

Press Release

HORS TEMPSIA

EXHIBITION

UP/DOWN, the Silence of Memoration

« *When the coronavirus crisis happened, we both suddenly had a lot of free time. We turned to our archives for research: childhood photos, old letters and toys. These photos show us who we are and where we come from. This time of intimate reflection allows us to take stock of our past,*” explains Anneke Lauwert.

Agnès De Man has invited the artists **Bilal Bahir** and **Anneke Lauwaert** to exhibit their work in the **Hors Tempsia** space, on the ground floor of her beautiful house, from 4 October to 29 November 2020.

This artist couple is currently working on the theme of memory. For the exhibition *UP/DOWN, the Silence of Memoration*, they were inspired by *'The Poetry of Space'* by Gaston Bachelard, especially the first chapter, 'The house. From cellar to garret. The significance of the hut.'

The house, quite obviously, is a privileged entity for a phenomenological study of the intimate values of inside space, provided, of course, that we take it in both its unity and its complexity, and endeavor to integrate all the special values in one fundamental value. For the house furnishes us dispersed images and a body of images at the same time (...). Transcending our memories of all the houses in which we have found shelter, above and beyond all the houses we have dreamed we lived in, can we isolate an intimate, concrete essence that would be a justification of the uncommon value of all our images of protected intimacy? This, then, is the main problem (...) For our house is our corner of the world. As has often been said, it is our first universe, a real cosmos in every sense of the word.” (Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, 1957)

Both artists have worked, in different ways, on the subject of memoration, the resurgence and evocation of indelible events in the past. The two artists have therefore explored the universes of intimacy, memory, and childhood in which they find their roots – or not.

Anneke Lauwaert (1968, Turnhout) will present a work developed from the very precise memory of the rabbit she received as a child, and the cage she built for it with her father. The rabbit is rendered in several sizes, and placed on old objects like her father's workbench. Another recaptured memory is that of her bear Callisto, which can be seen in her arms in a black and white photograph of the artist with her father. This object, which represents a link to the memory of her father, still exists. It has been reproduced in both plaster and bronze forms.

‘When my father died in 2013, I worked from a photo of him on the Isle of Wight, wearing a poncho. I took the patterns on this poncho and reproduced them in neoprene. Whether sewing with this soft material, or casting with plaster and bronze, sculpture remains my primary medium.’

Bilal Bahir (1988, Baghdad, Iraq), has always drawn. He has been living and working in Belgium since 2010. Among other things, in this exhibition he will present a series of 16 drawings, depicting episodes of his childhood and the stories that populated it.

‘I draw on printed paper, pages of books and letters. I don’t work with neutral material, I like materials which already have a history. I tell stories through my drawings, stories I heard as a child, or those of 1001 nights, childhood memories.’

Through visual links, each artist describes their own cosmos of memory; the resurgence and evocation of indelible events in the past. One artist does this through peaceful, intensely rooted memories, while another moves from the roots of childhood, to the experience of being uprooted by emigration.

‘All I ought to say about my childhood home is just barely enough to place me, myself, in an oneiric situation, to set me on the threshold of a daydream in which I shall find repose in the past. Then I may hope that my page will possess a sonority that will ring true – a voice so remote within me, that it will be the voice we all hear when we listen as far back as memory reaches, on the very limits of memory, beyond memory perhaps, in the field of the immemorial. All we communicate to others is an orientation towards what is secret without ever being able to tell the secret objectively.»(Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, 1957)

During the exhibition, which will run for a long period (from 4 October to 29 November 2020), courses will be organized with La Maison asbl, in Linkebeek, which hosts autistic children, and primary school children.

UP/DOWN, the Silence of Memoration

Anneke Lauwaert - Bilal Bahir
From 4 October to 29 November 2020
Open on weekends from 11am to 6pm
and by appointment during the week

Hors Tempsia

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