

Marcelle Joseph Projects

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Press Release

Photography's New "It" Girls: 2011

Güler Ates / Chloë Østmo / Sunju Lee/ Yu Xiao / Tereza Vlčková

10th May – 21st May 2011 (Private View: Tuesday, 10th May, 6 - 8.30pm) at Pop-Up Gallery, Blackall Studios, 73 Leonard Street, Shoreditch, London EC2A 4QS

Following the success of its inaugural exhibition in March, *Fast & Steady*, Marcelle Joseph Projects is delighted to introduce its next exciting exhibition of contemporary art, *Photography's New "It" Girls: 2011*. The show will present five young, emerging international female photographers, Güler Ates of Turkey, Sunju Lee of South Korea, Chloë Østmo of the UK, Tereza Vlčková of the Czech Republic and Yu Xiao of China, all exhibiting alongside each other for the first time. This exhibition will explore the contrasting ways each of these women use photography to convey their own personal messages.

Güler Ates, an artist who was born in Eastern Turkey, graduated from the Royal College of Art in 2008 and is currently a senior printmaking fellow at the Royal Academy Schools. Güler was the first artist-in-residence at Leighton House Museum after its refurbishment in 2010. She is currently working on a large public commission in St James's Square in London. Her striking works are intrinsically interlaced with her heritage and her experience as a Turkish woman in the 21st century. Güler's work is essentially an exploration into the experiences of displacement, which she describes as 'bewildering.'

"I engage with the potential of pattern and motif within Islamic art, which is often integrated in lavish architectural spaces, where it fulfils the functions both of concealment and exposure, thereby alluding to the theatrical. My work begins with film and photography, yet with a subsequent layering of imagery – resulting in a disruptive blur of cultural perceptions. The idea of 'the veil', which sits at the core of my art practice, is thus compounded. Manifestations of my work are realized through performance and site-responsive activities that merge Eastern and Western sensibilities."

Chloë Østmo is an English artist who graduated from The Slade School of Fine Art in 2010 and was part of the 2010 Bloomberg New Contemporaries show at the Institute of Contemporary Art, London. Chloë's work is concerned with the negotiation between a three-dimensional original event or object and its two-dimensional copy, focusing on the transformations that occur, which impact upon our perception and understanding of space. Chloë works predominantly with photography and video; she is interested in the spatial possibilities and generative potential of the photographic print as a complex 'material' that has the ability to confront the viewer as an object in the present as much as an image of some past event.

Chloë describes her Buildings' series, which is being exhibited.

"The 'Buildings' series continues my ongoing interest in the confluence of the two-dimensional and three-dimensional in photographic representation. Focusing on architectural photographs as source material, I photocopy images from books and, using the innate properties of the photocopy paper (bending, folding, creasing etc), I reshape the apparent structure of the depicted buildings."

Sunju Lee is an artist from South Korea who graduated from the Royal College of Art in 2010 and is now living and working in London. She recently exhibited her work at the SOMA Museum in Seoul, Korea. Sunju's work tackles the way in which one interprets a space through living in it. A space is given an identity through the connections it has with individuals and their surroundings, becoming a place through it being experienced and memorised. The place is a particular space covered with various actualities induced by certain people. In order for the artist to read a place, she repeatedly photographs a space over several hours or days, catching distorted and stretched shadows. The photographs are then used to reconstruct the physical place using abstract shadows.

"I gather all the shadows, as found, before stacking them up and eventually creating a scene, which will convey all the happenings of the place within a certain period of time. Through this process, the observer can imagine the movements of people who were in the place and situations that occurred there."

Sunju visualises her interest by using a shadow as a metaphor of experience and reality, the shadow within a given place representing the situation of a moment. Sunju amalgamates these photographs of a certain place, be it a street in London, Paris or Edinburgh, and prints them on framed monofilament on both the front and back of the artwork, transforming the work into an ethereal art "object" or installation.

Tereza Vlčková is a Czech artist who has studied photography across the Czech Republic over the past decade. Tereza was a runner-up in the Lacoste Elysée Prize in 2010 and is one of the featured artists in the book, *reGeneration2 : tomorrow's photographers today* (W. Ewing & N. Herschdorfer, 2010, Musée de l'Elysée, Lausanne), which has also included a worldwide touring exhibition in 2010 and 2011. Andre De Carlo's opening of his book entitled *Leielui* (2010) is very befitting when using it to describe Tereza's photography.

"The most exciting thing about flying without wings is its absolute simplicity: you just need to move your arms and legs as if you are swimming, except you move through the air. It's easy and doesn't require any physical or mental effort, just a certain level of focus. You just have to be convinced you can do it, and you do. For example, she is now gradually rising over the densely vegetated hillsides. She isn't interested in great heights: the enjoyable thing is fluttering low over the landscape in order to appreciate fully all its details."

The fragile girls in Tereza's work are weightless, dreamily levitating above the peaks of the Beskyd Mountains in the Czech Republic. They are gravity defiant, leaping skywards in an attempt to escape from the mundane weight of the real world, to know the unknowable and overcome limited possibilities. Vlčková herself describes these beautiful, weightless, dream-like works as follows:

“All these girls gazing intently above them are located in the open landscape on high mountains, cliffs and hilltops. Are they there in order to attain a deeper spiritual experience? Are they trying to get just a little higher with their leaps, with which they submit to the magic of nature? Do they hope to be closer to heaven? No-one can know whether they will really lift off the ground or whether they will fall back to earth...”

Yu Xiao who lives and works in Beijing, recently won first prize in the China Academy Awards at China Central Academy of Fine Arts, where she graduated in 2009. In 2010, Yu exhibited at CAFA Museum in Beijing, China, as well as the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen, Denmark. Within Yu Xiao’s work, there are nostalgia-provoking images of a childhood full of dreams. Confronted by the gap between the fretless childhood life and the pressure of grown-up society, the artist cries, “I don’t want to grow up.” Yu’s “*Never Grow Up*” series is the story about her growth into adulthood and the realisation that the world is not as wonderful as her childhood allowed her to imagine. In reaction to the grown-up world around her, Yu uses her work to create a fantasy world to escape the stresses of society. Although aspects and images of her childhood appear within her work, such as dolls, teddy bears, her little red bike and the path she went to school on, they only go so far as to highlight the distance she is from her childhood and the harsh realities of the world around her.

Note to Editors

Founded in 2011, Marcelle Joseph Projects is a roving contemporary art projects company devoted to promoting contemporary art in different venues or found spaces across the United Kingdom. The core activity of this commercial venture is to showcase contemporary work of emerging to mid-career international artists who work in a variety of media. Marcelle Joseph Projects will mount four exhibitions in 2011. For more information, go to www.marcellejoseph.com.

Visitor Information

Gallery opening hours: Tuesday-Friday 11am-6pm; Saturday 11am-4pm; or by appointment

Directions

From Old Street Tube station, take exit 4 to City Road south and walk south on City Road toward the City for 2 minutes. Turn left at Pret-a-Manger on Leonard Street. Walk down Leonard Street past Leonard Circus until you reach 73 Leonard Street.