

MAMMMMMMA
PRESS RELEASE

An exhibition with Eggert B, FXC, Valgedur Salome, Oktopuce, Por Por Por
Coordinated by Serge Comte and Julia Embla Katrinardottir
From October 5 to November 9 in 2008
OUI, 56-58 bd de l'Esplanade, Grenoble

MAMMMMMMA was born from the meeting of Serge Comte, artist who's «gentle» work is well known from the end of the 90ies, he has been living in Reykjavik for the last decade, and the team of the center of contemporary art OUI, which is open in Grenoble since September 2007. Having the same taste for atypical projects, for experiences that take place in the everyday flux, far away from the blockbuster-exhibitions, they developed on this bases quite quickly the idea for a franco-islandic exchange; hence was born MAMMMMMMA.

It is a first episode of a collaboration work between several french and icelandic artists. The collaboration involves several structures for production, education and exhibiting, and the particularity of the collaboration is to mix actors from very different ages and horizons. In fact, the five artists that curator Serge Comte (associated for this occasion with Julia Embla Katrinardottir) takes with him for the exhibition MAMMMMMMA are all children born after the year 2000, and they invest OUI with a multiple, joyful exhibition that is in a large amount realized on the spot.

The atypical choice to work with children is therefore at the core of the project. But even more atypical is to claim that this choice is finally normal: artists go to work with children, children exhibit their works, but for Serge Comte and OUI, the project has the same criteria and expectations than any other type of project of contemporary art. To put in in other words, there is no attention to pretend innocence, or to propose the children to play a game, it is just about looking there where the things are intense. The question of age doesn't really come up: if it seems normal for everybody that an old lady with shaking hands (Louise Bourgeois) occupies a floor in Centre Pompidou, why couldn't the works made by children, in a similar way, be considered? It's not more nice to infantilize the children than to «senilize» the elderly, isn't it?

For Serge Comte, it is even more simple. He writes: «All the «children of the 3rd millennium» will try to make slide -without hiding it- their own miraculous visions about the craziness of living with the technics of their time, the complex but frankly complex free mediums. They don't talk about the death of art. For them, history has no sense, unless it is a funny story. With the time, it is not better: «it is foam in the bath» (Valgerður), time is «the bubbles of Fanta that stick on a plastic cup» (FXC), or «a cloud in the sky with the face of smiling Mama» (Þór Þór Þór). The Mother universe is a little bit all around, the Mother mountain where one can stretch out head above the heels, where the balls jump around, that mother trampoline which turns the Time and Space into one and the same suspending object until the moment when, the bottom in the void, one hears her telling: «so, have you finished?». »

After this episode in Grenoble, four artists supported by OUI will work in a primary school in Reykjavik where, assisted by the children, it is their turn to put up an exhibition – and we will see, comparing the two exhibitions by the help of images, during a possible break time, who made it better. This second exhibition will be called PAPA, of course.

Stéphane Sauzedde
September 2008