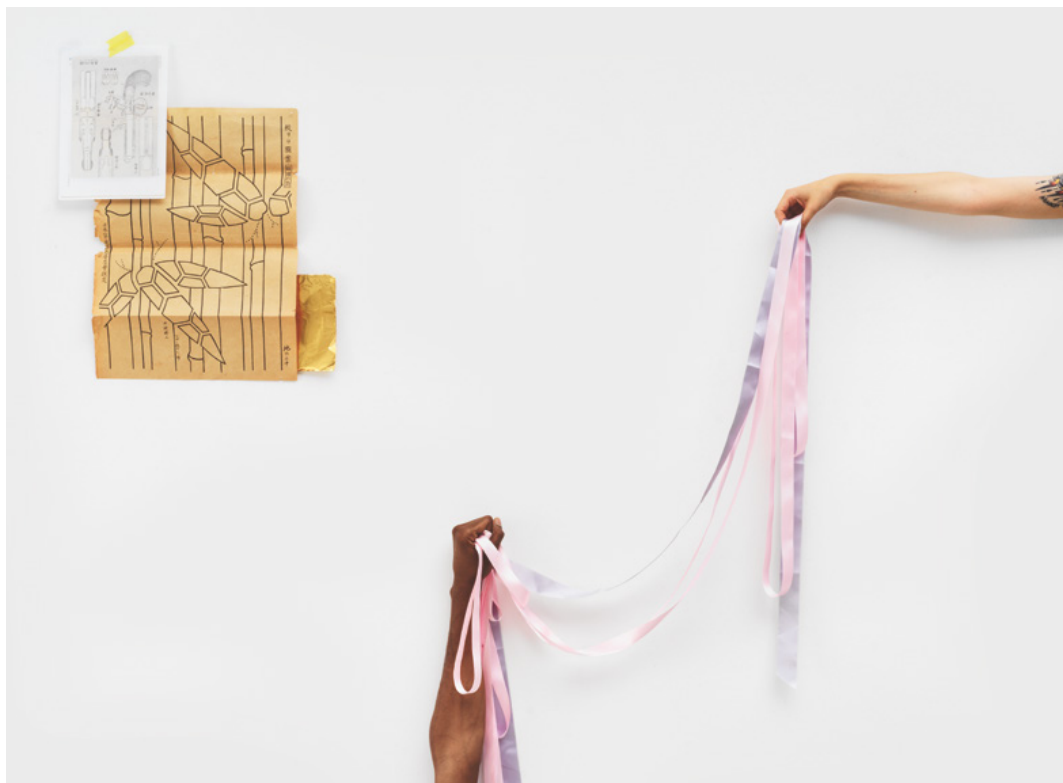


Tanya Leighton

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**BODY POLITICS: ON MASCULINITY
VOLUME 1**



Technique et Sentiment II, 2021
Archival inkjet print, veneered MDF pedestal
110×150 cm
Photography: Gunter Lepkowski
Courtesy of the artist; Stigter van Doesburg, Amsterdam;
and Tanya Leighton, Berlin and Los Angeles

Jimmy Robert's conceptually driven practice encompasses performance, photography, film, and sculpture, exploring their boundaries and confluences. Robert often offers up his own body to encounter and confront unyielding institutional frameworks and narratives. The photos from the *Technique et Sentiment I–V* (2021) series attend to legacies of colonial erasure and histories of invisibility in Western visual culture by asserting the complexity of historiography and representation. He uses abstraction as a way to represent the body and allude to the many elements constituting one's identity.

King Kong Magazine, March 2023

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Tanya Leighton



Technique et Sentiment III, 2021
Archival inkjet print, veneered MDF pedestal
110×150 cm
Photography: Gunter Lepkowski
Courtesy of the artist; Stigter van Doesburg, Amsterdam;
and Tanya Leighton, Berlin and Los Angeles

Tanya Leighton



Technique et Sentiment IV, 2021
Archival inkjet print, oak batons
110×150 cm
Photography: Gunter Lepkowski
Courtesy of the artist; Stigter van Doesburg, Amsterdam;
and Tanya Leighton, Berlin and Los Angeles

In the photographic compositions, Robert combines objects, photographic images, drawings, and fragments of raw materials, as well as his or someone else's body parts. In the first photo, pieces of paper with gradient colors resemble sunrise or sunset moments; the ball of paper hints at recent human activity and the sensually bent leg teasingly enters the picture frame—the composition renders the objects as actors and the image frame as a performative space.

In another photo, a reproduction of Constantin Emile Meunier's *Le débardeur* (ca. 1893) — a sculpture of a dockworker that came to archetypally represent the individual's embodiment of work—is mimicked in another image by Robert's partner. The juxtaposition emphasizes the sculpture's queer signifiers and could be read as a reference to the work of queer activists, i.e. queer activism as labor. In the series' fifth and final photo, Robert gently and caressingly reaches out to a queen conch shell — native to his country of birth, Guadeloupe, and fished close to extinction and exported globally. The individual elements become symbols and metaphors, only partially revealing all their possible different meanings, and creating their own undisclosed narratives.

Tanya Leighton

PLIÉ, 2020

Just as in language
Long legs, folded

Body disappearing under
its own weight
Not ballet but
the gravity

of porous materials
Skin
Paper

Transpiring as solid truth:
Precise execution

1, 2, 3 and again
plié

You get the jest?
What is your
position
at this very
moment?

Are you
performing this
language?

What is your
position
in relation to
this text?

1, 2, 3 plié

Repeat the exercise
mechanically
until it is written all
over your flesh
and bones

The body becomes
the word
on the paper

Again, plié

At one with the
image no body
yet a tender surface

To print
To pry

open

The text *Plié* (2020), also, is an exploration of performativity in mediums other than performance, here namely in writing. Robert translates movement to paper with words, questions the position of the reader's body in relation to the text, and attempts to engage them in following his lead. The text itself becomes energetic, jumping around on the two-dimensional surface of the paper. *Parameters* (2012) is in this vein too: the text addresses the limitations of entrenched social or institutional parameters and stresses the endless possibilities of identification once one rethinks them.

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Tanya Leighton

PARAMETERS, 2012

set up the parameters
adjust the structure

define the place one speaks from
who speaks? In the name of whom?
data, insignificant calculations
these measurements appease or unnerve

bail out of formatted minds
distinguish the limit from the edge
the dubious scientific approach
unsettle the apparatuses, question them even
base line of deformed minds

a direction or another wouldn't be inconsequential
titillated by verbal feats
while hiding behind an oblique language

set up the parameters
adjust the structure

static shots and elevations
the form of the text coerces the movements
however free they regarded themselves
liberated from all technique

the dimension you evolve in
is it a pose or posturing?

outsized and fragile architecture
of a seductive yet redundant reported speech
troubabours and trinkets generate
pleasant linguistic asymmetries

how could I imagine that our bodies
would be made to measure even?

Set up the parameters
Adjust the structure

Jimmy Robert (born in Guadeloupe, FR in 1975) lives and works in Berlin. He was the subject of a mid-career survey at Nottingham Contemporary in 2020, which travelled to Museion, Bolzano and CRAC Occitanie, Sète in 2021. Recent solo exhibitions include Kunsthalle Baden-Baden in 2022, and The Hunterian, Glasgow in 2021. A solo exhibition at Moderna Museet, Malmö will open in April 2023.

Curated by Léon Kruijswijk