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Austria



KUB Projects

SOL CALERO –

LA SAUNA CALIENTE

feat. Blunt x Skensved,

Conglomerate, Rubén

D’Hers, Trevor Good,

Cristian Guardia, Hanne

Lippard, Dafna Maimon

& Érika Ordosgoitti

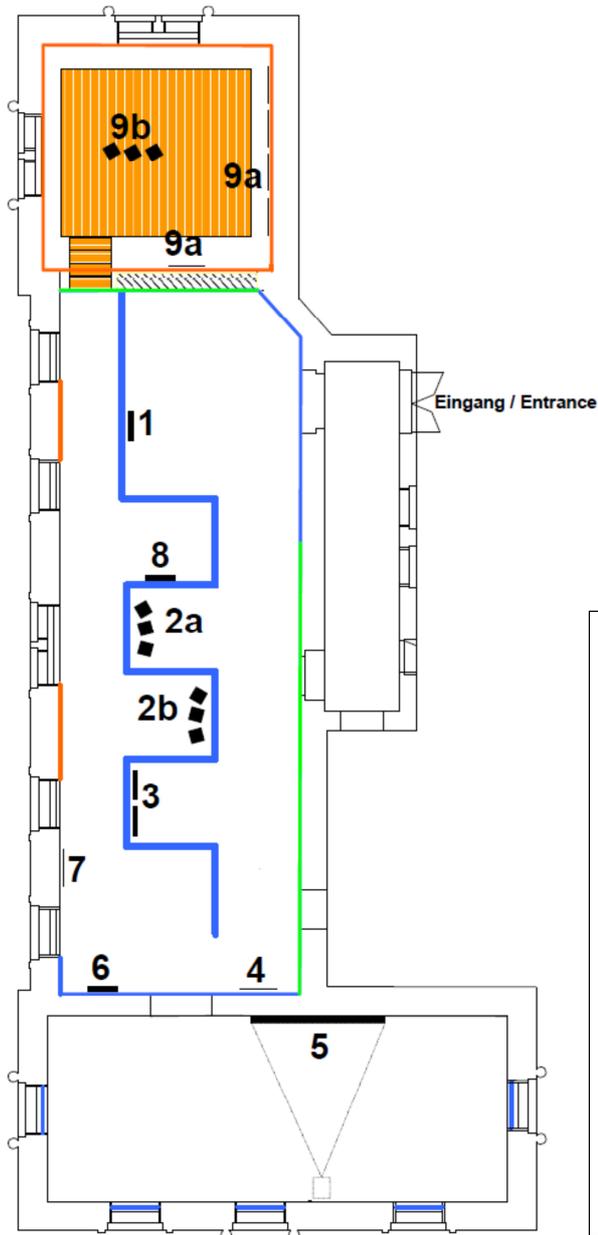
23|10|2016 – 15|01|2017

Exhibition Guide / CVs

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Sol Calero - La Sauna Caliente

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- 1 Blunt x Skensved, *La Sauna Caliente*, 2016 (1.24 min, loop)
- 2a Rubén D'Hers, *Sound observations of indoor space 1-9*, 2016
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- 4 Trevor Good, *Tropical Birds*, 2015
- 5 Sol Calero / Dafna Maimon, *Desde el Jardín*, produced with / produziert mit CONGLOMERATE 2016 (28.24 min)
- 6 Blunt x Skensved, *Azúcar! Azúcar!*, 2014 (2.40 min, loop)
- 7 Trevor Good, *Tropical Birds*, 2015
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Information on the exhibited works

Sol Calero, *La Sauna Caliente*, 2016, site-specific installation, various materials

La Sauna Caliente, a site-specific installation in the KUB Collection Showcase, an immersive recreation of a spa-like scenario in which Calero references those typical of the regional landscape of Vorarlberg as a site for sports, body and wellness culture.



Mainly originated in northern European countries and established as a Nordic tradition, but also used by indigenous populations of Central America, saunas have become a widely spread modern-day practice, integrated in the first world health and leisure practices. The proliferation of spa-like environments, and the increasingly omnipresent wellness culture and aesthetics in western societies reveals the perception of care of the self as a *right*, and not a *privilege*. It circulates as a commodity, in a system where fitness, health and inner-and-outer beauty are social markers with a direct translation of status value.

This tendency converges with the fascination for exoticism and translates into ventures such as the Tropical Islands resort, a glass dome containing an artificially created habitat of an everlasting summer world. The portrayal of exoticism in these environments is not gratuitous: it produces a sense of closeness with nature that provides a sort of legitimizing layer, an illusion of authenticity. A warm and sunny waterpark and wellness-spa, a place to relax and get distance from contemporary life stress and to indulge in an array of health and beauty treatments: a literal “bubble” that appears as a metaphoric one. Physically abstracted from the neighboring territory, the creation of an artificial ecosystem revolving around the physical care of the individual stands as a parallel to the isolation system of wealthy societies that are oblivious to the larger scale reality surrounding them. While cleansing our pores and relieving our souls, the conditions of our existence as advantaged communities rely precisely on a worldwide socio-economical imbalance, which we need to ignore in order to properly *enjoy ourselves*.

The attention to oneself as a disordered body disguises the notions of privilege to self-indulgence under the veil of the *right* to self-care. It then becomes not only a right, but an *obligation* of the contemporary subject: it intersects with the duty to pay tribute to one’s body and mind, and thus becomes a cult and a form of labor. Producing an image of this constantly updated body is essential to the contemporary demand and it becomes an institutionalized practice.

Sol Calero’s work explores the strategies of institutionalization of these practices, and how they become a commonplace where identity is simultaneously performed and produced. Her starting point and the source of her research are Latin American cultures and their

iconic forms of aesthetization. As Calero has already stated with previous projects, the spaces where this performative identity takes place are essentially spaces of socialization. The beauty salon, the dance class, the school, or even the telenovela, are scenarios that she recreates, exposing that the construction of a common paradigm is mediated by, and inseparable from, the social fabric where it is woven.

In *La Sauna Caliente* we find ourselves invited to take part in the ritual of such spaces: the robes, the slippers, the warm light, the changing rooms and the lounge chairs. They all provide the necessary *déco* to let the relaxation soak in, while watching and experiencing the following series of contributions revolving around the constructed notions of the body, self-image and daily nature:



1 Blunt x Skensved, *La Sauna Caliente*, 2016, digital animation, 1.24 min, loop

La Sauna Caliente and *Azúcar! Azúcar!*, the digital animation loops presented by the Blunt x Skensved, display a digital representation of fluids that compose letters on screen, using a glossy 3D-rendered tech advertising aesthetic. They create, in one case the title of the exhibition – made of digital fruit juice spilled on a surface resembling a kitchen counter; and a succession of words associated with tropicality on the other. These visual poems take the form of a flow against a flat background, resembling an experience of the Internet as a constant stream of information juxtaposed to a static and minimal navigable frame.

2a Rubén D’Hers, *Sound observations of indoor space 1-9*, 2016, sound archive, media guide

2b Rubén D’Hers, *Sound observations of indoor space 10*, 2016, sound archive, media guide

Sound observations of indoor space 1-10 is a small archive based on sounds found in the domestic environment. The imperceptible sounds that D’Hers takes as his material are generally undistinguishable from our notion of silence. He mimics them by means of acoustic instruments creating a sound installation, highlighting static and stationary character, and thus their physical presence in our everyday spaces in what he recreates as material objects.

3 Cristian Guardia, *Trópico*, 2011, 2-channel video, loop, 30.20 min

Trópico is a 30 minutes durational performance, where the artist is dancing to salsa music while trying to hold a level in front of his waistline without tilting it. The title refers to the notion of *center*, both as the visual line of straightness that the level indicates, and as the middle ring area around the planet. The latitude areas surrounding the equator – the tropics, correspond to the axial tilt of the earth, and comprise all the territories with the climate and ecosystems where the generalized notion of “tropical” stems from. That includes, on one hand, a clichéd array of cultural manifestations and aesthetics such as the one that Guardia reenacts with his dancing. On the other, it echoes a sense of remoteness – both as an idea of a far-off paradise and as territories socially and politically detached

from a westernized worldwide center – that is contrary to its middle place in the planet.

4 Trevor Good, *Tropical Birds*, 2015, poster

5 Sol Calero/Dafna Maimon, *Desde el Jardín*, 2016, telenovela, video, loop, 28.24 min

Desde el Jardín, a telenovela written and directed by Calero and Maimon, and produced with CONGLOMERATE, is featured for the first time in full length in the relaxation room. Highlighting the romanticizing effect and the exoticism of life that become clichés through their cinematic projection, “Desde el Jardín” examines the articulation of relationships and narratives of love, status and moral value that telenovelas enforce.



6 Blunt x Skensved, *Azúcar! Azúcar!*, 2014, digital animation with words by Sol Calero, 2.40 min, loop

La Sauna Caliente and *Azúcar! Azúcar!*, the digital animation loops presented by the Blunt x Skensved, display a digital representation of fluids that compose letters on screen, using a glossy 3D-rendered tech advertising aesthetic. They create, in one case the title of the exhibition – made of digital fruit juice spilled on a surface resembling a kitchen counter; and a succession of words associated with tropicality on the other. These visual poems take the form of a flow against a flat background, resembling an experience of the Internet as a constant stream of information juxtaposed to a static and minimal navigable frame.

7 Trevor Good, *Tropical Birds*, 2015, poster

8 Érika Ordosgoitti, *The dogs keep barking*, 2016, video, loop, 3.20 min

Using her body and her voice as a mediator for her socio-politically charged statements, Ordosgoitti performs a short text in the form of the spoken poem *The dogs keep barking*. Holding the words *Tengo/Nada* (I have/Nothing) written on opposite sides of a card that she sinks in an oil barrel, her reciting echoes impressions of violence, injustice and impotence rooted in the reality of her home country, Venezuela, surrounding her.

9a Hanne Lippard/Sol Calero, *You say banana*, 2015, posters

9b Hanne Lippard, *You say banana*, 2015, sound

You say banana is a collaboration between artist Hanne Lippard and Sol Calero that was first presented in the magazine *Kuba Paris* in 2015. It was then a series of poems by Lippard in the form of juice recipes, which inhabited the visual backgrounds created by Calero. The text, now performed and recorded by Lippard for the show, unfolds as a small collection of instructions on how to use tropical fruits in order to make culinary creations that will supposedly be beneficial to bodily and mental health, using the wordplay and concept association characteristic of Lippard's work.

Thanks to Sira Pizá Arias for her assistance during artistic research.

CVs

Sol Calero, born 1982 in Caracas/Venezuela, currently lives and works in Berlin. Recent solo exhibitions include: Laura Bartlett Gallery, London (2016); Satements, Art Basel, Laura Bartlett Gallery (2016); David Dale Gallery, Glasgow (2016); Studio Voltaire, London (2015); Sala Mendoza, Caracas (2015); SALTS, Birsfelden (2015); Laura Bartlett Gallery, London (2014); and Frutta Gallery, Rome (2013). Recent group exhibitions include: 1857, Oslo (2016); KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2015); and Mostyn, Llandudno (2015). Forthcoming solo exhibitions include, Dortmunder Kusverein (2017), Kunstpalais Erlangen (2017) and Folkestone Triennial (2017). She is co-director of the Berlin project space Kinderhook & Caracas and is represented by Laura Bartlett Gallery, London.



Blunt x Skensved is an artist duo (Grégoire Blunt and Emmy Skensved) who have been collaborating since 2013. Together, they produce exhibitions, events, and web-based curatorial projects. Their practice spans a variety of media, exploring themes of economic and bodily consumption, subculture, social ritual, and technological extensions of the body. Some of their recent projects include "GEOLOGOS" (Komplot, Brussels) "TeraTear" (Moscow Biennale for Young Art), "Swimminal Poolitics" (DIS Magazine), "Deep Skin" (SNOLab, Sudbury), and eStamina (Import Projects, Berlin).

CONGLOMERATE is a collaborative Gesamtkunstwerk presented in the form of a television network. The project is realized by a core team of five artists and filmmakers: Sol Calero, Ethan Hayes-Chute, Derek Howard, Christopher Kline and Dafna Maimon. It acts as a producer of original programs, also inviting additional Berlin-based and international artists to realize their own segments, sets, commercials and specials for the network. Mixing diverse content ranging from melodrama, documentary, comedy, interview, music, and art into a unified body, new 30-minute Blocks composed of recurring shows and one-off segments are broadcast on www.conglomerate.tv, with new *Blocks* and *Specials* released throughout the year.

Rubén D'Hers is a musician and sound artist from Caracas, Venezuela based in Berlin. His current focus on sound installations deals with the act of tuning (adjustments to the tensions of strings instruments) as a strategy to compose sound spaces. His work has been exhibited and performed at venues like ZKM in Karlsruhe (DE), Neues Museum Weimar (DE), Pure Data Convention (DE), SeaM Weimar (DE), LAB 30 Klangkunst Experimente Augsburg (DE), Heart of Noise Festival Innsbruck and Donau Festival (AT), Network Center (BE), Oficina #1 Gallery in Caracas (VE), the Empty Gallery (HK) and Klang Raum Krems (AT).

Trevor Good, born in Canada, is a photographer based in Berlin, for further information see: www.trevorgood.de

Cristian Guardia Jacinto, born in Maracay in 1982, is a Venezuelan-Spanish multimedia artist. His work reveals interests on processes of configuration and legitimation of identity. Specially focused in exoticism, he makes sarcastic

approaches to narrative potential of landscape and recreates the tense dialectics between exhibitionism and voyeurism in an anthropological dimension. He has recently shown his work at *Invisible colours. Festival Interference*. Breda (NL); *Trópicos. Oficina #1*. Caracas (VE); *Contemporáneas*. Museo de Arte Valencia (VE); *Festival Internacional de Videoarte*. Madrid (ES); or *Construcciones identitarias: cuerpo, memoria y lugar*. XVII Salón Banesco Jóvenes con FIA. Caracas (VE).

Hanne Lippard, born in 1984 in Milton Keynes, UK, lives and works in Berlin. She has performed and exhibited at Index – The Swedish Contemporary Art Foundation in Stockholm (2016), *KURATOR in Rapperswil, CH (2016); Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst in Leipzig, DE (2016); Kunstverein in Hamburg (2016); 6th Moscow Biennial, RU, Kunsthalle Wien, AT, Transmediale, Berlin, Badischer Kunstverein, Bielefelder Kunstverein, HAU Berlin, UKS Oslo, Berliner Festspiele, Marres in Maastricht and Poesia en Voz in Mexico City, MX. Hanne Lippard is the recipient of the Ars Viva Prize 2016, awarded by the Association of Arts and Culture of the Germany Economy at the Federation of German Industries.

Dafna Maimon is an artist based in Berlin, whose practice includes short film, performance, video, online TV shows, texts, and sculpture. She explores and engages with human narratives that challenge stereotypical constructions in order to question the unclear limits of identity, the self and the body. Her projects showcase the economy of affect-based ties as well as materialize through them, casting value on community and collaboration on a grassroots level. She has shown her work internationally in KW/Berlin, PS1 Moma/New York, Centre for Contemporary Arts Uzajdowski Castle/Warsaw, Lilith Performance Studio/Malmö, Kunstverein Braunschweig, Based in Berlin, Moscow Museum of Modern Art, W13/Amsterdam, 1646/The Hague, Project Native Informant/London and Le Magasin/Grenoble among others.

Erika Ordosgoitti lives and works between Caracas and Bogotá. She has a degree in Fine Arts Mixed Media Mention from Armando Reveron Higher Education School of Fine Arts (IUESAPAR) in Caracas. She has been granted several awards including: Young Artist Award, MISOL Foundation for the Arts, Bogota (2014); First Honorable Mention, SuperCable Salón de Jóvenes con FIA, Caracas (2011). Her work has been exhibited at Museum of Contemporary Art Caracas, Museum of Contemporary Art of Bogotá, and in many private galleries. She is co-producer and co-curator of the International Biennial of Performance Art of Caracas.

