



Press release

**ÉLISE FLORENTY**  
IN ASSOCIATION WITH MARCELTÜRKOWSKY  
**MEMORY WHEELS**

EXHIBITION FROM 28 FEBRUARY - 10 MAY 2009

OPENING FRIDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2009

6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

*The artist will be present*

*Almost every word I write jars against the next, I hear the consonants rub leadenly against each other and the vowels sing an accompaniment like Negroes in a minstrel show. My doubts stand in a circle around every word, I see them before I see the word, but what then! I do not see the word at all, I invent it.*

– Franz Kafka, *Diaries*, 15 December 1910<sup>1</sup>

For some years now Élise Florenty has been stubbornly exploring the mechanics of language. At the Synagogue de Delme she is presenting a densely woven installation in which the literature and the life of Franz Kafka, the art of recollection and the Cabbalistic tradition echo each other in an imaginative whirling around a central spinning top. The viewer is quick to realise that in more ways than one this latter is the pivot for an ensemble of which Kafka is the tutelary angel.

The opening master-stroke, however, is architectural: the ground floor of the synagogue – a male domain, men alone being allowed to read the sacred Hebrew texts in the Jewish liturgical context – has been closed off and can now be seen only from the balcony, the section for women which is reached by a separate staircase. Thus Elise Florenty has literally *reserved* this “profane” area for herself, making it virtually the sole circulation space for visitors to *Memory Wheels*. Just as women, while present at the ceremony, were forced to remain mere viewers, the exhibition viewers will in turn be restricted to the upper level and denied any access to the spiritual. The artist has, moreover, scrupulously emphasised this exclusion by inviting visitors to stroll around outside the building, where a sentence from Kafka’s *Diary* is spelt out along the ground-floor windows.

Haunted in his craft by the limitless fecundity of the Jewish religious heritage, Kafka is quickly on the scene in this exhibition: once on the balcony we only have to look up at the trapeze of *Erstes Leid (First Sorrow)*<sup>2</sup>, hanging beneath the dome in evocation of an early story about a circus performer who “had so arranged his life that [...] he never came down from his trapeze by night or day.” And from there on in, Kafka makes appearance after appearance: from the story *Josephine the Singer* and the sound track of the same name – musical tops whistling weirdly through four loudspeakers – to the quote from the *Diaries* (“My doubts stand in a circle around every word”), visible only from the outside on the fence barricading the ground floor entrance. The discreet cornerstone of the exhibition, this fragment is there to remind us that it is always language in its achieving of material form that is the focus of this artist’s quest, whether its tangible manifestation be a building (the synagogue) or the singular ordering of ink stains on bound sheets of paper (Kafka’s “minor literature”<sup>3</sup>).

As is often the case with Florenty, it is less a question here of contemplating the various “narrative fragments” she has brought together than of reading them: either learning from the multiple strands she has set up between the objects and their structure and history; or by slipping one’s own strands into the narrow interspaces of meaning this artist never fails leave open here and there.

Gauthier Herrmann

Translation: John Tittensor

<sup>1</sup> Franz Kafka, *The Diaries 1910–13*, tr. Joseph Kresh, in Franz Kafka, London, Secker and Warburg/Octopus, 1976, pp.604–05.

<sup>2</sup> Franz Kafka, *First Sorrow*, tr. Willa and Edwin Muir, in *Franz Kafka: the Complete Stories*, New York, Schocken Books, 1995.

<sup>3</sup> See Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, tr. Dana Polan, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1986.



## ÉLISE FLORENTY

Elise Florenty was born in 1978 in Bordeaux, France. She lives and works in Berlin.

### Recent solo exhibitions

- 2008 *Apparition*, OÙ Gallery, FID-Festival International du Documentaire, Marseille, France  
*Tch, Tch, Tch*, *Tch*, *Tch*, *Tch* (*le charme qui pétrifie*), La Planck, Air de Paris Gallery, Paris, France  
*Ceci tuera cela*, ESBAMA, Montpellier, France
- 2007 *Todas la horas son del viento*, Cultural centre La Recoleta, Buenos Aires, Argentina  
*K*, Uqbar, Wedding, Berlin, Germany  
*Des jeux et des serments*, Jeu de Paume, Paris, France
- 2006 *The minimalest house*, et.c Gallery, Prague, Czech Republic
- 2005 *Kino*, Bétonsalon, Paris, France

### Recent group exhibitions

- 2008 *Notorious*, Le Plateau, Frac Ile de France, Paris, France  
*Anteriorities*, International meeting Paris – Madrid, Reina Sofia National Museum, Madrid, Spain  
*Bass Diffusion Model*, Fieldgate Gallery, London, United Kingdom  
*Vivas Las Vegas*, Palais de Chaillot, Paris, France  
*Regard-caméra, portrait de l'artiste en spectateur*, Contemporary art centre La Ferme du Buisson, Noisiel, France
- 2007 *Wheeeeel*, Fondation Écureuil, Printemps de Septembre, Toulouse, France
- 2006 *Shaking Smooth Space*, La Générale, Paris, France

### To be published

*Replicas*, published by ESBAMA, Montpellier, France

## MARCEL TÜRKOWSKY

Marcel Türkowsky born 1978 lives and works in Berlin.

After completing his studies in philosophy, music science and soundart at the UDK Berlin he mainly works in sound, installation, film, theatre and performance. He is also member of different experimental music collage groups like the *Snake Figures Arkestra*, *Cones*, *Datashock*, *Wooden Veil*... and has published his music on various musiclabels worldwide.

The installation *Spyed spy*, shown at the Hildesheim Kunstverein in 2008, presents a very specific use of sounds, objects and ideas of storytelling.

As a performer Marcel Türkowsky uses his instrument/object - collection, his personal soundarchive stored on magnetic tape and fieldrecordings mostly in the form of realtime improvisation whereby he focuses on expanding the possibilities of sound through an exploratory approach to duration, silence, timbre and narration. His performances create situation for listening by staging sound and interrogating its mode of distribution and reception.

Marcel Türkowsky designed the sound installation of *Memory wheels*.

### RELATED EVENTS

- Guided tour of the exhibition with Élise Florenty, Sunday 5 April at 4:00 PM
- Guided tour with Laurène Macé of visitor service, on Sundays at 4:PM

### PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Exhibition opening in the artist's presence Friday 27 February from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Exhibition open from 28 February until 10 May 2009

Wednesday-Saturday: 2-6 PM & Sunday: 11AM - 6PM, Admission free.

The exhibition will be closed on May 1st.

**PRESS KIT DOWNLOADABLE ON [WWW.CAC-SYNAGOGUEDELME.ORG/PRESSE](http://WWW.CAC-SYNAGOGUEDELME.ORG/PRESSE)**

**VISUALS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST**

**PRESS CONTACT: AGATHE BORGNE, [COMMUNICATION@CAC-SYNAGOGUEDELME.ORG](mailto:COMMUNICATION@CAC-SYNAGOGUEDELME.ORG) / +33 (0)387 014 342**



### HOW TO GET TO THE SYNAGOGUE DE DELME

ACCES FROM PARIS (1HR30):  
TGV EST, ARRIVING AT METZ OR NANCY

ACCES FROM METZ (1/2HR):  
D955, THE OLD STRASBOURG ROAD

ACCES FROM NANCY (1/2HR):  
N74 FOLLOWING SIGNS TO CHÂTEAU-SALINS  
THEN D955 TOWARDS METZ

