

Raise the Curtain

LiMac group exhibition @ galería Moisés Pérez de Albéniz
From November 18th 2017 to January 13th 2018

Opening Saturday 18th of November from 12h to 15h.
Inaugural concert by DRAAS at 13h.

“In our urban society everything connects. Each person’s needs are fed by the skills of many others. Our lives are woven together in a fabric. But the connections that make society stronger also make it vulnerable.”
(Threads, British Television drama produced by the BBC, 1984)

*Raise the Curtain** is a patchwork of visual expressions related to music where hip-hop, punk, blues, hardcore, salsa, electro and other avant-garde forms of popular urban cultures reverberate. The title puts emphasis on the cloth that unveils the performer to its audience. Cloths, networks, dress codes serve as a backdrop that unites sound and image, identity and anonymity, culture and politics. As the seemingly ungraspable essence of sound meanders within the wrap and the weft of the exhibition, its unfurled fabric resists to the apolitical hegemony of the spectacle.

In parallel with the works, *Raise the Curtain* includes a selection of flyers, videos, fanzines, pictures and records of specific underground music movements; mostly international d.i.y hardcore punk from the 80’s up until recent times. On the margins of commercial networks and against all odds, this revolted attitude of do it yourself culture spread over Latin America, the United States, Western and Eastern Europe as well as Asia or the Middle East and resonated as a sound board of social unrest. These collections expose a topography of fragments where the memories of shows, songs and places are material proofs of collective forms of struggles. For that reason, LiMac exposes these archives as the testimony of a multicultural reality made of gaps, bridges, noises, silences where the white neutrality of the exhibition space clashes with such forms of manifestation.

These archives were facilitated by:

Cheribibli lent original flyers and concert tickets from the French antifascist skinhead scene. The documentation includes music genres such as ska, punk, reggae, oi! from the late 80’s up until early 2000.

Epvmd photocopied 60 flyers from the 90’s Chicago d.i.y hardcore punk scene as well as other shows from the rest of the United States and abroad.

JorelSp photocopied flyers from the 90’s straight edge hardcore scene of Sao Paulo.

KuzaSubte lent original flyers from the hardcore punk scene of Lima from the late 80’s.

Uatan lent original flyers, records, pictures and fanzine mostly from the international d.i.y hardcore punk scene.

*The title of this exhibition comes from the title of the song “Raise the Curtain” by the hardcore punk band Jerry’s Kids.

[1] Phil Collins, *Rude Boys, Leith Street #3*, 2011, 58.6 x 58.6 cm, lightjet print on Fuji Crystal Archive.

[2] Phil Collins, *Rude Boys, Leith Street #4*, 2011, 58.6 x 58.6 cm, lightjet print on Fuji Crystal Archive.

Music’s capacity to ripple overseas appears in the photographs of **Phil Collins**. Taken from his film *The Meaning of Style* these pictures show a group of anti-fascist Malaysian skinheads listening to i-pods in a colonial palace. Their dress code and cropped hair are the same as the original rude boys from 1969. Almost fifty years after the first skinheads appeared from the mix of Jamaican and British bands, the Malaysian skinheads maintain their multicultural roots. Through the legacies of rocksteady, ska, soul, reggae, punk, oi! and other derivative styles, music connects a post-colonial context with an internationalist working class consciousness.

[3] Eugenio Espinoza, *Colored songs*, 2017, variable measures, fabric, wood, cardboard, chains, acrylic paint and prints on paper. *Colored Song* (2017) by **Eugenio Espinoza** ties musical expression within a violent context. A large white cloth hangs from the ceiling. It alludes to the looming ghost of a Ku Klux Klan member. The cloth is made of carbon fiber. It has a very tight knit that protects from fire and is used by metal welders. Around the draped presence, four colored cardboards balance themselves with a white slate of wood recuperated from a typical house of rural United States. All hang from a chain that allows a limited mobility.

On the verso of the cardboards, the B-sides, images of record covers from popular Latino singers and rock bands do not match with the names of avant-garde musicians written below. In this sculptural song, the displaced references generate gaps that recontextualize the musical roots of African Americans.

[4] Moyra Davey, *Music*, 2010, 51 x 61 cm, photography framed in aluminum.

[5] Moyra Davey, *Love not money*, 2010, 51 x 61 cm, photography framed in aluminum.

A tombstone from a cemetery in Rome spells the word Musik (2010). No other name appears. According to this photograph by **Moyra Davey**, it could be argued that music has its own grave. Paradoxically, death may be resumed to silence and stillness. By taking this picture, a nature morte, it questions us regarding the life of music. Next to the engraved letters, a dark hole in a bright orange fruit could allude to a musical culture without substance, emptied of content.

[6] Alice Creischer, *Mavi Jeans*, 2012-2014, variable measures, cut-and-pasted printed paper, pencil, watercolor on paper.

For her work *Mavi Jeans* (2010), **Alice Creisher** blends drawings, texts and collages into a narrative polyptych that may be read like the indications for a performative march. The work begins at the production line of sandblasted jeans, the fashion trend of aged and ripped pants (with a reminiscence to punk clothing) that are sold brand new. Due to the high toxicity of this process, numerous workers of the Mavi jeans factory have died or fell sick from silicosis, a health hazard of mine workers. Creischer's work proposes to walk from the outskirts of the factory in Istanbul to the shopping center where the garments are sold. The march may take days as the participants have to cross highways, train tracks and other urban obstacles. Along the road the performers read poems and play music through amplified instruments that they built out of jeans. The flux of magnified sounds spread information regarding its true social cost. Turned into speakers, the garments recall ghostly figures of bodies as if they were the floating caskets of the workers. Within the whirlwind map of the city, *Mavi jeans* finds itself between a protest for workers' rights and a funerary march. It criticizes the exploitative conditions of textile production and its relation between center and periphery.

[7] Geta Brătescu, *Cocktail Automatic*, 1993, 4:09 min, VHS video cassette transferred onto a DVD 4:3.

Walking into a puddle, a pair of boots has the main role of **Geta Brătescu's** video *Cocktail Automatic* (1993). The sound of the footsteps generates a sludgy rhythm that loops over and over. To walk becomes the paste of a musical ground. As we do not see the face of the person, an aura of anonymity surrounds the film. In another layer (the video is composed of simultaneous frames that alternate depending on the image and the sound of the sequence), the artist draws with a piece of charcoal. One circle for the head, two scratches for the eyes, two parallel lines for the forehead and the mouth and one long vertical divide for the nose. Its schematized essence has no identity. Nonetheless it exposes elemental notions of symmetry, rhythm and repetition. While the boots mash into the wet earth and a hand slaps onto an arm chair, the body fuses with materiality of objects.

[8] Tony Conrad, *L-bracket with Three Strings*, 2002, 35 x 40 x 26 cm, bowed wire (hand stretched), L-bracket, electric pickup.

In **Tony Conrad's** *L-bracket with Three Strings* (2002) the bracket's right angle is the sculptural support of sound. The do it yourself precariousness of the instrument goes beyond western notions of composition. With his contemporaries, Conrad's proto punk attitude opened up to other musical cultures such as the one of India where instrument is its own partition.

[9] Jutta Koether, *Untitled (Eagle, chimes)*, 2006, 61 x 30.5 x 3.8 cm, liquid acrylic, found objects and acrylic on canvas.

Jutta Koether's work *Untitled (Eagle, Chimes)* (2006) is a hybrid between a painting and a musical instrument. A set of chimes are attached below the stretched canvas. When the wind passes through, the flickers of the chimes come to life unpredictably. Nonetheless a black cloud of acrylic paint looms over the metallic instrument. Its dark hues interact within a transparent resin that the artist refers to as liquid glass. In between these veils, a grey eagle appears spreading its wings. His claws hold a swastika. Inflight, the historical interpretation of this symbol balances between the spirituality of Zen Buddhism and the darkest hours of humanity. *Untitled (Eagle, Chimes)* revives contrasted times. The work was made after the departure of Steven Parrino, an artist known for his raw paintings and a friend of Jutta Koether with whom he played in the noise duo Electrophilia.

[10] Johanna Calle, *Fuga*, 2009, 59,5 x 43 cm each one, steel needles on printed paper.

A set of hypodermic steel needles are attached to unwritten sheet music. **Johanna Calle's** work, *Fuga* (2009), escapes the keys of music theory. With the needles parallel to the staff, the score is up to interpretation. From afar, the straight lines look inoffensive but at close range their spiky edges instinctively recall health and sickness. Like arrows, the needles become the notes of a silent fugue that goes beyond sound and its image.

[11] Jon Mikel Euba, *One minute*, 2005, 170 x 125 cm, silkscreen print.

On the stage of rock concerts, possessed by the heavy mass of sound the musicians shake instinctually. In **Jon Mikel Euba's** screenprint from his series *One Minute of Silence* (2005), the face of a rock singer is covered by the face of a gorilla. The singer and his band are not the protagonists anymore. Body language is under the spotlight. The hands raised over head point at the crowd and recall the gestures of a music conductor. As if it is about to unleash a towering roar, the animal's voice is held in suspension. There is no song, just the imprint of the textile from the silkscreen that embodies the tension between exposure and disguise.

[12] Daniel Paris-Clavel, *Le Tatoué*, 2001, 87 x 67 cm, etching.

A shirtless man reveals the ink that went through his skin. In **Daniel Paris-Clavel's** *Le Tatoué* (2001) the engraved line of the aquatint unites a constellation of tattoos. The needle knitted a new pair of sleeves. On the torso, a myriad of bodies and faces blend into each other while on the neck a spider sustained by the vocal chords overlooks this scenery.

[13] Raúl García Pereira, *Lucho Sanguinetti en casa de Kimba y Daniel F.*, 1997, 67 x 48 cm, photography.

For an instant, a young rocker from Lima, captures all the attention. In **Raúl García Pereira's** photograph *Lucho Sanguinetti en casa de Kimba y Daniel F* (1997) the hairy legs of a tarantula find refuge in between fingers and the palm of the hand. Known for his documentary photographic work of Peru's punk rock scene, Raúl García Pereira synthesizes the raw South American political context from the 90's with the alternative networks of underground rock. In this encounter, courage and rebellion do not come without its risks.

[14] Iñaki Garmendia, *Planos (Verja)*, 2011, 99 x 69 cm, sequence of folded plans.

[15] Iñaki Garmendia, *Txitxarro*, 2000, 60 x 106 cm each one (diptych), C-Prints.

Iñaki Garmendia's *Plans (Fence)* (2011) folds and unfolds the structure of a metal gate built in the shape of a spider web. The work refers to *Txitxarro*, a dance club from the Basque country that has partly been destroyed in 2000 by a bomb placed by the terrorist organization ETA who considered it as a hotspot of narco traffic. While the music club becomes a terrain of conflict, entertainment loses its neutrality and paradoxically highlights a political, cultural and ideological context.

[16] Christian Bagnat, *Noche mentira*, 2017, 200 x 100 x 30 cm, grease pencil on sheet metal

[17] Christian Bagnat, *Nos tocan, nos tocan y nos dejan*, 2017, 200 x 100 x 15 cm, grease pencil on sheet metal and leds.

[18] Christian Bagnat, *Pasillos*, 2015, 220 x 270 cm, color pencil on paper.

In the center of a dented black metal sheet a lightning sparks through the night. The sculptural drawing of **Christian Bagnat** relates the intimacy of a song with its lyrics. *Noche mentira* (2017) (literally: night lie) comes from a verse from the wistful tune *La luz del amanecer* (The Light of Dawn) by Alejandro Sokol, a referential singer of Argentinian rock bands. The crude turquoise marks of drizzling oil stick delineate a room where a record spins by the yellow spot light of a lamp. The bottom part of this large drawing depicts a moonlight by the sea. One can read: "Animal space", a fragment of that song whose lyrics mention that "many moons will tell us what to do."

[19] Elvira Poxon, *Pablo*, 2017, 32 m, video.

A wide range of portraits of African American musicians from the 50's up until recent times introduce the personal habitat of Crazy-P. In the old apartment of this rap instrumentalist from Madrid, Hip-hop beats bounce back and forth. **Elvira Poxon's** short film *Pablo* (2017) portrays the daily life of the DJ. While the musician cuts and pastes colorful patches of sound on his computer program the interior scene is on the verge of a still life. As the movie advances the apartment empties. Shadows of beds and sofas trace a horizon on the walls. Crazy-P packs his belongings, opens all the windows and abandons the place to its own sounds.

[20] Amilcar Llontop, *Quipucamayoc*, 2015, variable measures, household electrical cables.

The quipu, a pre-Columbian writing system made of threads, hangs in silence. Most quipu's have been destroyed by Spanish conquerors and resulted in the loss of this ancient codified system of writing remains undisclosed. **Amilcar Llontop's** quipu is made of headphones and other electric cables used to amplify and transmit information knotted together. The quipu's buried information contrasts with the cables of the hyper connected world. *Quipu Curtain* traces a line between the absence and the excess of information.

[21] Carmela García, *Tiakatú*, 2017, 110 x 90 cm, C-Print on dibond.

[22] Carmela García, *Triadas*, 2012, 200 x 180 cm, C-Print under methacrylate.

Carmela García's *Tiakatú* (2017) reenacts a 1937 picture taken by the anarchist photographer Kati Horna during the Spanish civil war. The original shot portrays a group of republican soldiers posing and resting in the countryside. Two of them point at the sky; one with his finger and the other with his rifle. 80 years later, García invited the *Tiakatú*, the first all women collective of Batucada percussionists, to pose with their purple drums and shirts in a similar way. The Batucada is a traditional form of percussive procession. It originates from rites of African roots and spread in South America and Spain for carnivals and protests. Nonetheless, aspects of the Batucada reminds of military orchestras and for that reason was considered for decades as a predominantly male tradition. With García's investigation of women genealogies that resist patriarchy, her photograph shows a festive form of collective resistance.

[23] William Cordova, *Dwellings* (sculpting elsewhere in time or Halim El-Dabh), 2014, variable measures, Audio vinyl recording.

William Cordova's *Dwellings* (sculpting elsewhere in time or Halim El-Dabh) (2014) entangles sound, space and sculpture. Its title names the Egyptian composer of concrete music Halim El-Dabh, a key figure that bridged concepts of western and oriental composition. Cordova's work portrays places that have been fundamental to the development of urban music from the 70's and 80's. In his gatefold record cover the studio of electronic band pioneers Kraftwerk appears on one side while the Bass Station

recording studio in Miami appears on the other. The latter has been key in mixing different genres such as latin music, reggae, R&B or disco with Hip-hop. Spinning on a turn table, a vinyl record can be listened to. It blends the atmospheres of five locations. Places connect into a meta network where the narratives of sound and space.

[24] Colectivo Bestiario & Alfredo Márquez, *Bestiario 1984 – 1987 Documenta*, 2012, 100 x 70 cm each one, silkscreen in 10 parts. The portfolio of 10 silkscreen prints edited by **Colectivo Bestiario** and **Alfredo Márquez** entitled *Bestiario 1984-1987 Documenta* (2012) chronicles the events organized by Las Bestias (The Beasts), a referential collective from the mid 80's of anarchist artists and architects from Lima. Focused on self-government, their multidisciplinary practices activated public spaces in an organic manner that led to concerts, performances, theater, dance, craftsmanship, debates and exhibitions. Their ephemeral constructions made with recycled materials, although closer to an antithesis of academic architecture and sculpture, had a lot in common with the activism of the time. Nonetheless, in retrospect their work has common points with artists such as Gordon Matta Clark, Yona Friedman or the collective Group Material. In contrast to a rigid and opaque urbanism, their constructions highlighted a transparent and flexible grid that, by making anarchitecture a concrete utopia, made visible another part of the social fabric.

[25] Sandra Gamarra, *Prueba para October*, 2010, 54 x 65 cm, oil on canvas.

Sandra Gamarra's painting *Sketch for October* (2010) served as a sketch when the artist appropriated the controversial series of paintings by Gerhard Richter *October*, a group of works made from photographs of imprisonment of several members of the German armed struggle group the R.A.F (Red Army Faction). The work comes from a picture of the turntable that Andreas Baader had in his jail cell after the prisoner had, apparently, killed himself. The record player, most often related to entertainment and freedom, appears without spinning with the needle at rest. Within this political context this image shows the products of the cultural industry tied to its proper contradictions. By appropriating the works of others, as versions and remixes of songs, Gamarra points out political structures of culture.

[26] Dennis Adams, *Lullaby*, 2004, 33 x 33 cm, vinyl record steel plate and photography.

The title of **Dennis Adams' work** *Lullaby* (2004) refers to the tunes sung put kids asleep. More precisely the work represents the last record that Andreas Baader listened to in his cell, an album by Eric Clapton entitled "There is One in Every Crowd". A copy of the long play record comes in a plexiglass box that reproduces the color picture of the record on the turntable photographed by the police after the death of the prisoner. It also is the same image that Gerhard Richter used to make one of his paintings from his series *October*. Inside the plexiglass box, the record comes with a thick steel plate of the same size. Once the heavy slab is placed on a turntable the record plays slower and slower until it eventually breaks the motor of the record player. In this work popular culture becomes vulnerable and distorted by the political context.

[27] LiMac archives.

[28] LiMac archives.

Antoine Henry Jonquères, Madrid, November 2017

