, confronting the education system that became "the funnel for an immense unification" (<Art and Discourse>, 1996, LEE Sunyoung). Education is regarded as the most important socialization process. The process of removing the differences of individuals and not allowing one to live naturally as they are, enforces everyone to compete against each other until one dies out. This process presumes a group in power who asks others to devote their labor, sometimes their lives. The term "Citizen School" or "National People's School" in Korean proves that modern education has settled down as the most fundamental system, turning natural people into "citizens" who can be mobilized as laborers and warriors.

Borrowing from the anti-war slogan during the World Wars and the Vietnam War, the message "live and let live" appeals to us because we live in the world where power tends to turn our everyday lives into a war. This message will become more appealing in the future, in an extended Enlightenment that is combined with the information age. The black electric wires constituting the letters are part of an experiment kit used in science class, and the small light bulb on the tip gradually dims as time passes, expressing an individual's resistant outcry that fades. Not unlike that of education, the subjectification process in both private and public realms is closely related to the (social) system. The subject and the (social) structure are mutually produced, unlike how romanticism contrasts the two. In *Moving-unchangeable1425* (2013), the numbers on the floor plan meet and part to make a wall. Whether it is a school, a military, or a workplace the work speaks about the process of the structuralization of power within social groups. The work is like a cheerful game, but it contains a dark message — that the system, which wields force gained by power, will not easily change.

RohwaJeong's interests are omnidirectional when it comes to the exhibition system and conservative media, etc., since power is scattered everywhere in networks on microscopic and macroscopic levels. However, why is their recent practice focused on the educational system? Wouldn't their age (mid-30s) influence them to reminisce about school memories with rose-tinted glasses? Doesn't RohwaJeong belong to the older generation who identifies with the sub cultural rock music phrase "Do not believe people over 30!"? Nonetheless, in the Korean context, artists in their mid-30s have been concerned with school — either they feel victimized or they hold a sense of responsibility towards it. The foundation of our art world is so fragile that we need school as a "lifeline," not only in our 30s, but also in our 40s. However, schools become the ruling reality rather than a place that can accept a vulnerable position art in the reality. In the current situation where the function and role of art are not fully recognized in society, except for inside of education system, "pedagogically related things" are in fact ongoing problems of today, not problems that have been left behind in the past.

Inside the standing water blocked by society, another dirty system of power, art, will not be able to free people even though we accumulate more knowledge about art. The art works that constantly support and strengthen the existing system are heavy and dismal. The "work," that is held as mortgage by schools, lacks art's intrinsic qualities to be able to joyfully run ahead, leaving behind this tangled reality. The people who believe that schools are autonomous and liberating, are only the few privileged by the system. The reality, in which we must become consumers of education and accumulate academic capital long after graduating from university, leaves a deep scar on ones who have dreamt of living their lives as artists. Since the entire society has become rationalized and systemized the tendency of the excessive growth of educational institutions, and furthermore the "school-ization" of the entire society, is interconnected to the trend of dividing all members of society into "manager and being managed" (Susan SONTAG). Regarding their tendency to work with their surrounding daily lives rather than a distanced reality, RohwaJeong's message, "Let me live the way I want" appears to be a cynical but desperate outcry of the young generation who is confined by school.

Korean society produces a sense of deprivation, as much as its materialistic excesses. We can affirm the great power of the system from the silent art world, which lacks the "angry youth" who demonstrates an understandable rage towards the system. According to the dictionary definition, the English term "school" and the French term "ecole" comes from the Greek word "schope," meaning "leisure time." It's meaning was related to "the leisure time for learning how to absorb in contemplation." Later on it relates to a craftsman school or private educational institutes. However, in the age of infinite competition with one's "Spec." (short for specifications, used in Korea to refer to an individual's qualification) , schools are never places full of leisure. Schools demand students to be busier and busier, on the top of their already busy contemporary lives. Furthermore, they have become absurd places that produce "busy-ness" for the sake of being "busy." Especially, in societies like Korea that are undergoing rapid bureaucratization, schools are gradually expanding in institutional dimensions, revealing social bottleneck phenomena and congestion. Whether positive or not, they are the places where we prepare ourselves or stand by in order to enter society. At the same time they represent society itself. Thus, some people learn the "social world" rather than knowledge of the arts and theories from school.

Schools insist on keeping their exclusive status' even in the current state of the information society that is full of numerous opened opportunities for education. The (systematic) monopoly of schools is not driven by itself, but relies on the logic of the capital that has the more fundamental superiority. As long as schools stay under the subcategory of the capital, they will remain in eternal shackles to most people. We can see from RohwaJeong's work, good answer, where the educational curriculum for a good answer is a procedure of internalizing disciplines (of the society), comparing it to the pain of forcefully cramming food that one cannot digest. The milk pack in the piece is (physically) small, but it is a hugely impactful symbol. Assuming that the internalization of power is the precondition for its autonomous execution, the rotten and inflated white milk, which is connected to the lines of composing letters, is a horrifying symbol of monotonous regulation that penetrates our soul, as well as our body. In Drawing, which displays Tom and Jerry chasing and being chased by each other on the screen, we can find an impulse to obliterate the perpetually inescapable process of power.

In *Discipline and Punishment*, Michel FOUCAULT mentions that school is not only a place for education, but also functions as an institution that surveils, builds hierarchies, and dispenses rewards and punishment. Standing for the benefit of the majority, their disciplines are sophisticated techniques of power to control people, namely, a special technique that turns an individual into an instrument as well as a means of executing power. Individuals are produced through a strict observance of the rules, disciplinary punishments, imposed supervision, and restrictions. According to Foucault, discipline is a technique, which not only allocates one's body, then extracting and accumulating "time" out of it, but also combines different forces to create an effective apparatus. Furthermore, it manages the time of one's life, accumulates them into an useful form, and employs these controlled times to contribute to the execution of power on people. Indeed, our minds are also produced around, on the surface of, and within the body by the effect of power. RohwaJeong's recent work emphasizes one of the most important messages today that art must convey to the society and itself, that is, the resistance of the body and soul that is tamed by discipline.

Lee Sunyoung (Art critic)

LA CONFIDENTIELLE #02 DU YIA ART FAIR PARIS

with **ROHWAJEONG**

SOMEWHERE... SOMETIME...

March 27th - March 29th 2015

RohwaJeong is a duo artist made by Yunhee Roh (wife) and Hyunseok Jeong (husband), both born in Seoul, in 1981. They founded the duo in 2007. However, RohwaJeong may be regarded as a single artist.

Their work observes and pays attention to relations changing in various times and spaces, and makes efforts to capture them effectively in their works. In particular, they try to probe into diverse relations among individuals and the individuals' detailed conflicts arising from their roles in the relations. This is a movement to get away from the majority's subjective and violent eyes that interpret all phenomena around in somewhat lazy and stereotyped judgment. Accordingly, it sometimes appears to be a situation or state that may induce various interpretations of a certain relation through works. What is more, because each work adopts its medium in proportion to the weight to be conveyed, the overall formative uniformity among the works is avoided. That is, including the drawing series starting from a personal position, individual works employ different media such as installation, photograph and video that can be interpreted relatively according to subjective viewpoint so that each work may reveal its theme most effectively. Recently they are taking interest in so-called 'work,' which is an activity making works, and research is being conducted on the boundary between the act of work and artists' private life — which may not be considered directly relevant to work. In other words, it is being studied whether a specific act absolutely necessary for the birth of a work — for example, the body's action to conquer the object to be expressed using brush, scraper or other expression tools or the process of mental exploration for the implementation of a theme or message that the artist is to communicate — can be defined as a direct act that implements a work. In addition, they are interested in the contemporary social phenomenon. There is various and different cases of life in the world. They often express it without personal feeling, but would expect what awaken viewers about the world around them.

MOUSAÏ / MUSES

with **Charlotte Seidel, Jihee Kim, Sara Acremann, Rohwajeong,  
Elisabeth S. Clark et Louis-Cyprien Rials**

February 06th – March 12th 2016

Nine sisters... each of them received a present they will donate to the whole humanity... Eloquence, history, lyric poetry, music, tragedy, rhetoric, dance, comedy, astronomy. Such gifts are blessings for us, human beings, who try to explain our existence, to brighten it up, to share experiences or simply leave a track. The exhibition MOUSAÏ / MUSES invites six artists with literature and the time that goes by as a basis. References to art history for Charlotte Seidel, Jihee Kim, with her bold and unexpected associations which make her inspiration free, the lyricism we feel when reading Sara Acremann's letter on a personal event, the scenario of the life's ordinary condition with Rohwajeong, the subtle and intellectual reflection upon the language and the verb by Elisabeth S. Clark and finally the three ceramic bowls containing rhythmic incantations for curses or blessings of Louis-Cyprien Rials, illustrate various aspects of the gifts that human beings possess, and express through literature.

**Charlotte Seidel**, born in 1981 in Hamburg, is a German and French artist, who lives and works in Paris.

She presents works having relationship with the art history. «...» is a book edited by the artist on the added passages and the modifications of the text made by E.H. Gombrich in his *Story of Art* since the first edition (1950) until the sixteenth (2012). These passages are surrounded by the blank space of a never-ending story. She suggests that art history, could be a living matter, and the perception of a same event changes according to eras. Square Dance and still, are the retranscription of some texts from the *Theory of Colours*<sup>1</sup> by Johan Wolfgang Goethe. The works speak of absences, transparencies, presences, light refraction, and effects the observation of colours produces upon the human sight. For instance, complementary colours would appear inside the «internal» eye after a while observing a coloured surface.

**Jihee Kim**, born in 1983, in Seoul, graduated from the Goldsmith School of London in 2013. She is interested in the relationship between «text et image» and she has been exploring her drawings by using books. The books Kim normally use as sketchbooks were donated by cities. This project began when she selected some sentences or words from a book. She creates automatic drawings that spread like dominoes - her thoughts, memories and experiences are the starting point which evokes her imagination. Literature provides her sources she could extract a multitude of ideas from. The question of what she has to draw made unexpected images, like for the works To Dark Eyes, Bruce Lee, My tastes are singular. Black Books and Don't touch come from the sensation of the language barrier, she feels in front of English.

**Sara Acremann** is awarded a Contemporary Literature Bachelor degree and arrived at the National School of Fine Arts of Paris in 2007 then obtains her Master of Arts degree with the congratulations of the jury in 2012. She uses the sound and the textual work, to question the notion of uncertainty -of the author and the spectator, the status of the image and the speech, by building fragile fictions, stories which always lean on observations of the daily reality and spread in the uncertain space of the assumptions. In 2015, she is nominated for the Revelations Emerige Prize and was part of the exhibition *Empiristes*. Le Mail et le Mur is a artwork that takes back an e-mail sent to someone in November, 2013 and carved in the wall. Here we have a testimony where the central event remains absent, where the characters still speak and tell. Language is always embodied even if it changes its shape. Sara Acremann wishes to bring forward the speech and the act to carve in the wall is bold... Will to make this event last forever ?

**Rohwajeong**, formed by **Yun-hee Noh** (Seoul, 1981) and **Hyeon-seok Jeong** (Seoul, 1981), is a visual artist duo from Seoul, South Korea. More than a duet, it is a unique and inseparable being. They work on human relationships that change through space or the time or on stories of their environment using various mediums. *Das Leben Der Anderen* (2009) is a video which scenario is realized on the basis of the movie *Das Leben Der Anderen* (The life of others)<sup>2</sup> and reports the various forms of relationships that make society. This movie deals with the mechanism of large-scale espionage practised by Stasi in East Germany. The video of Rohwajeong speaks of natural conflicts, common understanding which grows with time and illusions of the society that surrounds us everyday. The non-verbal communication in this video represents the conversation between two persons whereas the simplicity of this video invites us to look into our daily lives, like for the first time.

**Elisabeth S. Clark** (born in 1983) is an artist working between London and Paris. She explores the topography of language, time, sound and thought. Her works speak of displacement and disappearance – but also of transformation and appearances. She adds, removes, establishes protocols and often refers to literature, music or science. Her work moves freely between disciplines – whether sculpture, installation, performance, gestures. She shows:

- *When I buried the Book of Sand...*, from the book by Jorge Luis Borges *The Book of Sand*, she saw on a journey to Buenos Aires, in 2009. She bought it and took it for three months while travelling around Argentina. In one of the most dry regions of the world, the Atacama Desert<sup>3</sup>, she decided to bury the book, remembering the words from the book «the best place to hide a leaf is the forest». Photos and dry transfer are the trace of this action.

- *After a long time or short time*, an artwork being part of the series *Words that don't keep still*, strings of words are like negative sculptures, traces of motion, documentation in the present tense, transforming a short sentence into an imaginary picture or recreating an impression of an ephemeral moment.

- *Choon*, a word invented by the artist. The word was first spotted in Samuel Beckett's novel *Watt*. He used it (spelt it) phonetically to imply the verb to «tune», but with a Dublin accent. However, the artist would argue that it was no mistake that Beckett would choose to specifically (he tunes the verb «to tune»!). While creating this verb, she is interested in its use, the evolution and the modification of the language.

**Louis-Cyprien Rials**, born in 1981 in Paris, practises photography and video art. After attending theatre lessons at the conservatory, his aspiration to independent creation ways leaned him to choices that marked his artistic career. In 2005, he left and lived for three years in Tokyo and organised his first exhibition, *Koban*. Since his return from Japan, he lives between Paris, Brussels and Berlin and continues his researches. In 2010, he went on a first bike journey to entire closed areas, he sees as «unintentional nature parks». In 2012, he finished his first experimental fiction, the impersonal western *Nessuno*, and keeps involving in the creation of videos between art and meditative documentary, with the projects *Holy Wars*, *Dilmun Highway* ( Bahrain, 2014 ) and *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin* ( Iraq, 2015 ).

*Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin - Bols* are three ceramics in biscuit, new evolutions of a Sassanian tradition to engrave curses in incantation bowls turned to the ground. Texts, translated with the help of the Collège de France, are written in Judeo - Aramaic on the faces of these objects. One of them is a blessing for the selfless and beneficial man, while the two others promise fire to the persons responsible for wars and contemporary predations. Those ceramics are along with the video *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin*, where we can see an eternal fire. Rials explains the ceramics are like realised form this fire.

1. The *Theory of Colours* shows how colours could be perceived in many circumstances, yielding to a physiological approach.

2. *Das Leben Der Anderen* (The life of others), 2006, written and directed by Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck.

3. The Atacama Desert is located in the north-east of Chile and is one of the most dry deserts in the world. It is full of natural resources as copper, iron and lithium. Currently, in 2015, providential rains made some of the vegetation grow in some places inside the desert.

## RETURN TRIP

January 18th - February 22nd 2014

An exhibition by **ROHWAJEONG** (Yunhee Roh and Hyunseok Jeong)

Rohwajeong is an artist duo composed by Yunhee Roh (wife) and Hyunseok Jeong (husband), both native of Seoul in 1981. They create the duo Rohwajeong in 2007, and began to work about human relationships. They currently work about those human relationships that change through space and time or about stories of their environment using many media.

RohwaJeong draws an analogy between their latest exhibition and their thoughts on the term 'journey', where journey stands for physical movement along a distance that stands as absolute. Even a journey with a conspicuous purpose or specific aim can bring about unexpected inner changes. After travelling with the right dose of strain, curiosity and fear, things back at the familiar territory seem unchanged. What has been changed is the subject of thoughts that perceives the surroundings, which in turn changes the object of perception.

RohwaJeong intend to understand the experience of exhibition as a journey, from the genesis of key ideas for the birth of a work of art in the offing, and that of spectators whose journey begins as they enter the exhibition space and encounter various works of art until they pass below the exit sign. The duo for whom 'relationship' and 'in-between' once marked the important beginning of their career, now attempts to expand on their initial ideas toward the artists' (daily) life and their relationship with their own work, as well as their thoughts on the term 'we' and the intimacy vis-à-vis things surrounding our existence. At the Galerie DohyangLee, the multifariousness of the duo's work is staged with different media, all of which boil down to one conclusive point.

For the basement level was used candles instead of halogen lights, which allows to conserve the original atmosphere of the basement, but also for a sense of conservation of the works themselves, like old relics having never been displaced. Meanwhile, two projections, one installed in the basement *Black Mountain* and the other on ground floor *Milk*, create a black-white contrast constituting their overall visual impression. In effect it portrays "society" as impregnated with countless changes. And in fact the society follows certain structures of repetition or patterns that always remain difficult to be broken down, which is the common denominator in both projections. In *Black Mountain*, the mountain is shaped by blackened newspapers familiar to the generation preceding that of the artists. The shape of the material evolves through various external factors to give new shapes such as one of mountain range or hummock and does not crumble even despite the raging blizzard. On the other hand, *Milk* shows non-focal yet obscurely focused white images filling the entire screen. There, milk, usually recognised as an agent that dissolves into coffee and other foodstuffs to smooth out the taste, suddenly gives off bubbles with a violent sound. The work offers a microscopic view of the existence of violence that persists but remains hard to recognise. The previously unseen facet of newspaper and milk come face to face on a breakfast table that usually serves to place the two objects.

All of the above is accompanied by two plant pots and a can inviting the spectators to kick around throughout the exhibition space. Along with *Time is Disgusting*, another work *Moving* traces the movements of the kicked-about can on the gallery floor plan. Standing between *Tree of Boundaries* and *Cloud of Boundaries* is *Bye-Bye* where the two former works are facing each other, all of which draw a 'dialogue', specific to the oeuvre of RohwaJeong, and hovers between the natural and the artificial, quotidian life and artistic operation, the real and the image, goodwill and ill will of Time, departure and return.

These are results to be considered unconsciously deriving from the duo's co-operation as one, but also the dual-identity relationship that gives birth to another entirely new identity, which is also specific to RohwaJeong.

Finally, in *The thing(The thing that you know, I do not want to know\*.)*, the couple pulls on a rope figuring a sentence on a canvas, which they pick up to get it up in the air. It distills the duo's modus operandi as a long journey. It also gives rise to an imagery that embodies first the artists' squabbling and technical arguments in the process of creation and finding the right balance, and a collective bodily act of leaving afloat the trace of their changed self(-ves) through the journey.

\* text on the rope.

Winter 2014, Seoul.

*Bubble Lab* is an artistic film made for the individual exhibition in the Gallery Factory, **This distance**, and designed for the exhibition's theme. The subject is focused on the elements around art, describing the stages of the assembling and displaying the many tools used for the making of an exhibition, as art pieces. *Bubble Lab* deals with the wrapping and the transportation of the works.

Throughout the beginning and the end of the work, we see that *Bubble Lab* describes the stages from the wrapping in the artist's workshop, through its transportation until the unwrapping inside the exhibition space. However if the spectator doesn't see the beginning nor the end of the video, he might think the screen is out of function, or this work is abstract and monotonous.

When the artwork is wrapped, the screen goes white, because of the numerous layers of bubble lab, while the screen goes black when it is transported inside a truck whose doors are closed, until the arrival in the exhibition space. The last scene shows the unwrapped artwork and the space used for the exhibition.

In the middle of the conversation between the artist and the shipper, appears a cathodic TV screen, that sets in motion the artwork. That TV seems to look at the artwork it will receive.

Through this trick, and this mise en abyme, the artwork is displayed in this TV, and having a physical body, it seems to look in a mirror, that reflects its past state.

RohwaJeong

RohwaJeong is a duo artist consisting of two persons Yunhee Roh and Hyunseok Jeong. However, we expect that RohwaJeong may be regarded as an artist rather than as a duo of two persons.

Our work observes and pays attention to relations changing in various times and spaces, and makes efforts to capture them effectively in their works. In particular, we try to probe into diverse relations among individuals and the individuals' detailed conflicts arising from their roles in the relations. This is a movement to get away from the majority's subjective and violent eyes that interpret all phenomena around in somewhat lazy and stereotyped judgment. Accordingly, it sometimes appears to be a situation or state that may induce various interpretations of a certain relation through works. What is more, because each work adopts its medium in proportion to the weight to be conveyed, the overall formative uniformity among the works is avoided. That is, including the drawing series starting from a personal position, individual works employ different media such as installation, photograph and video that can be interpreted relatively according to subjective viewpoint so that each work may reveal its theme most effectively. Recently we are taking interest in so-called 'work,' which is an activity making works, and research is being conducted on the boundary between the act of work and artists' private life – which may not be considered directly relevant to work.

In other words, it is being studied whether a specific act absolutely necessary for the birth of a work – for example, the body's action to conquer the object to be expressed using brush, scraper or other expression tools or the process of mental exploration for the implementation of a theme or message that the artist is to communicate – can be defined as a direct act that implements a work. In addition, we are interested in the contemporary social phenomenon. There is various and different cases of life in the world. We often express it without personal feeling, but would expect what awoken viewers about the world around them.

RohwaJeong

galerie dohyanglee

# ROHWAJEONG