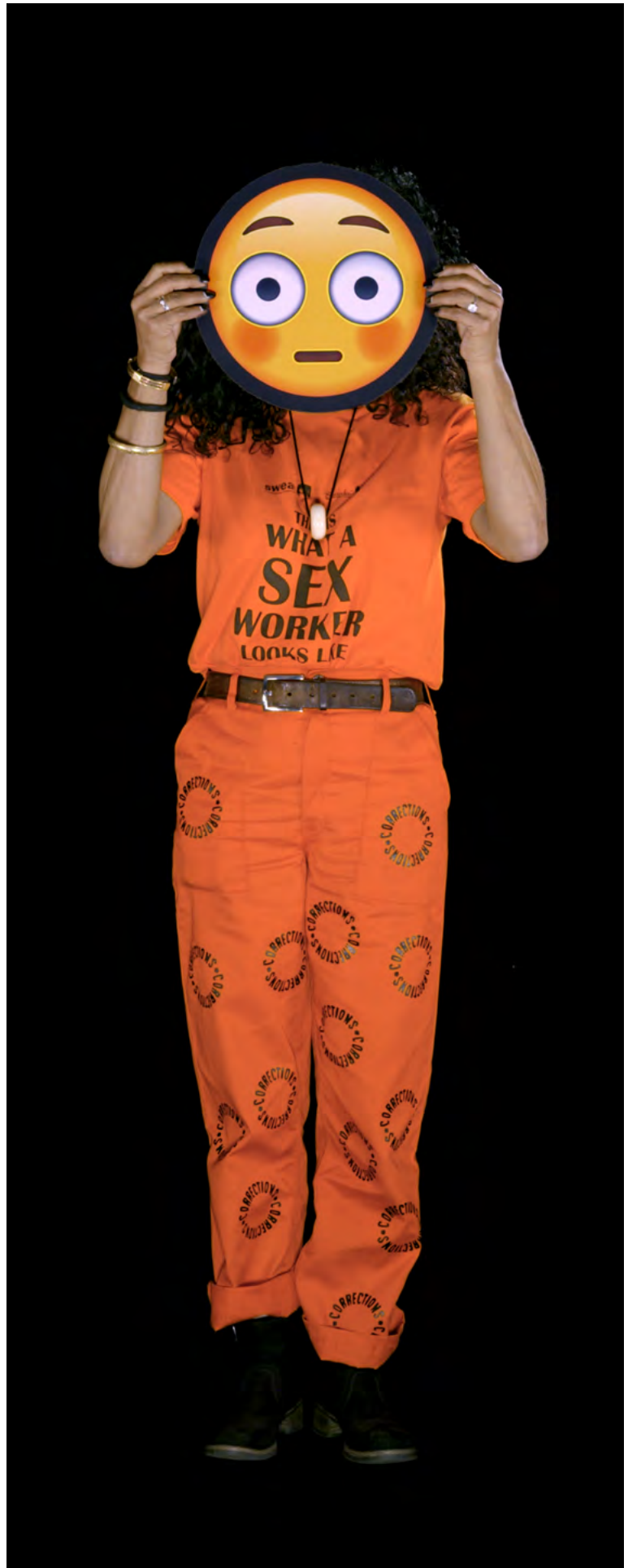


Candice Breitz

OFF VOICES



Press release
01.02 > 11.05.2025

BP MUSÉE D'ART
DE LA PROVINCE
DE HAINAUT
S²²



Duvel



Programme 01.02 > 11.05.2025

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Candice Breitz

OFF VOICES

Off Voices brings together an expansive selection of works made by Candice Breitz between 1994 and 2020. Curated by Dorothee Duvivier, it is the first major solo exhibition of Breitz's work in the Belgian context. The title of the exhibition most literally describes voices that are not visibly attached to an on-screen individual or character. As a narrative device frequently used in television or film production, an 'off voice' most commonly serves to give viewers access to the inner thoughts of an on-screen character, providing information that might otherwise remain inaccessible.

Beyond screen life, on the other hand, a voice that is described as 'off' is one that cannot be heard, or – more ominously – one that has been silenced, as is so often the case for those who are marginalised or repressed. In a media-saturated society that is bursting with opinions and dense with the voices of those who are most visible, silence is too often misperceived as indicative of absence or failure. The ongoing stifling of the voices of those who are most precarious and/or vulnerable among us, serves not only to violently undermine their presence in our presents, but also to obliterate their personal and collective histories. Across Breitz's oeuvre, she asks whether and how such silences might be broken; how it might be possible to amplify the voices of those who are typically consigned to the shadows and to anonymity.

Collectively, the works presented in *Off Voices* offer an expanded reality – one that accommodates narratives that are at once personal and political, weaving elements drawn from lived experience with fictional propositions – to point to a possible future in which a broader range of subjects might come to voice. *TLDR*, for example, prominently features the testimonies of sex work activists who have for years fought to end the stigmatization and decriminalization of their labour. Via an archive of interviews, this community brazenly questions societies in which categories such as race and

gender have been weaponised in the service of power. Within the body of work that is on view at BPS22, Breitz openly thematises her own privileged position within such societies, pointing a finger at herself to bluntly ask whether and how artists living comfortable lives can succeed in amplifying calls for social justice. In works such as *Ghost Series* and *TLDR*, she grapples with the systemic relationship between whiteness and visibility, directing our attention towards the micro and macro violences that almost inevitably attach to privilege.

Rather than offering simplistic or dogmatic conclusions, the works assembled in *Off Voices* open up space for reflection and negotiation, offering visitors new filters through which to observe and consider the complex ways in which we are each positioned, as individuals, in relation to the many others who we encounter both directly and virtually within the media landscape and the world at large.

Curator: Dorothee Duvivier

Candice Breitz,
Off Voices (exhibition
view), BPS22, 2025
Photo Leslie Artamonow

Artworks

TLDR

2017

13-channel video installation, sound, colour

Duration: 60 minutes, loop

Commissioned by the B3 Biennial of the Moving Image, Frankfurt

Courtesy: Goodman Gallery (London) + KOW (Berlin)

TLDR was produced in dialogue with members of SWEAT (the Sex Workers Education & Advocacy Taskforce) in Cape Town, South Africa.

The work features interviews with:

- Zoe Black (00:34:42)
 - Connie (01:07:18)
 - Duduzile Dlamini (01:18:40)
 - Emmah (01:08:51)
 - Gabbi (01:28:28)
 - Regina High (01:17:19)
 - Jenny (01:09:19)
 - Jowi (01:02:49)
 - Tenderlove (01:12:40)
 - Nosipho 'Provocative' Vidima (00:45:57)
- It is narrated by Xanny 'The Future' Stevens.

TLDR (still), 2017





TLDR continues upstairs, where visitors are invited to spend time with a series of intimate documentary interviews, via which the first-person testimonies of the same community of sex workers can be heard. The interviewees offer frank comment on their labour, describe the socio-political conditions under which they found their way into sex work, and articulate their political goals as activists.

Before encountering these spoken testimonies (which add up to approximately eleven hours of viewing), one passes through an archival space that displays the costumes and props that were made for *TLDR* in collaboration with the SWEAT community. The archive includes a series of posters from SWEAT's #SayHerName campaign, which pays tribute to sex workers who have faced violent deaths.

TLDR is dedicated to the memory of Nokuphila Kumalo, a young sex worker who was murdered by artist Zwelethu Mthethwa in Cape Town in 2013.



TLDR (interview's stills, from top to bottom : Duduzile Dlamini, Gabbi, Zoe Black and Jowi) 2017

Ghost Series

1994-1996

Ten photographs
101,5 x 72 cm each
Courtesy of Studio Breitz

The *Ghost Series* was produced by Candice Breitz at the age of 22, soon after she left Johannesburg to study in the United States (and directly after the historic elections that took place in South Africa in 1994, ending the apartheid era).

The photographs originate from a series of South African tourist postcards that Breitz has altered using white correction fluid (better known as Tipp-Ex). The blunt layer of white-out applied to the postcards polemically reproduces the violence and erasure that black South Africa had for so long endured under the apartheid regime, leaving behind a series of ghostly figures whose spectral absence testifies to the ongoing and haunting consequences of apartheid. The layer of bony whiteness projected onto the postcards at the same time hints at the extent to which white fantasies about an exotic and rural Africa (fantasies that tend to conveniently suspend the continent in the past), have served to distract from the vibrant contemporary reality of the continent. Looking at the series, the recently-coined English term 'ghosting' comes to mind – one that millennials use to refer to an abrupt withdrawal into silence as a means of ending a conversation or relationship (a tactic that can be understood as an expression of power).

The original postcards from the *Ghost Series* are preserved in the collection of Tate Modern in London. The series of photographs shown here – which were produced by rephotographing and enlarging the postcards – further exaggerate the ghostly resonance of the smaller works. When hung on a gallery wall, the whited-out bodies featured in the photographs read as cut-outs that are continuous with the gallery's white walls, implying a continuity between the racist discourse that is perpetuated by postcards

such as these within the tourist economy, and the residual presence of such discourse within the cultural institutions and museum collections of countries such as South Africa or Belgium, contexts in which the colonial past still looms large.

The *Ghost Series* generated strong criticism when it was first exhibited. Some critics insisted that the work was an expression of racist prejudice. One writer described the making of the work as an act comparable to ethnic cleansing. Others have defended the series, assessing it in light of the artist's long-standing commitment to analysing and challenging white privilege (including her own). The wall texts displayed opposite the *Ghost Series* offer insight into some of the responses that the work has received since 1994.

Some thirty years later, this early work – and the public reception it garnered – remain at the foundation of Breitz's thinking as an artist. They serve, within this exhibition, as a footnote that looks back to the artist's beginnings, while offering retrospective insight into later works such as *TLDR* or *Profile*. On the occasion of this exhibition, BPS22 invited Breitz to share her reflections on the *Ghost Series*, in the form of a short essay. The essay is exhibited alongside the works in the exhibition and can also be found next page.

Made as I was leaving Johannesburg to study in the United States – directly after the historic elections that took place in South Africa in April 1994, elections that marked the end of the apartheid regime, but not of the long shadow of apartheid – the *Ghost Series* is the earliest work that I continue to exhibit. Offering a jarring point of entry into my artistic practice, three decades later the series can best be described as the sincere yet unsophisticated attempt of a very young artist to consider the weight of her own privilege as a white South African. I was 22 years old at the time the works were made.

In making the *Ghost Series* – via the application of correction fluid (better known as Tipp-Ex) to a selection of the kind of ethnographic postcards that were still being voraciously consumed by white tourists in the mid-1990s – I was searching for a language that would allow me to reflect on the violence that is inherent to whiteness and, in particular, on the glaring blind spots that are characteristic of the white gaze. The works were critiqued by some, when they were first exhibited, as reiterating the very modes of erasure that I had hoped to call into question. The purpose of continuing to exhibit the *Ghost Series* is not to refute or reject such observations, but to acknowledge the manner in which a perspective (my own, in this case) is always shaped and limited – and at times, severely compromised – by the positionality of the perceiving subject (me, in this case). The *Ghost Series* has come to haunt my body of work, for better and for worse. I took a decision not too long after the *Ghosts* met with fierce debate, that I would not bury or deny these skeletons in my closet but instead carry them with me as a source of productive discomfort. I wanted to remain in critical dialogue with the *Ghosts*.

It was the violent operations of whiteness – the indifference with which whiteness consigns bodies of colour to the past, the obliteration and dehumanisation of racialised subjects as inferior and remote

from contemporaneity – that I had hoped the *Ghost Series* might polemically throw into question. I chose Tipp-Ex because the medium evoked, in my mind, the logic of denial and negation that is at the heart of the condition of whiteness, a condition that I was born into. I wanted the *Ghost Series* to speak to the ways in which whiteness relies on its own purported invisibility to perpetuate dominance and to invisibilize those who it sees as ‘other.’ By means of the clumsy application of the toxic white fluid to the surface of tourist postcards – souvenirs that were produced by white people explicitly to be consumed by white people – I wanted to insist on the bullying opacity of whiteness, on the material consequences of white supremacy for those who bear its brunt, on the deathliness that undergirds whiteness. I imagined that the unevenly applied correction fluid would over time come to have a bone-like quality, as it gradually yellowed and cracked.

The *Ghost Series* could not do all the work that I hoped it would do. I was, though I had no way of knowing it at the time, at the beginning of a long journey. The *Ghosts* continue to travel alongside me as an artist, for better and for worse – a spectral reminder of how hard it is (perhaps impossible) to fully arrive. I dare to think of their uneasy presence within my oeuvre as a form of defiant resilience in the face of multiple efforts to erase them (including my own). To remove the *Ghosts* from circulation would be to let myself (and others like me) off the hook; to repress the painful yet necessary and urgent conversation that they invite. My ongoing conversation with the *Ghost Series* takes place, in this exhibition, in the awkward self-portrait titled *Profile*, as well as in *TLDR*, the work you’ve just encountered (both works from 2017). The conversation continues, beyond this exhibition, in works such as *Extra* (2011), *Love Story* (2016) and *Whiteface* (2022).

Candice Breitz
January 2025



Ghost Series, 1994-1996
Photo Leslie Artamonow

Profile

2017

Three single-channel videos, colour, sound, loop:

Variation A: 2 minutes, 20 seconds

Variation B: 3 minutes, 27 seconds

Variation C: 3 minutes, 21 seconds

Commissioned by the South African Pavilion, Venice Biennale, 2017

Courtesy: Goodman Gallery (London) + KOW (Berlin)

Profile – a series of three short films that the artist has described as ‘self-portraits’ – is Candice Breitz’s response to being nominated to represent South Africa in the country’s pavilion at the Venice Biennale. Breitz’s fast-moving edit is as earnest as it is irreverent, conflating self-representation with brand promotion, biography with racial profiling, artist statement with political campaign. Rather than appearing before the camera herself, Breitz invited ten prominent South African artists – who could equally have been selected to represent South Africa in Venice – to feature in the work. *Profile*

thus deflects the heightened attention that is extended to an artist exhibiting in Venice to a range of fellow artists who, much like Breitz, appear intent on disrupting fixed notions of subjectivity. Collectively, their on-camera statements prompt a series of questions regarding the dynamics of power that are at work in acts of representation, both of the self and of others.

The slipperiness of identity becomes evident as questions of class, gender, religion and race intertwine and truth converges with fiction. Who is speaking in the name of whom? Sidestepping

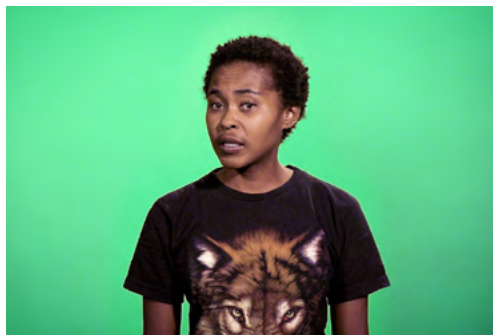
Profile (still - Steven Cohen), 2017



objectification, the artists featured in *Profile* – in cahoots with Breitz – confront the placatory ‘rainbow nation’ metaphor that is frequently applied to post-apartheid South Africa. In doing so, they broach the question of who may legitimately speak of and for their nation. The question is a particularly fraught one in the South African context, where debates regarding the extent to which white South Africans can engage, portray or stand in alliance with Black compatriots, remain central to public discourse. Can would-be allies whose very being is defined by socio-historical privilege, avoid simply entrenching

such privilege as they endeavour to align themselves with those who have been historically disadvantaged? This charged question – which is central to *Profile* – resonates loudly in other works in the exhibition, such as the *Ghost Series* and *TLDR*.

Profile features South African artists Igshaan Adams, Roger Ballen, Steven Cohen, Gabrielle Goliath, Dean Hutton, Banele Khoza, Gerald Machona, Buhlebezwe Siwani, Chuma Sopotela and Sue Williamson.



Top left:
Profile (still - Dean Hutton), 2017

Top right:
Profile (still - Buhlebezwe Siwani), 2017

Bottom left:
Profile (still - Gerald Machona), 2017

Digest

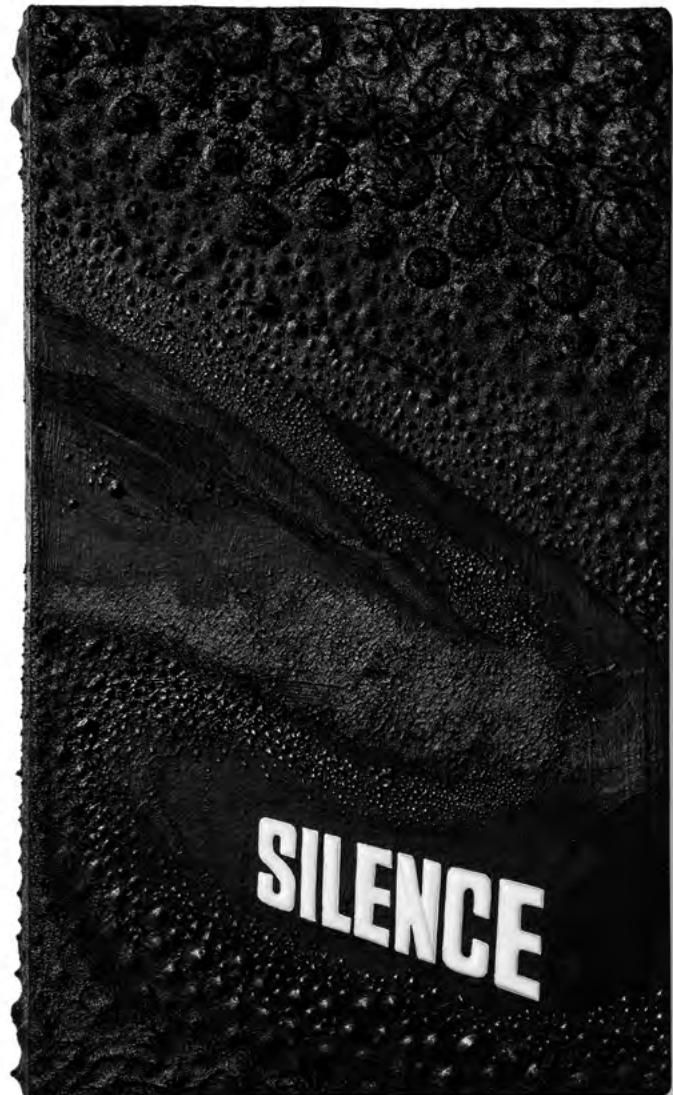
2020

1,001-Channel Video Installation (200 wooden shelves,
1,001 videotapes in polypropylene sleeves, paper, acrylic paint)
Unique Installation
Produced with support from the Sharjah Art Foundation
Courtesy: Goodman Gallery (London) + KOW (Berlin)

Digest draws its inspiration from the legend of Scheherazade, the celebrated storyteller who – according to *The Arabian Nights* (also known as *One Thousand and One Nights*) – was one of the many wives of the powerful sultan, Shahrayar. Directly after their wedding, Scheherazade is locked away by her new husband, who intends to have her put to death the following day. On that night – and on the 1,001 nights that follow – Scheherazade shares a mesmerising story with Shahrayar, intentionally failing, night after night, to reveal how the story ends. Desperate to hear the end of each night's story, Shahrayar postpones Scheherazade's execution again and again, until eventually, after 1,001 nights, he decides to spare her life. Seen by some as a proto-feminist, Scheherazade's ability to generate narrative suspense literally becomes her means of survival within a violent patriarchal order.

Like Scheherazade, *Digest* carries 1,001 hidden stories. Completed over the long months of lockdown during the Covid pandemic, the work – which Candice Breitz describes as 'a multi-channel video installation' – consists of 1,001 videotapes that have been buried and sealed in plastic video sleeves. The tombstone-like objects are arranged on shallow wooden racks, evoking the aesthetics of a video rental store. The plastic kentia palms that punctuate the installation nostalgically recall the tacky décor that was characteristic of such stores, while at the same time paying sly homage to the Belgian artist, Marcel Broodthaers.

Each of the video sleeves on display within this ghostly video store is meticulously coated in black abstraction and adorned with a single hand-painted verb that has been excerpted from the title of a film that



Digest (Silence), 2020

was in circulation during the era of home video. The verb, 'to die,' for example, is sourced from the VHS cover of *Die Hard* (1998), while 'to trek' is sourced from the VHS cover of *Star Trek* (1979). In each case, the *Digest* verb faithfully appropriates and reproduces the typography that was used on the original VHS cover. The infinite number of ways in which the 1,001 verbs might be arranged within the installation, hints at the endlessly disruptive and subversive potential of narrative (as so skilfully exploited by Scheherazade). In denying us access to the inner contents of the 1,001 video sleeves, Breitz liberates us to weave our own narrative journeys through the installation. She offers us nothing more than the crisply isolated verbs embedded in Rorschach-like black abstraction as our tools of navigation, perhaps supplemented by individual memories of the films that the work catalogues.



Digest (before/after), 2020

Breitz has created a monument to the canon of moving images that has been so central to her own evolution as an artist. Preserving and concealing hundreds of metres of videotape, *Digest* is at once an archive, an inventory and a time capsule that immortalises a now obsolete mode of consuming films. The work spans nearly a century of cinema – from Cecil B. DeMille's silent film *The Cheat* (1915), to the gory horror film *Drag Me to Hell* (2009).

For the presentation of *Digest* at BPS22, Breitz has chosen to display the verb 'labour' on a freestanding pedestal at the point of entry to the work, thus directing our attention to another installation that is on view in the same space. Titled *Labour*, this second installation – like *Digest* – considers how patriarchal violence might be creatively resisted.



Digest, 2020
Photo Leslie Artamonow

Labour

2017

6 Single-Channel Video Installations:

Labour (PMURT), 2017

Labour (MIK), 2019

Labour (NÁBRO), 2019

Labour (NITUP), 2019

Labour (ORANOSLOB), 2019

Labour (NAĀODRE), 2020

Co-produced by the Neuer Berliner Kunstverein

Courtesy: Goodman Gallery (London) + KOW (Berlin)

Labour is a series of single-channel video installations. Each consists of footage from an actual birth, captured in raw documentary style by Candice Breitz. The births are installed in semi-circular viewing cabins that are hung with austere grey curtains, in a nod to the peep show aesthetics of Courbet's *L'Origine du monde* (1866) and Duchamp's *Étant donnés* (1966).

Labour, 2017
Photo Leslie Artamonov



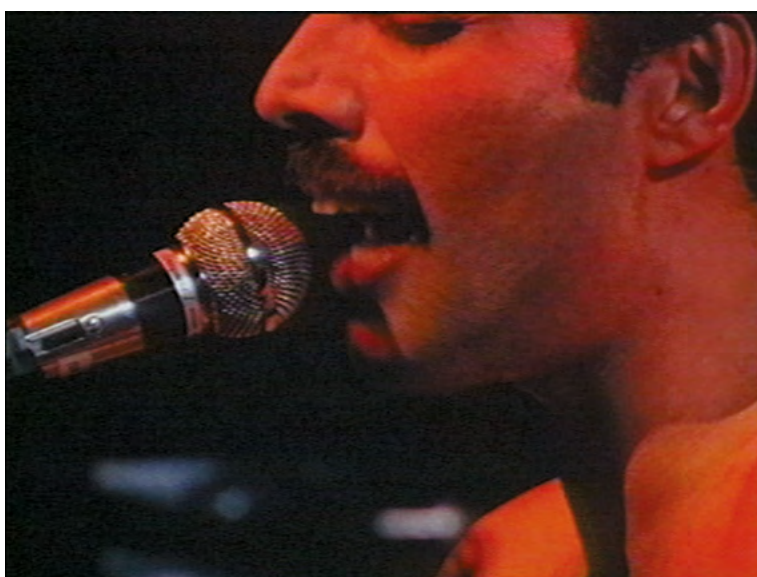
Labour quickly veers off the documentary path. Rather than presenting each birth in its natural chronology, Breitz has us witness the arrival of each baby in reverse. We observe as each newborn is swept out of its mother's arms, only to be slowly sucked back into the womb.

The work is accompanied by a Matricial Decree, which has been issued – Breitz would have us believe – by the *Secular Council of the Utopian Matriarchat*, a government body that refers to itself, in abbreviation, as S.C.U.M. The document is drafted in bureaucratic English that is simultaneously antiquated and futuristic in style. The Matriarchat, it becomes clear, is a stridently feminist authority that is fiercely committed to reproductive justice. Its officials practice a zero tolerance policy towards those who do harm to the bodily autonomy of women and others, strictly punishing “eruptions of testosterism” and incidents of “binary extremism.”

Additional clues are provided by the titles of the individual installations in the series. The earliest piece – which is titled *Labour (PMURT)* – was shot only days prior to Donald Trump's first inauguration as US president in January 2017. Other works carry the titles *Labour (ORANOSLOB)*, *Labour (MIK)*, *Labour (NÁBRO)*, *Labour (NITUP)* and *Labour (NAĀODRE)*, a veritable inventory of the early twenty-first century's most callous populist leaders. Each of the barely fictionalised leaders alluded to here – Trump, Bolsonaro, Kim, Orbán, Putin and Erdoğan – must, by order of The Matriarchat, face the most drastic possible punishment. Each is to be

ceremonially withdrawn from the world. In this alternate reality, the embodied power that flows through mothers as they give birth, is a resource that the state can tap for corrective purposes, such as the elimination of violent individuals who have done wilful damage to the wellbeing of society. The women who selflessly perform the retractions are citizens who have stepped forward voluntarily to protect the broader collective. Their answer to patriarchal violence is bodily resistance. In calling forward an elite squad of agents to courageously volunteer their wombs, *Labour* holds up a mirror to the patriarchal present, in which the instrumentalization of women's bodies is more often than not underwritten by state policy, and in which absurd levels of sacrifice are expected of mothers.

Some will find dark humour in Breitz's proposal, which is as disturbingly dystopian as it is earnestly utopian. This is speculative fiction combined with a feminism that is simultaneously tongue-in-cheek and dead serious. In imagining a world free of the shackles of patriarchy, Breitz joins a long list of feminist thinkers, such as Valerie Solanas (the author of the *SCUM Manifesto*) and Margaret Atwood, whose novel – *The Handmaid's Tale* – depicts a society obsessed with controlling female fertility. Breitz has described *Labour* as “a desperate gesture made in response to desperate times.”



Babel (stills, from top to bottom : Grace Jones, Madonna and Freddie Mercury), 1999

Babel Series

1999

Seven-channel Video Installation

Courtesy: Goodman Gallery (London) + KOW (Berlin)

In the Entresol, the small room behind the black curtain that protects *Labour*, some of the most loved pop stars of the '80s and '90s appear across seven video monitors. The *Babel Series* is Candice Breitz's earliest video installation. It was first exhibited at the Istanbul Biennale in 1999.

The work appropriates fragments of footage from iconic music videos featuring Madonna, George Michael, Grace Jones, Freddie Mercury, Prince, Sting and ABBA. Each of these stolen moments loops endlessly in the space of the installation, creating a cacophonous composition that evokes the bible story from which the work takes its title.

The *Babel Series* reduces language to its most primal building blocks, orchestrating monosyllabic fragments of sound into an aggressively dysfunctional soundscape. Madonna's iconic 'Papa Don't Preach' is cut down to an endless "pa-pa-pa-pa," while Freddy Mercury's vocals from 'Bohemian Rhapsody' are distilled to a monotonous, "ma-ma-ma-ma." George Michael whimpers "me-me-me-me," while Grace Jones in turn insists "no-no-no-no." The work draws an analogy between the most primal stages of speech acquisition and the steps through which consumers absorb the lingua franca of mass entertainment culture. The artist's reduction of pop music lyrics to nonsense syllables alludes to the manner in which the entertainment industry at times reduces its fans to a state of infantilism.

Amputated from the recognisable sense of their familiar source songs, the sound fragments constituting the *Babel Series* disintegrate language into infantile garble, dragging a pantheon of pop stars back to a pre-linguistic condition that is not too far removed from the reversed cries of the newborn babies in *Labour*.

Biography

Candice Breitz was born in Johannesburg in 1972, during the era of apartheid. Throughout her formative years, South Africa was subject to stringent cultural boycotts, via which the outside world sought to put pressure on the country's white supremacist regime. Under apartheid (1948–1994), all forms of media were strictly controlled and intensely censored by the paranoid racist government, as a consequence of which television only arrived in South African homes in 1976. The eventual arrival of domestic video recorders and video rental stores in the early 1980s, provided some respite to South Africans who could afford such luxuries (the majority of whom were white). The relatively easy availability of moving images gradually came to supplement Breitz's obsessive reading habit, inevitably informing and expanding her relationship to the world beyond South Africa. It was not until after she had completed her art education at Wits University in Johannesburg, however, that moving images were to find their way to the centre of her practice as an artist.

Soon after the election of South Africa's first Black president, Nelson Mandela, in 1994 – a moment that marked the beginning of the slow transition towards a post-apartheid future – Breitz was given the opportunity to study in the United States. After completing a degree in art history at the University of Chicago, she spent nearly a decade in New York pursuing a doctorate at Columbia University, before coming to the realisation that it might be possible to live her life as an artist, an option that had seemed remote and utopian until that point. In early 2002, in the wake of the events of 9/11, Breitz left New York to settle in Berlin. She has lived and worked in Germany for the last two decades.

From her earliest years as an artist, Breitz has focused both on the emancipatory potential and on the threat of repression that she considers inherent to technologies of mass culture, technologies which can be instrumentalised either to reinforce or to challenge social and geopolitical hierarchies. Over the last three decades,

her oeuvre – with its strong focus on multichannel video installations and photography – has persistently interrogated and deconstructed popular culture, seeking in particular to consider the dynamics by means of which an individual becomes their self in relation to a larger community, be that the immediate community that one encounters in family, or the real and imagined communities that are shaped not only by questions of national belonging, race, gender and religion, but also by the increasingly undeniable influence of mainstream media such as television, cinema and social media. Most recently, Breitz's work has focused on the conditions under which empathy is produced, reflecting on a media-saturated global culture in which strong identification with fictional characters and celebrity figures runs parallel to widespread indifference to the plight of those facing real world adversity.

Taking the vast repertoire of the culture industry as her starting point, Breitz archives, analyses, filters, dissects, cuts, pastes and reformulates the substance of popular culture, regurgitating it to us in the form of experiences that are both familiar and alien. Her multi-channel installations reposition us as viewers, inviting us to critically consider the stream of images in which we are increasingly embedded.



Candice Breitz,
Photo Till Cremer

Cultural mediation

Petit Musée

Cut, paste, create

The Petit Musée is an educational space where artworks from the museum's collection are displayed at children's eye level. Separate from the more serious themes explored in the main exhibition, it offers a welcoming environment where young audiences (starting from nursery age!) can be guided through specific artistic themes or practices.

In conjunction with Candice Breitz's *Off Voices* exhibition, the Petit Musée is casting its spotlight on the art of collage. Around twenty collages on paper or canvas, dating from 1962 to the present day, highlight this rapid, accessible technique, which is free from the constraints of formal technical training.

Collage involves assembling pre-existing images through a simple process of cutting, arranging, and pasting. Easy to replicate, this technique allows paper to be recycled into innovative forms and reimagined visuals, offering entirely new meanings. This practice of appropriation also fosters a deeper reflection on the significance of the images that surround us and the impact they have on our lives.

Next exhibitions

Democracia / Hervé Charles

June > August 2025

La "S" Grand Atelier

October > December 2025

Collections

January > April 2026



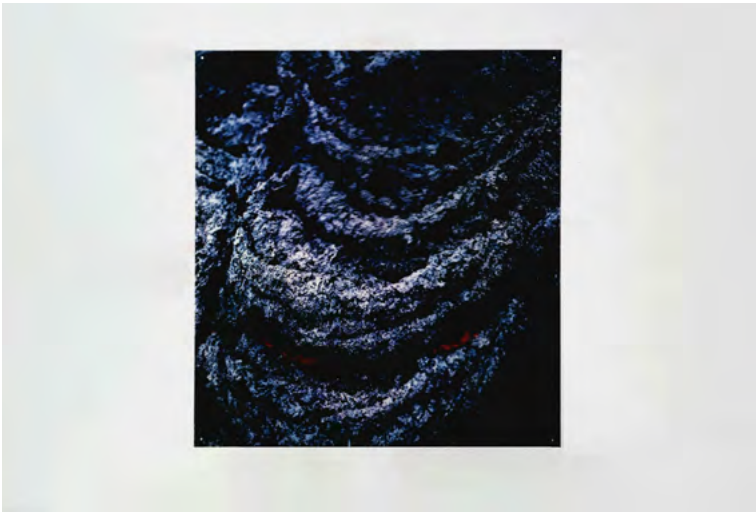
Democracia, 18 Retratos
(from *We Protect you from Yourself* series, 2013-2018), 2014-2018,
US OR CHAOS a/political
collection, BPS22, 2018.
Photo Leslie Artamonow

Democracia

Emerging in the mid-2000s, the Spanish collective Democracia defines itself as a “work team,” a group consisting of permanent members and occasional collaborators brought together for specific projects. This activist collective, deeply involved in fighting against social issues in their country, favours an artistic practice in which the exchange of words, ideas, and forms of action is paramount.

Their works draw from socio-economic spheres and revolve around political questions that animate our societies. Whether it is to highlight NATO's endeavours to legitimise the military (*Home of Nato*), to remind us of social inequalities and class struggle (*Eat the Rich - Kill the Poor*), or to denounce the repression of grass-roots movements in Spain (*We protect you from yourselves*), Democracia always operates with great conceptual precision and sharp formal acuity.

Curator: Becky Haghpanah-Shirwan



Hervé Charles,
Etna 9803, photography,
2000. Photo BPS22

Hervé Charles

Since his early work in the 1990s, Hervé Charles (Nivelles, 1965) has focused on the terrestrial environment and its transformations, while remaining sensitive to questions concerning his medium, photography, and the challenges of image production. From the outset of his career, he made his mark with a series of cloud photographs taken from very close range using a small leisure aircraft. This initial series already shows a genuine ability to capture a world in perpetual transformation through the sheer power of synecdoche, a skilful framing which isolates a fragment that expresses the whole. Printed in black and white on circular glass formats, with images on both sides, this series demands a real effort of attention to grasp all its visual subtleties.

Later, moving to colour, the artist developed several series, turning this same intense focus towards environmental upheavals. He has traversed major volcanoes to capture their ruddy glowing fissures, like so many wounds inflicted on the Earth. Adapting format and medium according to the themes observed, he has turned his lens to oil spills, forest fires, storm damage, mining exploitation, and more. Though not a retrospective, the exhibition puts older works into perspective alongside his latest photographs, emphasising the consistency of his attentive gaze on the state of the Earth and the repeated precision of his various artistic expressions.

Curator: Pierre-Olivier Rollin

Press visuals

Available for download via [Google Drive BPS22](#)

Mandatory mention = File name

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Open from Tuesday to Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Closed on Mondays, 24, 25, 31 December and 1 January
and during exhibition set-ups.

Prices

Adults: 6 €

Seniors: 4 €

Students en job seekers: 3 €

Free for children under 12 and on the
first Sunday of each month.



Duvel

Cover photo

Gabbi on the set of *TLDR* (production image),
Cape Town, 2017.