

## Press release

11 September 2017

### Tell It to the Stones

#### The Work of Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub

14 September – 19 November 2017, Hanseatenweg 10

#### Rencontres I and II event programme

What happens during our encounter (*rencontre*) with a film, what the film does and how it can be translated into theory and action – this technique is closely associated with the films of Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub, and yet is always in sharp contrast to the relatively sporadic visibility of the films themselves. In **Rencontres** – part of the programme of peripheral events surrounding the exhibition *Tell It to the Stones* – we would like to invite you to explore in depth the special characteristics implied by the term ‘encounter’.

For Huillet and Straub, speaking about, arguing over and travelling with films has always formed an essential part of their practice. Now that their films have acquired an international presence, and have been published on digital media, approaches to them have also proliferated. During the Rencontre days at the beginning and end of the exhibition we shall explore as many different forms of discourse and approach as possible. Participants include: Renato Berta, for many years the Huillet/Straub cinematographer; Manfred Blank, former assistant, actor and filmmaker; Peter Nestler, friend and filmmaker; Peter Kammerer, for decades a critical fellow-traveller; Giulio Bursi, their assistant director on several occasions; Christophe Clavert, cameraman on Jean-Marie Straub’s more recent films; as well as theoreticians and artists from a younger generation such as Luisa Greenfield, Nida Ghouse, Louis Henderson, Oraib Toukan, Ala Younis and the New Composers Collective, a spin-off project from the electronic duo Mouse on Mars.

#### Rencontre I

##### The luxury you gain when you’ve nothing to lose

15–17 September 2017

The three days of Rencontre I, which is closely related to the themes and issues of the exhibition, will open up a whole spectrum of varied approaches to the work of Huillet and Straub. Focal points will be provided by the films produced in Italy and the literary works on which they are based: Elio Vittorini, Cesare Pavese and Franco Fortini, as well as Brecht and Hölderlin. In connection with this, the concepts of ‘work’ and ‘worker’ will be subjected to scrutiny, along with the role and significance of peasants for Huillet and Straub and in relation to Heiner Müller. With reference to the film *Communists*, showing as an installation in the exhibition, Patrick Primavesi and Peter Kammerer will discuss the question of a (future) form of communism. Other themes of the exhibition which will be taken up in this

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weekend of discussions and presentation include: a special focus on the role of Danièle Huillet, and the key significance of places and landscapes and their history in Huillet and Straub's politics of imagery. The artists of the exhibition will be in attendance on these days to speak about their work, as well as during the guided tour on Sunday, 17 September at 12 noon.

## **Rencontre II**

### **Until we start to see something**

**10–11 November 2017**

The title of Rencontre II, which coincides with the end of the exhibition, alludes to the two Cézanne films *Cézanne in conversation with Joachim Gasquet* (1989) and *Une visite au Louvre* (2003), and emphasises the significance that Cézanne's work has had for the two filmmakers – above all his understanding of vision. In particular, Huillet and Straub regarded Cézanne's interest in repetition – and what happens when you repeatedly look at the same thing (e.g. the Mont Sainte-Victoire) until you actually start to see something – as a quality that they wished to transfer to their films. In connection with this, both understood seeing as 'turning to face outwards' – a relinquishing of self.

Additionally, with the appearance of guest Peter Nestler on 10 November, the focus will be on the films that Nestler and Huillet/Straub have reciprocally dedicated to one another – over the course of a friendship lasting decades, which has relied not least on their shared respect for the act of seeing. The public seminar on 11 November is concerned with the question of what Serge Deney has described as 'Straubian pedagogy' – what forms its basis, and what significance it might have in a post-digital age.

In this way, Rencontre II will pick up the threads of what has already been seen and discussed and take them further forward, once again with the aim of elaborating or refining something that can transcend the event and, in various ways, bring the audience up to the present moment. For this reason, the programme of the 'Rencontre' on 11 November will also include the music performance based on the *Antigone* script by Huillet and Straub – a collaboration between the New Composers Collective (a spin-off from the electronic duo Mouse on Mars) and Astrid Ofner (voice/stage production).

For further information and dates, visit: [huilletstraub-berlin.net](http://huilletstraub-berlin.net).

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