

Yamamoto Keiko Rochaix

PRESS RELEASE

Spaces and Moments

Magda Stawarska-Beavan

25 September - 24 November 2020

Private view and opening reception: 24th September 2019 1pm- 8pm

Yamamoto Keiko Rochaix is pleased to present 'Spaces and Moments', the debut solo exhibition in London of Magda Stawarska-Beavan. With the ensemble of installations comprised of projections onto paper structures, combining moving image, soundscape and traditionally-made screen prints and paintings on paper of exquisite colours, Stawarska-Beavan explores the space, shadows and traces which haunt a once-great industrial city, and how to fill the void, how to hear the music and how to mend what is broken.

Through a process of listening to first-hand accounts of Polish Jewish women's lives, days spent walking the streets of Lodz in her native Poland and hours of perusing through street plans, maps and architectural drawings in the archive, Magda Stawarska-Beavan has embarked upon a project which allows us to glimpse the traces of lives obliterated, songs unheard, clothes unmade and fabulous buildings replaced by busy parking lots and scruffy children's parks. What have the natives leave to share about the city, and what can a stranger hear and see more clearly because of unfamiliarity?

In the main gallery on the ground floor are delicate panels of printed and hand-painted paper wafting and fluttering from the ceiling, which depict, in shades of sublime grey, copper, cream, ochre and terracotta, strange and unhappy rooms where the old slow rituals of parting and farewell have long since faded from their mysterious interiors. The image of old trees, wrought iron works and gravestones are accompanied by the background music of birdsong and the traffic noise of today, but a dynamic layer of cultural fabric has been ripped from the landscape and has never been replaced or mended.

Continuing to the downstairs galleries, a number of architectural plans and drawings hang expectantly, waiting to be turned into places to live or to worship. Layered on top of these the audience finds the same ornate and sacred buildings now reduced to empty spaces; the moving images of the city, including its courtyards, streets, shops and workplaces, are slowly smeared across the wilful destruction of a vibrant layer of life at the heart of an industrial city.

Her desire to help audiences remember what has been lost or forgotten has driven the artist to create the exhibition, quiet in appearance, but daring in concept. This desire is lined with tender affection: the artist painstakingly unfolds the city's hidden narratives by tracing its history with much care, always with deeply felt connection with the subjects. This sense of connection, of roots, or belonging, is what makes this show feel unambiguously humane.

Magda Stawarska-Beavan (b. Poland)
Lives and works in the UK

Stawarska-Beavan is a multi-disciplinary artist whose practice is primarily concerned with the evocative and immersive qualities of sound. She is interested in how a soundscape orients us and subconsciously embeds itself in our memories of place, enabling us to construct personal recollections and offering the possibility of conveying narrative to listeners who have never experienced a location. She works predominantly with sound, moving image and print, often connecting traditional printmaking processes with digital audio.

Amongst Stawarska-Beavan's recent projects exploring the shifting sonic and visual identities of cities are 'Translating the City' (2019) 'Resonating Silence' (2019), 'East {hyphen} West; Sound Impressions of Istanbul' (2015), 'Seas Apart – Bosphorus' (2018), 'Who/Wer' (2017), and 'Kraków to Venice in 12 Hours' (2013). They not only reveal intimate glimpses of the singular urban soundscapes of places but also interrogate their cultural complexities, exploring the blurred boundaries between public and private and probing the notion of physical and political borders as points of connection and signifiers of separation. Through her collaborations with other artists and writers and their "retelling" of her audio collages, her work explores the process of 'inner listening'.

Her works were exhibited in the group shows including 'INVISIBLE NARRATIVES; New Conversations about Time and Place', Newlyn Art Gallery, Penzance, UK (2019), 4th International Biennale of Casablanca, Morocco (2018), 'Sounds Like Her', which toured in the UK at New Art Exchange, Nottingham, York Art Gallery, York, and Gallery Oldham, Oldham (2017-2020).

Her works are in the public collections including: The British Library Sound & Vision collection, London, China Printmaking Museum, Shenzhen, Association of the Museums of Painting and Sculpture, Istanbul, Kraków International Print Triennial Collection, Kraków, TONSPUR Kunstverein Vienna.

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Title: Spaces and Moments
Artist: Magda Stawarska-Beavan
Address: 19 Goulston St, London, E1 7TP
Dates: 25th September - 21 November 2020
Private View: Thursday 24th September 2020 1pm - 8pm
Opening Hours: Wednesday to Saturday, 12 noon – 6pm
Travel: Aldgate East, Aldgate, Liverpool Street

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