

P A R I S

P1 IRMAVEP CLUB
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irmavepclub.com



lective of artists and curators that operates as a kind of itinerant and familial artist-run space.

Originally formed in 2003 in Châtillon-sur-Marne, Irmavep Club inaugurated its first of cycle of exhibitions, titled “Livret” (“booklet”) in Paris at galerie schleicher+lange this past January. Prefaced by the phrase, “I would prefer not to” – the mantra of Herman Melville’s passively resistant character Bartleby – “Livret I” revolved around the idea of avoidance and absence. Jordan Wolfson’s invasive installation, “The light switch 27th floor (1931-2007)” – an authentic light switch from the Empire State Building that invited viewers to turn the lights of the exhibition space on or off at any given moment – provided the backdrop for enigmatic works by emerging artists Maurice Blaussyld, Daniel Gustav Cramer, Thomas Dupouy, Maria Loboda, Thomas Merret and Michael Pfisterer. “Livret II”, hosted this last February at Art:Concept (Irmavep member Ulla Von Brandenburg’s Parisian gallery), played with a similar scenario of thwarted meaning, presenting Maurice Blaussyld and Michael Pfisterer for a second time, along with Jonathan Binet and Nate Harrison. With Marshall McLuhan’s “the medium is the message” as its epigraph, “Livret II” brought together works that investigated form as a primary signifier. Nate Harrison’s video “Aura Dies Hard (Or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Copy)” is like a conglomerate of appropriated video work by other artists, animated by a confessional voiceover that painstakingly recounts the history, criticism, and problems of the medium – a self-conscious video aware of its own failure. Michael Pfisterer’s photographic work “The Fall of the Bodies Near the Earth” presents physical representations of abstract mathematical equations – useless forms of emptied meaning.

Both exhibitions left a sense of longing, even melancholy – perhaps in homage to the original Irma Vep, the iconic vamp persona played by silent film actress Musidora in the 1915 “Les Vampires” serials. Taken from antique encyclopedias of curios and mysterious objects, the images of ambiguous, gothic-esque animals that accompany the Livrets’ printed material add a dark, romantic mood to the shows.

Each exhibition also reflected the Club’s intimate engagement with the selected artists, feeling more like interconnected presentations of single works to which viewers are given subtle clues rather than a curated group show. According to one member, “We could make a solo show of each of the presented artists – it’s not about one work, but the entire panorama of the individual artist’s practice”.

While Irmavep is still awaiting an invitation from non-



Thomas Merret, *Objet trouvé dans le coffre de ma voiture*, 2010
Courtesy: the artist

While economic cutbacks and slow-moving bureaucracy are perhaps not the best of conditions for experimental curatorial approaches, Paris stands resilient and responsive with a small but effective network of independent art spaces and initiatives. Non-profit spaces like castillo/corrales and Bétonsalon, as well as centers like La Maison Populaire, are indeed important to the Parisian scene. Newcomer Irmavep Club offers a slightly different and rather dynamic format as a col-

commercial institutions, their next “Livret” is tentatively planned for gb agency’s first-floor space, which the gallery recently announced will be exclusively dedicated to curated projects and research. In September, Irmavep Club will be hosted by Amsterdam’s Motive Gallery.

P2 SATELLITE PROGRAM AT JEU DE PAUME
Curated by Raimundas Malašauskas
jeudepaume.org
ma-bernardanthonioz.com

Have you ever attempted to imagine an open book that, while without a material form, nonetheless presents pages of a fantastically vivid, diverse and complex tale? Curator and writer Raimundas Malašauskas poses this paradoxical question in describing the work of artists Audrey Cottin, Alex Cecchetti & Mark Geffriaud, France Fiction, and Jessica Warboys. His answer comes in the cycle of four exhibitions for Jeu de Paume’s Satellite program, dedicated to young and emerging artists and presented each year by a guest curator in the institution’s transitory spaces, as well as at off-site locations. For Malašauskas, each exhibition unfolds as a chapter in a kaleidoscopic story, revealing an intriguing panorama of artists who seem to share the curator’s predilection for translating the imagination into perceptible experience.



Alex Cecchetti and Mark Geffriaud, *The Police Return to the Magic Shop*, 2010
Courtesy: the artists and Jeu De Paume, Paris

On March 1, Alex Cecchetti and Mark Geffriaud opened the cycle at Jeu de Paume with their first collaborative project, “The Police Return to the Magic Shop: La Guerre, Le Théâtre, La Correspondance”. The Paris-based artists present a series of works that examine the transformative possibilities of collective exchange and imagination. Most notable is their living table de jeu, where performers engage in an elliptical game and dialogue, improvising a script by the artists and activating game pieces – found objects placed in a non-descript arrangement. Learning the sense of the objects and the rules of the game remain the curious, labyrinthine quest of the performers and the audience.

British artist Jessica Warboys opened a new cycle on March 24 with a show titled “À l’étage” at La Maison d’art Bernard Anthonioz, a contemporary art center in a historic 17th-century residence just outside of Paris. Warboys presents a new film that explores the space’s suggestive architecture – both material and ephemeral – through the objects that inhabit it. In May, the cycle returns to Concorde with France Fiction, a Paris-based artists’ collective, curator group and magazine. Founded in 2004, France Fiction is known for devising events for the collective experience of fact and self-narration. The Satellite program closes in October with young French artist Audrey Cottin, whose performance last summer at the Centre Pompidou explored communal engagement through group clapping as a possible form of sculpture in space.