



## VISITOR'S GUIDE

## MERLIN CARPENTER

## archive élastique

### EXHIBITION

FROM OCTOBER 24<sup>TH</sup> 2020 TO JANUARY 31<sup>ST</sup> 2021

Merlin Carpenter is an artist and painter whose painting practice, in order to reflect on itself, does not hesitate to go beyond its limits and extends towards other mediums or fields. In parallel with this he keeps a conscientious and evolving eye on issues of institutional critique or contemporary versions of "contextual" art. He constantly questions his medium, its appearance and existential conditions, as well as what it means to be an artist today within the machinery of capitalism.

Basing his work on Marx's theories of value (as shown in the many theoretical writings which accompany his artistic practice<sup>1</sup>), in his view the artistic critique is no longer content with acting as an example of development for capital: though it stigmatises and condemns, being caught in capital's grip itself, it acts directly for it. Also, each of Merlin Carpenter's projects is a chance taken to react to the various crises punctuating the recent history of capitalism, even if they impose a conceptual reversal to on them, sometimes subtracting themselves in this contradiction. Aware that capitalism always emerges more strengthened than weakened by these crises, he looks for some other way to maintain a certain intellectual and artistic freedom.

If we take the view that visitors of cultural sites now have a consumer reflex, are consumers of culture, of art; then some of his recent exhibitions have aimed to hinder the satisfaction of the immediate desire of the visitor/consumer. In these exhibitions, hidden, concealed works are created with materials that are considered poor or improper for art. And when he makes figurative paintings, enabling him to give viewers what they appear to need to satisfy their desires, these have something encrypted; they are either kitsch, or are well-painted but their subject does not offer itself in an immediate way. In so doing, Merlin Carpenter gladly admits that his art has something to do with the creation of value, and though it can appear abstruse, deceptive or sometimes iconoclastic, the artist believes that every anti-aesthetic or anti-spectacular approach, which still had a strong critical or subversive connotation a few years ago, is now doomed to be academic and even decorative, to become a cliché of "contemporary art", negating the expected effect. So it is here that he believes it is most relevant to act, in those interstices where capital absorbs what opposes its logic. Merlin Carpenter therefore does not make art just to produce art, but to highlight the context of his art, the situation in which it is made and evolves. Where others consider this whole apparatus of the establishment of art's value to be secondary, the artist chooses an aesthetic approach that brings it to the fore. If his work tends not to represent an end in itself, or has ends other than its own, he finds himself in an endless operation in an ever-more unpredictable social context.



The exhibition *archive élastique* takes as its point of departure the Synagogue de Delme's location, the road running through the village, on which numerous lorries and wide loads circulate. In the middle of a rural area, this traffic is irritating. France is a distribution machine. Also—and because the synagogue/exhibition space is located at the side of that road—the artist proposes to make it into a warehouse or archival storage space, in which one finds thousands of boxes, awaiting transportation. Right in front of the synagogue entrance is a forklift, parked and ready to load the pallets into lorries for hypothetical delivery. But since no forklift of this kind could get through the door, the vehicle is doomed to wait outside.

1. See for example Merlin Carpenter, *"The Outside Can't Go Outside"*, Institut für Kunstkritik, Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste - Städelschule, Frankfurt am Main, Sternberg Press, Berlin, 2018.

## BIOGRAPHY

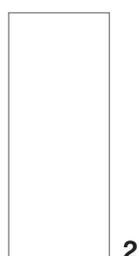
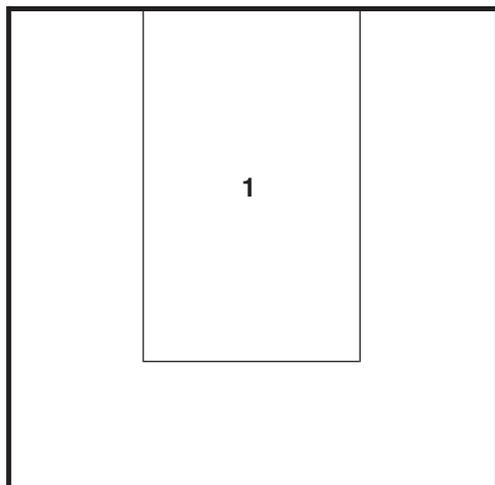
Merlin Carpenter (UK, 1967) lives in Shepperton, UK and works in London and Berlin. He graduated from Central Saint Martin's School of Art, London.

Since the early 90's, his work has been exhibited on the occasion of solo shows, events and projects. Recently at *dépendance*, Brussels ; Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York ; Simon Lee Gallery, London ; Overduin & Co, Amsterdam/Los Angeles ; Christian Andersen, Copenhagen ; Galerie Neu, Berlin and earlier at Kunsthalle Bern (2015), Bergen Kunsthall, Norway (2005), Secession, Vienna (2000) as well as for the project « Burberry Propaganda Tour 2013 » ... and featured in group shows at Galeria Municipal do Porto ; Galerie Emmanuel Layr, Vienna ; Kim? Contemporary Art Centre, Riga ; Marciano Art Foundation, Los Angeles ; Aishti Art Foundation, Jal el Dib, Lebanon ; MUMOK, Vienna ; Swiss Institute, New York ; Aram Art Gallery, Goyang Aram Nuri Arts Centre, Seoul ; Gaudel de Stampa, Paris ; Centre Pompidou, Paris ; The Kitchen, New York ; Contemporary Art Centre (CAC), Vilnius ; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York ; Museum Brandhorst, Munich ; Gavin Brown's Enterprise, New York ...

[www.merlincarpenter.com](http://www.merlincarpenter.com)



## FLOOR PLAN



### Works in the exhibition:

1. **archive élastique, 2020.**  
Wooden pallets, cardboard boxes, packing tape;  
dimensions variable.
2. **Untitled, 2020.**  
Manitou 1440 14m telescopic forklift;  
dimensions variable.

### archive élastique floor plans

## TOURS

### GUIDED TOUR BY BENOÎT LAMY DE LA CHAPELLE, DIRECTOR OF THE ART CENTER

Saturday, November 1<sup>st</sup> 2020 at 4 PM.

Free, reservation on 03 87 01 43 42 or [publics@cac-synagoguedelme.org](mailto:publics@cac-synagoguedelme.org)

### TEACHER MEETING

Teachers will be welcomed by Camille Grasser, head of visitor services, for an introduction to the exhibition *archive élastique*.

Thursday, October 29<sup>th</sup> 2020 from 4.30 PM.

### WEEKLY TOUR

Guided tour of the exhibition *archive élastique*.

Every Sunday at 4 PM.

Free, reservation not required.

### A JOURNEY «BETWEEN NEIGHBORS»

In partnership with Centre Pompidou-Metz and 49 nord 6 est - Frac Lorraine / Metz

Saturday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> 2021 (to be confirmed) from 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM (to be confirmed)

In relation to the exhibition *archive élastique* by Merlin Carpenter at the Centre d'art contemporain - la synagogue de Delme, this journey gives the opportunity to discover three singular places devoted to contemporary creation: Centre Pompidou-Metz, 49 Nord 6 Est - Frac Lorraine and the Centre d'art contemporain - la synagogue de Delme.

The visit of these three neighboring places is an occasion to shine a light on different relationships with the archive, to question exhibition venues, the contexte of production and diffusion of art in our current time.



## WORKSHOPS

### **“BIG IDEAS SMALL HANDS” WORKSHOPS > FOR CHILDREN AGED 6-11**

Led by Camille Grasser, head of visitor services, and artist Katia Mourer, these workshops allow children to discover the current exhibition through a playful, concrete approach to the exhibited works.

*Wednesdays November 25<sup>th</sup>, December 9<sup>th</sup> 2020 and January 20<sup>th</sup> 2021 from 2 PM to 5 PM.*

Free. Reservation required on 03 87 01 43 42.

### **PLAY-WORKSHOP IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MÉDIATHÈQUE DE DELME > CHILDREN AGED 7 AND UP**

Play-workshop about the exhibition *archive élastique*.

*Wednesday, November 25<sup>th</sup> 2020 from 10 am to 11.30 AM.*

Free. Reservation required on 03 87 01 39 91.

### **HAND-IN-HAND WORKSHOP > PARENTS AND CHILDREN AGED 5-12**

The art centre is offering a workshop for children and their parents! Little ones and bigger ones can come and share a convivial moment playfully discovering works of art.

*Saturday, January 30<sup>th</sup> 2021 from 3 PM to 4.30 PM.*

Free. Reservation required on 03 87 01 43 42.

### **BOUT'CHOUX TOUR > FROM 1 TO 3 YEARS OLD**

#### **IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PARENTS CHILDCARE ASSISTANT RELAY OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE MUNICIPALITIES OF THE SAULNOIS**

Discovery of the current exhibition *archive élastique* through a sensitive approach of the artworks: observation, listening, experimentation.

An exploration filled with emotions and sensations!

*Wednesday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2020 from 10 AM to 10.45 AM.*

Free. Reservation required: [rpam@cc-saulnois.fr](mailto:rpam@cc-saulnois.fr) / 03 87 01 17 88.



Due to the epidemic situation linked to COVID-19, wearing a mask is compulsory in all areas of the art center and other safety rules must be observed (physical distancing, hand washing with hydroalcoholic gel).

There will be a limited amount of visitors allowed at once in the exhibition spaces. Visitors might have to wait in line before entering.

The art center team thanks you for respecting these instructions and would like to remind you that this event may be subject to modification or cancellation depending on the health context and government measures. Any program changes will be communicated in good time.

## INFORMATIONS

### PRACTICAL INFORMATIONS

From Wednesday to Saturday, 2pm - 5.30pm  
and Sunday 11am - 5.30pm.

Admission free.

Guided tour every Sunday at 4pm.

The CAC will be closed from December 23<sup>st</sup>  
2019 to January 1<sup>st</sup> 2020 included.

### CONTACT

CAC - la synagogue de Delme  
33 rue Poincaré F-57590 Delme  
T +33(0)3 87 01 43 42  
info@cac-synagoguedelme.org  
www.cac-synagoguedelme.org

### ACCESS

**FROM PARIS** (by train 90mins):

TGV Est, get off at Metz or Nancy

**FROM METZ** (by car, 30mins):

D955, formerly route de Strasbourg

**FROM NANCY** (by car, 30mins):

N74 towards Château-Salins

then D955 towards Metz

### CONTACT EDUCATIONAL SERVICE

Camille Grasser

publics@cac-synagoguedelme.org

+33(0)3 87 01 43 42 (office)

+33(0)3 87 01 35 61 (exhibition space)

## THANKS

We would like to thank Fluxus Art Projects, Guillaume Lemuhot, the municipal employees of Delme, Loxam, 49 Nord 6 Est - Frac Lorraine and Centre Pompidou-Metz.

## PARTNERS

Since 2019, the CAC - la synagogue de Delme obtained the label « Contemporary art center of national interest » by the french Ministry of Culture.

The CAC - la synagogue de Delme receives the support from



The exhibition Merlin Carpenter *archive élastique* is supported by Fluxus Art Projects.



The art center is a member of d.c.a / association française de développement des centres d'art, Lora - Lorraine Réseau Art contemporain and Arts en résidence - French national network.

