

## The Invisible Seminar: Magic

with **Alena Alexandrova**, **Soledad García Saavedra**, **Brandon LaBelle**, **Michelle-Marie Letelier**

In collaboration with Bergen Academy of Art and Design.

The Invisible Seminar is an ongoing project investigating the topic of invisibility and aims to consider questions of agency and appearance, the immaterial and identity, and how these interlink to perform within culture and politics.

In conjunction with the opening of the exhibition "Magic Block: Contemporary Art from Chile" (Gallery 3.14), this edition of The Invisible Seminar focuses on the exhibition themes of disappearance, erasure and the phantasmic. The exhibition reflects on strategies found within contemporary Chilean art that aim to negotiate the force of a political body, and in particular, those experiences and complex legacies left over from the Pinochet dictatorship. "Magic Block" brings together works from 1978 to the present that emphasize how the weight of such history is mysteriously found in its phantasmic presence, in what is left unspoken, unresolved, missing or crossed out. For example, declassified documents related to the dictatorship carry not so much clarification, but rather contribute to a perennial ambiguity, creating a dizzying collection of possible clues or unclear paths toward collective renewal. These conditions have led to a particular artistic culture whose works often engage with the "ghost." Projects that both amplify processes of erasure, silencing and disappearance, while turning us toward those secret dimensions that may also contain a new sense for recovery.

These questions and topics are highlighted as they appear within contemporary artists' works, and the methodologies that assist in negotiating what is so present and yet so absent at the same moment. The Invisible Seminar will explore these issues by way of presentations and shared discussions. Through the Seminar, the relation of artistic practice and the political, the visible and the invisible, the archive and knowledge production will be brought forward, drawing out the example of Chilean contemporary art as an opportunity for reflection.

**Soledad García Saavedra** is an independent curator with an MFA in Curating at Goldsmiths College, University of London and History of Art at Universidad de Chile. Current exhibition and publication projects ventures on reframing trash and memory through artistic works and archives. Among her recent curations and collaborations are, *Cautiva* (Centro Cultural Matucana 100, Santiago, 2012), *Time Capsules and the conditions of Now* (David Roberts Art Foundation, London, 2012), *Matta: Centenary 11-11-11* (Centro Cultural La Moneda, 2011); *Urban Residues* (Ch.ACO Art Fair, 2011). She was resident curator at the 8th Mercosul Biennial, *Essays on Geopoetics* in Porto Alegre, Brasil, 2011. Since 2010, she is coordinator-curator of archive and research of the Centre for Visual Arts Documentation at Centro Cultural La Moneda, Santiago de Chile. At the Centre, she has directed educational sessions, digital and editorial programmes around the contemporary collections with the purpose to enrich research on Chilean/Latin-American art. She is academic of the master *Studies of the Image*, Universidad Alberto Hurtado and the master of *History of Art* at Universidad de Chile.

**Alena Alexandrova** obtained her doctoral degree from the University of Amsterdam with a dissertation on the way contemporary artists critically appropriate religious motifs (*Dis-Continuities: Religious Motifs in Contemporary Art*). She has an MPhil degree in Philosophy and Cultural Analysis (cum laude) from the same university. She was a visiting researcher at the Humanities Center, Johns Hopkins University. Currently she

is a lecturer in theory at the Dutch Art Institute, Arnhem and Gerrit Rietveld Academy, Amsterdam. She curated *Capturing Metamorphosis*, an exhibition around the issue of metamorphosis situating media and modes of display between archeology and contemporary art, Allard Pierson Museum, Amsterdam. She is developing a curatorial and research project entitled *Anarcheologies* as an outcome of a residency at the Cité des Arts, Paris. She is the co-editor of a volume on the work of Jean-Luc Nancy and has published internationally in the fields of aesthetics, performance and visual studies (Performance Research, Rue Descartes, Esse, Kunstlicht, Bijdragen). She is a member of the International Association of Art Critics.

**Brandon LaBelle** is an artist and writer, and professor at the Bergen Academy of Art and Design. His works explore questions of social life, using sound, performance, text and sited constructions. This results in situational and contextual projects in public spaces, acts of (mis)translation and archiving, as well as micro-narratives of the (un)common. His artistic work has been presented at the Whitney Museum, NY (2012), Image Music Text, London (2011), Sonic Acts, Amsterdam (2010), A/V Festival, Newcastle (2008, 2010), Museums Quartier, Vienna (2009), 7th Bienal do Mercosul, Porto Allegro (2009), Center for Cultural Decontamination, Belgrade (2009), Casa Vecina, Mexico City (2008), Fear of the Known, Cape Town (2008), Netherlands Media Art Institute, Amsterdam (2003, 2007), Ybakatu Gallery, Curitiba, Brazil (2003, 2006, 2009), Singuhr Gallery, Berlin (2004), and ICC, Tokyo (2000). Also a prolific writer, he is the author of *Diary of an Imaginary Egyptian* (Errant Bodies, 2012) *Acoustic Territories: Sound Culture and Everyday Life* (Continuum, 2010) and *Background Noise: Perspectives on Sound Art* (Continuum, 2006).

**Michelle-Marie Letelier** was born in Rancagua, Chile, in 1977. She currently lives and works in Berlin, Germany. In 2000 she obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts, at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. Her solo exhibitions have taken place in Calama, Valparaíso, Santiago (Chile) and Padua (Italy). She has participated in group exhibitions in Calama, Santiago, Torino, Padua, Weimar, Berlin, Shanghai and London. Her videos have been exhibited in various screenings and festivals across the world, among them: World One Minute Festival (Beijing and Lisbon), Citypulse (Santiago), ALBIAC (Valencia) and Next Festival (Vilnius). In 2005 she participated in the Mercosur Biennial (Porto Alegre, Brazil). She has recently been awarded a first edition of ORA prize (Italy).