Using filmic installation, photography as well as performance, Caecilia Tripp’s conceptual work is entangled with the space of collective imagination as a space of transgression of social and cultural boundaries. Beyond geographical borders and with a poetic mind it deals with forms of freedom, utopia and civil disobedience at the crossroads of globalization, shining a light on the invention of new languages, sounds, cultural codes and social imaginary as a permanent process of “making history”.

Caecilia Tripp’s works has been shown internationally in galleries, museums such as PS1/MOMA New York / USA, Museum of Modern Art, Paris / France, Center of Contemporary Arts, New Orleans / USA, 7th Gwangju Biennale 2008, Gwangju / South Korea, Clark House Initiative, Bombay/India, Brooklyn Museum New York, Bronx Museum, New York, USA, Contemporary Art Center of Ivry, Le CREDAC.
The Turtle Walk

(after Walter Benjamin)
Participatory Performance, Caecilia Tripp 2010

Around 1839, W. Benjamin reports, it was fashionable to walk through the arcades with a turtle on a leash in order to enforce the slow pace really determined looking required.

"There was the pedestrian who wedged himself into the crowd, but there was also the flâneur who demanded elbow room and was unwilling to forego the life of the gentleman of leisure. His leisurely appearance as a personality is his protest against the division of labour which makes people into specialists. it was also his protest against their industriousness. Around 1840 it was briefly fashionable to take turtles for a walk in the arcades the flâneurs liked to have the turtles set the pace for them." (W.B.)

Each edition of the Turtle Walk is site specific.

The Turtle Walk had his first edition with 5 turtles in Korea, Gwangju at the Gwangju Biennale Foundation curated by its director Yongwoo Lee in an exhibition named "Flower Of May" (2010) in relation to the civil uprising in the 1980`s.

5 turtles were displayed throughout the exhibition space guarded by the museum guardians and walked by the visitors through the exhibition. The turtles were manifesting different writings on their back in relation with democracy and processes of transgression. They were given away by the artist to the people in the streets the following day.
"The Turtle Walk", 2010, Caecilia Tripp, Gwangju, South Korea
While the title of Gertrude Stein’s book The Making of Americans (written in 1908-09 and published in 1925) is a genealogical approach to American culture, presenting creation’s infinite possibilities, Caecilia Tripp’s interpretation is a real opening up of this musical and visual work. Although repetition is the very essence of Gertrude Stein’s work, this repetition allows for precisely the juxtaposition of the sounds and images in the film, as though the desire to take the very notion of repetition literally should generate a multitude of dualities starting with reality and representation, images and copies, music and recording, voice and rhythm. The importance of African-American culture in the United States has always been defined by the recognition given to its music, performance and oral narration. These elements are also brought together in Stein’s opera, but it is their concrete application in the context of black vernacular performance that Caecilia Tripp chooses to show. Starting with a history (and from its start), she proposes back-and-forth movements in form and sound that suggest at once the incessant passage between the individual and the collective and also between scream and monologue, between interior and exterior space. This duality is further reinforced as the venues are evoked through nocturnal and luminous images of the
Apollo Theater. The scene in which the meeting or splitting in two of the identity is played out is the one with the marionette manipulated by the magician in the smooth suit, the one with the little twin girls who add to the turmoil with their reflections in the mirror. “Any one is one” emphasizes the text, and one also hears “it is always a question of being”. While the Diva travels the streets of New York in a limousine which accentuates the quick horizontal movement of the image, the Poet affronts the viewer in a vertical scene reinforced by the walls covered with posters which seem to hold him up and maintain him in a most intransigent urban reality.

“In black culture, repetition means that the thing circulates (exactly in the manner of any flow) (...). In black culture, the thing (the ritual, the dance, the beat) is ‘there for you to pick it up when you come back to get it’. If there is a goal in such a culture, it is always deferred; it continually ‘cuts’ back to the start, in the musical meaning of ‘cut’ as an abrupt, seemingly unmotivated break (...) with a series already in progress and a willed return to a prior series (...) Black culture, in the ‘cut’ builds ‘accidents’ into its coverage, almost as if to control their unpredictability. Its own a kind of cultural coverage, this magic of the cut attempts to confront accident and rupture not by covering them but by making room for them inside the system itself”1.

The editing in Caecilia Tripp’s film is at once a construction of and a reflection on repetition. The Making of Americans does not seem to have a beginning or end, like a long improvised conversation that one stumbles into the middle of, and yet it is within this fluidity that the ruptures of voice and sound take place. Oral narration and music mixed by DJ Spooky become as many ways to construct a different history: A different story, A different history.

Elvan Zabunyan

1 James A. Snead, « Repetition as a Figure of Black Culture », in Out There, Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures; New York, Cambridge, The New Museum of Contemporary, The MIT Press, 1990, p. 220
The Making of Americans, 2004
C-Print color 50 x 65 cm
Twosome / The Making Of Americans, 2004
C-Print color 50 x 65 cm
The Storyteller / The Making of Americans, 2004
C-Print color 50 x 65cm
Exploring the question of creolization in the contexts of post-colonialization and of globalization (le Tout-Monde to quote Glissant), Caecilia Tripp, recently invited for a residence at PS1/MOMA in New York, directed a film, The Making of Americans, a « free-style opera » version of Gertrude Stein’s book. Written in 1908 and published in 1926, The Making of Americans tells in a non-linear fashion the genealogy of American culture, founded on the principles of immigration and diversity. Stein’s writing – she co-authored with Virgil Thompson in 1934 Four Saints and three acts, an opera that played on Broadway at the time when African Americans were segregated—incorporates the ideas of accident, rupture and repetition and anticipates slam and hip hop.

With a soundtrack by DJ Spooky ‘the History maker’ playing notably Not in our names by Saul Williams – Caecilia Tripp filmed the rap ‘Diva’ Jean Grae cruising New York in a limo, and the slammer Postell as a street ‘Poet’ preacher, appropriating passages from Stein on the means of variation and digression of spoken word poetry. Another protagonist, the ‘Magician’, animates a marionette before performing a matrix laser show in front of closed theater curtains while two ‘twins’ tap and dance in the tradition of musicals. The characters, each incarnating an idea of spectacle as a metaphor for the construction of the American identity, moving around without ever meeting, in emblematic places of New York: the
Apollo Theater ("where stars are born and legends are made"), Times Square, Harlem, the Brooklyn Bridge, Ground Zero…

“Anyone is one”… but at the same time one notices that each character of the film possesses a doppelgänger, a complementary reflection, in a game of back and forth between the individual and the collective, the plenty and the void (the ‘Twins’, but also the absent Twin Towers, the ‘Diva’ and her fans, the ‘Magician’ and his marionette, the ‘DJ’ and the ‘Poet’); the image doubles, splits and mirrors sometimes, the words are repeated, the sounds reverberate in echo, evoking in some way the two turntables of a scratching DJ, replaying history backwards and forwards, in the fashion of Caecilia Tripp’s film based on sampling and mixing, between story and history telling.

History Mixer / The Making of Americans, 2004
C-Print color 50 x 65 cm
Like the 7th Gwangju Biennale itself, Spring is not a theme, but a concept that recalls the emancipatory energy of the South Korean Spring in May 1980. However, the references of Spring go well beyond Gwangju, and evoke other popular uprisings from the Canboulay Riots of 1881 in Port of Spain to May 1968 in Paris, as well as encompassing the history of Carnival street processions, especially as found in Brazil and the Caribbean, New Orleans, and Cape Town. Given its format as a street procession, and its location, Gwangju, the attention of the invited artists will be drawn to the May 1980 street uprisings in Gwangju. A principal interest of Spring is to refuse the constricted space of the exhibition gallery, but readapt the exhibition format into a space of active social participation. In this way the processional format is the arena through which this project seeks to experiment with new modes of conducting an exhibition. Spring calls to mind the idea of sudden motion and constant tension, both of which are at the core of popular street manifestations, from carnivals to demonstrations. Beginning this August, artists in Spring will assemble in Gwangju for a month of continuous interaction and production with local participants, building the models and displays, that will culminate in an eight-hour procession through the streets of the city around the Former Provincial Office (the starting point of the Gwangju May 1980 protests). The procession will begin during the day and end at night with a fiery conflagration to signal the end of the event. The procession will be accompanied by music by DJ GAZAEBAL and a film by Caecilia Tripp. Both the real time film and the music score will be the sole reminder of the procession and only element presented in one of the exhibition spaces.
Spring in Gwangju, 2008
Color & sound video, 10 min.
Spring in Gwangju, 2008
Color & sound video, 10 min.

Spring in Gwangju, 2008
Color & sound video, 10 min.
Boogie Man

In front of palace of justice... facing Paris.

In the legend he is described as the phantom who brings nightmares to the children who have not obeyed... to frighten them.

On the plantations it was the bluesman addressing through riddles the injustice of the white master. In urban language nowadays he is the revolutionary figure of transgression. The one who does not justify himself for his claims nor for who he is. He is the one to reveal injustice and painful truth in all layers of society. Nothing can escape his eye. He is unsubdued like the music which accompanies him; be it the Delta blues (John Lee Hooker), Rock (Aerosmith, ACDC) or Rap (Mos Def) : "I'm your Boogie Man..."

His gaze translates the duality of his imaginary existence: he incarnates the nightmare of lost souls and the one in defense of equity. His justice is without compromise.
Boogie Man, Caecilia Tripp, 2008
Installation with black and white film 16 mm, Mirror, without sound, 1'50
Collection Fond National d’Art Contemporain, Paris, France
Motoboy / Cacau The Mad Dog 2008

Motoboy / Cacau The Mad Dog, 2008
(HD Installation for 3 screens, color & sound, 30 min)
Motoboy / Cacau The Mad Dog, 2008
(HD Installation for 3 screens, color & sound, 38 min)
“Motoboy /CACAU the Mad Dog” is a filmic art project which follows the daily deliveries of the Motoboy Cacau through the megalopolis of São Paulo in an open scenario inbetween (non)fiction and the unpredictable moments of life. Equipped with a small camera the motoboy and pixografia artist Cacau has filmed himself, his trajectories through the city, his encounters or gatherings with friends and family.

Friends and unknown persons from different backgrounds have invented some scenario for him, send him somewhere or meet someone, or invent some sort of situation. Living in the periphery and doing his deliveries in the centre, Cacau, Motoboy, becomes the endless passenger and messenger in this chaos-world, constantly crossing the border between center and periphery, as the go-between of all different worlds as one.

The soundtrack of the film by DJ CIA brings different music references from urban underground hip hop in which he is very well known as well as playing with music references of different filmic genres. The display of 3 screens dwells the time-space lapses in between repetition, ellipses, delay and change of being “A life” in echo to oneself in a world you cannot grasp.

Steven Richter
Film critic São Paulo
The Zacheta National Gallery is presenting Invasion of Sound 6th April- 2nd August 2009 in conjunction with 13th Ludwig van Beethoven Easter Festival.

Over the past several years, the international art scene has seen a plethora of events attesting to a growing preoccupation with the place of music in contemporary art. It would be insufficient to approach this subject by limiting our observations to an admission of the complementary of art and music, which furthermore, is nothing new.

Invasion of Sound proposes a reading of the esthetic relationship between the visual arts and music as relating to culture, rather to cultures. Such an approach can encompass the whole of music and, at the same time, art in its entirety. To be precise, the exhibition pays particular heed to the points of friction between different musical genres, between different esthetic universes, between different cultures. In other words, Invasion of Sound aims to reveal how certain musical contexts of particular works disclose a critical distancing with the cultural, social, historic or political norms that the work addresses.

The tenacity of a carefree melody in the memory of those who have experienced exile, the improbable cross-pollination of a Baroque ensemble and a country orchestra, the harmony of a choir in the context of social suffering, the force of rock music or of a brass band interpreted as the history of a people, the melody of a flute as far-away echo of a revolution… Taking forms ranging from brass-bands to symphonic orchestra, from street music to the score of road movies, from chamber orchestra to free Jazz, the genres are called on and merge in this proverbial voyage where singular works conjugate very different states of consciousness, and in which sonorous confrontations reveal attentions forgotten by and to the family of man.

Paris Anthem 2008
16mm film loop, 1 min. 40

Paris Anthem relates to Miles Davis’ tribute for the World champion boxer “Jack Johnson” from 1970, a soundtrack for the documentary film by Bill Clayton on the World champion who defeated racial segregation in the ring.

After the riots in Paris of 2005 when social housings of African migrants were set on fire and two young suburban teenagers killed by the police.

All his lifetime Miles continues boxing
And his boxing is also the trumpet.
The moment Miles discovers Paris
Paris discovers Miles.
Miles introduces a sound of chaos and improvisation
A breathing of freedom and innovation
A poetics of change...
Which also leads Miles to the collaboration with the French filmmaker Louis Malle of “Elevator to the Gallows” 1958
Paris Anthem, Caecilia Tripp, 2008
Color & sound 16mm film loop, 1 min. 40
Paris Anthem, 2008
color & sound 16mm film loop, 1 min. 40
Galerie Maisonneuve, Paris, Février 2 - Mars 1, 2008
Paris Anthem

Paris Anthem, 2008
Silver Trumpet, engraving, black ribbon
E-1027 / A Lifeboat

A film by Caecilia Tripp 2002
(Video Installation, 2 screens, 20min)

In 1924-1929 Eileen Gray, encouraged by Jean Badovici, built her manifesta of “habitat minumum”, a sort of “Lifeboat” architecture at the seaside in the south of France.

She named it E-1027 which is a code of Eileen Gray and Jean Badovici, 'E' standing for Eileen,'10' Jean, '2' Badovici, '7' Gray, and a code of lovers.

The small villa was a perfect refuge for both exiled artists, a continuous architecture of “becoming”, a continuum of nomadic experience embraced by a sophistication of “camping” mobility as well as the possibility to isolate oneself from this world in order to develop oneself’s most profound deep inside architecture.

In the entrance is written “Entrez lentement” (come in slowly), which is followed by other surrealist inscriptions.

A friend of Badovici's, Le Corbusier who admires E-1027 and is its solely guest several times, not only “tags” without the permission of Eileen Gray a series of murals, inspired by colonial Algerian erotic photography, on its walls between 1937-39, but does not hesitate to publish his intrusion without naming Eileen Gray as the architect of the villa, so to become himself finally the “silent author” of E-1027.

In the film we see a small girl exploring its ruins in play in switch with archival photographs taken by Eileen Gray herself surrounded by a phantomatic soundscape.
E-1027 / A Lifeboat, 2002
Digital & super 8mm film
2 screens installation
Color & sound video, 15 min.
E-1027 / A Lifeboat, 2002
Digital & super 8mm film, 15 min.
Making History, 2008 (C-Print 50 x 65cm)
color & sound video, 10 min.
Co-direction Karen McKinnon / B3 Media Brixton

MAKING HISTORY

Edouard Glissant, contemporary of Frantz Fanon, is widely acknowledged as being one of the most important writers of the past half-century and was nominated for the Nobel Prize in literature for his writings on “Poetics of Relation”.

Linton Kwesi Johnson is the father of Dub poetry, former Black Panther in London, in 2002 he Òbecame the only second living poet and first black poet to have his work published in Penguin's Modern Classic series.

These old friends meet after 20 years in New York, breaking bread on questions of identity and nation, while another writer, a young woman is dwelling through the city nighttime, lost in between longing and belonging.

A B3 Media Film

Written and directed by Karen McKinnon and Caecilia Tripp
Music by LKJ & DJ Spooky

With : Edouard Glissant & Linton Kwesi Johnson
And: Sharifa Rhodes-Pitts
Making History, 2008
color & sound video, 10 min.
Co-direction Karen McKinnon / B3 Media Brixton
NOTHING IS TRUE, EVERYTHING IS ALIVE

NOTHING IS TRUE, EVERYTHING IS ALIVE 2016
Paper Print, Ink Edition 2000 EX,
(view at Contemporary Art Center of Ivry, Le CREDAC, Paris, France)
Sleeping with Books
A photographic series ongoing (2011-),
(view at Contemporary Art Center of Ivry, Le CREDAC, Paris, France, 2016)
Sleeping with Books, Photography 2011, B&W, 50 x 65 cm, framed
Sleeping with Books, Photography 2015, B&W, 50 x 65 cm, framed
Sleeping with Books, Photography 2016, B&W, 50 x 65 cm, framed
Sleeping with Books, Photography 2015, B&W, 50 x 65 cm, framed
Sleeping with Books, Photography 2011, B&W, 50 x 65 cm, framed
Sleeping with Books, Photography 2015, B&W, 50 x 65 cm, framed
Last Song (2015), performance, video, broken guitar, animal skin, matches, mirror
(view at Contemporary Art Center of Ivry, Le CREDAC, Paris, France, 2016)
Music for (prepared) Bicycles in 3 participatory Scores: Bombay / New York / Cape Town

«Music for (prepared) Bicycles» (after John Cage & Marcel Duchamp) is a participatory performance project in process by Caecilia Tripp celebrating the 100th Birthday of John Cage in the streets. To create her score, and film, the artist made a sonic bicycle, like a moving instrument, spiked with electric guitar strings, capturing street sounds, and sounds of strings hitting playing cards, as it is performed trilling through places of affect within the city. This project in process alters Cage’s “prepared piano” into three sonic bicycle processions, a “music of change” thriving through three global metropolis (Bombay/ New York/ Cape Town) as the bondage of a freed geography, beyond all boundaries.
Score Two of "Music for (prepared) Bicycles" was produced in New York in collaboration with the Schwinn Bike Club, a Puerto Rican bicycle club. The sonic bicycle procession took place in Brooklyn, Spanish Harlem and to the Bronx, tracing the history of Young Lords Civil Rights Movement. (C-Print 50 x 65cm)
Score One of “Music for (prepared) Bicycles” was produced in Bombay by Clark House Initiative Bombay 2012 in co-production with Rattapallax Films NY, French Institute Paris and the support of French Embassy Bombay. (C-Print 50 x 65cm)
Music for (prepared) Bicycles at Clark House Initiative Bombay/
A participatory project by Caecilia Tripp 2012

Free people and Free sounds (Cage)

Caecilia Tripp: To initiate the project 'Music for (prepared) Bicycles' in Bombay is quite symbolic. In a time of crisis and protest, where the old world order is put into question, with Occupy Wall Street and the Arab Spring, Mahatma Gandhi represents a historic figure of civil disobedience encouraging everyone to believe in their power for change.

To create her score, and a film, she made a sonic bicycle, like a moving instrument, capturing street sounds, and sounds of strings hitting playing cards, as it is performed trilling through places of affect within the city -- the last working cotton mill, in the mill area of Parel, the August Kranti maidan, where Gandhi issued his 'Quit India speech', and the pink migrating flamingos at the port of Sewri amidst old rusting ships. Installation, films, photographs, phrases of sound, quotation, memory and performance, come together in a participatory project of anarchist imagination.

Arjun Appadurai: The image, the imagined, the imaginary - these are all terms that direct us to something critical and new in global cultural processes: the imagination as a social practice...The imagination is now central to all forms of agency, is itself a social fact, and is the key component of the new global order.

'diminished spaces of fabrication and possibility'

The Indian Atlas cycles began to be made in 1951. Its design has not changed since then. It had a way to be put together and modified depending on its use, extra seats, or hooks that hold gas cylinders. It could carry a hundred kilos, and so is the cycle used by all manner of trades. One does not ‘buy’ as much as fluidly assemble the cycle, to each customer's individual need. Even in Bombay, the possibilities to fabricate, assemble,
alter and individualise, have become fewer and fewer. Entering this project breaks the myth that all is possible to make in Bombay cheaply. Hand embroidered lettering, so common in this Colaba even a year ago, has slowly died away. At least five shops no longer take small orders.

The making of the cycle was possible due to the effort of small businesses who took interest in the art work, and devised ingenious ways of constructing the cycle. We met Mahindra Bhai Chauhan while shopping for hardware in the Dadar Market. His tiny shop, a raised platform at the corner of a street, is in its fourth generation, and makes tablas and sitars (percussion and string instruments). He had said, "for this to work, we will all need to think". His eighteen-year old son devised a way to weld in musical keys to tune and stretch electric guitar strings. In a lane nearby, Amardeep Cycles is run by Sikh refugees from Pakistan who came to Bombay to live in the Sion refugee camp. The shop specialises in making cycles for grocers and other tradesmen. Oriya handlers at the shop spent hours away from their half-an-hour turn around time, to assemble the prepared wheels to a regular bicycle frame. Mr Panchal at Nana Chowk runs an inherited welding business sharing an old factory floor with garages. He welds ornate protective grills for windows. When requested to make clips to hold the playing cards, he offered his services for free in support, because the project was artistic and somewhat nostalgic. By traversing the streets of Bombay in search of a welder, we came across many individuals in their sixties who remembered their youth as soon as they saw the bicycle, remembering how well bits of x-ray sheets, wedged along the wheels of the cycle, audibly hit the cycles spokes. In India, the gears of sugar cane juice traders are often dressed up with gungroos (heavy bells worn on the ankles of dancers), and bicycles are fitted with brightly coloured plastic anklets, and cellophane paper windmills to create rainbows of vibrant colour and sound.

Caecilia Tripp begins her journey at the August Kranti Maidan, (August Freedom Park), where Mahatma Gandhi called for independence from British rule: to quit India, or to face mass non-violent civil disobedience. The cycle traverses a route through the older areas of Bombay, now circumvented by regular traffic. These geographies subsidise life in the
city by serving as centres of economic activity. The cycle moves from Gaiwadi, Girgaum on to Charni Road, a manic train station and the heart of the diamond business in Asia. It got its name from a grazing field bought by a private philanthropist to avoid British grazing taxes for cows from Girgaum. The cycle moves to Colaba Koliwada village, home to Bombay's indigenous community of fishermen, the Kolis, who have been pushed off their land into tiny spaces along the coast. Many migrant communities, such as the Banjaras (Indian Roma) and economic migrants from Bihar, share their space and find welcome. About four decades ago, these communities in Colaba asked for newly reclaimed land, and re-establised villages that now serve as vibrant multi-cultural oasis's of festivity, community life, and affordable housing. The cycle passes Nagpada, in the old Byculla district, which contains Bombay's oldest museum and botanical gardens, alongside Bombay's first stately apartment buildings, historically home to the Indian Jewish community and Muslim traders from Gujarat. The bicycle rides to the Sewri mudflats, filmed in the backdrop of sand dredges, and flamingos. As night falls, the cycle comes to Laxmi Mills in the Parel district, started as a woolen mill in the late 19th century by a Sassoon family, and is now among the last functioning mills in the area, due to close. The union strikes of 1982 that sought better wages for the mill workers met with factory lockouts ending in the closure of the mills. The mills have now all but given way to residential condominiums and shopping malls, displacing thousands of mill workers, a majority of whom have not been rehabilitated, even today, so many years on.

The artist has related her present project to John Cage's 'Music of Changes', and his entanglements with Indian philosophy via Ananda Coomaraswamy and the musician Gita Sarabhai. The poet Prabodh Parikh has pointed us to the philosophy of play, Leela or Ramaniyata, an aesthetic theory of Indian poetics by the 17th century Pandit Jagannath. It is in engagement with the idea of play that works of art emerge. He emphasises that Cage's is an attempt to achieve ease, without any of the weight of the 17th century aesthetician. He also remembers that it was Cage who first said, dropped in as an aside, that 6% of America is using up 96% of the resources, and in 1962, that America should stop being the police of
the world. The technique of the inserted playing cards translates John Cage’s 'prepared piano', on which he wrote many compositions, to the bicycle. Cage once said that the future of music was electronic sound. Caecilia Tripp's inspiration comes from Cage's writing, and she makes relation between these and the vernacular culture practiced and invented by teenagers in socially disregarded suburbs around the world.

Zasha Colah mai 2012
Clark House Initiative Bombay

Score Three of “Music for (prepared) Bicycles” will take place in Cape Town, South Africa in 2016.
“Music for (prepared) Bicycles Score One and Two (C-Print 50 x 65cm) 2012/13
(view at Contemporary Art Center of Ivry, Le CREDAC, Paris, France 2016)
Music for (prepared) Bicycles Score One Bombay, Atlas Bike Black, stringed with electric guitar strings and tuned with guitar keys, 2012

Air Bag Bombay 2012
(view at Contemporary Art Center of Ivry, Le CREDAC, Paris, France 2016)
Bicycle Score Performance Painting
Brooklyn Museum NY 2014

At VIVA BROOKLYN Exhibition

Score Painting for (prepared) Bicycles, Canvas 5 x 7 m, Black Mars Paint, amplified & stringed Schwinn Bicycle with electric guitar strings and tuned guitar keys from Music for (prepared) Bicycles, NY, loudspeakers, performance 30 min

Performer: Ethan Scott-Barnett
Score Painting for (prepared) Bicycles, Canvas 5 x 7 m, Black Mars Paint 2014
FREE CAGE (2013)

FREE (JOHN) CAGE, handmade rice paper, paint, pencil, wooden frames, 2013
(view at Contemporary Art Center of Ivry, Le CREDAC, Paris, France 2016)

FREE CAGE was produced by the artist with Clark House Initiative Bombay in collaboration with a Bollywood painter who finds himself out of work as the Bollywood Industry does not use painters for their publicity anymore. The matrix was a brown paper cut out from a health food store in New York. FREE CAGE is like a musical partition of repetition and change, a series of 5 samples, each one unique, 2 are in private collections in India.
GOING SPACE
Solo Show Contemporary Art Center of Ivry, Le CREDAC, Paris, France 2016

Going Space, C-Print 30 x 40 cm, color on Aluminum, 2015
(view at Contemporary Art Center of Ivry, Le CREDAC, Paris, France 2016)
Caecilia Tripp’s solo exhibition brings together an emblematic collection of earlier works that the artist has produced since 2004, as well as a number of new pieces that can be seen for the first time. Tripp has specially designed Going Space to resonate with the American Daylight Factory architecture of the Manufacture des Œillets—the building that is home to the Crédac art space enjoys in particular an immersive point of view on the city panorama.

Tripp has always taken an interest in the question of construction, fluidity, and getting beyond identities. Influenced by both “the trickster’s game”, a form of resistance, which is at work in collective rituals, and ways of transgressing social and cultural borders, her work is marked by codes like subversion, disguise, reinterpretation, and reenactment.

Seeking out spaces of invention that make it possible to deterritorialize identities, Tripp locates her works in a shifting historic context that lies at the crossroads of globalization and our social imaginations. Poets, choreographers, musicians, philosophers, historians, “day thieves,” physicists and astronomers are protagonists or companions of the participatory process that she has carried out between Paris, Mumbai, Dakar, New York and the Caribbean.

Through sound and film installations, photographs, sculptures, and performances, Going Space invites visitors into migratory spaces via a fluid geography, and makes our worldliness (E.Glissant) resonate on a cosmic scale. Adopting the form of a living archive of our struggles, Tripp’s show celebrates our collective dreams of a shared future.

At the center of the exhibition, Scoring the Black Hole is “a celebration of our invisible bonds through a piece of choreography whose score is drawn on a black canvas, as a cosmic musical composition of our irreversible echoes unbound.” (C.T.)

The piece Scoring the Black Hole is produced by Lafayette Anticipation – Fondation d’entreprise Galeries Lafayette.
Scoring the Black Hole

Scoring the Black Hole, canvas 8,68 x 5,77 m, white chalk, white pastel, performance with 2 amplified Roller Skaters, 3 musicians, Harp / Drones & voice, one performer speech (30min), Video

Scoring the Black Hole is a celebration of our invisible bonds through a piece of choreography whose score is drawn on a black canvas, as a cosmic musical composition of our irreversible echoes unbound. It brings together the ancient cosmology of the Dogon People from Mali with the future research of String Theory and Black Matter, blurring all of our own opacities.

Costumes: Rick Owens
Harp: Hélène Breschand
Drones: Kerwin Rolland
& Voice: Robert AA Lowe
Performers: Michèle Lamy
Laurence Sabas-Richard
Jackie Cross
SCORING THE BLACK HOLE

Scoring the Black Hole, canvas 8.68 x 5.77 m, white chalk, white pastel performance with 2 amplified Roller Skaters, 3 musicians, Harp / Drones & voice, one performer speech (30min), Video
Michèle Lamy performing the CHAOS Poem by Sun RA (4 min) Video
Scoring the Black Hole, canvas 8.68 x 5.77 m, white chalk, white pastel
performance Score on painting & sound installation & performance video
(view at Contemporary Art Center of Ivry, Le CREDAC, Paris, France 2016)
WE ARE NOTHING BUT STARDUST 2016

C-Print 50 x 65 cm
WE ARE NOTHING BUT STARDUST, 2016, HD color & sound, 7 min

WE ARE NOTHING BUT STARDUST dwells the universe and cosmic music in relation with our invisible soundings as fluid identity, a vision inspired and supervised by cosmic science of String Theory and the multiverse of eleven parallel universes.
WE ARE NOTHING BUT STARDUST, 2016, HD color & sound, 7 min Film still
(view CREDAKINO at Contemporary Art Center of Ivry, Le CREDAC, Paris, France 2016)
WE ARE NOTHING BUT STARDUST, 2016, HD color & sound, 7 min Film still
(view CREDAKINO at Contemporary Art Center of Ivry, Le CREDAC, Paris, France 2016)
GOING SPACE 2016, HD color & sound, 6min
Musical composition partition by step dancer for staircase.
HERE’m NOW

HERE’m NOW, 2016, woolen military blanket, Shepherd’s walking stick, gold leaves

To be performed.
Lost in Land: a Dark Odyssey

Hadn’t I made their poverty my paradise?

*Omeros*, Derek Walcott

Then at sea, now in land: lost.
Sailors adrift on Adam Smith Square rehearsing a future anterior amidst the fluttering lights of their searching crafts. Sight must be shaded from darkness. After one has been made King, after his crown has been adjusted around his handkerchief-clad forehead, after his wings have been laid to rest upon his shoulders, broadened with bristling fringes, he shades his eyes with dark glasses handed out to him by an attendant near the half-whitened trunk of their mast.

Prepare for Paradise Lost 2005/15, HD color & sound, 7 min
view CREDAKINO at Contemporary Art Center of Ivry, Le CREDAC, Paris, France 2016)

Dark is the night, darker his sight, darkest their lives, not. Their rich vestments adorn their black bodies with a brightening light as they do the night’s skin with a depthless glow. The golden threads of their garments tie together a web of seeing stones more precious than the pupils of their eyes. King Sailor, three minutes ago a simple fellah with a shirtless vest over a bulging belly, layered his modesty with hand-made munificence. He
is the halfway anchor sunken at mid-passage, the slow-clothing personification of the film’s subject: a searching for an ideology of darkness as the encounter between the idea of blackness and the dream of mankind.

They called at their Garden of Eden from different ships. That one, an humble matelot, just disembarked from the sidewalk a few lapses before King Sailors, teetering from his roller-skates, aided by a gliding cane. His bell-bottoms, simple vest and gloved-hands bear the clean light of white. His secret weapons are sparsely spread all around him: red-and-green Christmas lights blinkering all around him, from his front zip to the back of his cap. This other one, Red-Nose Sailor, snatches attention away from their king. Half Caribbean-Pinocchio, half tropical snowman, he has indulged his drunken majesty an elongated nose on his inflated head. Like his fellow shipmates, all the same he shines, his dark mask a glistening deep sea urchin.

How often times can Paradise be lost?
Darkened sight, opened ears. First in the field of perception, the nightfall grating of the crickets, the cascading beads of a rain stick, the spilling grains of shack shacks. Then a mounting wail. Specks of lights second, still flouted by the camera’s blinded lens, steady and sharpen somewhat onto scenes of slowed-motion ambulations.

Prepare for Paradise Lost 2005/15, HD color & sound, 7 min (view at CREDAKINO 2016)
Miltonian characters who never wore the Minshall cloak, they come straight out of myth. Bookman sways into frame. He keeps a Book of the Dead that has the precision of a telephone directory. His high-pitched wings surround the road that leads to city lights further up on the hill. Laventille from whence he came? Making only but a passing apparition is a female Indian. Her feathers short, she isn’t much of a sight to be seen but the camera follows her from the back once she’s gone past and reveals the beaded face of the island’s aboriginal spirits.

Prepare for Paradise Lost 2005/15, HD color & sound, 7 min (view CREDAKINO 2016)

Original sins peacefully overlap. God’s fallen mankind and man’s depraved humanity. Paradise and Africa lost both. Extracted from the sands of Drexciya, their limbs no longer in limbo, they mask myths out. Sometimes in the second half of the eighteenth century, they threw away the burden of invisibility and sought out the shield of indecipherability. They have played mas’ every year ever since to a few minor exception that belong in the anecdotal record of the colonists. However critical these interruptions, the Canboulay Riots of the late nineteen hundred—and although cathartically reenacted—the Kambule Reenactment since sometimes in the late twentieth century—will not pass the test of mythical time. The imps and the devils will. They have already. Or have they? Will they?

How can one prepare to loose paradise?
Shot ten years ago on Carnival 2005, the night of the Traditional Carnival Characters competition of the Trinidad Carnival, Caecilia Tripp’s Prepare for Paradise Lost delivers the harrowing experience of the drama of depth
and darkness in the disjointed making of history and memory. Centered around the figure of a King Sailor, minutely situated at mid-length in the film, *Prepare for Paradise Lost* follows and looses masqueraders in the dark as they ready for the night’s competition. While the three or four masqueraders of the opening scenes are in full costumes, and offer a small sample of the (much greater) variety of traditional Trinidad Carnival characters—an Imp (maybe), a Devil, a Fancy Indian and a Sailor—the film focuses on a King Sailor dressing up. Standing near a tree, he is caught in mid-action as he helps himself to elements of his costume and is being helped to adjust them by an invisible helper.

*Prepare for Paradise Lost* 2005/15, HD color & sound, 7 min (view CREDAKINO 2016)

Driven by an original score composed and performed by Robert Aiki Aubrey Lowe *Prepare for Paradise Lost* provides his characters with a surround environment in which an all-enveloping darkness is heightened by sound which travels a disorienting short distance between the human and the non-human, the organic and the spiritual. As the drawn out voices of lead male singers and the heightened cries of the female choir goes crescendo, so does the action climaxes around the ending of King Sailor’s clothing. With the final addition of facial accessories, a black beard, a pipe and sunglasses, King Sailor’s is fully masked and his character thus unveiled. As an actor of the night who seals his eyes with shades, he is darkness, unseeing what the camera tries to see and the spectator fails to sight. *Prepare is Tripp’s western deep, her day for night.*
Ten years on, these men, many of whom were well in their eighth decade of life, who knows how long into their masking years, may well have returned home, and transitioned into the immemorial realm of myth. More than a memory aid, Prepare for Paradise Lost roots these men and their masks in the fading history of the traditional Trinidad Carnival, relics of which they incarnated already then. It also elevates Caribbean Carnival into myth as Derek Walcott had done poetry, showing wealth in spirit and strength in imagination without loosing anything of history’s tragic bends.

Once the wails and cries have ceased and the men have presumably all gone on to line up before the judges, breathing hastens into short inhaling ah ah ah ah ah ah ahs, fire cracks and the devils are released. Greasy and blue-black, them too wearing light-catching albeit much smaller netted-wings and almost naked, they take a back road as the camera captures a final glimpse of them at the vanishing point of darkness.

Claire Tancons
New Orleans, January 2016

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1 Derek Walcott, Paradise Omeros (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux), 1990, p228

11 Famed Trinidadian Masman Peter Minshall’s first masband in the Trinidad Carnival in 1976 was Paradise Lost. Although Minshall is known for having brought contemporary flair to traditional carnival characters, it is unlikely that the film’s protagonists ever followed his genre-bending fashion. Rather, they likely stayed the course of tradition’s inner contemporary imagination.

111 Steve McQueen, Western Deep (2002) and Anri Sala’s When the Night Calls it a Day (2004), both are formal exercises in darkness as a cinematographic subject beyond their own respective subject matters.