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**SculptureCenter**  
**The Eccentrics**  
**Sanya Kantarovsky**  
**Adriana Lara**  
**Ieva Misevičiūtė**  
**Eduardo Navarro**  
**Jeanine Oleson**  
**Georgia Sagri**  
**Zhou Tao**  
**Tori Wrånes**



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**The Eccentrics**  
**January 24 – April 4, 2016**

**Sanya Kantarovsky**  
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**Curated by Ruba Katrib**

**SculptureCenter**  
**The Eccentrics**



# The Eccentrics: Funny Feelings

## Ruba Katrib



Eduardo Navarro, *Five minutes ago*, 2015, demonstration.

### IN THE RING

Everything changes with the circus. It makes the unbelievable real and the familiar unfamiliar. Formalized during the Victorian era, the institution emerged and evolved through industrialization, drawing on elements of ancient Roman rituals, street performances, and esoteric knowledge.<sup>1</sup> Testing the limits of the physical, the circus requires enormous expertise, artistry, endurance, and courage. Extraordinarily, it makes danger into entertainment, wild animals into performers, gravity into an illusion. Though the rituals and acts of this spectacle have transfixed audiences for centuries, in recent years it has begun to lose its urgency, no longer holding the same sway over audiences.<sup>2</sup> As Federico Fellini asks in his 1970 documentary *The Clowns*, which features the last legends of the European circus:

Where are the clowns of my childhood? Where are they today; that terrifying comic violence, that noisy exhilaration? Can the circus entertain? The world which it belonged to no longer exists. Theatres transformed into runways. Glowing ingenious sets, the childish naiveté of the public; they no longer exist. What remains of the old circuses? Subtle, wasted traces.<sup>3</sup>

Though the circus has been supplanted by other modes of entertainment, this unique form of recreation has continued to nourish the popular imagination into the modern period. If its box-office reality has changed, its metaphorical presence endures. Given its persistence, one can argue that the circus functions as an axis, bridging ancient spectacle and modern creativity; most notably and instrumentally inspiring film, new media technologies, and art.

The exhibition *The Eccentrics* has less to do with the circus itself than with the reinvigoration of its “subtle, wasted traces” in contemporary artworks. The exhibition considers strategies for communicating a comi-tragic sensibility and for calling on a viewer’s willingness to react with laughter as well as feelings of apprehension or astonishment. As the famous French clown and director Pierre Étaix says in Fellini’s film: “Clowns haven’t disappeared. People don’t know how to laugh anymore. The whole world needs to laugh again with clowns.”

Drawing the parallel with the circus at its most basic level, contemporary art often includes live acts and engages the physicality of its audiences. While cinema can now be viewed on mobile screens, with few exceptions, contemporary art requires a physical space. As in the circus, there is no place to hide: artworks are fully on view for scrutiny, particularly sculpture, which generally is subject to the 360-degree viewing conditions of the circus tent. “Any performance presented on a stage, framed by a proscenium, is a spectacle based on illusion. . . . Just as the theatre has a parallel in painting, so does the circus have an analogy in sculpture. You can walk

round it. It can be seen from all sides. There can be no illusion, for there are eyes all round to prove that there is no deception. The performers actually do exactly what they appear to do.”<sup>4</sup>

Artists, like illusionists, display their magic while concealing their methods. P. T. Barnum, who established the American circus and could be said to have invented the concept of marketing, understood and operated within the space of simultaneous trust and skepticism in relation to events in plain view. In his introduction to a facsimile edition of the showman’s autobiography, Carl Bode writes:

Sometimes his deceptions were so transparent that he seemed to deceive for the fun of it. For instance, he advertised that his popular American Museum in New York contained a miniature Niagara Falls “with Real Water”—as if it might have been artificial water otherwise. He always carried with him the conviction that the public relished a touch of chicanery.<sup>5</sup>

The type of suspension of disbelief required of the circus audience also envelops the production and reception of art. For the most part, we willingly enter a realm where we want to believe, rethink, and question the laws and order of our world. We understand that the object we see in an exhibition context does not, exactly, operate in the space of the real, but has taken on new, transcendent qualities. We are willing to trust the work on view even if it betrays logical processing. We are prepared to see it from a perspective that diverges from our habitual way of perceiving the world. This contextualized fantasy, backed up by material evidence, is the touchstone of both the circus and much contemporary art. Both circus and art can rip materials, bodies, and emotions from the quotidian and show us their more fantastic qualities.

In addressing the impact of filmic and photographic media on the reception of art in the 1930s, Walter Benjamin writes in his influential text *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility*:

American slapstick comedies and Disney films trigger a therapeutic release of unconscious energies. Their forerunner was the figure of the eccentric. He was the first to inhabit the new fields of action opened up by film—the first occupant of the newly built house. This is the context in which Chaplin takes on historical significance.<sup>6</sup>

As Benjamin observes, the eccentric circus performers anticipated and grew alongside comedic actors such as Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton.<sup>7</sup> The physical movements of the actor and circus performer turned their bodies into machines—a transformation that delighted their audiences. At the same time, the newly created space that Benjamin refers to also involved a rebellion against the repressed sensibility of the Victorian era, which unleashed libidinal energy. Audiences in the early twentieth-century craved the crudeness, outrageousness, and even depravity that the new humor offered.<sup>8</sup> Vaudeville, cinema, the circus, and avant-garde art all participated in these antics.

In early twentieth-century Russia, traveling clowns, magicians, and acrobats, known as “eccentrics,” honed unusual skills that riveted crowds. A fascination with the efficiency of mechanized culture, in tandem with the risk taking and absurdist aspects of the circus, became a touchstone for Russian artists.<sup>9</sup> After the 1917 revolution, a

group of directors, writers, actors, and artists inspired by Italian Futurism banded together to form the Factory for the Eccentric Actor (FEKS). The short-lived group elaborated on the Futurists’ emphasis on speed and technology, but had a more absurdist and humorous vision. The FEKS, whose activities centered on the theater and film, drew deliberately from the circus as a death-defying popular spectacle. Their 1922 manifesto refers to both acrobats and Chaplin, emphasizing risk and chance in the production and experience of art:

The sense of the theatre is the sense of the rope, the sense of accident. A healthy, joyful elasticated tension of our entire being, of our total life energy. When your breath fails, when it chokes in your gullet, when little red devils dance in your brain. Like at the circus. Right under the big top—as if hung by a thread—hangs the tra-peze artist and the entire audience is frozen, with bated breath . . . and . . . and . . . a bit more! Gasp! Enough! – Enough! – Enough!<sup>10</sup>

By the late 1920s, governmental cultural intervention effectively suppressed the FEKS’s activities, and much of their oeuvre has been lost.<sup>11</sup> However, their project resonates as a methodology for thinking through the notion of illusionism. By isolating and removing tricks from a larger narrative, the FEKS simultaneously revealed the construction of narrative devices and isolated their emotional and reactionary potential. The structure of the gag and its relation to a larger context were a central focus of the conversation around theater and cinema for the FEKS and Sergei Eisenstein, as well as Benjamin.<sup>12</sup> And, as the FEKS statement implies, the goal was a reactive audience on the edge of their seats who were also aware of the artifice of the structure.

It is not surprising that the freewheeling and secretive aspects of circus tricks, positioning the frenetic energy of the mechanized era against the pathos of the human condition, have historically fascinated artists. The trick, a complete event within the larger structure of the circus show, is an important aspect of the exhibition *The Eccentrics*. As in the early, golden days of the circus, a cohesive narrative is absent. The glue for the show is the structure and site, which thread together disparate acts to elicit emotional and intellectual responses from the audience. In their heyday, circus audiences weren’t passive spectators, but rowdy and vocally reactive. The ringleader took them through vivid experiences arousing humor, fear, apprehension, and amazement. The non-narrative progress of the show produced a series of surprises and shocks. The exhibition similarly brings together disparate, unrelated practices to create a powerful overall experience. Applying a dialectic frame to the relationship of parts, the exhibition borrows from the circus’s strategies and sets aside its current connotation as mindless spectacle.

## THE ACTS

*The Eccentrics* brings together eight artists on a single stage. Sanya Kantarovsky, Adriana Lara, Ieva Misevičiūtė, Eduardo Navarro, Jeanine Oleson, Georgia Sagri, Zhou Tao, and Tori Wrānes each offer a distinctive experience within the exhibition. The works are connected through suggestions and inversions of performativity and spectatorship, and through the emotional responses they consider and encourage. In addition to the works on view, ranging from videos to sculptures, a performance program is a central aspect of the exhibition’s framework.

Despite the upbeat tone of its title, Sanya Kantarovsky's video *Happy Soul*, 2015, generates an unclear emotional state. Its subject, a nude man who exists as a sketchlike painting, inhabits an ambiguous position. Conjuring performance anxiety, he conceals his nudity with only the slightest gesture of embarrassment . . . or is it perverse amusement? The figure is activated in different scenes, and the parameters of the wall that contains him are also engaged. A nonlinear event, the narrative moves between effect and affect. An impresario's arms, showing jacket sleeves, cufflinks, and gloves, authoritatively regulate activities while the nude man lingers in the background. The video flips and reveals itself. Blank canvases show their back sides, and brightly colored butterflies flutter and swarm in the space. Elements from the animation—like the unpainted canvases and empty sheets of paper—also reappear in a series of lithographic prints also on view in the exhibition. Digitally rendered, drawn, and painted elements are merged in images that, like the video, collapse different effects of flatness and depth in layered scenes that shift between cohesive composition and unraveling parts.

*Happy Soul* begins with the isolated vocals of Smokey Robinson's song "Being with You," which starts off with the verse "I don't care what they think about me, and I don't care what they say." This announcement of self-confidence is quickly contradicted by the narrative of isolation and rejection suggested by the visuals. Searching theatrical spotlights, microphones, and collapsing blank canvases insinuate that something needs to be performed, spoken, painted, and/or presented to a public. The anticipation of action builds into a space of humiliation, as the gloved hands caress the painting until the man depicted, still nude, blushes. Suddenly, an alarm clock rings. Is this a bad dream? He didn't wake up in time? In any case, we snap to attention. The anxiety that surrounds the character, who appears to feel more and more like a fool just standing there, ebbs and flows in this nuanced portrait of a performer's internal conflict.

In another unlikely scenario, a frog lays face-up on a plinth with its arms and legs spread, its belly rising and falling with slow breaths. This sculpture by Adriana Lara brings the amphibian, whose populations are in decline, into the space of the gallery. Its pose suggests that it is exasperated, tired, failing. The frog becomes an object to consider, a sculpture to experience. The vision of life teetering on lifelessness complicates the notion of the object as inert. Under scrutiny, the creature becomes strange, engaging a comic sadness as it nears a state akin to that of an inanimate toy. We discover on its side, written in small cursive letters, the phrase "Playa del Carmen." The form slips from its association with a live animal to become a branded souvenir. The pulsing of its breath takes on a new tone, as its performance is associated with the historical Mexican city that is quickly becoming an overdeveloped beach resort. The frog's strained breath complicates its references. Is it a tourist souvenir from a luxurious vacation, or an emblem of the struggle to sustain the natural environment in the midst of human expansion? And while we can't be certain of the exact cause of its exhaustion, we can see that its act is almost over.

The frog's communion with Lara's silkscreens, a series of six panels each depicting one frame of an animation showing a ball bouncing, draws attention to a basic technique for suggesting motion. The disparate characters of the frog and the ball come together through their movement and their breakdown of bounce. Reducing the phenomena of foreground, background, shapes, and frames to their most basic components, Lara speaks to the elementary aspects of the mechanisms that power our engagement with moving images, and motion as an indicator of life. A sign that is increasingly complicated through the expansion of virtual and mechanical movement. As an illusion, the bouncing ball is simple, but its effect of continuity is at the core of our increasingly animated and simulated media.

Tori Wrånes too makes a lo-fi allusion to the fascination with movement as an indicator of presence, using a

pair of gymnastics rings that sway back and forth from the ceiling without a performer. Even without an actor, the performance goes on. The unassisted movement of the rings above our heads, like objects possessed, creates a tense effect. On the bleacher seating built into the exhibition space, Wrånes has also located a compressed body sans torso. Two disembodied legs abruptly turn into a brimmed hat, with a long braid coming out of its crown. Extending from one of the seats, the sculpture acts as a dysfunctional audience member, lacking the faculties needed to fully appreciate the scene. Together, the two sculptures spark a dialogue around presence and absence. The missing performer and the almost-there viewer cannot locate each another. In a performance that forms part of the exhibition, Wrånes moves between the sculptures and references both their corporeality and incorporeality, activating the physicality suggested by both works.

Rolling down the wall, Ieva Misevičiūtė's monumental flesh-toned tongue anthropomorphizes SculptureCenter's architecture while also functioning as a stage for her performance component in the exhibition. In another bodily twist, the flat surface of the tongue is textured by a series of ceramic formations that emerge from its surface like tail-shaped bacteria. Her sculptures on view are evocative of props and costumes, hung up or placed on a rack for an uncertain use. Their presence evokes a dressing room, making the tongue function as both the front and back stage, merging the distinction between inside and outside. Further, the sculpture turns the interiority of the exhibition space into an orifice, as being in the building is now like being inside a mouth.

When Eduardo Navarro's custom-made helmet with an attached hourglass is not in use, it is a sculpture on display on gallery seating. An upside-down mannequin head models it, revealing a mirror mechanism that flips and frames the hourglass in a reflective trick that makes the sand appear to rise rather than fall when the helmet is worn. Gravity is defied and time reversed. The helmet contains an abstract inner world performed for the wearer. From the outside, we can view it as a potentiality, and project ourselves into the landscape it creates.

The inversion of performer and spectator is also an aspect of Zhou Tao's video *Blue and Red*, 2014, where public urban space has become the stage for political and social spectacle. In one instance, a park in Guangzhou is lit by LED billboards that stain the landscape and visitors in a kaleidoscopic corporate glow. Turning red and blue, the visitors become actors in a light show. In the video, Tao flips between the scene of leisure in the park and the 2014 demonstrations in Bangkok, the result of ongoing political tensions around government corruption and the royal family's resistance to criticism in Thailand. Protesters are camped out on the streets, impeding the flow of traffic and pedestrians and creating a carnivalesque disruption of civic norms. The protest includes festivities such as concerts and other entertainment, the everyday routines of the demonstrators temporarily living on the streets, and occasional bursts of violence. Tao abstracts and recasts the specifics of the urban scenes and the landscape to conjure an elegiac sensibility. Through the manipulation of light, color, and images, he turns people and places into actors who perform new roles.

In an older video in the exhibition, *Chicken Speak to Duck, Pig Speak to Dog*, 2005, Tao and a group of poultry farmers perch in the branches of a tree where they mimic the vocalizations of domesticated animals. In a transformation of identity, the men create a symphony of animal self-expression for an unknown audience. The performers are aware that they are acting, but their script is indiscernible. Furthermore, their behavior subverts the power relationships between the farmers and their animals: the men lose authority as they take cover in the trees, becoming the animals they raise.

In Jeanine Oleson's sculptures and 3D video, the generation of both language and matter appears to have magical qualities. A clay vessel containing copper wires transmits sound, enabling it to operate as a speaker as

well as a microphone. Receiving and broadcasting, the sculpture shifts in function, source, and output, creating a low frequency that continuously vibrates within the space, a reminder of the physicality of sound. In her video, Oleson uses new 3D technology to dramatize the tricks of ancient metallurgy. Demonstrating the activity of smelting copper, an element that conducts electricity, the video refers to the power source of the sculpture. A scientifically grounded process, the practice is enthralling, and it becomes vivid footage when rendered in 3D, with one thing appearing to alchemically turn into something else. In one section of the video, a group of people in a circle speak over one another, each monologue forming part of a discordant chorus of language that refers to material and process. In Oleson’s works, voices, materials, functions, sounds, and compounds are transmuted into different entities that carry new potential.

A walk through current events verges on the outlandish in Georgia Sagri’s work, *Sunday Stroll*, 2016. The walls of a darkened room are illuminated with projections of newspaper clips—a mostly black-and-white light show of headlines and images. Operating as a marquee, an illuminated sign at the entrance of the room refers to Platonic ideas of art and reality, particularly the relationship between real and “staged” objects. Announcing a cinema of sorts, when handled in this uncanny manner the projected content appears to be instructive and archival, though in fact it documents the Sunday news. World events become oddities subject to the spectator’s scrutiny instead of facts for consumption. The stillness of the projections and sculptures on view—small objects that appear as if they were leftovers from a meeting, i.e. cups, cans, and wads of paper—removes them from the realm of the moving image. They are specters frozen in place, and as light they take on an ephemeral optic quality, while the objects, subjects, and events they refer to are obscured. This distancing effect underscores the constructing and narrativizing tactics in the distribution of information and history, comprised of incidents that are real for those who experience them and abstract for those learning of them. In Sagri’s performance component of the exhibition, she becomes something of an animal trainer, further reperforming and manipulating the news content to convey and recharge its emotional resonance, bringing it back to life after it has become media material.

In early twentieth-century Russia, the FEKS resisted the monotony that resulted from industrialization and modern society by using culture as a bag of tricks from which to pull gags for fresh examination.<sup>13</sup> The artists in the current exhibition also investigate, from a contemporary perspective, the dynamic potentials of materiality. The FEKS turned sets and props into “acting places” and “acting things.”<sup>14</sup> Casting locations and objects as characters that interact with people is also central to many of the works in *The Eccentrics*. This idiosyncratic approach to the mundane and explicable endows inanimate things with inner states full of mystery and unpredictability. It also reveals the trick—the human manipulation of perception—while retaining the ability to captivate.

There is some irony in Fellini’s concern that clowns, for him “the first and most ancient anti-establishment figures,” were being displaced by the very technologies he was using to document them.<sup>15</sup> Though Fellini and Étaix lament the contemporary audience’s diminished interest in being wowed by the analogue means of circus tricks, perhaps viewers now respond to related artistic sleights-of-hand with more complex emotive states. The “lo-fi” quality of many of the works in *The Eccentrics*, albeit made using contemporary processes, facilitates an amazement similar to that produced by performers within the spectacular framing of the circus. Though less flamboyant than circus artists, contemporary artists likewise inspire a willingness to believe that the mundane can become fantastic. As in the big tent, within the walls of the exhibition we can be inspired to look at what we know with different eyes in order to gain a deeper grasp of what is real and what is possible.

- 1 The structure of the modern circus borrows from the Roman circus, an oval track for chariot horse races, and many of the acts and skills we see today originate from nomadic performers called “circulatores” who traveled the ancient Roman Empire. Paul Bouissac states: “Thus, when the circus entered the Western cultural landscape in the form which we experience today, it was not the continuation of a historical institution but a new type of organization. The acts themselves, though, were based on very ancient skills. The merging of scores of performers under traveling tents and permanent buildings was made possible by the convergence of modern technologies, rising demography, under concentration, and secularism.” Paul Bouissac, *Circus as Multimodal Discourse: Performance, Meaning, and Ritual* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), 159.
- 2 In chapter 12 of *Circus as Multimodal Discourse*, Paul Bouissac discusses the twenty-first-century backlash against the exploitation of exotic animals in circuses and the perceived seediness of circus life, and the turn toward humanitarian circuses. For an in-depth discussion of the reputation of the circus as attracting crime and the twentieth-century rebranding of the circus as a wholesome family event with the growth of the Ringling Brothers, see Helen Stoddart, *Rings of Desire: Circus History and Representation* (Manchester, U.K.: Manchester University Press, 2000), ch. 1.
- 3 *The Clowns (I Clowns)*, directed by Federico Fellini (RAI and Leone Film, 1970).
- 4 Antony Hippiusley Coxe, *A Seat at the Circus* (London: Macmillan, 1980), 24–25; quoted in Stoddart, *Rings of Desire*, 79–80.
- 5 P. T. Barnum, *Struggles and Triumphs: Or, Forty Years’ Recollections of P. T. Barnum*, ed. Carl Bode (1869; New York: Penguin American Library, 1981), 10.
- 6 Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility, and Other Writings on Media*, ed. Michael W. Jennings, Brigid Doherty, and Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 38.
- 7 In his “Fragment on Negative Expressionism,” Benjamin notes: “Eccentrics—clown and natural peoples—overcoming of inner impulses and the body centre. New unity of clothes, tattoos and body. Promiscuity of clothing of man and woman, of arms and legs. Dislocation of shame. Expression of true feeling: desperation, dis-location. Consequential search for deep possibilities for expression: the man, who has the chair he is sitting on pulled away from under him, and stays sitting.—Genderless, complete disintegration of vanity. Masculine genius at prostitution.” Quoted in Esther Leslie, *Hollywood Flatlands: Animation, Critical Theory and the Avant-Garde* (London: Verso, 2002), 16.
- 8 Media scholar Henry Jenkins discusses the “new humor” that emerged in the United States in the early twentieth-century as part of a folk culture informed by immigration, industrialization, and disillusionment with American institutions. Henry Jenkins, *What Made Pistachio Nuts?: Early Sound Comedy and the Vaudeville Aesthetic* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 37.
- 9 Sergei Eisenstein and the FEKS were also connected to Vsevolod Meyerhold’s biomechanical acting technique, which developed out of Taylorist models of efficiency and the participatory elements of the circus and *commedia dell’arte*. For further discussion, see Justus Nieland, *Feeling Modern: The Eccentricities of Public Life* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 68–69.
- 10 *The Eccentric Manifesto*, (London: Eccentric Press, 1992. Originally published 1922).
- 11 Ian Christie and John Gillett, eds., *Futurism/Formalism/FEKS: “Eccentrism” and Soviet Cinema 1918–36* (London: British Film Institute, 1978), 6.
- 12 Nieland, *Feeling Modern*, 69–71.
- 13 Ibid., 68.
- 14 Emma Widdis, *Visions of a New Land: Soviet Film from the Revolution to the Second World War* (Princeton: Yale University Press, 2003), 77–78.
- 15 Stoddart, *Rings of Desire*, 155.



# Jugglers, Buffoons, and Other Low Strollers

## Mark Beasley

“He Haw, Sire Ass, He Haw!”

—Twelfth-century goliardic verse

The twelfth-century goliards were unregenerate poets, rogue clergy who protested the financial and moral hypocrisies of the church through bawdy, satiric poetry. High on the liberating fumes of reason over authority—they were the first generation to have access to the burgeoning European university system—their protest took many forms: censing churches with the burning soles of old shoes; driving animals to the altar to be blessed—“He Haw, Sire Ass, He Haw”; stumbling around town dressed as women; driving shabby carts; and rousing laughter through bizarre performances. Unable to find a place in monastic life, these eccentric, under-motivated, and over-educated young men took to the road in search of an alternate truth. A truth that often led to the tavern, the bottle, and the brothel, where for the cost of a drink they would provide an alternative news source, twisting the lyrics of Latin verse into church- and authority-baiting song.

If the goliards were outsiders (performance artists on the loose), the medieval period was also home to another outspoken and outlandish fool figure: the jester. This fool, however, was sanctioned. A licensed trouble-maker, the court jester was skilled in the art of song and dance, and provided entertainment while openly mocking the exploits of the crown. The jester was the one figure who could speak freely in any context, as his words were taken “without offence” by all. As such, the fool had the right to sit at the nobleman’s table and say whatever came into his head. The European court jester would and could emerge from a number of backgrounds: he could be an unconventionally minded university dropout, a monk thrown out of a priory for “nun frolics,” an erudite jongleur, or a blacksmith buffoon who amused while tending the forge. The rise of the jester was meritocratic. Not merely a flatterer of the crown, he was given license to criticize and mock, delivering news of the day uncooked and ungar-nished: it was understood by royal authority that not everyone at court should be a yes-man. The jester fights the machinations of the powerful, yet he is not a rebel seeking power himself. The jester seeks to overthrow systems not to replace one with another, but to free us from all.

And what of the clown, that figure of base craving led by gluttony and carnal desire? Not the slip-’n-slide party clown, twisting balloon animals and the minds of sugar-rushed toddlers, but those sacred clowns who, with painted body and rare performance, turn the world on its head. Of the sacred clowns, there is none more appealing or vital than the Pueblo Clowns of Taos, New Mexico. Centuries-old—no exact date, year, decade, or even century is known for the advent of these secret societies—but still very much a part of village life, they appear during the spring and summer solstice. Wreaking havoc on the townspeople, they drag white tourists from their dinner tables and force them to dine on mud; fornicate wildly in front of the church; grab babies from their mothers and baptize them in muddy streams; and strip corrupt elders of their wallets before tipping them over the bridge into the river. The Pueblo Clowns, in their daubed black and white stripes, perform a sacred duty, a yearly purge that turns the norm on its head and reveals both the horror of life as it is and the horror of life as it could be. Like the jester, the Pueblo Clown does not lead a revolt against the law, but instead draws us into a region of the spirit where the writ of law does not apply. Rules are abandoned and there is a momentary release from deadening life, a move toward chaotic freedom.

Mimicry, comic humor, and caricature are at the heart of clowning. What greater power than to steal the mask and essence of others—their own presumed power—and turn it against them? The goliards stole sacred verse and reconfigured it in search of another truth, while the Pueblo Clowns ridicule the governing order through the adop-tion and reversal of societal laws. For a moment, there are no rules except those arrived at through dissent. What is being called for by the jester and the clown in their performance, dark humor, and tall tales is perhaps the need to relinquish and redress the dictates of the crowd in order to follow the crooked path, for, after all, as England’s greatest New York eccentric, Quentin Crisp, noted, “Fashion is what you adopt when you don’t know who you are.” For time immemorial, the rituals of the crooked path and those of the clown have suggested some other route, one that is unbound by rules and answerable only to the spirit.





Installation view.





Installation view.



Ieva Misevičiūtė, *Tongue PhD (Hardcover)*, 2016, installation view.





Tori Wrånes, *Tennis Cat*, 2015, installation view.



Zhou Tao, *Chicken Speaks to Duck, Pig Speaks to Dog*, 2005, installation view.





Installation view.





Jeanine Oleson, installation view.



Jeanine Oleson, *Matter-phone*, 2016, installation view.





Eduardo Navarro, *Five minutes ago*, 2015, installation view.



Adriana Lara, *The Non-object (frog)*, 2016, installation view.





Installation view.





Georgia Sagri, *STAGED*, 2016, installation view.



Georgia Sagri, *Sunday Stroll*, 2016, installation views.





Sanya Kantarovsky, *Happy Soul*, 2015, installation view



# Checklist of Works in the Exhibition

## Sanya Kantarovsky

*Wrong Currency (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday)*, 2015  
Five prints, Lithography and Inkjet on paper  
28.5 x 21.5 inches  
(72.4 x 54.6 cm) each  
Courtesy the artist; Casey Kaplan, New York; and Tanya Leighton, Berlin

## Sanya Kantarovsky

*Happy Soul*, 2015  
Animated video and painting  
5:44 minutes  
Courtesy the artist; Casey Kaplan, New York; Marc Foxx, Los Angeles; and Stuart Shave/Modern Art, London

## Adriana Lara

*The Non-object (bouncing ball)*, 2016  
Five panels, silkscreen on linen  
48 x 48 inches  
(121.9 cm x 121.9 cm) each  
Courtesy the artist and Algis Greenspon, New York

## Adriana Lara

*The Non-object (frog)*, 2016  
Silicone, paint, motor  
Dimensions variable  
Courtesy the artist and Algis Greenspon, New York

## Ieva Misevičiūtė

*Tongue PhD (Hardcover)*, 2016  
Ceramic, Dragon Skin, wood, paint  
Dimensions variable  
Courtesy the artist

## Jeanine Oleson

*Figures of Speech*, 2016  
3D video  
8:32 minutes  
Courtesy the artist

## Jeanine Oleson

*Matter-phone*, 2016  
Terracotta, wood, hand-made copper wires, transducer speaker  
Sound composition: Rainy Orteca  
21 x 24 x 24 inches  
(53.34 x 60.96 cm)  
Courtesy the artist

## Jeanine Oleson

*See-ing, Be-ing*, 2016  
3D sandstone print  
3.5 x 3.5 x 7.5 inches  
(8.89 x 8.89 x 19.05 cm)  
Courtesy the artist

## Eduardo Navarro

*Five minutes ago*, 2016  
Custom made PTC transparent helmet, aluminium bars, mirrors, traps, five minute hourglass.  
Dimensions variable  
Courtesy the artist

## Georgia Sagri

*Sunday Stroll*, 2016  
Glass, paper, plastic, wood, aluminum, Taos taupe flat finish paint, eight overhead projectors on eco-lock non-slip rug, five painted wooden pedestals  
36 x 196 inches (corridor)  
182.5 x 208 inches (interior)

## Georgia Sagri

*Sunday 17th 2016*, 2016  
Pedestal A: overhead projector, laser print on clear paper  
23 x 96 inches (58.4 x 243.8 cm)  
Greek to English translation: "To Pireas port"  
Pedestal B: overhead projector, laser print on clear paper  
23 x 72 inches (58.4 x 182.9 cm)  
Greek to English translation: "We shall not offer our Sundays. Organization and resistance to every working place"  
Pedestal C: overhead projector, laser print on clear paper  
23 x 17 inches (58.4 x 43.2 cm)

*Sunday (the print will change every Sunday during the course of the installation's presentation. The last print made remains within the installation in its future presentations.)*, 2016  
Pedestal D: overhead projector, laser print on clear paper  
23 x 17 inches (58.4 x 43.2 cm)

*Sundays (the overhead projector and the ten laser prints used during the performance Sunday Stroll Undone and Redone\* remain within the installation.)*, 2016  
Pedestal E: overhead projector, laser print on clear paper  
23 x 17 inches (58.4 x 43.2 cm)

## Georgia Sagri

*Sunday Stroll Undone and Redone*, 2016  
Performance, Tuesday, February 2nd 2016, 7pm  
2 hours

## Georgia Sagri

*STAGED*, 2016  
Written and designed by Georgia Sagri  
Unique, large format inkjet on moab lasal exhibition luster paper, white LED lights, in situ  
36.5 x 53.25 inches  
(92.71 x 135.25 cm)

All works courtesy the artist

\*The performance piece *Sunday Stroll Undone and Redone* derives from *Sunday Stroll Undone*, with Hunter Hunt-Hendrix, 2015. Bunkier Sztuki, Kraków and Nina Kowska. Courtesy the artist and Nika Kowsa.

## Zhou Tao

*Blue and Red*, 2014  
Single channel video  
24:25 minutes  
Courtesy the artist and Vitamin Creative Space, Beijing

## Zhou Tao

*Chicken Speaks to Duck, Pig Speaks to Dog*, 2005  
Single channel video  
6 minutes  
Courtesy the artist and Vitamin Creative Space, Beijing

## Tori Wrânes

*Double Vision*, 2016  
Metal pipes, textile, wooden rings, motor  
Dimensions variable  
Courtesy the artist

## Tori Wrânes

*Tennis Cat*, 2015  
Leather, textile, wood, hair  
Dimensions variable  
Courtesy the artist

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