

Ström

exformation



Agnieszka Kurant

1 December 2013 - 23 February 2014

Agnieszka Kurant exformation Introduction

A version of the New York Times from the year 2020 assembled by messages from a professional clairvoyant and written by NYT journalists, a collection of books imagined in other books, conceptual artworks that hitherto only existed as suggestions, a soundtrack of silences from famous public speeches, works in ink that disappears and reappears depending on the weather, a film with characters that were edited out of Hollywood movies, a levitating meteorite.

Phantom Library
Photo: Eduardo Ortega, courtesy of Tanya Bonakdar Gallery and Fortes Vilaca Gallery

Agnieszka Kurant *exformation*

1 December 2013 - 23 February 2014

Opening: Saturday 30 November, 5 pm (preceded at 4 pm by a talk between Agnieszka Kurant and Chris Fitzpatrick)

Location: Hogewal 1-9, The Hague

Basic guide design: Thonik, Amsterdam

Photo on cover: Agnieszka Kurant, *Political Map of Phantom Islands* (detail)

Photo: Eduardo Ortega, courtesy of Tanya Bonakdar Gallery and Fortes Vilaca Gallery



In her first solo show in the Netherlands taking place at Stroom Den Haag Kurant will present existing works as well as two new ambitious works that are connected by her fascination for fleeting or imperceptible elements of reality, phantoms, intangible or invisible forces, the exchange of symbolic values, the editing process as an aesthetic and political act.

The title of the exhibition, *exformation*, refers to this as well: exformation is a term coined at the end of the 90s by the Danish science journalist Tor Nørretranders to denote the process in which information is explicitly left out.

The exhibition will feature a new film, *Cutaways*, a portrait of the invisible universe of characters that have been completely deleted from the final cut of feature films. The new work *Phantom Estate* furthers Kurant's investigation into fictions, speculations and potential forgeries present in the functioning of conceptual artists' estates.

“Although her work is centered in and around the fictional, she has an extremely real and practical flair for implementations and realizations and the techniques associated with them. Kurant always works with surprisingly high-caliber professionals from the worlds of science and technology, who help her achieve her ‘magical’ effects,” writes Diedrich Diederichsen in his text written on

the work of Agnieszka Kurant on the occasion of her show at Stroom.

Kurant is investigating how phantoms, fictions, the things left out, and rumors influence social, economic and political systems of the contemporary world. The artist explores the hybrid and shifting status, value, aura, authorship, production, and ownership of objects. Analyzing the ‘unknown unknowns’ of knowledge, mutations of memes, immaterial labour, collective intelligence and its unconscious, she seeks to explore gaps in logic that confuse and inform our understanding of reality.

In the words of Diedrich Diederichsen :
“Agnieszka Kurant thematizes the relationship of fiction to the real in a different way. Fiction is not a forgery or falsification of reality, an invented reality, an art that is not identified as such, or an “artless” artificiality, a lie, as suggested by the various ethical and political critiques of fiction. Nor is it a surrogate for or alternative to reality and hence a dead-end road out of it, a drug, escape, or error. Rather, it is a second creator of reality, an illegitimate or repudiated sister of the demiurge, not grounded in reality but capable of influencing or altering it. For Agnieszka Kurant, fiction always has reality effects.”

Agnieszka Kurant was born in 1978, in Poland; she lives and works in New York. She represented Poland at the Venice Biennale in 2010 (in collaboration with the architect Aleksandra Wasilkowska) and has exhibited her work in solo and group exhibitions at Objectif Exhibitions, Antwerp (2012); CoCA, Torun, PL (2012); Witte de With, Rotterdam (2011); Performa Biennial, New York (2009); Athens Biennale (2009); Frieze Projects, London (2008); Moscow Biennale (2007); Tate Modern, London (2006); Mamco, Geneva (2006); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2004), among others. Kurant was an artist in residence at Location One, New York (2011-2012); the Paul Klee Center (Sommerakademie), Bern (2009); ISCP, New York (2005); and Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2004). In 2009 she was shortlisted for the International Henkel Art Award (MUMOK, Vienna). Sternberg Press published Kurant's monograph *Unknown Unknown* in 2008.

Works in the exhibition

Endless Second

A sculpture in the shape of a meteorite that 'magically', but actually through magnetism, levitates in the air. It is a fragile sculpture that reacts to movements of air, for example when people walk by it. This anti gravity piece is governed by an unfamiliar logic, the rules of which are yet to be invented.

Endless Second and 88,7 (title variable)
Photo: Isabelle Arthuis. Courtesy of Objectif Exhibitions, Antwerp





Phantom Library

In the work *Phantom Library* the artist produces imaginary books, titles that were never written, read or published, yet nevertheless described in real books by authors such as Stanislaw Lem, Roberto Bolaño and Jorge Luis Borges. Kurant presents them as sculptural objects for which she purchased ISBN numbers and acquired barcodes, thereby giving these fictional books a status in the material world.

Phantom Library
Photo: Eduardo Ortega, courtesy Galeria courtesy of Tanya Bonakdar Gallery and Fortes Vilaca Gallery

Maps of Phantom Islands

Maps of Phantom Islands depicts non-existent islands observed as mirages or invented by past explorers and placed on important political maps throughout the history of cartography. These fictitious territories often lead to real political conflicts. The map is printed with thermal-sensitive ink that makes the image appear or disappear according to the weather.

Maps of Phantom Islands
Photo: Eduardo Ortega, courtesy of Tanya Bonakdar Gallery and Fortes Vilaca Gallery



88,2 (title variable)

In *88.2 MHz* - the title changes in accordance to the radio frequency used in a given museum to broadcast the piece - a tape player linked to a radio transmitter and antenna emits the accumulation of silent pauses excerpted from radio broadcasts of different political, intellectual and economic speeches. The tape with the compilation of silences is an actual realisation of the fictitious work described in the short story by Heinrich Böll, *Murke's Collected Silences* (1955).



Endless Second and 88,7 (title variable)
Photo: Isabelle Arthuis. Courtesy of Objectif Exhibitions, Antwerp



Future Anterior

Future Anterior
Photo: courtesy of Tanya Bonakdar Gallery and Fortes Vilaca Gallery

This work consists of a version of The New York Times from the year 2020. A professional clairvoyant who collaborates regularly with Interpol, police and governments and is a reliable source of information for businessman and politicians, was asked by Kurant to create a forecast of what will happen in and around 2020. These forecasts were developed into an issue of the newspaper that has all the parameters of a real NYT issue, with articles written by several NYT journalists, a bar code and advertisements bought by existing companies. However, this newspaper is printed with disappearing ink, which becomes completely invisible above 21 degrees.



Cutaways, 2013. Cinematography: Michael Simmonds, courtesy of Anna Lena Films, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery and Fortes Vilaca Gallery

Phantom Estate

This new piece explores authorless structures, fictions, speculations and potential forgeries present in the functioning of conceptual artists' estates. It critically analyses the mythology surrounding conceptual art practices as well as the hybrid status of objects. The work is a small plinth-display-case-museum architecture, a miniature institution, consisting of several phantom works. The pieces are based on unfinished, barely mentioned and rumored works of deceased conceptual artists such as Marcel Broodthaers, Guy de Cointet, Alighiero Boetti, Lee Lozano, Edward Krasinski and Gino de Dominicis.

Phantom Estate furthers Kurant's investigation into "unknown unknowns" and hybrid authorship. The work includes an artificial intelligence unit inspired by the artist's dialogue with the AI scientist Luc Steels, the Director of the Artificial Intelligence Laboratory at the Vrije Universiteit in Brussels. *Phantom Estate* is conceived as an intelligent artwork which has its own agency and agenda.



Cutaways

Cutaways is a portrait of the invisible universe of phantom characters that have been completely deleted from the final cut of feature films after decisions regarding film duration or structure made by editors, directors and producers. Although they leave no apparent trace in the stories, these films also, strangely, belong to them. *Cutaways* looks at this no man's land or junkyard of surplus characters and deleted narratives.

Addressing editing as a basic common intellectual and political tool present everywhere in our lives, and made in collaboration with legendary film editor Walter Murch (*The Godfather*, *Apocalypse Now*), *Cutaways* narrates the encounter of three cut-out characters from different major American films.

Cutaways, 2013.
Cinematography:
Michael Simmonds, courtesy of
Anna Lena Films,
Tanya Bonakdar
Gallery and Fortes
Vilaca Gallery

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They play, once again, their original role and 're-impersonate' their cut-out characters: Charlotte Rampling as the hitchhiker in Richard C. Sarafian's *Vanishing Point* (1971), Abe Vigoda as the lawyer and best friend of protagonist Harry Caul in Francis Ford Coppola's *The Conversation* (1974) and Dick Miller as junkyard owner Monster Joe in Quentin Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction* (1994).



Stroom School

Stroom School is the umbrella term for the side program accompanying exhibitions. Themes are highlighted and more profoundly explored.

The Stroom School of Agnieszka Kurant consists of a number of guided tours, workshops and an evening on her work.

Opening of exhibition with a talk between Agnieszka Kurant and Chris Fitzpatrick

Saturday 30 November 2013, 4 pm
Stroom Den Haag, Hogewal 1-9

Chris Fitzpatrick (New York, 1978) is director of Objectif Exhibitions Antwerp since 2012. He has independently organized exhibitions and events, including *VEERLE* at Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin (2013-14); The San Francisco Pavilion, 9th Shanghai Biennale (2012); *The Museum Problem* and *Walkie Talkie* at Frutta, Rome (2012); *The Cat is on the Table* at Spazio A, Pistoia (2011); *Nina Beier: What Follows Will Follow II* and *An Oration by Father Bertie Pearson, Priest of the Episcopal Church* at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco (2010-11) among others. Chris Fitzpatrick received an MA in Curatorial Practice from the California College of the Arts, San Francisco (2009) and was awarded several curatorial residencies. His writing has been featured in publications including *Pazmaker*, *Nero*, *Mousse*, *Fillip*, *Cura*, *The Baltic Notebooks* of Anthony Blunt, exhibition catalogues, and books.



Tales to Tell: Writing workshops by Writerskitchen

12 December 2013, 16 January and 13 February 2014: 2 pm - 4:30 pm
Stroom Den Haag, Hogewal 1-9
Entrance fee: 20 euro
RSVP: info@stroom.nl (please specify on which of the three above dates you would like to participate).
Limited number of participants.

Workshop of 2 ½ hours by Kathy Mathys of Writerskitchen. Mathys is an experienced writer and will focus in this workshop on plotting and plot endings, the politics of editing and choices.

Kathy Mathys has written for Belgian and Dutch magazines and newspapers as a freelance journalist. She writes about literature for *De Standaard*. She also writes about food and is interested in food culture. Her food stories have been published in *Bouillon!* She does public interviews and is a teacher of creative writing at the Schrijversacademie. She's working on her first book which is due to be published in 2015 by *De Bezige Bij* Antwerp.

An evening on the work of Agnieszka Kurant with Diederich Diederichsen, Pieter Fleury and James Richards

Thursday 6 February 2014, 5 pm
Stroom Den Haag, Hogewal 1-9
RSVP: info@stroom.nl
Entrance: 7,50 euro

Diederich Diederichsen will talk with Agnieszka Kurant about the text he wrote especially for the exhibition (see p. 22). Diederichsen (1957) is a German author, music journalist and cultural critic. He is one of Germany's most renowned intellectual writers at the crossroads of the arts, politics, and pop culture. Diederichsen worked in Hamburg as a music journalist and editor of the German Sounds magazine in the heyday of Punk and New Wave from 1979 to 1983. Until the 1990s he was the editor-in-chief of the influential subculture magazine *Spex* in Cologne.

Diederichsen is a prolific writer whose articles and texts are printed in a variety of periodicals and publications. Newspapers and magazines with contributions by Diederichsen include *Texte zur Kunst*, *Die Zeit*, *Der Tagesspiegel*,

Süddeutsche Zeitung, *Artforum*, and *Frieze*. With his thinking and his attitude Diederichsen reflects a multitude of influences. His writing shows traces of Post-structuralism, Marxism, Cultural studies, New Journalism, Beat literature, Psychoanalysis, and Situationism. A main topic of his writing is the tension between subjectivity, identity politics, and culture industry in Post-Fordist society.

Pieter Fleury (1955) built a name for himself over the last 30 years as a director and producer of documentary films, television films, corporate films and commercials. He directed amongst others the documentary *Ramses, où est mon prince* about Ramses Shaffy which won the Gouden Kalf for Best Documentary in 2002. Fleury founded the film production company Golden Monkey Enterprises. As producer and director he produced, for example, *Shanghai The Peoples City* (1985), *Mene Tekel* (1997), *Noord Korea, een dag uit het leven* (2004) and *Klokken van de Keizer* (2010). As co-director of *Acht en de Vlieg* filmproductions he created *Het Schitterende scherm, 50 jaar NOS-Journaal* (2006). His most recent film *Het*

Oordeel (2011) deals with decision-making of judges. In 2012 he became head of documentaries at the Netherlands Film Fund.

The artist **James Richards** (lives and works in London) makes videos, curates film and video projects and often works with archival film material and found film footage that he dissects and reassembles. He will give a presentation that consists of screening both his own work, fragments of collaborative works and historical work from the Lux collection of artists film and video. He will, in the course of his presentation, lightly touch upon some of the topics present in Kuran's work. Recent solo shows of James Richard's work have been

held at Rodeo, Istanbul; Spike Island, Bristol (both 2013); CCA Kitakyushu (2012); Chisenhale Gallery, London and RODEO, Istanbul (both 2011). Recent group exhibitions include *The Encyclopedic Palace*, Venice Biennale, 2013; the Lyon Biennale, 2013; *Frozen Lakes*, Artists Space, New York (2013); and *The Imaginary Museum*, Kunstverein Munchen, Munich (2012). He has curated screenings for numerous venues including Light Industry, New York and the ICA, London. Richards was awarded the 2012 Jarman Award for film and video and is currently in Berlin with the DAAD Berliner Künstlerprogramm.



Photo: installation view James Richards *Active Negative Programme* (2009) and *Untitled Merchandise (Lovers and dealers)* (2007), *The Imaginary Museum*, Kunstverein München, Munich

Guided Tours

On a number of Sundays during the run of the exhibition there will be guided tours where people will present their personal view of the exhibition and its underlying themes.

Sunday 12 January 2014, 3 pm

Guided tour Machteld Rullens

Free. Reservations not required

Machteld Rullens (1988, The Hague) is currently studying at the Piet Zwart Institute (Rotterdam). In her work she combines fact and fiction to show ordinary situations in a different way. The work can take any shape. It can be a video, a performance, an installation or a combination of these forms. While making, a play between artist, actor and audience takes place. She considers this play as a material.

Work by Machteld Rullens is on view at Stroom Den Haag in an OpZicht presentation (27 November 2013 to 12 January 2014).

Sunday 2 February 2014, 3 pm

Guided tour Ton Geerts

Free. Reservations not required

Ton Geerts is curator modern and contemporary art at the RKD, Netherlands Institute for Art Histo-

ry. The RKD evaluates, documents and describes, throughout the year, many artworks. Four times a year the RKD organizes a sort of Antiques Roadshow day, where visitors can get an evaluation of their artworks in terms of authenticity and art-historical value.

Sunday 9 February 2014, 3 pm

Guided tour Vivian Sky Rehberg

Free. Reservations not required

On the last day of the exhibition, Vivian Sky Rehberg will give a guided tour. Vivian Sky Rehberg is an art historian and critic and Course Director of the Master of Fine Art at the Piet Zwart Institute. She obtained her PhD in art history in 2000 from Northwestern University (Evanston, Illinois, U.S.A.). Based in Paris since the late 1990s, Rehberg worked as a curator, writer, translator and educator in France before moving to Rotterdam in February 2012. Rehberg is a contributing editor of *frieze* magazine and publishes widely on contemporary art and artists.

Lunch tours on Friday

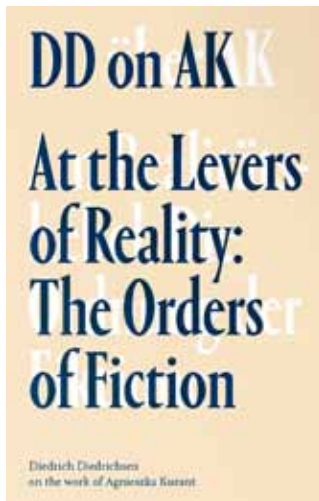
Sign up for a guided tour plus lunch on Friday afternoon! For more information and bookings, Please contact Stroom: info@stroom.nl

Costs: 12,50 euro

Guided tours for students

Students can request a guided tour on weekdays. For more information and bookings, please contact Stroom: info@stroom.nl

Costs: free



Text by Diederich Diederichsen on the work of Agnieszka Kurant

Price: 5 euro

On the occasion of Agnieszka Kurant's show at Stroom Den Haag, Diederich Diederichsen has been commissioned to write a text on her work. This text, designed by Atelier Carvalho Bernau and presented as a small booklet, is for sale at Stroom.

Stroom Den Haag is supported by the city of The Hague. The program is also made possible by the Mondriaan Fund, Stichting DOEN and the Creative Industries Fund NL.

Partner for the exhibition Agnieszka Kurant *exformation* is Sculpture Center, New York with additional support by the Adam Mickiewicz Institute, Poland.

Cutaways, 2013

Produced by Anna Lena Films and commissioned by Sculpture Center (New York) and Stroom Den Haag.

Stroom Den Haag

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