

the goma

THE GOOD CALLIGRAM

14/03/2015 - 15/05/2015

Alain Arias-Misson
Detanico & Lain
Musa Paradisiaca
Los Torreznos

Curated by Bruno Leitao

calligram

(also calligramme; from French, from Greek kallos beauty + gramma letter)

1. A word or piece of text in which the design and layout of the letters creates a visual image related to the meaning of the words themselves

The fact that the term “disambiguation” exists is proof in itself that language is naturally ambiguous. This ambiguity gives rise to misunderstandings but also to poetic potential. And poetic potential in turn engenders the possibility of debating problematics which are difficult to express or to define. The artists showcased in this exhibition make the most of the incongruity of how something so precise can at once be so open.

The Good Calligram explores the power of language in written, oral or coded form within the visual arts. The artists engage with dilemmas of translation, repetition or coding as mechanisms to address questions pertaining to narration, self-referentiality, politics and the social.

Born in Brussels, Alain Arias-Misson settled for a while in Spain and worked with artists like Joan Brossa, Ignacio Gómez de Liaño and Herminio Molero, all of whom were associated with experimental poetry movements in the 1960s. His most noteworthy works include his “public poems”, an extension of visual poetry into streets and beaches, situated somewhere between happenings and concrete poetry.

Detanico & Lain connect different artistic tendencies from Brazilian modernist vanguards with our everyday. The ambiguities on which their works are sustained are the product of their affinity for coding and decoding, translating and transposing codes and perceptions, the very traits of the flow of information in contemporary societies.

The members of the Musa paradisiaca collective start out by dialoguing with each another and then with other entities in order to form a working group with a linguistic remit. Their area of research embraces various disciplines and they reveal themselves in manifold voices that compose a personal intelligible universe.

Los Torreznos describe themselves as “a communication tool working with the social, the political and deep-rooted customs.” They operate on the boundaries between action art, performance and contemporary theatre, predicated on the everyday, using stage design coupled with oral and bodily language to acknowledge contrasts between high and low culture and seek out points in common.