

LUKE FOWLER

*N'Importe Quoi (for Brunhild) and other works by
Luke Fowler with Brunhild Ferrari and Cerith Wyn Evans*

June 1 – August 19, 2023

***Kunst ist Magie, befreit von der Lüge, Wahrheit zu sein
(Art is magic delivered from the lie of being truth)***
Adorno, Minima Moralia (1951)

Galerie Gisela Capitain is pleased to announce the third solo exhibition of Scottish artist, filmmaker and musician Luke Fowler. Fowler has been critically celebrated for over two decades for breaking down the boundaries between the interrelated, yet distinct, spheres of video art, documentary and experimental film. Fowler's artistic practice explores the intersections of these histories, often focussing „expressively“ on how image, sound and meanings are constructed.

Fowler's previous films are characterized by a fragmented, non-linear and polyvalent approach to “documentary“ and “portraiture“ often incorporating ruptures between sound and image or refusing an objective or totalizing view of his subjects. Through his films Fowler aims to shed light on marginalized or misrecognized subjects. Within this filmic-space he also considers the vital role that the apparatus plays in encoding normative modes of representation.

His previous films have dealt with a breadth of subjects from radical psychiatrists to Marxist historians, hi-energy disco pioneers to experimental composers, often considering the wider relationship between art, music and society. As an artist, Luke Fowler has been widely influential in the field of artists' film, his cinematic collages being recognized as meditating on film itself as a complex, multi-layered medium.

For this exhibition Luke Fowler has created two new 16mm films and shows a newly conceived sound sculpture (the first of its kind for the artist). The sculpture could be considered one of the fruits of a long-standing dialogue with the Welsh artist Cerith Wyn Evans, who Fowler was mentored by from 2008-9 and has been in correspondence with ever since (Evans first appeared in Fowler's work when he played the part of narrator in his film *The Poor Stockinger, the Luddite Cropper and the deluded followers of Joanna Southgait*, 2012).

The film *N'Importe Quoi (for Brunhild)* in many ways stands in the tradition of Fowler's impressionist portraits of persons who have made an impact on his personal and artistic life. Quite often, the person being portrayed remains unseen, with Fowler concentrating instead on their voice and traces of their presence in the form of personal ephemera or the atmosphere of their room. Yet, in this new film, the performativity of his subject - Brunhild Meyer-Ferrari is self-evident. Composer Brunhild Ferrari, born 1937 in Frankfurt a.M., Germany moved to Paris in 1959 where she would meet and marry the composer Luc Ferrari. Brunhild Meyer, who produced a number of works of radio art in the 70's and 80's for SWF, slowly began to emerge as a composer in the last decade (adopting her husband's surname) only after his death. Luc Ferrari, was a pioneer of 'Musique concrete' and a founding member of *Groupe de recherches musicales* (GRM) with Pierre Schaeffer in Paris. Fowler's film provides peripheral glimpses into their collaborative life and work but resists a traditional biographic narrative.

COP26FILM was shot in Fowler's home city of Glasgow during the period that the 26th UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) took place there in from October 31 – November 12, 2021. Denied entry to the main “blue zone“ the artist instead made daily walks around the periphery of the site recording the temporary infrastructure of the conference, security systems, police cordons and the omnipresence of Police helicopters. These combine to form a subjective image of state-power at a highly monitored and politically expedient event.

Fowler offsets these displays of power with a patchwork of alternative interventions that took place; mass protests, temporary squats, and the significance the Minga Indígena, a collective of over 100 indigenous leaders who travelled to Glasgow to claim representation and space in the decision making process around issues of the climate crisis and potential solutions. **COP26FILM** features a soundtrack composed from recordings made on location and also synthesized sound by Richard McMaster and Luke Fowler.

Featured in the main space of the gallery is Luke Fowler's sound sculpture *Print-through (for Cerith)*. The work has many antecedents in minimalist sculpture and 20th century experimental music. One of these references is Harry Partch, a queer, American composer who invented his own orchestra of instruments which were all constructed around specific micro-tonal scales. One of these instruments "The cloud chamber bowls"; which were notoriously "difficult-to-find and impossible-to-tune", was made from sections of Pyrex carboys, suspended from a wooden frame on ropes. The original bowls were found at the Radiation Laboratory of the University of California, Berkeley, and had been used as cloud-chambers to trace the paths of sub-atomic particles. Similar to Partch, Fowler is deeply involved in working with new musical instruments which create unusual pitches or sonorities. In Fowler's work the gongs, instead of being struck are resonated by means of transducers and fixed "memorized sound".

In the same room as *Print-through (for Cerith)* directly engages with 3 sound sculptures *Speaker A, Speaker B* and *Speaker C* (2023) by Cerith Wyn Evans. Evans, who is particularly known for his work with light and language, incorporates a diverse range of media including installation, sculpture, photography and film. He frequently uses poetic and philosophical texts and sound for his artworks.

The distinct sculptures by both artists meet in a 7-channel sound installation composed by Luke Fowler; periodically activating the individual speakers in the space. The composition consists of acoustic sequences from Fowler's films *N'Importe Quoi (for Brunhild)* and *COP26FILM*, various recordings by Brunhild Ferrari and Cerith Wyn Evans. Together they create an ambiguous soundscape of noise, sound, speech and music; weaving multiple temporalities into an autonomous whole. Adding to this conversation between the artists, two light sculptures *Phare de la...* and *Come (0)* by Evans are installed in close proximity to Fowler's films.

Luke Fowler (b. 1978 in Glasgow) had recent solo exhibitions including VOID, Derry (2022), Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid (2021), Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas (2018), University of Chicago (2016), Whitechapel Gallery, London (2015), Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, Plymouth Arts Centre (both 2013), among others. He was awarded the inaugural Jarman Award for artist filmmaking in 2007 and was nominated for the 2012 Turner Prize (Tate Britain, London).

His films have been presented widely, with recent screenings including Museum of Modern Art, New York, Centre Pompidou, Paris, Berlin Berlinale (all 2023), 57th Mostra Internazionale del Nuovo Cinema, Pesaro, Reina Sofia, Madrid, Museum of Modern Art, New York, Centre Pompidou, Paris (all 2021), International Film Festival Rotterdam (2020), Sonic Acts Festival, Amsterdam, 57th New York Film Festival, New York (both 2019), among many others.

Cerith Wyn Evans (b. 1958 in Wales) has exhibited extensively including solo exhibitions at Aspen Art Museum (2021), Pirelli HangarBicocca (2019), Museo Tamayo, Mexico City (2018); Duveen Galleries Tate Britain, London (2017); Museion, Bolzano, Italy (2015); The Serpentine Gallery, London (2014); TBA-21 Augarten, Vienna (2013); Bergen Kunsthall, Norway (2011); Tramway, Glasgow (2009); Inverleith House, Edinburgh (2009); Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León, Spain (2008); Musée d'art moderne de la ville de Paris (2006); and Kunsthaus Graz, Austria (2005). He has participated in the 57th Venice Biennale (2017); 4th Moscow Biennale (2011); 12th Venice Biennale of Architecture (2010); 1st Aichi Triennale, Japan (2010); 3rd Yokohama Triennale, Japan (2008); 9th Istanbul Biennial (2005); and 50th Venice Biennale (2003). In 2018 Evans won the Hepworth Wakefield Prize for Sculpture with his monumental work 'Composition for 37 Flutes', 2018.

Brunhild Ferrari (b. 1937 Frankfurt a.M., Germany) has made music compositions including *Stürmische Ruhe* (with Christoph Heemann) (2011-2014), *Extérieur jour* (2014), *Brunes du réveil* (2009), *Tranquilles impatiences* (2010), *Dérivatif* (2008), *Le piano englouti* (2012). She conceived radio plays such as *Die zerborstene Insel* (1997), *Sentimentale Erzählungen* (with Luc Ferrari) (1990-1994), *N'importe quoi* (1985), *Hommages Irrespectueux* (1984), *Ein Ohrenblick* (1988) which were aired at France Culture, KPFA-FM Berkeley, California - WDR (Cologne Radio), SWF, BR (Radio Munich) and Deutschlandradio Kultur Berlin amongst others. In 2005 Ferrari founded "Association Presque Rien - Friends of Luc Ferrari" and initiated the biennial competition "PRESQUE RIEN" by providing artists with original sound material from Luc Ferrari's archives and edited a book about his writings by Presses du Réel, France.

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