

Education

There is a free educational activity for kids available at our desk. The educational workshop 'Create your own conveyor belt!' will take place on September 10, starting every hour on the hour, between 11:00 and 16:00. All conveyor belts will be presented at 16:00 and prizes will be awarded!

Press

For press requests, please contact
Adriënne van der Werf via: adrienne@vleeshal.nl

Guest Curator

Yaby (Beatriz Ortega Botas & Alberto Vallejo)

Team Vleeshal

Director: Roos Gortzak
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Curatorial assistant: Adriënne van der Werf
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Graphic Design: Vennica Sidibanga Kaseye,
Werkplaats Typografie, Arnhem

Financially supported by: Ministry of Education, Culture and Science;
Municipality of Middelburg



Vleeshal
Center for Contemporary Art

17.07.2022–11.09.2022

Open: Wed–Fri 13:00–17:00
Sat–Sun 11:00–17:00

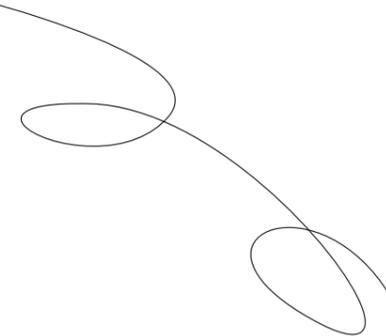
Some of It Falls from the Belt and Lands on the Walkway Beside the Conveyor

Curator: Yaby (Beatriz Ortega Botas & Alberto Vallejo)

with: **Christopher Aque**
Aria Dean **Rindon Johnson**
Claudia Pagès

Works

1. Claudia Pagès, *Fans seashells*. Three customized air fans with seashells. 2021
2. Claudia Pagès, *Walking the Gerund Mountain (Montjuïc, bando del Port)*. Video, metallic structure, flexible LED screens. 2022
3. Aria Dean, *fragment from skinning cattle by power 1867 (fig. 122 in gideon)*. Red lacquered wood, silicon rubber. 2022
4. Christopher Aque, *Double Negative (Swapping Spit)*. Kiln-formed glass, acrylic, UV-C germicidal lights, water, pumps, PVC tubes. 2021
5. Rindon Johnson, *Idiom 1 Plea Piece (Time is a Dimension)*. Five channel audio. 2022
6. Rindon Johnson, *In the end all he had left were negative decisions, eye hole, wind eye, breath hole, a sun lit curvature, five bookends and 5 shelves, his own narcissism, a keeper of things or a sun that kept rising, sacks that were never full nor empty, a man's face in a glass of port, no sherry, in decision on a cliff face, discussion of rocks and sudden openings, I wish I were not drawn to you he said before sleeping, turning over a reply was redundant, basically impossible, so nothing more was said*. Rawhides, dirt. 2022
7. Rindon Johnson, *From the chat this will be related to the speaker, the cold can easily take a voice, a bed, a bed like vehicle carried on a man's shoulders, lound, lounge, sofa, dining-couch, lie down, lay, scattered oddments, disorderly debris, provide with bedding, provide with bedding, bring forth, give birth to, to strew with objects, to scatter in a disorderly way, jonah and the whale, stretcher, bier, straw, bedding, not them, late and then later, cunning, lectus, erosion, like touching the same object with the same object over and over and then at some point stopping arbitrarily in accordance almost exactly as you begin all of which is distinctly nothing like the happiness of a dog with a ball in its mouth*. Rawhides, dirt. 2022



ecture have obscured the determining role of the slaughterhouse in its early development: agricultural constructions designed to optimize animal slaughtering and carcass waste disposal inspired the creators of the modern style, who abstracted and aestheticized the sharp functionality of the abattoir and its efficient organization of bodies in space. Using rubber—a material used for erasure, absorption and channeling flows—, Dean engraves a digitally manipulated illustration from the section dedicated to slaughterhouses in *Mechanization Takes Command*, a book by architecture historian Sigfried Gideon. The red wooden structure that holds the engraving mimics a revolving knocking pen door, a piece of slaughterhouse machinery designed to optimize livestock flow whose mechanism is activated when it is hit by the falling weight of a dead body. This kill door recreated in wood becomes the frame for an abstracted image of an abattoir scene.

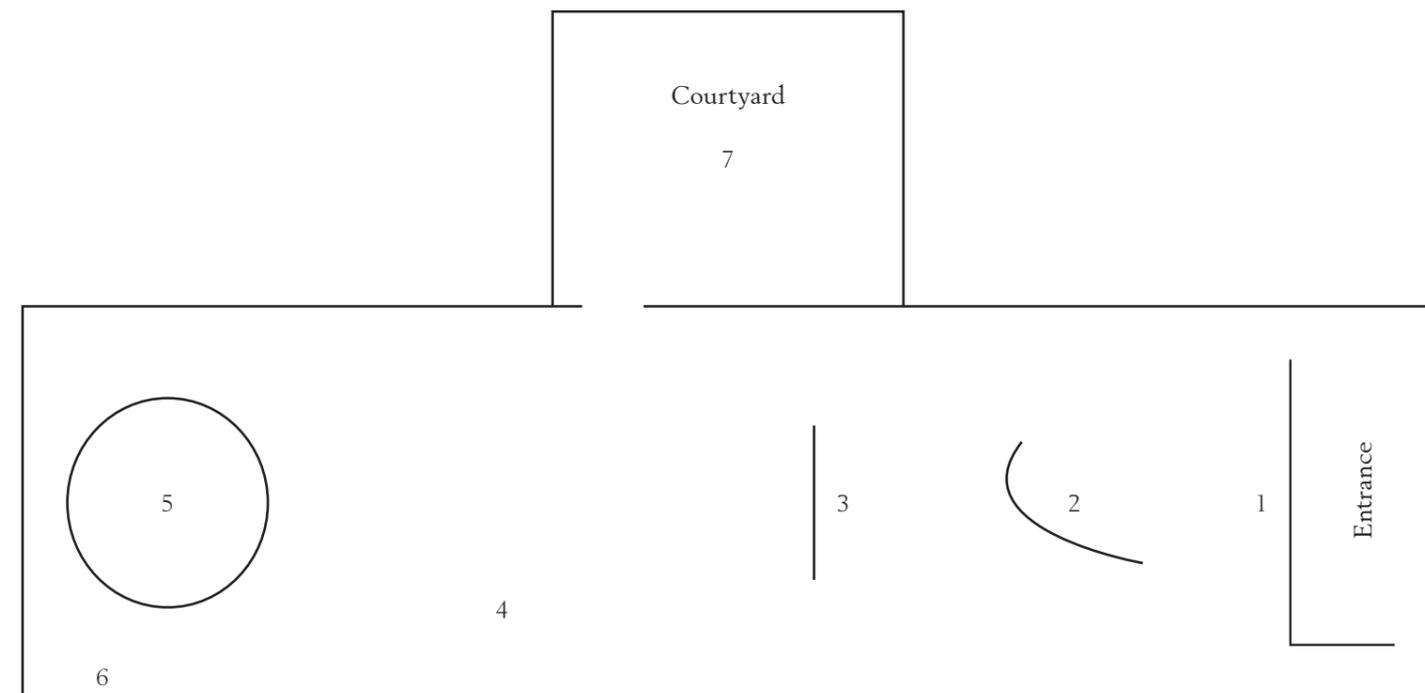
Rindon Johnson

Cow rawhide, a central material in Rindon Johnson's work, has a particular closeness to its milieu that is akin to the context-dependence of bodies and meanings—it is a by-product whose very existence is the leftovers of a prior larger system (the meat industry). Neglected for months, this untreated skin bloats with rainwater, stretches, stains, rots, and then dries out stiffening into a different shape. It is uncannily close to what it was before and at the same time always open to transformation, in an intimate and volatile relationship with its immediate surroundings. *Idiom 1 Plea Piece (Time is a Dimension)* is a collaged audio piece made with a YouTube scrubber that finds instances where Dolly Parton, Prince, Frank Sinatra, Taylor Swift and Kanye West say the word “please” in a song. “Please” is a word that has a place in political conflicts, conflicts of justice, personal conflicts and desires. Johnson connects this private dimension of the heartfelt “pleases” recorded in music to wider, deeper crises that take the word closer to the plea and its core role in the field of radical political change. The question of who is granted permission and who only gets to infinitely ask for it weighs on the piece as the “pleases” voiced over the years begin to accumulate around the room taking up space and time. Johnson extracts these “pleases” from their contexts, exposing their idiomatic character, stressing the discord between their polite allegiance to social and linguistic convention and their vast residue of inefficacy, frustration, unmatched desires and unresolved injustice.

Claudia Pagès

Small-scale instances of dissent take place in the vicinity of the larger-scale operations that sustain the state. Customs management and systemic operations alike share a linguistic common thread: they are always expressed in the gerund, a verbal tense that has no person, no beginning and no end. Claudia Pagès addresses the indeterminate present that is held in suspension by this parlance, and how bodies get violently trapped in it. *Fans seashells* consists of three fans customized with shells from the port of Rotterdam. The work addresses the inhuman orientation of ports, the engineering of their unending smooth circulation, and how they're regulated by a jurisdictional language that bears down on any possible human-scaled experience. In *Walking the Gerund Mountain (Montjuïc, bando del Port)*, Pagès takes videos of their choreographed night walks through the different socio-economic, sexual and historical spheres that unfold on both sides of Montjuïc, the mountain overlooking the port of Barcelona. On one side: fenced gardens, lookouts for the tourists, a nineteenth century graveyard for the bourgeoisie and a mass grave from the Civil War; on the other, scattered clothes, scraps, raves and cruising spots. The dark of the night brings out all these minor flows that coinhabit the mountain, with their specific codes and dynamics. At one point in the video, Pagès squats behind the trees to pee, the stream runs downhill or stagnates in a puddle, defining its own particular tricing of time.

Text by: Yaby



Some of It Falls from the Belt and Lands on the Walkway Beside the Conveyor has to do with what exceeds normal flow. This image of a conveyor belt draws out some of the ideas behind the show: a context that determines how things move forward (a well-oiled system where all circulates according to preset parameters); accumulation, waste and spillage within it, not quite halting circulation but always swirling it a little; and the possibility of withdrawing from normal flow and finding some space to take up in its near surroundings.

A legal process, an economic system, a language, a public place, an aesthetic paradigm... Any given context is a sphere of constraint, but it's also the inescapable grounds for liberation. All contexts have their residue, some degree of leakage or superabundance where anchored values and uses get unsettled, opening gaps for non-standard enunciation and existence. There is a lineage of political and aesthetic experimentation that has located in the residual a means to navigate contexts, to negotiate their structures and limitations from within; the works brought together here extend this approach in addressing the problems and possibilities of different contexts and closed systems, observing their ordinary flows and tracking alternative ways for circulation.

Christopher Aque, Aria Dean, Rindon Johnson and Claudia Pagès all deal with residue on different levels: whether literal waste and flows of excretion, secondary products generated by the operations of larger primary systems, the omitted role of the industrial management of death in the formation of modernism, or residual navigations of public space that transcend its intended socialization. In speaking to the significance of frictions between remainder and context, these works point also to the place containing them: Vleeshal used to be the meat market of the former town hall, a gothic civil building in the center of an old port city deeply ingrained in the history of colonial trade, political power and cultural hegemony. This exhibition space, marked by commerce and governance, is itself a context dense with codifications regarding the assignation of value, the funneling of desire, and the distribution and interplay of bodies and meanings.

Christopher Aque

Christopher Aque investigates visuality and erotics in the public milieu, looking at how desire disregarded by dominant forces moves through spaces that were not built to accommodate it. *Double Negative (Swapping Spit)* interconnects two fountains made of glass, each placed inside a plexiglas basin where the discharged water is collected. A germicidal UV-C light disinfects the fluid, neutralizing any unwanted organic growth or potential contamination that might arise during their exchanges. Fountains and reflecting pools are common elements of public monumental architecture, already synthesizing a communion of sorts between individuals and a non-specific conception of mourning, memory and belonging. Aque is interested in the capacity of reflective surfaces to disclose their ideological discourse and to implicate the viewer, while at the same time concealing everything that lies beneath them. Disclosing, implicating and concealing are also historical gestures of cruising, the visual erotics of which coexist in such public sites with those of the state, surveillance and capitalism. Aque's work almost suggests some complicity between dissident desires and the systems that threaten to suppress them, with which they share many optical strategies. Erotic charge shares the public sphere with systems of power, and the personal overlaps with the genericity of these structures without necessarily altering their normal workings.

Aria Dean

Aria Dean's work is based on a trenchant critique of systems of representation and how objects and subjects move through them, finding ways to exist at odds with them or in excess of them. Her piece *fragment from skinning cattle by power 1867 (fig. 122 in gideon)* pertains to a recent line of research that examines the conceptual and material relationship between modernity and death. Historical accounts of modernist archi-