

PRESS RELEASE

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CORNELIA PARKER

NO MAN'S LAND

24, RUE DU VIEUX-BILLARD

OPENING ON 17.05 – AT 6PM

Art Bärtschi & Cie is pleased to welcome for the 4th time the British artist Cornelia Parker with *No Man's Land*, an exhibition of her recent artworks.

The exhibition revolves around the imposing installation *No Man's Land* (2018). Conceived with wooden boards found in the shantytowns of the metropolis of Guangzhou (China) where rapid urbanization replaces old buildings with skyscrapers at an astonishing speed, the work evokes this transitional zone at the edge of the city where objects can only be ephemeral. Cornelia Parker's boards are animated by an astonishing levitation, suspended to glide just above the ground. This installation directly projects the viewer into Parker's work, mapping an uncertain territory at the crossroads of mental borders.

The series of works assembled around this central piece meet and confront each other in an exchange that is both discursive and aesthetic. All have a meaning that goes beyond the simple condition of the object: Parker's work transforms the ordinary into extraordinary in a combination of visual and verbal allusions. The artist tells us thus stories about ourselves and our society.

A no man's land is an undefined, indeterminate place, a place at the borders of a given space, the land between two borders, the rugged terrain between the Good and the Bad of Parker's tapestries where one can read definitions of antonyms in transparency embroidered by prisoners (*Good/Bad*, 2018). A no man's land is also perhaps the end of the world as we know it or think we know it. There is like a semantic slip between a lead bullet and her *Bullet Drawings*, where the initial trajectory of a bullet is entirely diverted to make a delicate work.

Parker shows what one does not want or cannot see, she questions and moves the boundaries she crosses in a back and forth movement between certainties and illusions, positive and negative, front and back. She reveals unknown worlds by focusing on the reverse of objects as in *Verso series*, 2016 where she photographs the reverse side of button samplers, 2016, thus revealing subtle embroidery patterns. To allow us to see beyond objects, Parker is interested in language, its importance and impact. This reflection stands out here in her embroideries and in the blackboards where children have written down news headlines such as in *News at Seven (Chilling)*, 2017. Each of her pieces offering different levels of legibility, Cornelia Parker invites us to break the boundaries of thought, to look at and read the world differently in order to grasp a new dimension.

To be interested in limits and hidden faces is also to give visibility to people and works which are too often marginalized. These can be here the prisoners embroidering the works; the workers who sewed the buttons samplers of the *Verso series* or the inhabitants of the slums of Guangzhou. All these objects, sometimes fragments of forgotten destinies, sometimes elements whose primary *raison d'être* has been transformed, seduce the senses and the spirit in a dialogue between individual experience and collective memory.

Cornelia Parker (1956) studied at Gloucestershire College of Art and Design and at the University of Reading. Since the 1980s, she has been questioning our society, working with different media ranging from works on paper to installations, including photography of found and manipulated objects. Among her most famous works is *Cold Dark Matter: An Exploded View* (1991, Tate collection): a fragmented garden shed of the British army whose pieces are suspended. Her work has been the subject of numerous exhibitions throughout the world, notably at the Serpentine Gallery in London or the ICA in Boston or more recently at the Venice Biennale, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2016 with the exhibition *Transitional Object: Psycho Barn* or at the Whitworth Museum in Manchester in 2017.

She has been a member of the Royal Academy since her election in 2009 and was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire in 2010. She was voted Artist of the Year by Apollo magazine in 2016 and was selected as the official artist of the British general election (2017). Many international institutions have acquired her works, including the Detroit Institute of Art, the MoMa, the Tate Gallery and the Centre Pompidou. Cornelia Parker lives and works in London.