

# Philippe Van Snick

## *Instability of Fundamentals*

Opening: Saturday, 04.02.2023, from 17h to 20h

*"My work starts from concrete experience, from things that offer themselves to me in everyday life. Whenever I am pondering an idea, an object I run into may suddenly help me to do the next move."*  
Philippe Van Snick



Installation view of 'Instability of Fundamentals' at Grazer Kunstverein, Graz, 2016. Photo: Christine Winkler, Courtesy Grazer Kunstverein

Galeria Jaqueline Martins [Brussels] is pleased to present 'Instability of Fundamentals', a solo exhibition of works by Philippe Van Snick (1946-2019). Organized in collaboration with the Philippe Van Snick Estate, the exhibition will feature a large-scale installation, and a selection of significant drawings, paintings and documentation. The exhibition will provide an opportunity to experience a particular body of work, which demonstrates the scope of formal, poetic and conceptual invention within which the artist created.

This will be the gallery's inaugural solo exhibition of the artist's work since announcing its representation of the Philippe Van Snick Estate.

In keeping with the gallery's program of recreating historic presentations of work by our artists, the exhibition carries the title of the main work on view, 'Instability of Fundamentals', created in 1990 and presented that year at Zeno X Gallery in Antwerp. Later it was on view at Provinciaal Museum in Hasselt (1993-1994), at the National Gallery during the 12th International Winter festival of Sarajevo (1996) and Grazer Kunstverein (2016). This is the first time the work will be presented in Brussels.

This large-scale installation consists of eight painted wooden blocks placed on trestles, demonstrating the artist's explorations on day and night, the rhythm of the seasons, and the passage of time.

*"By presenting the blocks on trestles, I could elicit the notion of instability. A trestle is a quite trivial user object that [is] light and can be moved easily, but that still offers support as well. The trestles meant that I could have the colored volumes float, shape other constellations with them. Such work never starts off with 'I am going to put volumes on a trestle' as a preconceived idea. From the wish to work in the space and to convey certain ideas, the trestles present themselves at one point in the working process. At that point you notice that it is possible."*<sup>1</sup>

The positioning of the eight asymmetrical volumes in the space is variable. Many configurations are possible. As in several other works, here he embraces duality. There is unity in the work as a whole but also in the scattering through its different elements.

Philippe Van Snick had a great interest in observing the cosmos, the world, society and life. Every system has variables that lead to dynamic possibilities and ways of interpretation. This implies an alternation of moments of instability and stability. Each element of a system has a certain degree of autonomy, while remaining part of the collective whole.



Installation view of 'Instability of Fundamentals' at Grazer Kunstverein, Graz, 2016.  
Photo: Christine Winkler, Courtesy Grazer Kunstverein

On view for the first time, a selection of later drawings in the exhibition highlight the artist's continual examination of the interplay between the human body and nature. Van Snick's drawings are marked by a certain degree of abstraction. Taking inspiration from his immediate surroundings, he often staged the garden of his home in Brussels and his garden at Le Bos Nord in France.

*"Gardens are enclosed areas in which plants and arts meet. They form 'cultures' in an uncompromised sense of the word."*<sup>2</sup>

The library of the gallery will host a selection of documents and books from the artist's studio, providing a unique experience to enter in the artist's intimate observations of the world. Philippe Van Snick was inspired by a combination of influences, from mathematical theories, philosophy, botanical sciences, cosmology and art history to his own studies of the minutiae of everyday life. Incorporating these diverse influences, he created unexpected paths to research and develop the possibilities of visual experience.

Through sculptures, drawings, paintings, photographs, and installations, Van Snick heightens the subtle levels of interplay between man, art, and nature. His works seem to connect past and present, the ephemeral and the eternal, it gives way to a poetry that links everyday experience with universal concerns.

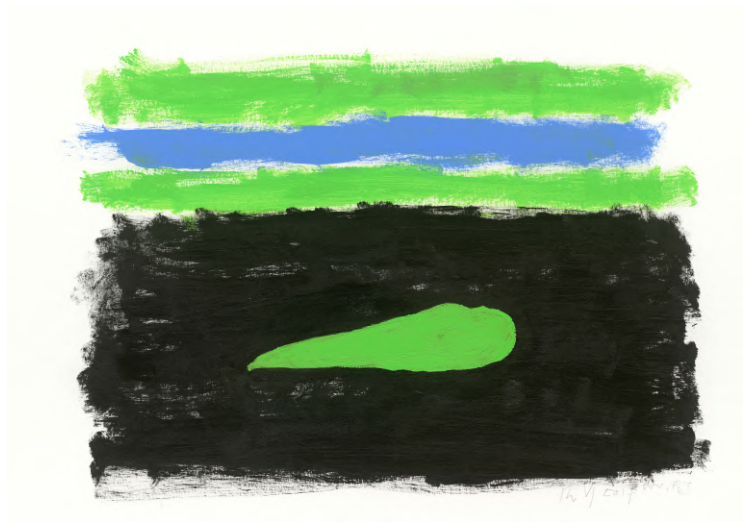
Currently a comprehensive solo exhibition; 'Philippe Van Snick. dynamic project', curated by Marta Mestre and Luk Lambrecht, is on view at S.M.A.K. museum in Ghent until the 5th of March 2023.

1- Philippe Van Snick 'Territorium'. *Een gesprek tussen Philippe Van Snick, Wouter Davidts en Eva Wittocx, Kunst Nu, Ghent, S.M.A.K., December 2000, nr. 6, p. 4-9 (translated from Dutch)*

2- Peter Sloterdijk: 'Du mußt dein Leben ändern' 2009 (translated from German)



**Model of 'Instability of Fundamentals',  
studio view, Brussels, 1990. Photo: Philippe  
Van Snick**



**[no title], 2017  
acrylic and graphite on paper  
(scanned by Fotorama)**





[no title], 2017  
acrylic, watercolor and graphite on paper  
(scanned by Fotorama)



**Philippe Van Snick in Le Bos Nord, 2017.**  
**Photo: Marijke Dekeukeleire**

Ghent, Belgium, 1946

Brussels, Belgium, 2019

Philippe Van Snick is one of the foremost contemporary Belgian artists. His work combines the heritage of modern abstract art and the conceptual enunciations of the seventies, delving into a field of speculations on the perception of the world and life. Even though Van Snick's work has been repeatedly considered from the perspective of painting fundamentals, recent reviews of his oeuvre have shed light on his recurrent experimentations, straddling fields as distinct as conceptual photography, film, installation, artist's books, or site-specific projects. Like a spiral, the work of Philippe Van Snick unfolds continually from the infinitesimal to that which transcends us. Encompassing not only mathematical strictness but also an experimentalism that embraces the element of chance in life, his artistic propositions are poetical and unconventional, at once dense and light-hearted, empathic and desiring of the world, silent and dynamic.

His work is in the museum collections of MoMA, New York (US), Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Serralves, Porto (PT), Mu.ZEE, Ostend (BE), M HKA, Antwerp (BE), S.M.A.K., Ghent (BE) and various private & corporate collections in Europe, USA and Latin-America. He presented solo exhibitions at, M HKA, Antwerp (BE); Museum M, Leuven (BE); S.M.A.K., Ghent (BE); BOZAR, Brussels (BE); De Hallen Haarlem, Haarlem (NL); Grazer Kunstverein, Graz (AU); Kunstverein Langenhagen, Langenhagen (DE); Art Gallery of York University, Toronto (CA); ART-EX'95, Oxy Gallery, Osaka (JA); Zeno X Gallery, Antwerp (BE); Tatjana Pieters, Ghent (BE); Galeria Nuno Centeno, Porto (PT); Arcade, London (UK), Exile, Vienna (AU), amongst others.



## About Galeria Jaqueline Martins

Founded in São Paulo in 2011, Galeria Jaqueline Martins is a space for research, documentation and presentation of contemporary artistic production. It proposes collaborative curatorial strategies that foster dialogue between different generations and different cultural perspectives. One of its guiding principles is the encouragement of research-oriented conceptualist practices characterized by critical, even subversive, approaches. Since its inauguration, the gallery has developed a special programme around the investigation of artistic productions carried out during the Brazilian military period – more specifically from the 1970s and 1980s. It promotes a historical revision of processes grounded on strong intellectual resistance, audacity and commitment to art and which transformed the artistic practice in the country, but nonetheless were neglected throughout the last decades.

By integrating research and practice that confront the contemporary scene by means of its exhibition program, the gallery encourages the revival of the debate that conceives of artistic actions as contact zones for the exercise of aesthetic, social and political change. In 2020 the gallery opened its second exhibition space, in Brussels, aiming to expand our presence in Europe and to develop a multidisciplinary program that will foster connections between our artists and Brazilian art practices in an international context.

## Exhibition period

### Philippe Van Snick: Instability of Fundamentals

04 February to 23 March 2023

Opening: 04.02.2023, from 17h to 20h

Gallery hours: Tuesday to Friday 14h-18:30h Saturday 12h-18h

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