The Promise of Ruin(s) CHPT 1 Parasites of the Imaginary

DEC:18.-MAR:20.2022 THE BALCONY

WITH Minsook Kang, Martha Rosler, Eva Pel

The Promise of Ruin(s) tackles the concept of ruin(s)—as both a material relic and an intangible construct of the mind—into their diverse specificity, giving space to relational proposals and overlapping temporalities. Each of the three upcoming chapters echoes the ruin in its multiplicity, from the reading of modernity, to the speculative discrepancy of decay and precariousness of turbo-capitalism.

This program is set to unfold at The Balcony over the course of the upcoming year. Each chapter is articulated as a trio exhibition. The aim is to bind established artists, with mid-career and recently graduated practitioners from the field.

Recent history and particularly the start of the twenty-first century has seen the flourishing of ruins, and the representation of decay in the realm of global events, popular culture and visual arts. Ruins surround us, from the frivolous consumption of global tourism, to the remnants of modernity and the industrial revolution, down to the materiality of conflict-architecture, dust and kitsch.

To quote Marina Garces' Conditio Posthuma, "Historical linearity has shifted into reverse, pointing not to a light at the end of the tunnel, but casting a shadow on our shop windows illuminated by constant artificial light". (Marina Garces, Condition Posthuma, 2017).

Ruins are constructed, adored, romanticized as traces of decay and disrepair. Remains define growth, our past and a possible future. From the debris of history, ruins whisper the future into our ears.

What do ruin(s) say to—and about—us today and tomorrow, in the aftermath of an unprecedented historic, economic and epistemic crisis?

Discourses around production and consumption in contemporary capitalist scenarios are so entangled that the terms Prosumption and Prosumer are today commonly used to describe the condition in which subjects of capitalism find themselves, "especially in light of the explosion of user-generated online content—abundance over scarcity, and a rise in exploitation and unpaid labour". (George Ritzer And Nathan Jurgenson, Journal of Consumer Culture).

THE BALCONY
Nieuwe Molstraat 14^{A2}
2512BK, The Hague
Sat: 13^{HR} – 17^{HR}
Mon – Fri: by appointment thebalconythehague.com

Minsook Kang is an emerging South Korean artist based in The Hague, NL. Her practice looks at how capitalism focuses on producing, selling and efficiently discarding. Consumption is all about speed and functionality, whereas Minsook's practice is all about care, nurturing and slowpaced displacement. In her work titled the *Christmas Trees Project I: The Christmas Trees Island*, she undertook to save as many discarded trees as she could, before replanting them on an undisclosed island. At The Balcony Minsook presents *The Christmas Trees Project II*, that will be accompanied by an excursion to the trees she originally replanted in 2017.

couple of lines of bio couple of lines

Happy Boxes by Eva Pel looks into the relation between e-commerce and the rapid disappearance of small shops in city centers. The combination of large-scale shopping malls and online shopping is greatly affecting local shop owners. Houses are being demolished and inhabitants expropriated. Communal structures fall apart. Through these observations, Pel develops a series of boxes inspired by online stores such as Amazon, Bol.com, Zalando, Coolblue or Hema. The boxes made of wood, and are highly accurate hand-painted replicas. At first sight the delivery boxes look similar to disposable cardboard packages. Yet from close-up they are the product, to be kept instead of disposed.

couple of lines of bio couple of lines

In these three short, early Super-8 films, Rosler reflects on the relationship between labor and leisure. Set in the arch-American "home movie" context of a sunny suburban yard, *Backyard Economy I* and *Backyard Economy II* document the mundane activities of a woman going about her domestic chores. Quietly depicting this figure in the tasks of mowing and watering the grass, hanging laundry to dry, and keeping her son company, Rosler points up the labor that allows leisure, and interrogates the "economy" that creates her role. In the film *Flower Fields*, Rosler creates a color field painting from the vivid flower-growing fields along Highway 5 in California, which provide a living for the many, most undocumented, workers in the area.

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About THE BALCONY

The Balcony is a multi-headed artist initiative based in The Hague. Since 2018 The Balcony curates exhibitions supporting the presentation of upcoming practices with a focus on alternative formats of display, keen on collaborations and using unconventional locations as part of their *extramuros* program. The initiative has previously been hosted in the vitrine of a violin store (from 2018 to 2020), as well as the basement of a former office space, previously known as Susan Bites (from 2019 to 2021).

The Balcony is curated by Arthur Cordier and Valentino Russo, in conversation with artists Harriet Rose Morley, Flaviu Cacoveanu and curator Ioana Mandeal. The studio hosts artists Ariane Toussaint, Minsook Kang and curator Yannik Güldner. The initiative is self-funded, with the addition of project-based funding. Members of the initiative sustain the program on a voluntary basis, and your support is appreciated. Arthur & Valentino warmly thank the artists for making this exhibition possible, Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI) for their support, Stefan Bandalac (SBAE) for the technical partnership as well as Pavlo Radich and Julia Waraksa from STAATSDUET.



