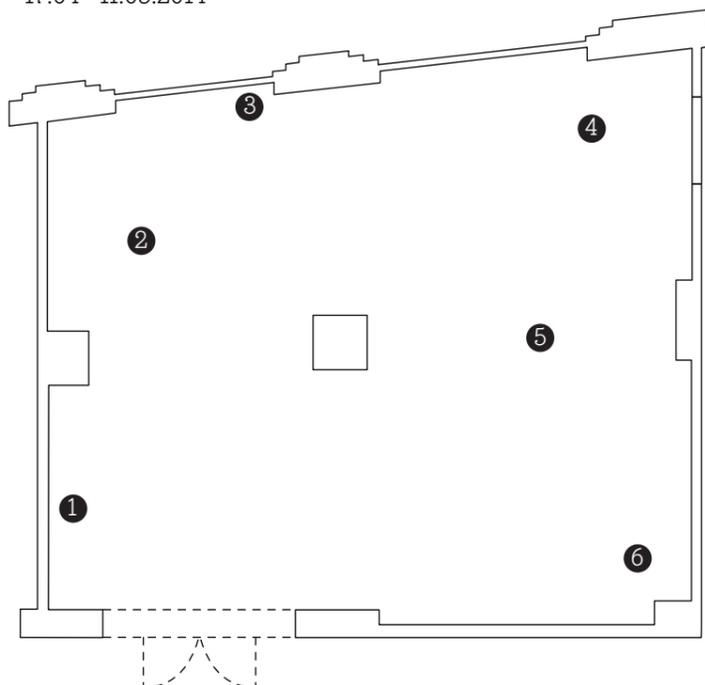


Soft Measures

WIELS Contemporary Art Centre, Brussels
17.04 - 11.05.2014



- 1** **Marco Bruzzone**
*For Each Love That Becomes Physical
There are Many Variations That do Not*
Jacquard woven cotton
Variable dimensions
2010

Italian artist Marco Bruzzone once had ambitions to organize an outdoor symposium on conceptual art, the purpose of which was to address the inherent basis for cultism in the artistic and theoretical output of this particular movement in western art history. The event never actually saw the light of day, but the artist ended up producing a series of jacquard quilts intended to be used by the participants of the conference during plein-air lectures. The textile work *For Each Love That Becomes Physical There Are Many Variations That do Not* (2010) is made from the fabric that Bruzzone developed for these quilts and the repetitive pattern of coloured cubes takes its cue from Sol LeWitt's geometric abstractions. Although designed with a particular purpose in mind, the dishtowel-like sample version of the quilt presented in the exhibition is also suggestive of the traditions and domestic rituals of housekeeping.
- 2** **Magnhild Øen Nordahl**
The Knot is Infinitely Far Away
Plaster, styrofoam, painted pine, cotton rope
187x83x67 cm / 55x60x55 cm
2014

The series of sculptural works entitled *Occupational Knots* (2014) by Norwegian artist Magnhild Øen Nordahl is based on the naval handbook *The Ashley Book of Knots*, an encyclopedic record of knots first published in 1944. One of its chapters lists a variety of occupations and which knots are useful for whom, and the sculpture shown at WIELS is based on the Artists' selection of knots and makes use of a knot invented to secure the easel when sketching in the wind. The titles of the works derive from Mathematical Knot Theory, a theory created in the 19th century as an attempt to classify all substances in the world according to a comprehensive tabulation of knots. Motivated by both epistemological and tactile interests, Øen Nordahl uses her sculptural practice to examine relations between particulars and universals, between form and function and how a systematized investigation of material properties
- 3** **Philip Raiford Johnson**
The Sound of Fireworks and Bugles
Video, iPhone, charger
Duration 9:59 min
2013

In South-African artist Philip Raiford Johnson's film *The Sound of Fireworks and Bugles* (2013), the artist undertakes a journey from a theme park to a beach on a typically inclement day in the south of England, carrying with him a large roll of canvas. The piece follows Johnson's seemingly purposive walk to the beach, where the canvas is transformed using plastic poles to provide rigidity, and is dragged into the sea. The reasons for this strange procedure are never revealed in the piece, and Johnson's actions take on the air of a mystical ritual. However, the work's anticlimactic finale reiterates that his actions have served no other purpose than their own taking-place.
- 4** **André Tehrani & Sus Soddu**
Ceremony
Lightweight polyester fabric, box in spray painted MDF
82x139 cm / 86x144x9 cm
2014

The textile work *Ceremony* (2014), made by former WIELS resident André Tehrani with the assistance of Swedish costume designer Sus Soddu, is based on the flag-folding custom reserved for the US military's official memorials and funerals. In Soddu and Tehrani's take on this military ritual, fourteen pieces of fabric identical in size record each of the steps of the ceremonial folding procedure and have subsequently been sewn together as a life-size, step-by-step flag-folding manual. Although based on the ceremonial folding procedure for the flag of the United States, the final product is made in a monochrome lightweight fabric designed for utility clothing and presented as a piece of abstract soft sculpture. Nevertheless, the collaborative work is underpinned by allusions to a ritualized treatment of fabrics of mythological and symbolic significance.
- 5** **Linn Pedersen & Jan Freuchen**
Primary Gym
Climbing rope, plaster, sportswear
Variable dimensions
2012 / 2014

Jan Freuchen and Linn Pedersen's installation *Primary Gym* (2012/14) consists of a web of colored climbing ropes, knitted and stretched across the room with geometric plaster casts suspended from it. The piece is more of an obstacle or a trap than a sculptural object, like a mobile put in motion by the spectator's accidental touch. The installation's armature of suspended ropes makes the construction light and transparent, while its anchors are visibly pulled towards the floor. The colours, angles and materials also seem to suggest a link between sculptural abstraction and the aesthetics of the gym, where bodily movement is represented in swooshes, triangles and lines.
- 6** **Ryan Brewer**
*Performance Study
(I've Been Looking for Your Touch)*
Video
Duration 4:16 min
2012

The rituals of the domestic environment serve as a backdrop for American artist Ryan Brewer's *Performance Study (I've been looking for your touch, 2012)*, in which the artist performs a striptease pole-dance before a stationary camera in his living room. Brewer's work contrasts the soft, suppliant surfaces of domestic furniture, the falling clothes shed during the dance and even his own flesh and palpable weight, with the absolute rigidity of the pole around which the dance is performed. The piece draws out the erotic connotations nascent in several other pieces in the exhibition, and in the notion of a sensual knowledge itself.