



Aude Hérail Jäger | Tisna Westerhof THE OPEN DOOR

6 April - 2 June 2024

Private View: Saturday 6 April, 6pm

Lieu d'Art Contemporain | 1 Rue de la Berre - Hameau du Lac | 11130 Sigean
France

L.A.C. opens its doors to two London artists whose sense of identity has been rattled by recent events and current affairs. Hailing from France and the Netherlands respectively, artist and curator Aude Hérail Jäger invited Tisna Westerhof to collaborate on a joint project that launches in France this spring before moving to London in September.

Monumental drawings and discreet needlework, painted tiles and playful sculptures are in dialogue with each other across the breadth and height of the former wine vaults. A sense of home and childhood memories are recurring themes throughout with both artists working across disciplines as they explore concepts of belonging and displacement.

Hérail Jäger and Westerhof present works produced individually and jointly, separately and together, with an emphasis on themes that link women across the world. Their collaborative interaction with an old French domestic science handbook highlights each artist's individual approach to feminist themes via personal and shared heritage. While Hérail Jäger responds to the words in 'La Science de la Maison', Westerhof adds visual commentary to the vintage

illustrations.

Not only does the exhibition take Hérail Jäger back to the land of her childhood, a lot of her work also directly references maternal ancestors, their domestic rituals, linens bearing their initials. All are watched over by the 'Sentinels', an army of female guardians who draw their strength from historical and imaginary archetypes.

Westerhof follows in the tradition of artists subverting practices deemed inferior or domestic. Painting in the Delft style of her Dutch childhood, traditional motifs or rustic tranquility are interspersed with references to danger and violence; delicate embroideries reveal scenes of police brutality and racist violence.

A collaborative piece of textile art created in workshops with members of the local communities in France and in London rounds off the project. For *Women's Quilt of Pride*, participants were invited to dedicate a textile square to an inspirational woman, family member, friend or public figure. The experience of personal expression through an ancient craft forming a cathartic bond between the participants, their contributions stitched together serving as a testament of togetherness and hope.



“[...] Virginia Woolf, more than anyone, truly understood the degree to which the condition of women forced them to live in a constant tension between the inside and the outside. [...] The question of women is a question of space. It is impossible to understand the domination women are subjected to without studying its geography, without evaluating the constraints imposed upon their bodies by clothing, by places, by other eyes. Rereading Virginia Woolf's diary, I remembered that she had once imagined a sequel to *A Room of One's Own*. The provisional title was ... *The Open Door*. [...]”

Leïla Slimani 'The Scent of Flowers at Night', Hodder & Stoughton 2023.



Aude Hérail Jäger is a French artist who lives and works in London. She holds a BA (Hons) in Sculpture from Central Saint Martin's (UCL) and continued her post-graduate studies at the Slade School of Fine Art (UCL) and The Royal Drawing School in London where she currently teaches.

Her work has been widely exhibited, including solo shows in the UK, France and Japan. She is recipient of grants by the British Council, the Henry Moore Foundation and the Arts Council England.



Born in the Netherlands, **Tisna Westerhof** lives and works between London and Amsterdam. She studied Printmaking at the Royal Academy of Art in The Hague and holds an MA in Scenography from Central St Martins (UCL).

Her work has been exhibited at the Venice Biennale, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam and London's The Royal Academy, The Dutch Centre and Whitechapel Gallery.

She is co-founder and director of hARTslane Gallery, London.

Lieu d'Art Contemporain is a contemporary art space in the Languedoc region in the South of France.

Founded in a former wine cellar by the late Dutch painter Piet Moget and his daughter Layla Moget, L.A.C. has attracted international artists since the early 90s, including Marlene Dumas, Berlinde de Bruyckere, William Copley and Sol Lewitt.

The L.A.C. exhibition programme is supported by the Ministry of Culture and Local Authority for the Occitanie Region, the Aude General Council and Sigean Town Council.



Top and centre images: Installation maquette of THE OPEN DOOR at L.A.C., 2024, courtesy of Aude Hérail Jäger

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