

# MAGASIN

Centre National d'Art Contemporain

Press release/May 2013

## **«I lie to them.» Based on a true story**

An exhibition and online project by Session 22 of the École du MAGASIN :  
**Michela Alessandrini, Kanika Anand, Laurie Chappis Peron, Carmen Stolfi, Ekaterina Shcherbakova, Dimitra Tsiaouskoglou**

Under the tutelage of Caroline Soyez-Petithomme

From June 9th to September 1st, 2013

**Opening on Saturday 8 June at 6pm**



- How would you like it if we tried to compose history?
- I would like nothing better. But which?
- Indeed, which?

**Gustave Flaubert, *Bouvard et Pécuchet***

*I cannot trust quotations.*

*They always lie, because essentially they are paratruths.*

*Speak with your own words, clumsy, unconvincing and unintelligible, but yours. And don't forget that every fable is a potential truth.*

**Anonymous**

What moves us, irks us, makes us think, emotive or react? What drives the need to acknowledge a past event or person, a story neglected or silenced, one that is considered unpopular? Can the retelling of marginal histories represent a form of resistance?

The exhibition *«I lie to them.» Based on a true story* explores the effectiveness of fiction in re-telling, re-representing and re-enacting traumatic experiences and unofficial histories. The artists blur the boundaries between the real and the fake, employing strategies of manipulation to create new narratives appropriated from archives, news images or war witness accounts; while questioning both the medium and source's authenticity. But how do we know what is true if the narration of the story changes every time? The act of retelling presupposes different degrees of comprehension that 'occupy' and control the flow of (hi)story by taking a stand in its construction and production of meaning. As for the gathered artworks, are they simply some other subjective versions added to the plethora of stories used by the authorities or the media? Can their inherent creation processes recall the lies, the alleged truths to which we are exposed almost daily?

In order to comment on or transmit a traumatic experience, such as a war, do we need to have survived or witnessed it? Within the exhibition, the constellation of fragmented narratives refers back to historical tragic events; for instance from the Second World War or the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina to the current state of fear caused by terrorism or social displacement. Retelling establishes a new relationship with History within the context of the exhibition and unfolds on three levels- the disconnection between the actual trauma and the narration of its experience, the (thematic) leveling of historical content of the narratives within the exhibition and the continuing relevance of re-reading these narratives as a reflexive tool that mirrors today's state of precariousness.

MAGASIN's auditorium will become an exhibition space where a selection of artworks will be presented: **Riikka Kuoppala's** film reclaims minority voices left behind when an event has made official History, and focuses on the effects of past trauma on collective identity. **Agnès Geoffray** draws from archives and media reportage, of which she deliberately confuses the original source as a way to reiterate the ambiguity between the simulated and the real. **Bani Abidi's** ten flip-books which document a day in the life of a retired political speech writer, deals with repression and free expression, and the fabrication of history. In his video, **Omar Fast** edits clips from CNN's "talking heads" so that each word is spoken by a different newsperson. This anxious new address demonstrates the mutability of information and language. The work asks the viewer to question media authenticity and authority and addresses the audience's experience of news, particularly the language of fear. Through his series of fake bombs, **David Ter-Oganyan** criticizes the way media use the post 9/11 rhetoric to maintain a climate of hysteria and suspiciousness. Drawing on these fears and proving biological warfare ineffective, **Critical Art Ensemble's** filmed performance is a recreation of an experiment by the British army in 1952 wherein they attempted to use plague as a weapon. In **Mladen Miljanovic's** film, members of a special police unit, arrest his Professor and escort him to a police station in handcuffs for an interrogation, while the entire operation was monitored from above by helicopters. The re-enactment of violence and the staged arrest are a comment on the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina and reflects the power of the artist's narration to manipulate reality.

*Our sincerest thanks to Yves Aupetitallot for his support throughout the entirety of this project.*

*We also cordially thank the seminar guests for their truly inspiring seminars and the staff of MAGASIN and Alexandru Balgiu, ENSBAL for all the help.*

*Web design and visual communication : Benjamin Vigliotta, Thibaut Vandebuerie, Olivier Raimbaud, Florian Eberhardt.*

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The École du MAGASIN is a curatorial training program, one of the activities of the art center the MAGASIN in Grenoble, France. Established in 1987, the École was set up to provide a professional environment for a rigorous combination of research and practice.

More info: [www.ecoledumagasin.com](http://www.ecoledumagasin.com)

The participants to Session 22 (2012-2013) and curators of the exhibition are:

**Michela Alessandrini** (b. 1987, Italy)

**Kanika Anand** (b.1984, India)

**Laurie Chappis Peron** (b. 1989, France)

**Carmen Stolfi** (b. 1985, Italy)

**Ekaterina Shcherbakova** (b. 1990, Russia)

**Dimitra Tsiaouskoglou** (b. 1984, Greece)



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// AU MAGASIN - Centre National d'Art Contemporain de Grenoble

**The Unborn Museum by Pietro Roccasalva from June 9th to September 1st, 2013**

For his first comprehensive solo show, this Italian artist will gather around forty pieces and installations presented room after room according to a principle of *mise en abîme* to favor the links and the connections which exist between the works.

Painting seems to hold the deepest aspects of the artist's practice for which it is the starting point and the completion, even in his sculptures, installations, digital works, drawings, movies and performances.

*Italian artist born in 1970 in Modica, Pietro Roccasalva lives and works in Milano, Italy.*

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#### PRACTICAL INFORMATION

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