

TEMPORARY GALLERY

Press Release **I See, So I See So. Messages from Harry Smith**

09/05–12/20/2015

Opening: Friday 4 September 2015, 7 pm

Press Talk: Friday 4 September 2015, 11 am

**Peter Adair, Kasper Akhøj/Tamar Guimarães, Wallace Berman, Franco Pinna, Harry Smith,
Suzanne Treister, Rosemarie Trockel, Apichatpong Weerasethakul**

“My movies are made by God; I am just the medium for them”. The experimental filmmaker, mystic and ethnomusicologist, Harry Everett Smith (Portland, Oregon 1923–1991 New York City) was a major protagonist of American counterculture of the 1960s and was especially well known in Europe for his influential “Anthology of American Folk Music”. His works combine autobiographical links to 19th-century occultism and spiritism with anthropological (sound) studies on the shamanism of the Lummi Nation und experiments with psychedelic substances in the attempt to visualise synaesthetic and mystic experiences as a universal and transdisciplinary principle.

Using Harry Smith’s life and work as its starting point, the group exhibition “I See, So I See So. Messages from Harry Smith” presents artists and theorists working at the interface between visual art, film and anthropology. In their examinations of mediumism as a ritual, experimental and artistic practice, each of them raise specific questions concerning media semantics, exploring the politics of the aestheticisation, commodification and globalisation of ecstatic practices and their experimental appropriation and transformations through the means of art. The “medium” itself – in its two-fold sense as technical media and personal medium – presents itself in this way in the crosshairs of divergent artistic and scientific approaches and connections. In its ordered and segmented structures, levels and tensions, the exhibition “I See, So I See So. Messages from Harry Smith” is conceptualised as an open framework. New connotations, even unpredictable ones, emerge at the point where two works meet each other, each of which have in and of themselves an essential intrinsic function as a part of the whole. In this sense Harry Smith’s copious collection of 18 “String Figures” forms the core of the exhibition that is woven into the fabric of the respective artistic, scientific and religious works. The show furthermore features ethnographic documentary films and photographs of trance rituals, for example from Southern Italy, and experimental films, prints and photographs by Harry Smith and his contemporaries that are juxtaposed to the selected works by the present-day artists.

The exhibition has been curated by:

Regina Barunke, art historian and artistic director of the Temporary Gallery, Cologne, and Anja Dreschke, media anthropologist, filmmaker and research fellow at the DFG project “Trance Mediums and New Media” at the University of Siegen.

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Academy of the Arts of the World, Cologne; Kunststiftung NRW, Dusseldorf; Hypo Cultural Foundation Munich; Goethe-Institut, Munich; Brandl Transport GmbH, Cologne; Cultural Office of the City of Cologne; RheinEnergie Culture Foundation, Cologne; Deltax Steuerberatung, Cologne; Hotel Chelsea, Cologne. / We wish to express our cordial gratitude to all the participating artists, guests, galleries and lenders as well to Harry Smith Archives, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, to Anthology Film Archives, New York; and to Kolumba Museum, Cologne, and University Siegen.

TEMPORARY GALLERY

Program for the exhibition

Starts always at 7 pm, Admission: 2,50 EUR

For information on our current program, please ask for our exhibition booklet
or visit: www.temporarygallery.org

- Thu 10/22 **Lecture and Book launch (engl.):** „Even the Dead Rise Up“
Francis McKee, Curator and Director, CCA Centre for Contemporary Art, Glasgow
- Thu 10/29 **Talk (engl.):** „Tarantism Revisited. Ecstatic and Mimetic Practices in Art and Anthropology“
Joachim Koester, Artist, Copenhagen/NY, and
Michaela Schäuble, Media Anthropologist, University Bern
Screening: Joachim Koester, Tarantism, 2007, 16mm, 6:31 min
- Fri 10/30 **Lecture and Screening:** „With the voice of another. Power and obsession in the cult of the 'Holy' Alberto“
Ulrich van Loyen, Cultural Scientist, Cologne/Rome. With films by Luigi die Gianni.
- Wed 11/04 **Talk (engl.):** „Harry Smith. Underground Ethnographer“
Henning Engelke, Art Historian, Frankfurt a.M., and
Rani Singh, Director Harry Smith Archives, and Senior Research Associate at the Getty Research Institute,
Los Angeles
- Sat 11/07 **Screening:** Harry Smith, „Film #12, Heaven and Earth Magic“, 1957-1962, 16mm, 126 min
- Thu 11/12 **Film programme:** „Magic Mushrooms“
Curated and introduced by Ilka Becker, Art Historian, HBK Braunschweig
Bruce Conner, „Looking for Mushrooms“, 1965, 16mm transferred to DVD, 4:30 min
Storm De Hirsch, „Peyote Queen“, 1965, 16mm, 8:56 min
Étienne O'Leary, „Homeo“, 1967, 16mm transferred to DVD, 38 min
Gary-Lee Nova, „Steel Mushrooms“, 1967, 16mm transferred to Blu-ray, 10 min
Harry Smith, „Film #10, Early Abstractions“, 1957, 16mm transferred to DVD, 3:35 min
- Thu 11/26 **Talk:** „Satan Crucified“
Heike Behrend, Ethnologist, and
Armin Linke, Artist, HFG-Karlsruhe/Berlin
Screening: Heike Behrend / Armin Linke, „Satan Crucified“, 2011, 30 min
- Thu 12/03 **Talk and Screenings:** „Ghost Hunting“
Rainer Knepperger, director and author, Cologne, and
Ehler Voss, Ethnologist, Siegen/Leipzig
- Thu 12/17 **Music Night:** „Halleluwah“
Erhard Schüttpelz, Media Scientist, Siegen/Cologne, and
Carlo Peters, composer, Cologne
Screening: Harry Smith, „Film #1-5, 7, Early Abstractions“, 1939-1956, 16mm, 23min