

Cécile Hartmann

The Black Snake

From January 31 to April 18, 2021

“Will come a black snake who will captivate men and devour the earth”
Black Eagle prophecy, around 1930.



Cécile Hartmann
The Black Snake #1
(Sacred Stones, South Dakota), 2020
Image from *The Black Snake* movie
42' looping, color and b&w, sound,
no dialogue, original music
Fondation des Artistes
and Cécile Hartmann Production
Courtesy of the artist

The exhibition of the work of Cécile Hartmann, entitled *The Black Snake*, initially scheduled last spring 2020 and presented at the MABA from January 31 to April 18, 2021, is even more relevant since its deferment due to the sanitary crisis. Questioning both the violence against indigenous people and the lands damaged by oil extraction, this exhibition finds even louder echoes in the midst of the Covid-19 situation, a zoonosis that was made possible by the degradation of the environment.

This exclusive exhibition of the works of Cécile Hartmann develops the metaphor of a black snake: the gigantic Keystone XL pipeline delivering 700,000 barrels of impure oil from Alberta open-air exploitations through Indian reserves every day, spoiling their lands and freshwater resources and causing unprecedented ecological damages. The movie *The Black Snake* (2018-2020) follows the invisible flow of the pipeline and is at the core of the exhibition project, around which unfold photographs, sculptural element, wall painting and screenprints.

Exhibition from January 31
to April 18, 2021

Curator: Caroline Cournède

Wednesday, January 27

Press visit at 3pm
(shuttle departing at 2:30pm
from Place de la Nation)

Saturday, January 30

Opening from 2pm to 7pm
(shuttles from and to Château de Vincennes)

To be published:

The Black Snake
Digital edition
Art Book Magazine/ABM Distribution
January 2021

MABA

16, rue Charles VII
94130 Nogent-sur-Marne, France
maba@fondationdesartistes.fr

Access

RER A: Nogent-sur-Marne
then bus 114 or 210, stop at Sous-préfecture
RER E: Nogent-Le Perreux
then direction Tribunal d'instance
Metro line 1: Château de Vincennes
then bus 114 or 210, stop at Sous-préfecture

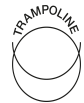
Open to the public

On weekdays from 1pm to 6pm
On Saturday and Sunday from 12pm to 6pm
Closed on Tuesday and public holidays

Free admission

The MABA is part of the *Fondation des Artistes*

TRAM Réseau art
contemporain
Paris / Ile-de-France



connaissance
des arts

Le Journal
des Arts

Four years after the protests of *Standing Rock* and *Sacred Stones*, Cécile Hartmann shares the archive of "the aftermath", a new episode of contemporary history where the fights have handed the floor to the first signs of alterations of the landscapes and the living creatures. The artist turns it into a story without men, in which documentary images are tied up with mental images, and times and spaces tangle in a voyage in the heart of darkness. It is the same darkness -here considered for its destructive as well as creative potential- that used to shroud the world "at the beginning of time when there was no moon or star". Here, it is a place of shadow, emergence and disappearance. It also counteracts the idealized vision of the Enlightenment and Modernity (Christopher Columbus never discovered America) as well as the environmental dead-end they brought up (exploitation and exhaustion of natural resources).

Cécile Hartmann's work always refers to latent, underground events that show through or (re)appear at the surface of the exhibited works. The movie *The Black Snake* and its many offshoots also play on these small interstices between the visible and invisible, the fathomable and unfathomable, reality and fiction, the organic and non-organic, strength and instability. The memory -and reality- of the violence inflicted on nature as well as the indigenous community is also suggested through images of the movie, textual elements, music... There are like the clues, the traces of these events.

The enumeration of the visited places also acts as a phantasmatic projection of natural landscapes, of indigenous "home"-lands or of infamous battles. The words conjure up images, in the same way that the concepts the artist -through works which blunt design evokes militant banners- invite spectators to think about the clash between economy, politics, history and ecology. Constantly bringing her gaze closer to the ground level, the artist is interested in the various stratum, the accumulated layers of time and memories. Her vision constantly alternates between a global and fragmented point of view, a panoramic vision of the landscape and an immersion in the heart of the earth, in an introspective movement much similar to psychoanalysis.

Drawing bridges between romanticism, minimalism and activism, *The Black Snake* proposes an archeologic look at a devastated and devastating present, as well as a prophetic vision of a future where chaos and destruction could become regenerative forces if a new cycle were to begin.

STANDING
ROCK

BLACK
ROCK

SACRED
STONES

KEYSTONE

Cécile Hartmann
Untitled (Duality), 2020
Wall painting
Variable dimensions
depending to the exhibition context
Courtesy of the artist

Press relations

Lorraine Husenot
Phone: (+33) 1 48 78 92 20
lohussenot@hotmail.com

Visuals available on request

MABA

16, rue Charles VII
94130 Nogent-sur-Marne, France

Phone: (+33) 1 48 71 90 07
maba@fondationdesartistes.fr

fondationdesartistes.fr