

**LE SILENCE Une fiction**

2<sup>nd</sup> February – 3rd April 2012

Nouveau Musée National de Monaco - Villa Paloma

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**Curator : Simone Menegoi**

**Co-curator : Cristiano Raimondi, Nouveau Musée National de Monaco**

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- **Press release**

The Nouveau Musée National de Monaco presents its latest exhibition, *LE SILENCE Une fiction* which will be held at Villa Paloma, NMNM. The work of 25 artists will invite the visitor, via a fictional approach, to reconsider the trace that our civilisation will leave behind. The curator, Simone Menegoi, states that this exhibition offers a “fantastic account, a form of narrative décor which tells the story of a planet that has become uninhabitable for reasons unknown...”

From 2nd February until 3rd April 2012, *LE SILENCE Une fiction* will gather a corpus of contemporary works, ranging from Arman’s Accumulations to Hiroshi Sugimoto’s photographs, which present the visitor with a world that is both strange and familiar. The effect is one of a reversal of history; as if the works displayed, artefacts of our contemporary era, were being observed through the eyes of an archaeologist or anthropologist from the future.

Part scientific experiment, part fictional narrative, the exhibition invites the visitor to use his imagination and depict a story. A substantial part of the exhibition consists of photographs and videos set against each other within the traditional landscape genre, yet seen from a particular perspective: the aesthetics of the contemporary Sublime, drawing on the spectacle of environmental disasters and economic collapse. Another prominent group of works is comprised of sculptures and assemblages from artists, active since the 1960’s, who use every day and waste material to create. Work by American artist Michael E. Smith, whose sculptures are made from waste collected in his home town, the urban desert of Detroit, completes the exhibition as ‘fossils’ of our consumer society.

With this exhibition, the NMNM continues its tradition of supporting exploratory missions, a project heartily endorsed by the Principality. The Nouveau Musée National de Monaco thereby supported Adrien Missika’s expedition across the Karakum desert to Darvaza, in Turkmenistan. A work entitled *Darvaza*, created especially for this exhibition, is projected into the narrative journey. In the same vein, the museum also enabled the curators Simone Menegoi and Cristiano Raimondi, along with art critic Chris Sharp, to explore the American town of Detroit. During this trip they met the artist Michael E. Smith and found inspiration for this exhibition.

*LE SILENCE Une fiction* at the Nouveau Musée National de Monaco is curated by Simone Menegoi and co-curated by Cristiano Raimondi (NMNM). A short story by Chris Sharp, accompanies the fictional drive of the exhibition.

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The exhibition will be accompanied by a publication of around 250 pages from the NMNM, edited by Mack Books and distributed worldwide available in late February. This bilingual publication will include critical texts (one of them written by Marc Augé) and Chris Sharp's novella.

At the private viewing, there will be a performance by the Italian artist Linda Fregni Nagler, *Things that Death Cannot Destroy* (Part 5- The Silence), 2012.

This exhibition is supported by the Government of Monaco, the Association des Amis du NMNM and UBS AG.

List of artistes (alphabetical order): **Dove Allouche, Vladimir Arkhipov, Arman, Bartolomeo Bimbi, Maurice Blaussyld, Michel Blazy, Karl Blossfeldt, Brassai, Peter Buggenhout, Carlos Casas, Romeo Castellucci, Lourdes Castro, Tony Cragg, Daniel Gustav Cramer, Geert Goiris, Jochen Lempert, Yves Marchand & Romain Meffre, Adrien Missika, Linda Fregni Nagler, Walter Pichler, Rudolf Polanszky, Pierre Savatier, Erin Shirreff, Michael E. Smith, Daniel Spoerri, Hiroshi Sugimoto.**

- Context

### Training for a Museum

Since 2009, the Nouveau Musée National de Monaco has been embarking on a new collective mission, entitled “Training for a Museum” an initiative by the museum’s director, **Marie-Claude Beaud**. This programme guides the museographic and heritage projects that are being developed at Villa Sauber and Villa Paloma simultaneously. This collective work focuses on enabling residents and the public to understand what a National Museum is, and how it fits in with contemporaneity. This programme/mission has included discussions with historians, restorers, designers, lighting engineers and meetings with artists aimed at renewing our outlook on the concept of heritage and the way it is transmitted to the public. With a strong focus on involving the public, the project “Training for a Museum” at the NMNM seeks to reveal a long-ignored heritage and develop the discovery of the contemporary scene.

The Nouveau Musée National de Monaco’s programming and acquisitions policy are presided over by the museum’s director, **Marie-Claude Beaud**, in terms of two main themes: Art and Performance and Art and Territory.

### Curators’ Biographies

Born in 1970, **Simone Menegoi** is an art critic and museum curator. He writes for Kaleidoscope magazine and artforum.com. He has been an independent curator since 2005. In 2008, he was curator at the artistic centre La Galerie (Noisy-Le-Sec, Paris). Notable recent and forthcoming projects include Scavi at the Cultural Centre, Français de Milan in 2010, and Bouvard and Pécuchet’s Compendious Quest for Beauty at the David Roberts Art Foundation in London, which he will co-curate with Chris Sharp in April 2012.

Born in 1978, **Cristiano Raimondi** is the Head of Development at the Nouveau Musée National de Monaco. Since the opening of Villa Paloma in 2010, he has co-curated the exhibitions *La Carte d’après Nature* with Thomas Demand and *Oceanomania* with Mark Dion. He is also responsible for the creation of the Friends of the NMNM Association grant which enables artists and curators to carry out “exploration” expeditions, such as the one conducted for the exhibition *LE SILENCE Une fiction*.

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**Contributor**

**Chris Sharp** is a writer and independent curator based in Paris. He is editor-at-large of Kaleidoscope magazine, and his writing has appeared in many magazines and institutional catalogues, such as for the Moderna Museet, Malmö, Kunsthalle Bern. Recent exhibitions and projects include, 'Antic Measures' Galerija Gregor Podnar, 2011; 'Under Destruction', co-curated with Gianni Jetzer, at The Swiss Institute New York, September 2010 and a solo survey of the work of Alexander Gutke at MOCAD, Detroit, 2009

- **Linda Fregni Nagler's performance**

**Linda Fregni Nagler *Things that Death Cannot Destroy***

Linda Fregni Nagler is planning a performance on the opening day of the exhibition, SILENCE. Une Fiction.

The performance consists of a double projection of old magic lantern glass slides.

The photographic material shown during the projection is original and has been collected by the artist over the years. The series, entitled, *Things that Death cannot Destroy* presents a series of image sequences (part 1, part 2...) a continuous stream of visual associations which changes each time it is performed.

While two projectionists, placed at the sides of the devices, alternate the images letting them slide into the projectors, a female voice reads the original captions in the language they were written (predominantly English). The photographs shot between 1870 and 1920 have different geographical origins and have been conceived for different purposes: didactic, familiar and documentary.

Uniting image and text, the different moments of the projection suggest various interpretative keys: an anthropological reading, an historical documentary report, and a surreal, fictitious and sometimes even comical tale. Every photograph, though belonging to different contexts, is inspired by the former one, the visual path thus developing into a sort of *cadavre exquis*.

The image sequence raises issues about staging the human figure, social categorisation, censorship and copyright.

In this personal and ambiguous archive, what is legible is not History, but a subsequent glance on many pieces of a mosaic that may be combined with infinite variations.

- **Brief chronology of Nouveau Musée National de Monaco**

**1873** : First National collection

**1935** : **Opening of the Beaux-Arts National Museum, Villa Sainte Cécile**

The catalogue compiled in 1936 by Louis Honoré Labande listed 250 lots. The art works reunited at the museum were split into 4 sections and included sculptures, ceramic arts, paintings, water colour and engravings linked to Monaco and its surrounding area ; Ancient paintings from the 20th century and works by contemporary artists (thanks to a donation by Charles Wakefield-Mori, who was a collector and museum curator)

**1958** : **Beaux-Arts Museum closes**

**1972** : **Opening of the Villa Sauber**

Showing a unique collection of dolls and automatons belonging to Madeleine de Galéa (result of a donation made by Christian de Galéa in 1962.)

**1972** : **Creation of the public Musée National de Monaco**

- The National collections are built up and acquisitions are made for a possibly future re-opening of the Beaux Arts national museum.

**1995** : **The state purchases the Villa Paloma**

**2002** : -30 000 pieces selected for the museum from a historical costume collection and the Société des Bains de Mer.

- Permanent loan of 4000 costumes and 2500 accessories established between the Bains de Mer and the state.

**2003** : Jean-Michel Bouhours nominated Director and project manager for the transformation of the Nouveau Musée National de Monaco, NMNM (2003-2008)

**April 2009** : **Marie-Claude Beaud nominated as director du NMNM**

**September 2010** : **Opening of the Musée National de Monaco**

One museum made up of two villas: the Villa Sauber for performing arts and decorative arts and the Villa Paloma covering art and cultural heritage.

- **Museum Programme and Forthcoming Exhibitions**

## VILLA PALOMA

### **September 2010- February 2011:**

*La Carte d'après Nature*, a Thomas Demand project, co-curator: Cristiano Raimondi (NMNM)

### **April 2011-September 2011:**

*Oceanomania, Souvenirs of mysterious seas, from the expedition to the Aquarium*. A Mark Dion project, co-curator: Cristiano Raimondi (NMNM)

### **October 2011-January 2012:**

*La table des Matières*, a project by Jonathan Olivares  
Projection of the work of Javier Téllez, *Letter on the blind, For those of us who see*, 2007 (Coll NMNM)

*Du Rocher à Monte Carlo, First Original photographs of the Principality of Monaco, 1860-1880*, curator: Nathalie Rosticher Giordano (NMNM)

*Caroline de Monaco, portraits by Karl Lagerfeld, Helmut Newton, Francesco Vezzoli, Andy Warhol and Robert Wilson*.

### **February- April 2012**

*LE SILENCE Une fiction*, curator: Simone Menegoi, associate curator : Cristiano Raimondi (NMNM)

### **Mid-April- June 2012**

*Groupe SIGNE*

### **July-November 2012**

*Thomas Schütte, One Man Houses*, in collaboration with the Castello di Rivoli, Curators: Andrea Bellini and Dieter Schwarz

**VILLA SAUBER**

**June 2010-April 2011**

*Looking up... Yinka Shonibare MBE*, curator: Nathalie Rosticher Giordano (NMNM)

**June 2011-January 2012:**

*Looking up... on aura tout vu presents the de Galéa collection*, curator : Lydia Kamitsis

**April-May 2012**

*Princess Grace : More than an image* (Title TBC)

An exhibition by the students of Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design for the “Pringle of Scotland Archive Project”

**July-October 2012**

The NMNM collection: works from Kees Van Dongen (RDC) and films (1<sup>st</sup> floor)

- **History of the Villa Paloma**

**by Béatrice Blanchy, Art and Tradition curator for the NMNM.**

Based on information that has thus far come to light, it was an American, Edward N. Dickerson, who, in 1913, pooled six plots of land belonging to different proprietors in order to build a villa and create a garden in the Révoires neighbourhood, on the Boulevard de l'Observatoire. It is thought that a pavilion already stood on the main plot, which was sold by Mr. Eugène Roganne, a sculptor and ornament-maker.

The villa, called the "Villa Coquette" by Mr. Dickerson, was a four-storey building. Some maintain that the architect was the famous Sébastien Marcel Biasini, but because he passed away in 1913, this seems most unlikely.

After being sold a first time in 1920, the Villa was then purchased in 1925 by Robert W. Hudson, an Englishman, whose father had founded a liquid soap factory in England. When he retired, Robert Hudson was comfortably-off, and in 1925 he bought the Villa which, after his marriage in 1932 to Béatrice Sabina Gaudengio, would become the "Villa Paloma". It is said that Béatrice Gaudengio owned a house already called the "Villa Paloma" at Cap d'Ail, and that she wished to keep that same name for the Villa in Monaco.

Mr. Robert W. Hudson was well-known in Monaco for his great generosity. In 1937 he created the Foundation which bore his name, whose purpose was to promote the learning of English in the Principality.

The Villa was greatly damaged during the Second World War, and thus in a sorry state when, on Mrs. Hudson's death in 1950, Mr. Joseph Fissore bought the house. After their marriage, the Fissores oversaw major restoration work, installed a swimming pool, and restored the long-neglected garden to its former glory.

In 1993, a Monegasque Company purchased the Villa from the Fissore family. Two years later, it was sold to the State of Monaco. In 2008 it was decided that it should be given over to the Nouveau Musée National de Monaco.

The Villa Paloma is one of the finest patrician residences in the Principality. We may not know the precise date of its construction, but we do know that the upkeep of the Villa's garden was entrusted to Octave Godard, the most gifted student of famous landscape artist Edouard André [1840- 1911]. Godard created one of the "antique-style" gardens which had become his specialty.

The stained-glass windows in the large entrance hall were made by the Master Glazier Fassi Cadet, of Nice.

- **Marie-Claude Beaud, director of the NMNM since 2009**

**1969:** Marie-Claude Beaud taught at the Université de Grenoble.  
Deputy Curator at the Musée de Grenoble, working alongside Maurice Besset.

**1976:** Director of the Musée de Grenoble. Here, Marie-Claude Beaud developed an Education department for schools and colleges, with Thierry Raspail.

**1984:** Director of the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, where she set up artist residencies, presented an astute programme of performing arts and organised important themed exhibitions such as the 1990 exhibition presenting the links between Andy Warhol and Velvet Underground. In the late 80s, Marie-Claude Beaud began working with the French architect Jean Nouvel to create new premises for the Foundation, in Paris itself. The now emblematic building opened in 1994.

**1994:** Managing Director of the American Center in Paris, Frank Gehry's first construction in France. At this time, Marie-Claude Beaud was instrumental in the development of the techno music scene in Paris, by co-producing Global Tekno, the electronic music festival, with RADIOFG.

**1996-1999 :** Chief Curator at the musées de l'Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs.

**January 2000:** Marie-Claude Beaud was asked by the Fondation Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean to head up the creation of the Mudam in Luxembourg. Here, she created an advisory committee for acquisitions, multiplied partnerships with national and international institutions, and she initiated, with artists, a programme of commissions open to all fields of creativity. This programme, called 'Be The Artists' Guest', rapidly became the leading principle for the museum: as a lively meeting place/ forum, conceived from top to bottom by artists.

**2001 & 2003:** Luxemburg commissioner at the Venice Biennale. Under Marie-Claude Beaud's commission in 2003, Luxemburg artist Su-Mei Tse won the Golden Lion. This was the first time that the prize was awarded to a pavilion outside of the Giardini.

**In April 2009:** Director of Nouveau Musée National de Monaco.

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**Distinctions :**

Chevalier des Arts et Lettres [awarded by the French Ministry for Culture].

Officier de l'ordre de mérite civil et militaire d'Adolphe de Nassau [awarded by the Grand-Duke Jean of Luxembourg, 2008]

Commandeur de l'ordre grand-ducal de la couronne de chêne [awarded by Ministry of Culture, Luxembourg].