

CLÉMENT COGITORE

13.03. – 05.04.2020

In collaboration with the French Embassy in Australia, Dominik Mersch Gallery is thrilled to present an exhibition of works by internationally acclaimed artist and filmmaker Clément Cogitore.

Cogitore developed his practice at the meeting point between cinema and contemporary art, producing powerful works that pick at the seams of our social and political tribes. At the heart of his first solo show in Australia, 'LES INDES GALANTES' adapts an extract of Jean Philippe Rameau's opera-ballet of the same name in collaboration with Krump dancers. The intensely physical and political bodies of these dancers re-shape the original tribal dance of Rameau's Baroque libretto performed in Paris in 1723, re-staging this scene on the verge of a volcano with raw, contemporary energy.

Cogitore's award-winning documentary 'Braguino' unravels a cruel tale of feuding families in the depths of the Siberian boreal forest. Stemming from the fear of the other, that of wild beasts, and the joy procured by the immensity of the forest, the film explores how tensions and fear give shape to the geography of an ancestral conflict. Accompanying this film is a suite of velvety dark photographs taken when Cogitore spent time with the families, evoking the permanent twilight of the season when he visited as well as the families' failed dreams of an isolated utopia.

Alongside these works, Cogitore's 'Tahrir' rapidly interleaves two recordings of Tahrir Square during the second Egyptian revolution, optically combining the rioters and the police as they stalk around the public space. Also suspended in the gallery is 'An Archipelago', which follows the news coverage of a British submarine that mysteriously runs aground. His wall-spanning 'Digital Desert' photographs also tread the line between the documentary and the reimagined, focusing on the pixelated pattern of American soldier uniforms designed to elude drone sensors. His practice investigates invisibilities, presenting each story as a question of how communities co-exist with their own rituals and representations.

Cogitore's work has notably been screened and exhibited at the Cannes Film Festival, the Palais de Tokyo, Centre Georges Pompidou, Institute of Contemporary Arts London, Haus der Kulturen der Welt Berlin, MoMA, Kunsthaus Basel, SeMA Bunker Seoul, and the Red Brick Art Museum Beijing. He was also awarded the prestigious Marcel Duchamp Prize for Contemporary Art in 2018.

To celebrate its 350th anniversary, the Opéra National de Paris entrusted Cogitore with staging the entirety of Rameau's opera ballet 'Les Indes galantes'. A screening of this full-scale production will open the Biennale of Sydney's NIRIN Film Program at the Campbelltown Arts Centre on 28 March 2020.