



presse@mudam.lu  
www.mudam.lu

Tel + 352 45 37 85 1  
Fax + 352 45 37 85 400

3, Park Dräi Eechelen  
L-1499 Luxembourg

Mudam Luxembourg  
Musée d'Art Moderne  
Grand-Duc Jean

# DOUBLE CODING

COLLECTION MUDAM

17.06.2017 – 10.09.2017

PRESS KIT

## Press release

# DOUBLE CODING COLLECTION MUDAM

**Exhibition from June 17 to Septembre 10, 2017**

**Curator** Marie-Noëlle Farcy, assisted by Lisa Baldelli

**Artists** Carlos Amoraless, Mel Chin, Andrea Mastrovito, Svätöpluk Mikyta, Ciprian Mureşan, Lucia Nimcová, Wael Shawky, Mitra Tabrizian, Danh Vo

On 19 September 1985, Mexico City was hit by a devastating earthquake. Yet nothing seems to link this dramatic event with the elegant drawing composed of concentric forms that expand almost hypnotically. As a witness of the disaster, **Carlos Amoraless** has vivid memories of that day, having been hit by a traumatic and emotional force and simultaneously subjected to a certain fascination at the destruction wrought on the city. With the title *Vertical Earthquake* (2010), the wall drawing conforms to an exact protocol, the open-ended repetition of the form of one of the many faults in a building, that was caused by the earthquake. Visually, it thus runs counter to the chaos provoked. Although the work is a perceptive transposition into visual form of the experience lived by the artist, Carlos Amoraless nonetheless allows viewers to approach the work in any way they wish, even if the nearby presentation of newspaper pages leads us to contextualise the work.

Often taking his personal and family life as a starting point - his parents fled Vietnam when he was four years old and settled in Denmark - **Danh Vo's** work tackles the links between history and personal memory and the construction process of identity. For *2.2.1861* (2009-), Danh Vo asked his father to copy by hand the letter that Théophane Vénard, a French missionary in Tonkin, in the north of present-day Vietnam, sent his father on the eve of his execution for proselytism. Through this simple gesture of copying, the work superimposes the two father-son relationships. In Phung Vo's extremely careful writing, Vietnamese history and the family history of the artist intersect: "I knew the handwriting of my father particularly through the signs and menus he copied for the small catering stalls he owned in Denmark, explains the artist. ... My father hardly speaks Danish, writes it even less, and knows no other Western language. When he copies these letters, he recognizes the alphabet, but he does not understand its meaning."

Foregoing all personal links with events, the works by **Andrea Mastrovito** and Mel Chin take a more remote perspective in time to question the way in which history gets written. The two artists invite us to reject any unambiguous reading of history and to reconsider our own point of view. As the expression "history is written by the winners" indicates, the way the historical account is related affects how it is interpreted and handed down. In his work, Andrea Mastrovito physically turns the caravel sailed by Christopher Columbus around in order to challenge the endlessly repeated benefits that resulted from the European discovery of America, which are seriously challenged if the event is considered from the outlook of the continent's indigenous peoples.

Less descriptive in its form, the sculpture of **Mel Chin** is an attempt - on his own terms - at a psycho-morphological portrait of a lie. The enigmatic tongue that emerges from a wall is sculpted in catlinite, a material from which the peace pipes of the indigenous peoples of North America were carved, in a direct allusion to the fraudulent treaties they were offered. On the other side of the wall, physical organs hard to identify are coupled with a strangely hypertrophied sac representing the physical reaction of the body - as conceived by the artist - when the mind harbours a lie within it.

The irony employed by **Wael Shawky** becomes more apparent when, as he zigzags among the aisles of a supermarket, he seems to mimic the glibness of a sales rep or the intense manner of a television presenter commenting live on a supposedly burning issue, like those that today pass continuously across the bottom of our screens. Neither an advertising rant, nor an item of breaking news, the artist gives us a cadenced account of a religious legend that is part of both the Christian and Islamic traditions. Called the *Seven Sleepers of Ephesus* or the *Ahl al-Kahf* (People of the Cave), it relates the story of young men who sleep for 309 years to awake in a completely different world that they are hard put to recognise.

The panoramic photography by **Mitra Tabrizian** was taken in a then new-build residential district on the outskirts of Tehran. With its silhouettes of the inhabitants and monumental portraits of the religious leaders, it initially appears to be a classic depiction of contemporary Iranian society. Yet the use of a wide-angle lens and the fixed attitudes of the subjects combine to give the impression of a form of artificiality that the photographer's objective gaze succeeds in piercing.

In his video *The Invisible Hand* (2011), in secret **Ciprian Mureşan** binds one of his drawings into the Romanian translation of Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*, which the artist borrowed from the library in Cluj University. Although the title of the work is a direct reference to the theories of the Scottish economist and father of the free market economy, with his action Mureşan is practising a form of reiteration: whereas in Smith's concept the invisible hand represents the supposed self-regulation of the market based on supply and demand, the hand we see in the film is actually working, delicately slitting the binding of the book so it can slip two additional pages into it. This is not the first time Mureşan has practised this action: books by Antonin Artaud, Honoré Balzac, Thomas Mann and J.D. Salinger have also been "illustrated" in this way with drawings he has made of a Soviet sci-fi novel, thereby creating a complete shift in time and theme within the narration. Unlike the books Mureşan shows in exhibitions, which are open to public view, the augmented book by Adam Smith in the video has been discreetly returned to the shelves of Cluj's university library.

We see the same mediation on existing documents in the work of **Svätopluk Mikyta**, who searches in second-hand bookshops and antique shops for illustrations that he alters and combines in large compositions on a bright red ground. Composed mainly of imagery linked to Eastern European communism, he cuts out, reframes, censors and scribbles on the images to accentuate the shade and contrasts, and in so doing restores these records of a past era to the status of graphic works which, as pale images on red and black grounds, are reminiscent of communist propaganda.

**Lucia Nimcová** works with the censored rushes of Slovakian films made before the fall of the Berlin Wall. Made up to a great extent by rejected extracts from films made between 1968 and 1989, her video exudes a very outdated atmosphere. Apparently inoffensive, they would not arouse the attention of viewers if the title – *Double Coding* – did not stimulate them to question the ambivalence of the images. The current meaning of the concept of "double coding", used in architecture and cognitive psychology, suggests, somewhat ironically, two possible interpretations, but it is a bitter-sweet irony that breaks through the images' triteness and the subjectivity of the montage. "The eyes change according to what you are looking at" warns the artist, or when the unpredictability of censorship is transformed into a poetic thread.

With their look backwards to the past, Ciprian Mureşan, Svätopluk Mikyta and Lucia Nimcová shine the light of the present onto the conditioning implemented by political and economic systems, inviting us to take a critical and constructive view of a recent past whose existence still has consequences today. The disappearance of the ideological confrontation between two distinct blocs has certainly altered the face of the world, though without smoothing away the many issues implicit in the geo-political landscape, which has since developed to reflect more unsettled questions.



## LIST OF THE EXHIBITED WORKS

### Carlos Amorales

*Vertical Earthquake*, 2010  
Wall drawing  
Pencil, metal ruler  
ø 320 cm  
Acquisition 2010

*Germinal*, 2010  
Newspaper  
Silkscreen, graphite and paint on paper  
53 x 75 cm each  
Donation 2011 – Galerie Annet Gelink,  
Amsterdam

### Mel Chin

*Shape of a Lie*, 2005  
Bronze, catlinite  
185 x 207 x 82 cm  
Acquisition 2011

### Andrea Mastrovito

*Non ci resta che piangere (There's  
nothing left to do but cry)*, 2009  
Paper  
Approx. 210 x 900 x 900 cm  
Acquisition 2011

### Svätopluk Mikyta

*Reportrait Volume II*, 2007-2011  
Set of 22 drawings on rotogravures  
175 x 320 cm  
Acquisition 2012

### Ciprian Mureșan

*The Invisible Hand*, 2011  
HD video, colour, sound  
8 min 59 sec  
Donation 2012 – the artist and Galerie Plan B,  
Cluj/Berlin

### Lucia Nimcová

*Double Coding*, 2008-2009  
Synchronized video installation, colour, sound  
5 min 14 sec  
Acquisition 2012

### Wael Shawky

*The Cave (Istanbul)*, 2004  
Video, colour, sound  
13 min 22 sec  
Acquisition 2006

### Mitra Tabrizian

*Tehran 2006*, 2006  
LightJet Type C  
101 x 302 cm  
Acquisition 2008

### Danh Vo

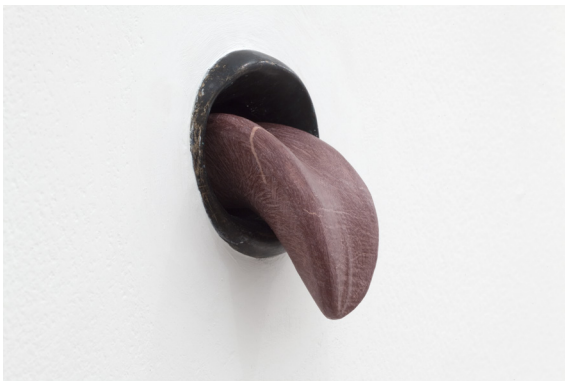
*2,2,1861*, 2009  
Handwritten letter by Phung Vo  
Ink on paper  
29,7 x 21 cm  
Production 2013



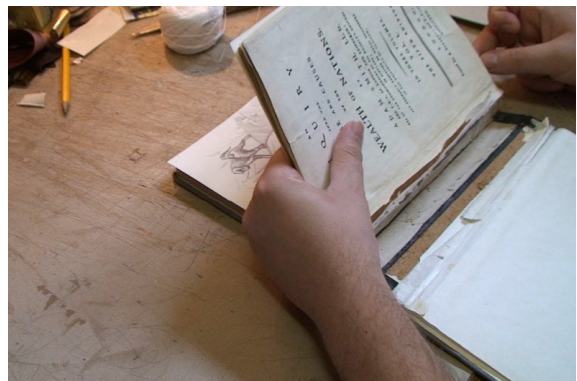
Mitra Tabrizian, *Tehran 2006*, 2006  
Collection Mudam Luxembourg  
© Photo: Mitra Tabrizian



Carlos Amorales, *Vertical Earthquake*, 2010 (detail)  
Collection Mudam Luxembourg  
© Photo: Carlos Amorales and Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam



Mel Chin, *Shape of a Lie*, 2009  
Collection Mudam Luxembourg  
© Photo: Simon Vogel



Ciprian Muresan, *The Invisible Hand*, 2011  
Collection Mudam Luxembourg  
© Ciprian Muresan



Svätopluk Mikyta, *Reportrait Volume II*, 2007 - 2011  
Collection Mudam Luxembourg  
Installation view, Slovak National Gallery, Bratislava, 2012  
© Photo: Svätopluk Mikyta/ Slovak National Gallery, Bratislava



Lucia Nimcová, *Double Coding*, 2010  
Collection Mudam Luxembourg  
© Lucia Nimcová



Wael Shawky, *The Cave (Istanbul)*, 2004  
Collection Mudam Luxembourg  
© Wael Shawky



F. M. F

20 janvier 1861.

Très cher, très honoré et bien-aimé Père,

Puisque ma sentence se fait encore attendre, je veux vous adresser un nouvel adieu, qui sera probablement le dernier. Les jours de ma prison s'écoulent paisiblement. Tous ceux qui m'entourent m'honorent, un bon nombre m'aiment. Depuis le grand mandarin jusqu'au dernier soldat, tous regrettent que la loi du royaume me condamne à la mort. Je n'ai point eu à endurer de tortures, comme beaucoup de mes frères. Un léger coup de sabre séparera ma tête, comme une fleur printanière que le Maître du jardin cueille pour son plaisir. Nous sommes tous des fleurs plantées sur cette terre que Dieu cueille en son temps, un peu plus tôt, un peu plus tard. Autre est la rose empourprée, autre le lys virginal, autre l'humble violette. Câchons tous de plaire, selon le parfum ou l'éclat qui nous sont donnés, au souverain Seigneur et Maître.

Je vous souhaite, cher Père, une longue, paisible et vertueuse vieillesse. Portez doucement la croix de cette vie, à la suite de Jésus, jusqu'au calvaire d'un heureux trépas. Père et fils se reverront au paradis. Moi, petit éphémère, je m'en vais le premier. Adieu.

Votre très dévoué et respectueux fils.

F. Théophile Vénard

m. s.

## EVENTS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EXHIBITION



© Photo: Mudam Luxembourg

### REGULAR GUIDED TOURS

LU – Saturday, 11.00am

DE – Saturday and Sunday, 3.00pm

FR – Saturday and Sunday, 4.00pm

EN – Wednesday, 7.00pm and Sunday, 11.00am

Guided tours of the current exhibitions

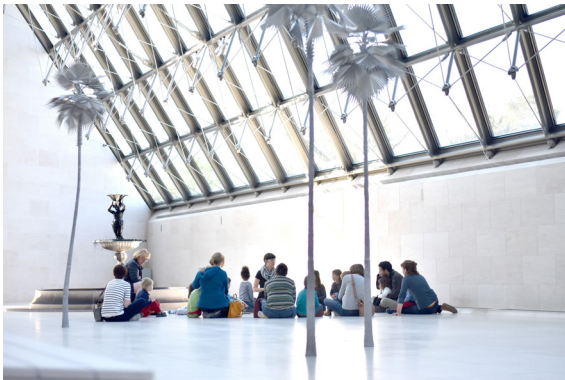
For individual visitors and small groups

(max. 5 people). Duration: 45 min.

Tours free of charge, except for the entrance fee

Information: [visites@mudam.lu](mailto:visites@mudam.lu); t. +352 45 37 85 531

No booking required



© Photo: Mudam Luxembourg

### MUDAMINI TOURS

15.07.2017 - 15.09.2017

FR – Wednesdays, 3.00-3.45pm

LU – Friday, 3.00-3.45pm

Guided tours for 6 to 12 year-olds

Duration: 45 min. Tours free of charge

Free of charge for children, regular entrance fee for

adults. Booking requested: t. +352 45 37 85 531;

[workshop@mudam.lu](mailto:workshop@mudam.lu)



## DOUBLE CODING COLLECTION MUDAM

**Exhibition from June 17 to Septembre 10, 2017**

**Curator** Marie-Noëlle Farcy, assisted by Lisa Baldelli

**Artists** Carlos Amoraes, Mel Chin, Andrea Mastrovito, Svätopluk Mikyta, Ciprian Mureşan, Lucia Nimcová, Wael Shawky, Mitra Tabrizian, Danh Vo

### PRACTICAL INFORMATION

#### Address and information

Mudam Luxembourg - Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean  
3, Park Dräi Eechelen, L-1499 Luxembourg-Kirchberg  
t. +352 45 37 85 1, [info@mudam.lu](mailto:info@mudam.lu), [www.mudam.lu](http://www.mudam.lu)

#### Opening hours

Thursday-Monday and public holidays	10.00am-6.00pm
Wednesday	10.00am-11.00pm (exhibition spaces: 10.00pm)
24.12 and 31.12	10.00am-3.00pm
Tuesday and 25.12	Closed

#### Entrance fee

Adults	7€
Under 26 years old, groups	5€
Mudami card (valid 1 year for 2 persons)	50€
Under 21 years old	free
Students under 26 years old	free
Wednesday, 6.00-11.00pm	free

#### By car

Kirchberg -> Avenue John F. Kennedy -> Philharmonie -> Tunnel -> Mudam  
GPS: X 49.62 - Y 6.14

#### Images

Available on request

#### Press contact

Julie Jephos, [j.jephos@mudam.lu](mailto:j.jephos@mudam.lu), t. +352 45 37 85 633

#### MUDAM THANKS

All the donors and the sponsors, and particularly



Delfin



as well as

The Loo & Lou Foundation, Arendt & Medernach, CapitalatWork Foyer Group, PwC, UniCredit Luxembourg SA, Prefalux, Soludec SA, Kaspersky Lab, Dussmann Service Luxembourg, Indigo Park Services SA, EducDesign, Les Amis des Musées d'Art et d'Histoire

Mudam is financed by the Ministry of Culture.



LE GOUVERNEMENT  
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG  
Ministère de la Culture