

HOŠEK CONTEMPORARY

— EST. 2016 —

MS HEIMATLAND GRAND OPENING

Opening reception: 27th April 2018, 7-10 pm

Hosek Contemporary is pleased to announce its first exhibition on board MS Heimatland, an old motor ship built over 100 years ago. The opening night, which also coincides with the launch of Berlin Gallery Weekend 2018, hosts two artists combining performance, sound and light. Gunnhildur Hauksdóttir is presenting a variation of her *Pendulum Choir* performance and an audio piece called *Five Drawings*, while Michael Klingner's minimalist light objects are illuminating the inside of the ship's cargo hold.

GUNNHILDUR HAUKSDÓTTIR

Pendulum Choir - Solidarity

Living in a world where one crisis seems to lead to another, we sometimes suffer from solidarity fatigue. While some events incite an uproar in the media, we remain silent when confronted with other equally destructive cases. "Pick your battles" they say, but how do we choose who is worthy of our solidarity, who is the ideal candidate? Who deserves our empathy? Hauksdóttir's *Pendulum Choir - Solidarity* performance is adapted to the current state of affairs, a site-specific piece also honoring the history of its surroundings. Used mainly as a cargo ship, MS Heimatland once served as a refuge for a family who was forced to flee the country, leaving their home behind. In the context of the current events, Hauksdóttir's piece thus takes on a whole new meaning, raising the question who do you stand in solidarity with?

Following a simple structure of call and response, the piece starts with the performers moving among the audience. The makeshift stage, empty to start with, is designated by rocks suspended with ribbons from the ceiling, forming a cluster of pendulums mobilized by people's movement. Slowly, the performers approach the stage, gathering at the centre of the space, exposed, like targets of our gaze. We are staring at them, but do we want to hear what they tell us? The dialogue is simple, but can we understand it when every response only raises more questions. Does losing your family, your loved ones, your home and your country mean you have lost your identity? When everything that made you who you are is gone, are you sure you are the same person? Sometimes you remember, but sometimes is not often.

The performance ends with *Ak Koyun*, a Turkish folk song about a white sheep, which walks in all innocence across a hill to reach what he is eagerly searching for. However, this always remains just another hill away, unattainable. One person starts singing alone, with eventually the whole choir joining in. Although Hauksdóttir often works with volunteers who are not professional performers or singers, for the *Pendulum Choir - Solidarity* she has chosen members of Ribo Chor, a Berlin-based choir conducted by Doreen Kutzke, who will sing in canon, repeating the short song until the old ship resonates with voices.

For the duration of the exhibition, the ship will be left in its original state, offering a rusty décor for Hauksdóttir's performance and serving as a temporary sanctuary for the audience.

Five Drawings

The exhibition also presents Hauksdóttir's piece *Five Drawings* (2016), combining an audio installation, drawings and sculpture. The artwork is based on five simple drawings, which are read as a musical score, vocalised by five jazz performance students and recorded with a sculpture serving as a binaural microphone. The first version of the work was on display in Nida Art Colony in Lithuania, where it was shown in its purest form through five pairs of headphones, with one drawing and one vocalist played in each pair. At Hosek Contemporary, the piece will be heard through speakers as a layered soundtrack with the singers' voices blending together. The wooden and metal sculpture is the original one used for the initial recording in Lithuania. The drawings are included in the artist's publication accompanying the piece, available on request.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Gunnhildur Hauksdóttir is an Icelandic visual artist living and working in Reykjavik and Berlin. She graduated from Sandberg Institute (MFA) in Amsterdam in 2006 and has been a member of the Dieter Roth Academy since 2000. She was the director of the Living Art Museum in Reykjavík between 2011-2014. Actively involved in publications, lectures and research on artist initiatives and performance art, she holds a visiting artist position at the Iceland Academy of the Arts. In her works, she creates transient conceptual assemblies by combining elements of audio, video, performance, sculpture, drawing and text, exploring themes such as cultural identity, nature, valour and fear.

Some of her recent displays include *Seismic Choreography* at the Galt Museum in Lethbridge, Canada earlier this year, *The Pendulum Choir - Jäkälä* in Helsinki, *The Braid*, a performance in Mengi, Reykjavík and during Gallery Weekend in Berlin with Hošek Contemporary, all in 2017. *Abstand*, installation and performance in Pole Positions at Werkhalle Wiesenburg in Berlin, *Erklärung [Declaration] II*, a solo exhibition and performance at Hošek Contemporary, Berlin, also in 2017. *Five Drawings*, an audio installation in Åkerstrøm Kunstsenter in Oslo in 2017, accompanied with a limited artist edition including a vinyl with a vocal composition. *Der Abstand [The Distance]* was performed in a collateral event called the Silver Lining at the 2015 Venice Biennale.

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