

Thursday 19th May 2016 at 7 pm RITA URSO presents the opening of the show by

## Jean-Baptiste Maitre

*Fluid Carrying the Hopes of Ships in Distress*



Jean-Baptiste Maitre, *Un café au comptoir, à Paris (3 minutes)*, 2016  
Epson ink and acrylic on folded paper mounted on wood  
180 x 105 cm

I radiate, invisible, from the summit of the Tower  
Fluid carrying the hope of ships in distress  
Enveloping the earth with my waves  
Proclaiming the Word, the Time of the world.  
(H.M. Barzun, in *Poème et drame 3*, March 1913).

Rita Urso is glad to present *Fluid Carrying the Hope of Ships in Distress*, a solo exhibition by French artist Jean-Baptiste Maitre.

The show, which title comes from a poem that Henry-Martin Barzun wrote in 1913, rotates around the sense of unification of time with space, triggered by the invention of wireless radio signals. Seen as a wonder, this technology allowed events, as catastrophic as they could be, to be perceived in real time at any location, such as the Titanic incident in 1912.

Meanwhile, during the same time period, film makers developed a video editing technique based on accelerated motion sequences, called contrast editing. This recreated a sense of simultaneity between the scenes, giving the audience the feeling of having an ubiquitous vision.

In the gallery Maitre presents sculptures, paintings and a video playing with the notion of filmic time and the measurement of space. To do this the artist is referencing the contrast editing and the *toise*, a highly contrasted ruler used by archeologist to measure the proportions of objects in relation to their context.

The sculptural compositions displayed in the gallery space are made of ropes with painted sections of increasing lengths based on the structure of the *toise* ruler. The ropes are sometime displayed in front of a background (*Ropes and Chevrons*), sometimes measuring the space of the gallery itself (*Rope on Three Axes*), or simply left on the floor.

The exhibition is also composed with a constellation of paintings structured as 35mm film strips, each representing a certain amount of filmic time. The paintings depict images modified by the artist to enhance their filmic quality. They show a turkish carpet, a set of rope compositions entangled with written jokes, patterns of a screen saver, and night-shots seen from a police helicopter.

The paintings are displayed as one large picture on the central wall of the gallery, a method inspired by Georges Didi-Huberman's idea of exhibiting 'la table de travail'. It is the craftsman's table on which thoughts are associated in order to create new visions. Visual connections between the paintings are also made through scanning and processing them into a digital motion video.

With these works Jean-Baptiste Maitre aims at measuring space and time through cinema, and showing the effects that this action has on images and narration: "By chance I noticed that the *toise* – a tool made to measure an object in relation to its context – has a similar visual structure than some film editing systems, originally developed to trick our common sense of measurement. This thought produced a vertigo and triggered my imagination".

Jean-Baptiste Maitre (1978, France), lives and works in Amsterdam. Maitre received his degrees in Art History at Paris-4 Sorbonne University and his MA at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris as well as Studio Photography at the Gobelins École de l'Image in Paris. He is represented in The Netherlands by gallery Martin van Zomeren, Amsterdam. Solo and group shows include: "IDFA", Eye Amsterdam Film Museum, Amsterdam; "It ain't whatcha write, it's the way atcha write it", Manifesta Foundation, Amsterdam; "CODEX", Wattis Institute for contemporary Arts, San Francisco; "Stripe Paintings", La Salle De Bain art center, Lyon; "Mandala République", Martin van Zomeren, Amsterdam; "Post-Sculpture" with Bruce McClean, Galerie 1m3, Lausanne.