



PRESS RELEASE

THE TRANSLATOR'S VOICE

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Today, translations are everywhere: facilitating international trade of goods, enabling diplomatic negotiations between political leaders, interpreting our daily news broadcast, permitting online communication between countries and continents, and introducing us to foreign films and literature. Much of what we know about the world has reached us through translation: as the pace and intensity of global communication and circulation are accelerating, the need for translations is growing.

Translation is often associated with loss. After all, languages and cultures are not different ways of saying the same, but different ways of saying different things. Translation is therefore always an approximation; an infinitely difficult task of mediating between different expressions of human experience. How can we, then, think of encounters between languages not only as a challenge and a difficulty, but as a source of creativity and learning? How can we understand the world differently in different languages? Can translation be a place for critical or even subversive activity?

The title of this project, "The Translator's Voice", points in two thematic directions. On the one hand, it encapsulates the idea of making visible the activity – and the voice – of translation, and the gesture of letting it take the center stage as a unique source of knowledge about the nature of cultural difference. On the other hand, the figure of the translator becomes a critical metaphor for the linguistic conditions of globalization and the postcolonial era: the growing need – and the joy, and the pain – to learn foreign languages; the voluntary and involuntary multilingualism of migrants; the tense encounters between "global" languages and "local" cultures; and the phenomenon of hybrid cultures and "accented" ways of speaking and experiencing the world.

Translation then no longer designates just a profession, or an activity. It represents human condition, and more and more often, we find ourselves assuming the role of a translator...

Artists: Erik Bünger, Luis Camnitzer, Esra Ersen, Jakup Ferri, Rainer Ganahl, Dora García, Joseph Grigely, Susan Hiller, Christoph Keller, Zineb Sedira, Mladen Stilić, Nicoline van Harskamp, Frank Westermeyer & Sylvie Boisseau, Ingrid Wildi Merino, Xu Bing

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