

Tris Vonna-Michell

SEPTEMBER 15 – OCTOBER 22, 201

Presenting a range of installation-narratives for his first exhibition at Metro Pictures, Tris Vonna-Michell exhibits a new sound edit combining hahn/huhn (2003-ongoing) and Leipzig Calendar Works (2005-ongoing), which recalls the peaceful 1989 demonstration of East German citizens at the Ministry for State Security, or Stasi, district headquarters in Leipzig. Merging this with descriptions of a feverish initiative to destroy incriminating documents before citizens stormed the agency's Berlin headquarters, Vonna-Michell's chronicle becomes a patchwork account of the months leading up to German reunification. Here, signals and pulses, repetition and overlay are edited in the recording to correspond to the slide sequences he displays on anachronistic projectors. As Vonna-Michell seems to earnestly meander through his monologue he alludes to the crafted structure of the very story he is telling, and suddenly the credibility of the words he speaks and the images he presents are cast into fiction.

Vonna-Michell develops his narratives over extended periods of time, altering and adding to them to make each of their iterations unique. Listening to his studio recordings, aural performance documentation, or abstract speech compositions, which he refers to as "audio poems," one is spellbound by the dizzying stream of his words. Vonna-Michell's installations beguile his audience with ostensive objects and projected images as his monologues reconstitute their respective histories and significance. It is the rapid-fire of his words however—whether heard on overhead speakers, headphones or in a small live audience—and methodical combination of fact with fiction that serves to disrupt his listeners' otherwise stable sense of time and space and enmesh them in an adaptation that suspends doubt and distance.

Vonna-Michell's 2009 Jeu de Paume exhibition "Finding Chopin: Endnotes 2005-2009," is the result of the artist's ever-evolving research into the iconoclastic French concrete poet, independent publisher, graphic artist, and, for a time during Vonna-Michell's youth, neighbor, Henri Chopin. After several attempts to meet Chopin and one brief encounter before his death in 2008, Vonna-Michell set out for Paris to unearth the obscure poet's work. The resultant exhibition presented an assortment of ephemera collected during Vonna-Michell's time in the French capital, which in the context of the show, were read as artifacts as dubiously related to Chopin's life and work as they were genuine. A version of the installation-narrative Finding Chopin (2005-2009) is exhibited at Metro Pictures.

A new catalogue published in September by JRP|Ringier, in collaboration with Kunsthalle Zürich, GAMeC - Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Bergamo, Halle für Kunst Lüneburg eV, and Fondazione Galleria Civica - Centro di Ricerca sulla Contemporaneità di Trento, is available for purchase at the gallery.

Tris Vonna-Michell was born in 1982 in Southend-on-Sea, United Kingdom. His one-person exhibitions include: "Finding Chopin: Endnotes 2005-2009," Jeu de Paume, Paris; "Studio A: Monumental Detours / Insignificant Fixtures," Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Bergamo, Italy; "Auto-Tracking-Auto-Tracking," Kunsthalle Zürich; and "Tris Vonna-Michell," Witte de With, Rotterdam. His work has been exhibited in group-shows at institutions and biennials that include: X-Initiative, New York; the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London; 5th Berlin Biennale, Kunst-Werke, Berlin; Performa 07, New York; and Manifesta 08, Cartagena and Murcia, Spain