

POSITIONS #5

telling untold stories

30.11.2019 – 08.03.2020

with:
Mercedes Azpilicueta
Anna Dasović

Em'kal Eyongakpa
Mounira Al Solh
Quinsy Gario

VAN
ABBE
MUSEUM
EINDHOVEN

Press release 27 November 2019

Museum solo debuts in the Netherlands

Five emerging artists tell intriguing stories from around the world

This Saturday the exhibition *Positions #5: Telling Untold Stories* opens at the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven. The show consists of solo presentations by Mounira Al Solh, Mercedes Azpilicueta, Anna Dasović, Em'kal Eyongakpa and Quinsy Gario. Having presented their work abroad, they are now making their museum solo debuts in the Netherlands. The presentations, that include new and recent work, can be seen in ten galleries of the museum's temporary exhibition wing. The result is an intriguing representation of emerging artists who live and work in the Netherlands. What connects the five artists is their interest in different forms of storytelling, often relating to histories and events from the countries where they are from, but remain untold in the context of the Netherlands. The exhibition is open through 8 March 2020 and has been made possible in part thanks to the Ammodo Foundation and the Mondriaan Fund.

Mounira Al Solh (Lebanon, 1978)

Encounters and conversations with others form the starting point for Mounira Al Solh's work. Since 2012 Al Solh has been drawing portraits of people forced to leave their homes due to conflict, based on the extensive conversations she has had with them. The press called the project *I strongly believe in our right to be frivolous* one of the high points of Documenta 14, after which there was a solo in the Art Institute of Chicago in 2018. There are also a number of embroidery works to be seen, made partly in collaboration with Stichting Ik Wil from Eindhoven (a foundation committed to an inclusive society). The film *Freedom is a habit I am trying to learn* is a new work. Al Solh spent 24 hours with each of four women - Rogin, Waad, Hanin and Zeina - in the cities to which they moved from Lebanon and Syria (Zutphen, Washington DC, Oslo and Sharjah). The film was realised in collaboration with *If I Can't Dance*, *I Don't Want To Be Part Of Your Revolution* in Amsterdam and the Sharjah Art Foundation.

Quinsy Gario (Dutch Antilles, 1984)

In *Positions #5*, Quinsy Gario shows a series of works about the recent history of the former Dutch colony the Dutch Antilles. Gario visited the island of Sint Maarten with his mother, Glenda Martinus, in the summer of 2019. There, Gario made an 8 mm film, based on the locations shot in a film produced in 1947 by the RVD (Netherlands Government Information Service). A maquette, made by Gario's mother, paintings by his uncle, Rudsel Martinus and great uncle, Mauricio Onofra, dolls made by his aunt, Gala Martinus, music by his cousins Quinton and Shaquire Martinus and a poem by his brother Jörgen Gario are a personal way of reporting the uprising on Curaçao in 1969. Also exhibited is *Bevrijdingskunst*, a work consisting of 200 slides from the archives of the Ons Suriname Association in Amsterdam. Gario's floor installation *Black, Basically A Genealogical Materialist Analysis*, which consists of small black objects, provokes questions about the significations of the colour black and what it means to be black.

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Mercedes Azpilicueta (Argentina, 1981)

The starting point for Mercedes Azpilicueta's presentation is the legend of Lucia Miranda, as recorded by the 19th century female author Eduarda Mansilla. It inspired Azpilicueta to produce new work consisting of sound, video, costumes and tapestries. Miranda was the first *Cautiva*, a European woman captured by the indigenous people on her arrival in 16th-century Argentina. Mansilla wrote a version of the story which emphasised the strength of both the indigenous people and Miranda in their resistance to domination. The tapestries, woven in the TextielLab in Tilburg, and costumes are inspired by the era in which Mansilla lived. The videos and sounds refer to characters from Mansilla's books. Azpilicueta recently had her European solo debut with an exhibition in CentroCentro in Madrid.

Em'kal Eyongakpa (Cameroon, 1981)

Em'kal Eyongakpa's large-scale installation is a part of the project *sǒ bàtú*, on which the artist has been working since 2015. The title means 'bath for the ears' in Kenyang, a language spoken in Manyu (Cameroon). Using water and sound as major elements, Eyongakpa creates an alternative environment within the museum. It forms a connection with Cameroon folk tales, in which 'other worlds' arise in caves when vulnerable groups of people retreat into them in times of peril. Sound recordings of nature, which Eyongakpa made in the forests of South Cameroon, merge with the sounds of Cameroon poems being read aloud and the intercepted messages of political prisoners and prisoners of war from all over the world. At present, a solo exhibition of Eyongakpa's work can be seen in The Showroom in London.

Anna Dasović (The Netherlands, 1982)

An ongoing body of work by Anna Dasović's centres on the decision by the Dutch government to send Dutch Blue Helmets to Srebrenica, declared a 'safe haven' by the UN, in the east of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to protect the area. Following the fall of the enclave in July of 1995, 8,372 people were murdered. The way in which these events were remembered, or rather concealed, in the Netherlands was the motive for Anna Dasović's ongoing research into the language and images used to describe and contextualise 'Srebrenica', before and after the fall of the enclave. For the first time, in *Positions #5*, various works are presented together, composed of images, video material and documents from the archives of the Dutch Ministry of Defence, obtained by the artist by invoking the WOB (the Dutch Freedom of Information Act). The video *Before the Fall there was no Fall* was realised in collaboration with Framer Framed in Amsterdam, where it will also be shown in 2020.

Public programme

Opening In the presence of the artists Saturday 30 November at 16 hrs.
Admission is free when you show your ticket. Registration through the website.

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- Embroidery cafés** Embroidery workshops given by handicraft experts, inspired by the collaboration between Mounira Al Solh and Stichting Ik Wil On Saturday 21 December, 11 January, 25 January, 8 February and 22 February from 11 to 13 hrs. Registration through the website.
- Spoken Word event** With Stokely Dichtman and Jörgen Gario on Thursday 6 February from 19 to 22 hrs
- Performances** By Mounira Al Solh, Mercedes Azpilicueta, Anna Dasović, Em'kal Eyongakpa and Quinsy Gario. Admission is free when you show your ticket. On Saturday 7 March 2020.
- Lectures** By curator Nick Aikens for holders of the Dutch Museum Card On Wednesday 11 December and Friday 10 January at 11:30 hrs. Admission is free when you show your ticket. Registration through the website www.museumkaart.nl

Curator

Nick Aikens together with assistant curator Evelien Scheltinga

Collaborative partners

The exhibition has been made possible in part by the Ammodo Foundation and the projects in the exhibition were realised thanks to the Mondriaan Fund and in collaboration with: TextielLab, Tilburg (Mercedes Azpilicueta); Framer Framed, Amsterdam (Anna Dasović); Stichting Ik Wil, Eindhoven; If I Can't Dance, I Don't Want To Be Part Of Your Revolution, Amsterdam, Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah (all Mounira Al Solh) and the University of Sint Maarten; Ons Suriname Association, Amsterdam and Wereldmuseum Rotterdam (all Quinsy Gario).

EDITOR'S NOTE

Biographies and visual materials are available in high resolution at vanabbemuseum.nl/press

If you have any questions:

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Visitor address

Bilderdijklaan 10, Eindhoven

vanabbemuseum.nl/en

Opening times

Tuesday through Sunday 11 – 17 hrs

Every first Thursday of the month: 11 – 21 hrs (except in December)

The museum is closed on Christmas Day, New Year's Day and King's Day.

Admission

€13

Adults

€6

Young people 13 - 18 years, students, holders of CJP card

Free

Children under 12 years of age, holders of Dutch Museum Card, BGL VIP card and every Tuesday afternoon after 15 hrs