

“ Le théâtre des nuages ”

**An exhibition of work by INFORMATION FICTION PUBLICITE (IFP)
from 10 March to 3 June 2012**

Curators: Frank Lamy and David Perreau

Preview Friday 9 March at 6:30 PM

Special press preview Thursday 8 March at 3:30 PM

Press release

This spring, for the first time in France, MAC/VAL is presenting a group of works by the group INFORMATION FICTION PUBLICITE (IFP). Created around an original concept that updates certain historical works and favors new combinations, the exhibition will highlight the ways in which, beginning in the 1980s, IFP anticipated and questioned the domain of the possible in art.

With IFP's “ Le théâtre des nuages ” (which can be translated as “ Cloud Théâtre ”), the Museum of Contemporary Art of the Val-de-Marne is presenting its first exhibition of contemporary art of a historical nature.

As chief curator Alexia Fabre and curator of temporary expositions Frank Lamy explain it, “ This is a sort of event that we'll repeat in the future – presenting works by living artists responsible for milestones of artistic in France over the past 50 years – always in connection with the museum's permanent collection. ” Lamy is co-curating the IFP exhibition with David Perreau who also organized the IFP retrospective at the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Geneva at the end of 2010. The Geneva exhibition provided a first opportunity for the public to verify the decisive impact of this “ agency ” on the art of the 1980s. (The group of artists claimed the title of “ agency ”, a word which takes on new meaning in the context of the questions their work poses about how art is represented, mediated, and disseminated.) From 1984 to 1994, IFP created a body of work that has come to represent an important milestone in the history of 20th century art, work that questions art and the conditions of its creation.

Starting 10 March, the MAC/VAL will present its original, particularly well-documented point of view on IFP, one created in perfect collaboration with the artists Jean-François Brun and Dominique Pasqualini. Although the show will not present new works (for the simple reason that the agency stopped producing work in 1994) it has voluntarily involved two of the agency's protagonists in its very conception with the desire to reactivate, update, and even “ amplify ” certain emblematic works like images of clouds, tarps, lightboxes and wooden blocks, placing the viewer in the midst of their process.

When art becomes a label...

Jean-François Brun, Dominique Pasqualini and Philippe Thomas founded their “ agency ” in 1984, using the abbreviation IFP, acronym for INFORMATION FICTION PUBLICITE (IFP). Three letters for three words that resulted from a reflection and diagnosis of the then current state of art; three words “ abandoned to a certain state of imprecision which allows for several levels of reading, their common, philosophical, and general senses. ” These three “ nodal ” notions were also chosen in order to define a new theoretical territory for thinking about art and the state of the world. IFP “ is an emblem, but also a diagnosis of what art is, our definition of art in general, in the sense that art is composed of information, fiction, and advertising (*publicité*) ” say Jean-François Brun and Dominique Pasqualini.

IFP’s activities began during a period in which a generation of American artists (Jenny Holzer, Barbara Kruger, Sherrie Levine, Allan Mc Collum, Richard Prince) were also putting images and the mass media at the center of their concerns. Jean-François Brun, Dominique Pasqualini, and Philippe Thomas’s propositions (until spring 1985 in the case of the latter) took on varied and diffuse forms including conference presentation (*L’invention des figurants*, 1984), book and record sales (*Entendons-nous bien, toute la lumière reste à faire sur la réserve de Ligne Générale*, 1984 and *Vers l’espace du non-encombrement...*, 1985), fashion show (*Dorothee bis*, 1984), magazine and catalogue inserts (in *File, Artistes, Alibis*, 1984).

...and comes to the museum

The exhibition created by the MAC/VAL will show a significant range of works from among the “ generic ” objects and images that set IFP’s apart. Visitors will be invited to enter their “ théâtre ”, an immense central structure mounted with tarp-covered scaffolding evocative of an agora, in the center of which are presented lightboxes (used here long before they became a cliché of art in the 1980s) and wooden blocks. This is a space to be “ lived ” but also viewed. Here, IFP turns its particular and personal reflections into tools accessible to the public, allowing them to give meaning to advertising and publicity, or in other terms, public space.

“ Art is a part of life pregnant with meaning ” to quote Jean-François Brun and Dominique Pasqualini.

Exhibition organized with support from Layher.

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