



ATHANASIOS ARGIANAS

Silence Breakers, Silence Shapers +)

17 September–21 November 2015

Opening Reception Wednesday 16 September 2015, 6–9pm

abc - art berlin contemporary 2015: Max Schaffer

Aanant & Zoo is pleased to present *Silence Breakers, Silence Shapers +)*, Athanasios Argianas' second solo exhibition in Germany.

Athanasios Argianas makes work between media. He often uses language, written or sung, or translated into musical notation. He produces objects that can then be used for performances, and performances that can produce data to define the shape of an object. These processes are means to probe the space between these media, to plumb the gaps in any translation and draw new connections among them.

The focus of this exhibition is shared between the two large-scale works, *Song Machine 19* and the series *Silence Breakers, Silence Shapers*. Although these two works seem at first very different – one consisting of a bench/wall and the other, an almost flat armature, like a hollow grid composed of strips of steel and brass – they share a format. Both works are structures supporting objects and information, which in turn are used to activate them, like musical scores or scripts that obliquely suggest to navigate with and through them.

Silence Breakers Silence Shapers is based on a simple dictum: a percussive sound breaks silence, and also shapes it. Intervening in the uneventful, formless space of silence, percussion shapes it into units – the first elementary blocks for making any kind of pattern or rhythm, and ultimately, any language. A tiled wall sports a range of percussive aberrations, objects to be touched and sounded, struck against the tiled surface. Oysters cast in bronze, whose tone is defined by the shape of the particular oyster; gong-like hats cast in copper reminiscent of cymbals; little fin-

ger chimes, engraved with poems, each forming a phonetic pattern for the performer to tap along.

It seems unavoidable to think of intuition through the act of "sounding something out," tapping an object in order to understand it or investigate its materiality. The tiled wall is at once a reference to an abstract unit-marked surface, perhaps like a grid of a music sequencer or a sheet of graph paper – a wall and an abstraction of a wall.

This is at once a structure to look at and a piece of public architecture, one intended for use: for sitting, for touching, for facilitating sound. One can shuffle the objects resting on it, striking them against its ceramic surface like small mallets.

Song Machine 19 also calls for activation. The sculpture is mostly made of air. A seemingly soft and pliable ribbon made of rigid brass is engraved with dozens of meters of text and suspended from a steel framework. This ribbon spools out entire stories like a long loop of audio tape, displayed so that its phrases can be read at multiple points in space. The text describes an impossible object: a Klein bottle – an endless bottle in its structure comparable to the idea of the Möbius strip, an object from the realm of theoretical geometry. It is a sculpture trying to escape its own materiality, its own site – a frame with ribbons that describe an object that is not in the room with us now.

The *Proposals For Reading Consonants As Noise (Brass & Oyster 1, 2, 3 and 4)* are studies in formlessness and recognition.



Previous versions of the series consisted of pairs of cast, rock-like shapes, exhibited side by side like twins in order to challenge our own ability to identify repetition in extremely complex forms.

For this exhibition, the challenge lies in the process of harvesting. The sculpture includes oysters that the artist identified over several days of diving.

The task of identifying an animal and distinguishing it from its environment (molluscs shape something like a landscape around themselves, calcifying a rock-like shell to resemble the real rock where they have anchored themselves) is an exercise in understanding how we recognise anything, how we can conceive of formlessness, by inviting elements beyond our control to make their own decisions.

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*Athanasios Argianas (*1976) was born in Athens, Greece. Since the late 1990s he lives and works in London. His works were recently exhibited in the NEON Foundation, Athens in collaboration with the Whitechapel Gallery, London. He had exhibitions and performances at the Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Milan, the Fondazione Prada, Venice, the Tate Britain, London, the EMST National Museum of Contemporary Art, Athens, the gallery On Stellar Rays in New York, the Barbican Art Gallery and the Serpentine Gallery Pavilion in London; also at the 30th São Paulo Biennale, the 2nd Athen Biennial, the 3rd Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art and the Art Now. In 2016 new works of the artist will be shown in the Kunsthalle Wien.*

His works are being collected by the EMST National Museum of Contemporary Art, Athens, the Collection of Aaron & Barbara Levine, Washington, D.C., the EKARD Collection, the Michael Haas Collection, Berlin, the Sammlung Heiner Bastian, Berlin, the Sammlung Lenikus in Vienna and the UBS Collection, among others.

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ABC - ART BERLIN CONTEMPORARY 2015

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with works by Max Schaffer

OPENING HOURS

Wed-Sat, 11am-6pm (and by appointment)

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