

ART from ELSEWHERE: Mexico City
The MOMENTUM Collection at LAGOS

CHRISTIAN JANKOWSKI



***Traveling Artist* (2018), Video Loop together with Video Performance, Japanese with English subtitles, 15'47".**

For *ART from ELSEWHERE: Mexico City*, we are proud to welcome Christian Jankowski into the MOMENTUM Collection with *Traveling Artist*. Jankowski's conceptual practice is that of artist-as-sociologist, playfully intervening to subvert the many norms and conventions we all take for granted. As one of the best known contemporary artists from Germany, Jankowski is always on the move to far-flung exhibitions, biennales, art fairs, and artist residencies. Travel is at once liberating and – especially in our post-pandemic age – increasingly difficult. Constrained by the many obligations of his career as a traveling artist, Christian Jankowski made these constraints literal when he was invited to the Kyoto City University of the Arts. Engaging with the traditional Japanese artform of

Kinbaku – Japanese bondage – Jankowski, with his customary subtle humor, translates an exotic subculture into something we can all relate to. We have all felt tied down by life’s innumerable obligations, or suspended in limbo – waiting with our luggage for delayed flights, or interminably waiting through the pandemic for our lives to get back on course. Though this work was made before the pandemic, it is a prescient metaphor for our increasingly complex world.

The metaphor of the traveling artist addresses the heart of Christian Jankowski’s socially-engaged artistic practice. Jankowski’s far-reaching body of work invites viewers to see our ourselves and others, history, the media and art from a whole new perspective. By using the language of human relationships, comedic humor, or indeed any of the other innumerable tools of modern communication available, Christian Jankowski trades blows with diverse cultures, history, politics and the language of art. His playful and far-reaching projects tug at the very fabric of society itself - of the (re)reading and (re)making of history and identity - querying many notions of authorship, ownership, originality, propriety and authenticity that might otherwise be taken for granted.

ARTIST STATEMENT:

An artist goes where he finds an audience. That’s why traveling is a constant companion in Jankowski’s life. In Kyoto, Jankowski seized the opportunity and visited Aska, a Kinbaku mistress running her own erotic nightclub – “Barbara Club Bizarre” – frequented mainly by Japanese businessmen.

Sensing a connection between the Japanese bondage tradition and the constraints of his life as a contemporary artist, he asked Aska to use her binding technique on him and his travel utensils. She accepted under the condition that Jankowski put on a western business suit like her customers, but not wear trousers, reflecting the naked or seductively dressed women, who are usually bound in Kinbaku. Jankowski rose to the challenge and showed up to their “date” sporting a suit and slightly old-fashioned white underpants provided by the mistress. Shortly after, he and his luggage hang upside down from the ceiling of Aska’s establishment, rotating to soft, but festive piano music. The

four photographs accompanying the project show Jankowski from four points of the compass.

Jankowski left the luggage that had accompanied him through the years of being a traveling artist with Aska and she rearranged the bags with their content spilled out into a new Kinbaku composition. The resulting sculpture was exhibited along with the photographs at @KCUA in Kyoto.

Christian Jankowski (b. 1968 in Göttingen, German. Lives and works in Berlin.)

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Christian Jankowski studied at the University of Fine Arts, Hamburg, in Germany. In his conceptual and media artworks he makes use of film, video, photography and performance, but also of painting, sculpture, and installation. Jankowski's work consists of performative interactions between himself with non-art professionals, between contemporary art and the so-called 'world outside of art'. These interactions give insight into the popular understanding of art, while incorporating many of contemporary art's leading interests in contemporary society: regarding lifestyle, psychology, rituals and celebrations, self-perception, competition, and mass-produced and luxury commodities. Over time, Jankowski has collaborated with magicians, politicians, news anchors, and members of the Vatican, to name just a few. In each case, the context for the interaction and the participants are given a degree of control over how Jankowski's work develops and the final form that it takes. Jankowski documents these performative collaborations using the mass media formats that are native to the contexts in which he stages his work—film, photography, television, print media—which lends his work its populist appeal. Jankowski's work can be seen both as a reflection, deconstruction, and critique of a society of spectacle and at the same time as reflection, deconstruction, and critique of art, which has given itself over to spectacle and thereby endangered its critical potential.

In 2016, Jankowski curated the 11th edition of Manifesta, becoming the first artist to assume the role. He has participated in numerous international Biennales, including: Bangkok Art Biennial, Bangkok, Thailand (2020); Kaunas Biennial, Kaunas, Lithuania

(2019); Venice Biennale (2013 & 1995); 1st Montevideo Biennial, Montevideo, Uruguay (2013); Taipei Biennial, Taiwan (2010); 17th Biennale of Sydney, Australia (2010); 3rd Guangzhou Triennial, Guangzhou, China (2008); 8th Baltic Triennial of International Art, Vilnius, Lithuania (2002); Whitney Biennial, New York, NY, USA (2002); 2nd Berlin Biennale, Berlin, Germany (2001); Lyon Biennale, France (1997).

Selected recent solo exhibitions include, amongst numerous others: José García, Mérida, Mexico (2020); Fluentum, Berlin, Germany (2020); Galleria Enrico Astuni, Bologna, Italy (2019); @KCUA, Gallery of the Kyoto City University of Arts, Kyoto, Japan (2018); Galeria Hit, Bratislava, Slovakia (2017); Haus am Lütowplatz, Berlin, Germany (2016), Kunsthaus Hamburg, Germany (2015), Center for Contemporary Art, Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw, Poland (2013); Sala de Arte Público Siqueiros, Mexico City, Mexico (2012); MACRO, Rome, Italy (2012); Nassauischer Kunstverein Wiesbaden, Germany (2009); Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, Stuttgart, Germany (2008); Miami Art Museum, FL, USA (2007); MIT List Visual Art Center, Cambridge, MA, USA (2005); Swiss Institute, New York, NY, USA (2001) and the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, CT, USA (2000).

Selected recent group exhibitions include: 2020: „Sender and Receiver“, Bangkok Art Biennial, Bangkok, Thailand. 2019: “Seeing Artists Voices”, Saco Azul & Maus Habitos, Porto, Portugal; “RAM Highlights”, Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai, China; “Ikonen”, Kunsthalle Bremen, Germany; “The Last Supper”, Faena Festival, Miami, USA; “El Desig de Creure”, Arts Santa Monica Centre, Barcelona, Spanien; “After Leaving | Before Arriving”, Kaunas Biennial, Kaunas, Litauen; “Fuzzy Dark Spot”, Deichtorhallen, Hamburg; “Comeback”, Kunsthalle Tübingen, Tübingen; “Visitors @ c/o”, Café c/o Berlin – Amerikahaus, Berlin. 2018: “The most successful couple of the epoch”, Spazio Cabinet, Mailand, Italy; “Entfesselte Natur”, Kunsthalle Hamburg, Germany; “Wahlverwandtschaften”, Galeria Pelaires, Palma de Mallorca, Spain; “Vice Versa”, m3 / Art in Space, Prague, Czech Republic; “Fleisch”, Altes Museum, Berlin; “The Playground Project”, Bundeskunsthalle Bonn, Germany; “KNOCK KNOCK”, South London Gallery, London, UK. 2017: “Yokohama Triennale 2017- Islands, Constellations and Galapagos”, Yokohama Museum of Art, Yokohama, Japan; “Generation Loss. 10 Years of The Julia Stoschek Collection”, Julia Stoschek Collection, Duesseldorf, Germany; “Transactions – About the value of artistic labour”, Haus am Lütowplatz,

Berlin, Germany; "Luther und die Avantgarde", Stiftung für Kunst und Kultur e.V. , Bonn, Germany; "Duett mit Künstler_in. Partizipation als künstlerisches Prinzip", Museum Morsbroich, Leverkusen, Germany; "Behind the Screen / An Art Tribute to Isabelle Huppert", Michael Fuchs Galerie, Berlin, Germany; "Tower of Blue Horses", Haus am Waldsee, Berlin, Germany; "Autogestion", Joan Miró Foundation, Barcelona, Spain. 2016: "Exhibitions Are The Best Excuses:", Michael Fuchs Galerie, Berlin, Germany; "Shame – 100 Reasons to be Red", Deutsches Hygiene-Museum, Dresden, Germany; "Unexpectedly: The Art of Chance", Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, Stuttgart, Germany; "Wall to Wall Carpets: Carpets by Artists", MOCA, Cleveland, OH, USA; "Performer/Audience/Mirror", Lisson Gallery, London, UK; "Think Outside the Box", Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich, Switzerland; "Social Contract", Izolyatsiz Platform for Cultural Initiatives, Kyiv, Ukraine; "TeleGen. Art and Television", Kunstmuseum Lichtenstein, Vaduz, Lichtenstein; "Mirror, mirror...self-portraits in Northern Germany 1892 to today", Kunsthaus Stade, Germany; "Autogestion", Joan Miró Foundation, Barcelona, Spain; "Way Man", Zeppelin Museum, Friedrichshafen, Germany; "Momentary Monuments", Migrosmuseum, Zurich, Switzerland; "Obsession Dada", The Caribart Voltaire, Zurich, Switzerland. 2015: "The Wish to Believe", Mataró Art Contemporani, Spain; "Spirit your Mind", Free Spirits Sports Café, Miami, USA; "Freedom Myths", Cinémathèque Leipzig, Leipzig, Germany; "Trends", Gogol House, Moscow, Russia; "Moment!", Kunstverein Göttingen, Göttingen, Germany; "Tele-Gen: The Language of Television in the Mirror of Art, 1964-2015", Kunstmuseum Bonn, Germany; "Checkpoint California: 20 Years of Villa Aurora", Deutsche Bank Kunsthalle, Berlin Germany; "When I Give, I Give Myself", Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands; "Hunters and Collectors in Contemporary Art", Villa Merkel, Esslingen, Germany; "A Man Walks into a Bar...", me Collectors Room, Berlin, Germany. 2014: "Things we discover alone (Independent Learning)", Galerie für zeitgenössische Kunst, Leipzig, Germany; "Dance Me", Wanas Foundation, Knislinge, Sweden; "Room Service", Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, Germany; "Real Emotions: Thinking in Film", Kunst-Werke Institute, Berlin, Germany; "GOLA: Art and Science of Taste", Foundation La Triennale di Milano, Milan, Italy; "Lucky: From the Piggy Bank to Life on Credit", Vögele Kulturzentrum, Pfaffikon, Switzerland.