

ENCOUNTERS

LES DEMOISELLES D'ORIENT

AUGUST 20 – 31, 2014

Encounters (2012-ongoing) is a project by Marco Cassani that reflects on the concept of ownership and authorship of the objects. The artist is interested in the potential of human being, in human behaviour, in reversing ordinary situations and discovering the interaction between the unpredictable situation created by the artist and the subjects chosen in their working time. Cassani collects new products created by these interactions, giving a new perspective on the concept of labour, a new value and modes of production in capitalism system.

For Les Demoiselles d'Orient (2012-2014), the first project of this series, Cassani has chosen Asian sex workers as the object of study. He has been attracted by the field of prostitution as a popular hidden aspect inside Asian society ever since he moved to Indonesia, particularly in prostitution as business and in prostitute figure as a worker who sells his/her body for sexual activity engagement.

The title of the exhibition is inspired by Picasso's painting Les Demoiselles d'Avignon. Created in the 1907, the painting represents five nude female prostitutes from a brothel on Carrere d'Avinyo (Avinyo Street) in Barcelona. In this adaptation of Primitivism and abandonment of perspective in favour of a flat, two-dimensional picture plane, Picasso makes a radical departure from traditional European painting to the Modern art through the exotic culture.

In Les Demoiselles d'Orient, Cassani used the observation of exotic culture as the starting point, gave prostitution a new perspective by reversing the ordinary situation of the prostitutes' work routine into a new labour by inviting them to draw him totally naked.

The drawings resulted from these interactions are not merely drawings but reflections of the concept of Affectio (affection) used in the philosophy of Baruch Spinoza and described by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari as:

'AFFECT/AFFECTION. Neither word denotes a personal feeling (sentiment in Deleuze and Guattari). L'affect (Spinoza's affectus) is an ability to affect and be affected. It is a prepersonal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to another and implying an augmentation or diminution in that body's capacity to act. L'affection (Spinoza's affectio) is each such state considered as an encounter between the affected body and a second, affecting, body (with body taken in its broadest possible sense to include "mental" or ideal bodies).' (1)
'The affection indicates the nature of the affected body much more than it does the nature of the affecting body.' (2)

During the research of over two years period, the artist has collected more than one hundred Affections Drawings, made by sex workers in various locations in Asia (Bali, Surabaya, Yogyakarta, Jakarta, Bangkok, Phnom Penh) and Affections Words, a mix of sex workers' words and phrases taken from audio records during the encounters with the sex workers.

The Les Demoiselles d'Orient will be presented in the WIPS program at the iCAN (Indonesia Contemporary Art Network) space in Yogyakarta from the 20th until 31st August 2014.

During this time, the artist will stay in Yogyakarta to continue developing the project. Everyday he will make new encounters with sex workers and he will constantly update the space and the blog <http://marcocassani.com/lddo> with new Affections Drawings and Affections Words.

*The spectators are allowed to visit the space, Monday-Saturday, and see the development of the project 2-4 pm.

Keynote presentation:

Les Demoiselles d'Orient

30th August, 6:00 pm

Marco Cassani (artist)

Enin Supriyanto (curator of the project)

Venue: Indonesia Contemporary Art Network (iCAN)

Jl. Suryodiningratan 39 Yogyakarta

Warning: Some of the images contain mature content

Marco Cassani is a multimedia artist.

He studied Fine Art in Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera in Milan and graduated in 2006.

Cassani started his practice in art by painting. He then developed interest to other fields of art.

Since 2011, Cassani's practice has expanded from painting into photography, video, 'art event' and actions, resulting a combination of performance, conceptual art and participatory art.

His artistic research analyzes the concept of ownership, authorship, reverse, encounter and its multitude unpredictable consequences.

Web Version: <http://canmanage.net/wips-agustus-2014-marco-cassani-2/>

(1) Deleuze, Gilles; Guattari, Félix (1987) [1980], 'A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia'. Trans. and foreword by Brian Massumi. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press. p. xvi

(2) Deleuze, Gilles 'Course Vincennes', January 24 1978