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Screening  
06/11, 8 pm

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Exhibition, 08/11 – 01/12  
Opening, 07/11, 5 – 8 pm

211

Listening Session  
07/11, 7 pm

**TRIS  
VONNA-MICHELL**

BOZAR Studio  
Rue Ravenstein straat 23  
1000 Brussels, Belgium

**TRIS  
VONNA-MICHELL  
WALKING  
SONIC TEXTS –  
SOUND POETRY  
AND MOVEMENT  
IN SPACE**

With a contribution by Marc Matter

Jan Mot  
Petit Sablon / Kleine Zavel 10  
1000 Brussels, Belgium

**MARC MATTER  
TRIS  
VONNA-MICHELL  
WALKING  
SONIC TEXTS –  
SOUND POETRY  
AND MOVEMENT  
IN SPACE**

Jan Mot  
Petit Sablon / Kleine Zavel 10  
1000 Brussels, Belgium

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# Walking Sonic Texts

## *Sound Poetry and Movement in Space*



Tris Vonna-Michell, *Chopin*, 2018 (film still).

By  
Marc Matter

BAD SÄCKINGEN, OCT. 12 – *On the occasion of the listening session by Tris Vonna-Michell and Marc Matter at the gallery on November 7, and the exhibition of Vonna-Michell's new film Chopin (2018), Marc Matter wrote the following introduction.*

A key-figure in one of Tris Vonna-Michell's works is the experimental poet and publisher Henri Chopin (1922–2008). A 'poète sonore' who performed his sound poetry using a tape-recorder as his instrument for a radical approach using the vocal range of the voice beyond letters to overcome the hegemonic power of the 'word' as we know it. 'Sound Poetry', 'Text-Sound' or 'Acoustic Literature' are terms for a certain kind of experimental spoken-word in which the sound shape of language and the voice are as important or even more important than the semantic content. Its roots can be found in Dada and Futurist poetry, it was a crucial counterpart to the hypergraphic novels in 'Lettrisme', and over-lappings with 'Concrete Poetry' occurred.

Since the 1950s many sound poets and artists working in the field of text-sound started to use electronic media (recording techniques, tape machines, sound effects), some of them envisioning an 'electronic revolution' (W.S. Burroughs) leading to a 'machine poetry' as Henri Chopin put it, who used the tape recorder as an important tool and encouraged poetry and literature to make use of new media to create sound poetry. In opposition to texts and poetry printed in books, the 'poésie sonore' emancipated itself from the page into the sonic space – a time-based art form in which the movement of sound in space is inherent.

Many of the artists working in this field also emphasize on performance practices or conceptual approaches that make specific use of walking and movement in space, like Bernard Heidsieck in his epic piece *Le Carrefour de la Chaussée d'Antin* (1972), a kind of a topology of this central crossway in Paris, investigating the space via field-recordings executed in a circular movement. The multidisciplinary artist Maurizio Nannucci, who is also deeply interested in sound and text in his own artistic research, went out into the streets with a microphone walking around and

approaching passersby to ask them to spontaneously utter their favourite word into his recorder, creating a somewhat collective poem resembling a list of words edited in a tight metre (to reflect the flow of running into people), resulting in the recording *parole / mots / words / wörter* (1979). Or the more contemporary artist Sue Tompkins, who integrates movements of walking and jogging to rhythmicise her spoken word performances based on repetitions of short sentences deriving from common phrases and quotidian speech, to be heard on her vinyl record *raid / turnover* (2016). My own text-sound composition *New York City. No Time to Explain* (2015) which Tris and myself will also present in our listening session, is a situationist-inspired *dérive* through Brooklyn and Manhattan, containing field recordings of urban noises and capturing speech fragments from the ubiquitous TVs, radios, public announcements and general chatter. Related documents and recordings will remain on display at the gallery, in combination with Tris' latest installation entitled *Chopin* (2018), which combines a 16mm film and a spoken word sound-work.

The overlapping of this film and sound-work with the listening session material is conceived as a form of expanded documentation, bringing together the disbanding threads and artefacts from his work *Finding Chopin* (2005-2018) and our ongoing research in experimental spoken word and sound poetry.

Marc Matter (°1974 in Basel, CH) is an artist and researcher based in the Black Forest. Assistant Professor at the Institute for Music and Media (Düsseldorf) in the module *(Music and Text)* (2010–present), founding member of the artists-collective Institut für Feinmotorik (1997–2016) and co-founder of c0sm0sm0se festival and edition. Author of several text-sound compositions for radio which explore the interplay between sound and language.

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# Notes on *Chopin* (2018)

By  
Tris Vonna-Michell

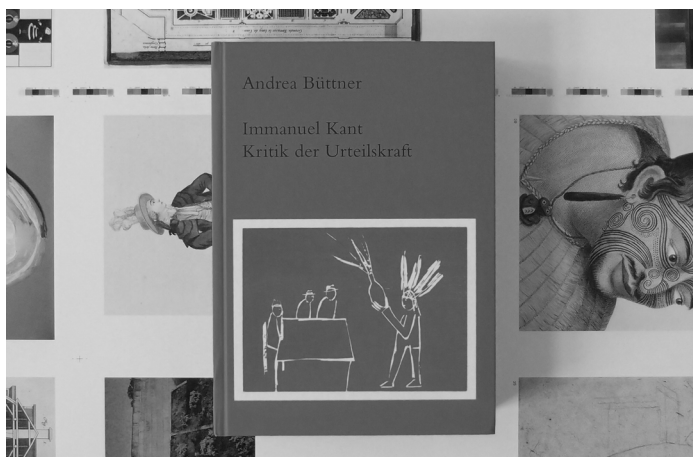
STOCKHOLM, OCT. 17 – The film installation *Chopin* (2018) brings together scenes of a tableau of staged objects, ephemera, slide projections and spoken word. In a way, the emergence of the film came from a necessity, a need to capture and timeline the disbanding threads of *Finding Chopin* (2005–2018). The idea behind making such a film evolved from a residency and having the opportunity to be in the city while an exhibition of mine was up. I visited the show sporadically during my residency and witnessed how quickly and unpredictably certain slides would fade, discolour, image alignments wander, projections lose focus and how the objects and prints on the table would wilt, disappear, re-appear and collect dust.

It was not only the obsolescence and ephemerality that *Finding Chopin* embodied or the impermanence of my performative self which induced the need to start filming. I conceded that all the parts that kept this work together were just about intact, held together by slender measures and by my performative presence. *Chopin* (2018) has a different constellation of form and imagery in relation to my past performances, yet both were aligned and determined by the presence of time (whether it be memory, analogue film or an egg-timer). With every iteration of *Finding Chopin* – idiosyncratic searching and researching, and not having a written script – there was always this sense of loss, misalignment or forgetting. Initially I had hundreds of objects, documents and photographs which belonged to this work, but gradually only a handful remained. There was a fragility to this way of performing, and with how the material components emerged, albeit temporally, for each new iteration.

*Chopin, a new 16mm film and sound installation by Tris Vonna-Michell will be on display at Jan Mot from November 8 till December 1.*

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# From the library of Andrea Büttner



Andrea Büttner: *Immanuel Kant. Kritik der Urteilskraft*, artist's book, edited by Museum Ludwig, Cologne, published by Felix Meiner Verlag, Hamburg, Germany, 2014. (Photo: Tino Grass) © Andrea Büttner / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2018. Courtesy Hollybush Gardens, London, David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles, and Galerie Tschudi, Zuzo.

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# 212

Exhibition  
07/12 – 19/01  
Opening  
06/12, 5 – 8 pm

## ANDREA BÜTTNER MANON DE BOER

Jan Mot  
Petit Sablon / Kleine Zavel 10  
1000 Brussels, Belgium

Aristoteles, *Nikomachische Ethik* [*Nicomachean Ethics*], Felix Meiner Verlag, Hamburg, 1985.

Thomas Bernhard, *Meine Preise* [*My Prizes: An Accounting*], Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 2009.

Martin Buber, *Erzählungen der Chassidim* [*Tales of the Hasidim*], Manesse Verlag, Zurich, 1984.

T.J. Clark, *Picasso and Truth: From Cubism to Guernica*, Princeton University Press, Princeton and Oxford, 2013.

Alfred Döblin, *Berlin Alexanderplatz*, S. Fischer Verlag, Berlin, 1929.

Meister Eckhart, *Deutsche Predigten und Traktate* [*German Sermons and Treatises*], Diogenes Verlag, Zurich, 1979.

Franziskus von Assisi, *Fioretti* [*Little Flowers*], Diogenes Verlag, Zurich, 1979.

HAP Grieshaber (ed.), *Der Engel der Geschichte* [*The Angel of History*], Harenberg Verlag, Dortmund, 1980.



# Replaced by the Same\*

## *Destruction, decreation and getting out of oneself*

By  
Dessislava Dimova

BRUSSELS, OCT. 15 – “One cannot consider the artist’s work uniquely in terms of creation; on the contrary, at the heart of every creative act there is an act of de-creation”, Agamben wrote on the cinematic work of Guy Debord. De-creation is not simply about not creating, even less about destruction. It’s a tool for altering reality by opening up possibilities. In cinema it has two specific conditions, which are repetition and stoppage – return and interruption. In a more general sense and in light of the condition of existence of art I would like to propose to read these two elements in more economical terms such as accumulation and loss.

It all plays on a seeming contradiction, a dialectics of full and empty, of way too much and nothing at all. An artwork autodestructs itself, by virtue of time, material or simply the artist’s intention. Gustav Metzger’s autodestructive art had to repeat in condensed form the road of destruction already taken by humanity. But destruction was also creation, by pouring acid on nylon Metzger was also interested in the new shapes that appeared. The nylon sheets were screens thrown upon the world that had to be destroyed, the holes were apertures from which to see everything anew again. Autodestructive ultimately means a destruction of the self, but while the artists might destroy the work voluntarily, the self is destroyed involuntarily by the world – war, weapons of mass destruction, or mass consumption. The artist does not fully destroy – there is always a leftover, a trace. Destruction is a scar.

Destruction is a whole different story when value is concerned. A tiny stencil drawing by Banksy in a disproportionately heavy and ornate golden frame literally dissolves into shreds the moment it reaches an excessively high price at auction. The frame empties out in real time, remaining as a symbol of everything that creates the value of the work that has nothing to do with the

work itself. As if this was not enough, we are supplied with a sort of a “making of”, a video posted on Instagram, about how the artist decided to install a shredder in the frame in case the work might be one day sold at auction. The destroying / value creating mechanism is not only part of the work, it is the work. Chance is a condition that is anything but accidental. The question of how the destruction shall be triggered is avoided as a mere technicality to be speculated on, contingent only upon the (un)certainly that the work might be sold. There is something tempting in the idea that the machine could even self-trigger for destruction by the mere excess of accumulation of value, some sort of a technological utopia of capital as nature.

The work is meant to autodestruct when it monetises in order to annihilate its value, all value, ultimately and irrevocably. It has to become nothing, or at least one might hope so. For a moment it almost does, but then it proves impossible. If destruction is the ultimate act of exuberance and excess, pure waste is one of the hardest things to achieve today. Poverty is redeemed into value. Not only the work is not completely destroyed and turned into garbage (the shredding stops halfway, by accident or plan), it is also reconfigured and recycled as a new artwork that incorporates its own annihilation. The title is changed and the new piece is authenticated by the artist.

The doubt about the authenticity of the whole action is probably the most authentic thing about the “work” of destruction. Being fake is the only way to step outside of oneself.

Destruction is always weighed down by the reality of what it destroys, it does not lead to a void. Void and nothingness need careful creation – consider the mise-en-scene of minimal art. Autodestructive art for instance lacked the immediacy of the gesture of an abstract expressionist painting. The material resists. There is something of the effort and time involved in the making of things that withstands the momentum of destruction. Take for example the 1960’s painstaking guitar

smashing of Pete Townshend (a former student of Gustav Metzger). An electric guitar is hard and slow to break.

The weight of this gesture is immortalised in a scene in Antonioni’s “Blow Up”, which gives us a clue about how destruction can succeed. In a small concert room, where a rock band is playing the public of young people is immobile and indifferent as if attending a chamber music performance. The guitarist (Jeff Beck) starts breaking his guitar, not as a pure and useless act of destruction, but because he is annoyed by a technical malfunction. The spiritual, radical and engaged aspect of Pete Townshend’s gesture here is delegated to the public, which suddenly wakes up and tries to get a piece of the guitar. While the guitarist loses the chance to get out of himself in the act of destruction, this possibility is seized by the main character. The photographer who was initially not even interested in the music and has entered the room for other reasons finds himself carried away by the frenzy. He manages to fight off the competition and escapes with a fragment of the guitar neck. Once outside however he realises that what he has in his hands is a piece of garbage. He quickly throws it away on the street, only for someone else to pick it up and realise in his turn that the object is unusable waste. For a moment though the object hangs in between two possible outcomes of destruction– the one of annihilation and the one of value creation, of poverty and accumulation, of waste and fetish. Antonioni wisely chooses the former.

The descent into absolute poverty, the de-creation of the self, could be a form of absolute daring as the Canadian poet Anne Carson argues in her essay “Decreation. How women like Sappho, Marguerite Porete and Simone Weil tell god.”

Weil’s concept of decreation is key here. Decreation is not equivalent to destruction: “Decreation: to make something created pass into the uncreated. Destruction: to make something created pass into nothingness. A blameworthy substitute for decreation.” Unlike destruction, decreation

is already implied in the creative act. By creating the finite world God renounced the infinite possibilities of his divinity. “Everything is possible for him, but everything happens as if everything were not possible for him”. Creation is God’s undoing, his abdication from absolute possibility. Decreation is to repeat this process in reverse, we have to “descend” just as God did for us. It is undoing of the self, or as Weil says the undoing of the “creature in us”. “God created us in his image, that is to say he gave us the power to abdicate in his favor, just as he abdicated for us”. Decreation for Weil is quite different from Agamben’s/Bartleby’s “I would prefer not to”. The poverty of the “not to” for Agamben is a return to a plane of potentiality, where the potential not to be (or not to create) is just as important as the potential to be (or to create). Decreation is not renunciation of creation, a return to the endless possibilities before the creation of the finite world, but the undoing of God’s creation as an act of God’s undoing of himself, which took place in creation.

This descent into absolute poverty of the self, the abolition of the only thing we have – the I, should be the purpose of every thinking being according to Weil. The means to this abandonment however vary. How to get out of ourselves? For the Greeks “ekstasis” – literally standing outside of oneself – was a condition ascribed to madmen, poets and lovers. Standing outside of oneself is already a double position, it’s a splitting in two, and cannot be a position of truth. If love is the uncompromising truth of the calling for annihilation of the self, Carson complicates it with the figure of jealousy, yet a third element in the decentralization of the self. Jealousy is a dance in which everything moves, says Carson. The abolition of the self is neither a truthful nor a singular act. It’s a process of constant back and forth.

Carson, who as an Ancient Greek scholar has translated Sappho, begins her essay with Sappho’s fragment 31, which is considered to be a poem about jealousy. It starts with depicting a situation where the narrator is standing outside of the scene – as an observer, witnessing a moment between two lovers. (“He seems to me equal to gods that man/ whoever he is who opposite you/sits and listens close/ to your sweet speaking.”) The narrator then goes on to study her own reactions depicting a situation of almost dying – “I am dead – or almost/ I seem to me.”

However, after this seemingly final declaration of the ultimate leaving of oneself - dying, Sappho starts the next stanza with a surprising twist and resolve. It is a sentence after which the texts breaks off, and it is rarely included in most Sappho’s translations, probably due to its seeming incoherence: “But all is to be dared, because even a person of poverty...” Daring and poverty seem to be entangled by a condition which is missing in the text (because it is incomplete) but can be guessed by the whole poem – it is the condition of love. The equation can then move around as a mathematical formula. Carson sees in this poverty of the self the condition for absolute daring and in love the means for achieving this poverty. After all Eros himself was conceived by Poverty and was always poor, dirty and barefoot. Poverty (lack, emptiness) is also a condition for love, not unlike the “kenosis” (the emptying) of Christ, which allowed him to be filled by the will of God.

In this attempt at abandonment however, the self is never fully destroyed, or at least this is what the three women writers presented by Carson seem to teach us. We can only look at ourselves from the outside as into a mirror. Indeed the oeuvre of Marguerite Porete, which Carson cites and in which she describes God’s love as a calling for annihilating the self, and for which she was burned at the stake in the 14th century, was called “The Mirror of Simple Souls”. Being fake, an image, a self and another, is probably the only honest attempt at truth. Carson sees this lack of authenticity as the very condition for being able to write about the experience of God. Writing requires us to step outside of the experience of the abandonment of the I, to retain somewhere a corner of a self. Marcilio Ficino, the 15th century philosopher, gives another quite simple arithmetic account of this loss and return of the self in his Commentaries of Plato. Lovers, he says, lose themselves and “die”, but continue to live in the other, they delegate their lives to the other. They can then find themselves back and return to their self through the other, thus receiving not only their own self but the self of the other as well. It is one death with two resurrections, Ficino concludes. Decreation then is destruction that allows the self to return back to itself repeatedly, in a constant movement, or a “dance”, of stoppage and repetition, of annihilating and going back to oneself.

\* The title *Replaced by the Same* relates to the eponymous series of works by Pierre Bismuth.

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Embrouillé	Mince
Touffu	Plat
Abondant	Vide

**Pierre Bismuth**, *De vide à abondant et vice versa*, 2002, synonym progression from the word "empty" to the word "abundant" and vice versa. Image source: *Pierre Bismuth*, Editions Flammarion, Paris, 2005.

## In Brief

On November 6th, the day before the opening of the exhibition of **Tris Vonna-Michell** at the gallery, a film screening and conversation between the artist and Xavier Garcia Bardon will take place at the BOZAR Studio (8 pm). The films screened will be *Smoke & Mirrors* (2018), *Chopin* (2018), *Registers* (2017) by Tris Vonna-Michell and *Stridence* (1977-1980) by Erik Vonna-Michell / Henri Chopin.

## Agenda

### Francis Alÿs

*I am you, you are too*, Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis (US), 07/09 - 19/01; *Democracy Anew?*, Pinchuk Art Center, Kiev, 22/06 - 06/01; *Subcontracted Nations*, A.M. Qattan Foundation, Ramallah (PSE), 28/06 - 01/03; *Ritual*, The Aspen Art Museum, Aspen (US), 17/07 - 25/11; *Imagined Borders*, Gwangju Biennial, Asian Culture Center, Gwangju (KR), 07/09 - 11/11; *Children's Games*, Kanal - Centre Pompidou, Brussels, 11/09 - 10/06; *The Eye of the City: The Flâneur from Impressionism to the Present*, Kunstmuseum Bonn, Bonn (DE), 20/09 - 13/01; *Civil War*, Wäinö Aaltonen Museum of Art, Turku (FIN), 04/10 - 13/01; *Other Walks, Other Lines*, San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose (CA), 02/11 - 10/03; *La Dépense*, Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai (CHN), 09/11 - 24/02 (solo); *Proregress*, Shanghai Biennial, Shanghai (CN), 10/11 - 10/03; *The Street. Where the World is Made*, MAXXI, Rome, 07/12 - 28/04; *You Got to Burn to Shine*, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Rome, 17/12 - 07/03

### Sven Augustijnen

*TRUST*, Les Brasseurs, Liège (BE), 20/09 - 17/11; *Extra States: Nations in Liquidations*, Kunsthal Extra City, Antwerp (BE), 22/09 - 16/12; *Sven Augustijnen and Sammy Balaji*, CC Strombeek, Strombeek (BE), 05/10 - 13/12; *Artefact*, STUK, Leuven (BE), 22/02 - 10/03; *Southern Constellations: Poetics of the Non-Aligned*, Moderna galerija, Ljubljana, 07/03 - 09/06

### Pierre Bismuth

*PLAY*, Stedelijke Musea, Kortrijk (BE), 23/06 - 11/11; *Bandes à part*, Musée régional d'art contemporain, Sérignan (FR),

23/06 - 02/06; *Beyond Borders*, Boghossian Foundation, Villa Empain, Brussels, 06/09 - 24/02; *Superstition*, Marres, Maastricht (NL), 22/09 - 25/11

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#### Manon de Boer

*Kaleidoskop*, Museen Worpswede, Worpswede (DE), 24/06 - 04/11; *Andrea Büttner - Manon de Boer*, Jan Mot, Brussels, 07/12 - 19/01

#### Rineke Dijkstra

*To See Time Go By*, Galeria Fonte, Inhotim Institute, Brumadinho (BR), 06/09 - 20/08; *The Moment is Eternity*, me Collectors Room / Stiftung Olbricht, Berlin, 26/09 - 01/04; *Picasso - A Period of Conflict*, Carré d'Art, Musée d'art contemporain, Nîmes (FR), 25/10 - 03/03; *La no comunidad*, Centro Centro, Madrid, 25/10 - 12/12

#### Mario Garcia Torres

*To See Time Go By*, Galeria Fonte, Inhotim Institute, Brumadinho (BR), 01/09 - 20/08; *Multitudinous Seas*, Fondation Hippocrène, Paris, 15/10 - 16/12; *Mario Garcia Torres: Illusion Brought Me Here*, Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis (US), 25/10 - 17/02 (solo); *Portadores de Sentido-Arte contemporaneo en la Collection Patricia Phelps de Cisneros*, Museo Amparo, Puebla (MX), 09/02; *Mario Garcia Torres*, Wiels, Brussels, 17/05 - 18/08 (solo)

#### Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster

*Martian Dreams Ensemble*, GFZK, Leipzig (DE), 12/10 - 17/02 (solo)

#### Douglas Gordon

*Zidane - A 21st Century Portrait*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin (NZ), 21/09 - 23/11 (solo); *Portrait of Janus*, St Columbs Hall, Londonderry (IRL), 09/11 (performance); *Portrait of Janus*, Babylon Kino Mitte, Berlin, 14/12 (screening)

#### Joachim Koester

*Written in Light. Early Photography*, Moderna Museet, Malmö (SE), 25/05 - 13/01; *Group Therapy*, FRYE Foundation, Seattle (US), 15/09 - 06/01; *Superstition*, Marres, Maastricht (NL), 22/09 - 25/11; *ECSTASY*, Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, Stuttgart (DE), 29/09 - 24/02; *Patterns, Shimmers, Scenes*, Moderna Museet, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen, 10/10 - 03/02 (solo); *Things That Shine And Things That Are Dark*, Beirut Art Center, Beirut, 24/10 - 28/12 (solo); *Wilderness*, Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (DE), 01/11 - 03/02;

*Camera Austria*, Museum der Moderne, Salzburg (AT), 24/11 - 04/03

#### David Lamelas

*David Lamelas. Fiction of a Production*, Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, (US), 02/06 - 06/01 (solo); *Lamelas, Irwin, Kusama: Regarding Perception*, Galeria Lago, Instituto Inhotim, Brumadinho (BR), 06/09 - 20/08; *David Lamelas*, Galeria Henrique Faria, Buenos Aires, 10/10 - 14/11 (solo)

#### Sharon Lockhart

*A Journey That Wasn't*, The Broad, Los Angeles (US), 30/06 - 01/02; *Stillleben in der Fotografie der Gegenwart*, Kunst Haus Wien, Vienna (AT), 13/09 - 17/02; *Picture Industry: une histoire provisoire de l'image technique, 1844-2018*, LUMA, Arles (FR), 13/10 - 06/01; *Signal or Noise: The Photographic II*, S.M.A.K., Museum of Contemporary Art, Ghent (BE), 09/11 - 17/02; *Movements and Variations*, neugerriemschneider, Berlin, 01/12 - 05/01 (solo); *Rudzienko*, Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius (LT), 08/02 - 01/04 (solo)

#### Tino Sehgal

*This success/This failure*, Kunsten Museum of Modern Art, Aalborg (DK), 11/10 - 25/11 (solo)

#### Philippe Thomas

[SIC]. *Works from the CAPC Collection*, CAPC musée d'art contemporain, Bordeaux (FR), 13/10 - 27/10; *Uniques. Carnet écrits, dessinés, imprimés*, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Genève (CH), 20/10 - 25/08

#### Tris Vonna-Michell

*Sound*, Francisco Fino Gallery, Artissima, Torino (IT), 02/11 - 04/11; *Tris Vonna-Michell*, Bozar, Brussels, 06/11 (screening); *Walking Sonic Texts - Sound Poetry and Movement in Space*, Jan Mot, Brussels, 08/11 - 01/12 (solo with a contribution by Marc Matter); Glyptotek, Copenhagen, 26/11 (screening)

#### Ian Wilson

*Bandes à part*, Le Musée régional d'art contemporain, Sérignan (FR), 23/06 - 02/06

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#### Colophon

*Publisher* Jan Mot, Brussels  
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*Graphic Design*  
Maureen Mooren, Amsterdam  
*Printing* Cultura, Wetteren

(advertisement)

## JAN MOT

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and by appointment