

The Last Terminal
Reflections on the Coming Apocalypse

Volume III

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Volume III, Part 6: Colonotopia*

LISA IVORY (2024 – 2025)
Paintings

Lisa Ivory's paintings point to an evolving story with a seemingly clear narrative arc yet the stories do not easily yield to identifications and sympathies. They undermine our certainties about where we are in relation to what we are looking at. They lead one into a painterly universe; a shadow world, a natural habitat for nudes, skeletons, and domesticated monsters.

In *Part 1: Beating Death With His Own Arm*, we presented two paintings titled *Tourist In Your Town* and *Love And Communication*.

In *Part 2: Errors*, we presented three new paintings titled *Foal Phantom*, *Hard Times*, and *Call It Something Nice*.

In *Part 3: The Recipient*, we presented three new works – *What The Goat Saw*, *Outside Love*, and *A Summer Evening*.

In *Part 4: Dormitorium*, we presented *What the Horse Saw*, *Upper Hand*, and *Cross Bones Style*.

In *Part 6: Colonotopia*, we present a new series of paintings.

GERLACH EN KOOP (2024–2025)
Om acht uur?
Dan word ik wakker.

As soon as the grip of darkness slackens, the boundaries between you and the objects around you lose their fluidity. Gradually they start to distinguish themselves, moving away from you, from the walls, from the floor, the ceiling. And you are moving away from them. Mutual sympathy turns into differentiation: the headphones on the couch with the cord in an elegant curl on the floor; the scissors on the desk, not closed but in the shape of an x; the chair that has not been drawn up; the black-and-white postcard stuck on the wall with Blu Tack; the glass of water without water on the small metal table mobiltecnica torino next to the bed; the shoes side by side close to the leg of the table.

You're washed ashore. You leave behind a stagnant surf of crumpled bed sheets as your feet touch the floor. You open the bedroom door. No longer asleep, but awake? Not quite.

Was machen Sie um zwei? Ich Schlafe. was an exhibition at the GAK, Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst in Bremen in 2020. Four years later in Rib gerlach en koop accepted the invitation by Maziar Afrassiabi to restage their attempt to approach the elusive phenomenon that is sleep by displaying works by other artists. Works that either corresponded to the disintegration of falling asleep or the reintegration of waking up. What was stretched out in space in Bremen was stretched out in time in Rotterdam. Four small gatherings of works, on display for a couple of months each time, trying to find a position that worked before, trying to merge with the original, like an insomniac.

During the night of 8th March Rib was exceptionally open until the next morning. After this good night's wake, the last stage in the restaging has arrived. All works on display are associated in different ways to the sometimes strange, sometimes frightful, experience of waking up. Frightful? Sure, we've all done it many many times in our life. However, just one oblivious moment is needed, one moment of doubt – do I know how to? – and sleep stays, until you die.

* Colonotopia is a marriage between colonoscopy and utopia. A medically intrusive procedure and a philosophical wreck. Dissecting it further, it's a cross fertilization of several key operative concepts: that of colonial histories, scopic regimes and ruins.

Les Portes Roses (1975) consists of thirty-two watercolours all depicting three pink rectangular shapes, each one slightly larger and paler than the one that came before. A long quote is dispersed over the thirty-two A4 sheets with one word (sometimes two) over each shape, a quote from the first chapter of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. We reproduce the quote here as it was printed in the catalogue raisonné published ten years ago by (SIC).¹ We were surprised to find a pink paper wristband in our copy when we removed it from the shelf. A paper wristband to an event we apparently didn't attend, or maybe just one of us did. Which event? Neither of us can remember.

'There were doors all round the hall, but they were all locked; and when Alice had been all the way down one side and up the other, trying every door, she walked sadly down the middle, wondering how she was ever to get out again.

Suddenly she came upon a little three-legged table, all made of solid glass; there was nothing on it except a tiny golden key, and Alice's first thought was that it might belong to one of the doors of the hall²; but, alas! either the locks were too large, or the key was too small, but at any rate it would not open³ any of them.⁴ However, on the second time round, she came upon a low curtain she had not noticed before, and behind it was a little door about fifteen inches high: she tried the little golden key in the lock, and to her great delight it fitted!⁵

The disappearing doors will not be on display in this exhibition, but its counterpart will: *Introductions Roses*, the fitting of pieces of pink fabric in certain *interstices repérés*, found gaps or blind spots in the artist's home that were photographed and made into a slideshow (1995). Mesmaeker expanded the slideshow into a site-specific intervention (2019) for the Brussels exhibition space La Verrière, it has been especially adapted for *Was machen Sie um zwei? Ich schlafe* and will be for *Om acht uur? Dan word ik wakker*. The pink fabric will direct the gaze to the details of the room, expelling the cloud-like whiteness of sleep and giving way to the brightness of the day. The return of detail.

Yes, of course, Alice's white rabbit has pink eyes.

You can't look for *I know, but when you ask me I don't* in the exhibition, but you can find it. Finding it would be the equivalent of being slowed down by it, ever so briefly, when the sole of your shoe sticks to the floor almost unnoticed and then tears itself loose audibly: *kgrr*.

It's the same when you tear yourself from sleep, and that is often not quiet either – *kgrr*, startled by some unfamiliar sound that a part of your dormant brain, a part that is deeply hidden but still vigilant, registers.

You remember how suddenly the lights come on in a club, after the music has stopped and the silence, almost tangible, is only broken by these sounds of shoe soles sticking to the dance floor: *kgrr, kgrr, kgrr*. A wake-up call, a disenchantment.

One thing is missing here in the classic triangle between you – the visitor – the architectural space, and the object. Between the mounting glue and the visitor there is nothing, until saturation slowly turns it into an image to be seen. Subsequent visitors will eventually exhaust the work until it becomes its own documentation. Just an image, a documentary image. No adhesive strength left, no more sound to be heard. One would be tempted to think that the work is gone.

Wide awake.

ISMAÏL BAHRI

Somebody showing you something. What these things are – not things but fragments of things – you can't really discern. The wind makes it difficult to see more than a fragment when the hand opens. You see a fragment of a fragment. You are tempted to consider it as one, single thing. Maybe it is. A single thing that changes shape, colour, texture while you're looking at it. It changes because you're looking at it.

An earlier version of the video is titled *Lâchers* [Releases]. A hand releasing again and again. Leaving it to the wind. But it's an on-going project; whenever the wind is good, Bahri returns to add new material. This version is titled *Saisir*, a French verb that means 'to grab', also in the sense of 'to grasp', 'to understand'. The best English translation would be: *Seize*. And yet that would be just the opposite: a hand that tries to hold on to something. Keeping it from the wind, so that it doesn't blow away.

Looking at it means that you're trying to hold on, too – to remember what you just saw.

'Repetition',⁶ says François Piron, 'is an instrument of insistence'. 'Repetition is a way of getting everything out of yourself and out of things in order to retain the tiny amount that resists', Ismaïl Bahri answers. 'I try to get to the point where it holds together, but in the hope that, from that point, having persisted, something continues to escape, a vulnerability that is expressed through tremors or vibrations.'

After many attempts, you finally wake up.

ANNAÏK LOU PITTELOUD

An Executive Series Ford Lincoln Town Car was found in the port of Antwerp. Koffie Natie, a coffee import-export company, found it submerged in its basin during a shipping manoeuvre, extracted and stored in its car park where it remained for many years. The car was probably new when it was sunk in the harbour, as evidenced by its perfectly preserved blue leather interior, while its bodywork bears the traces of its immersion.

The car was exhibited under the title *They* on the grounds of the Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten in Amsterdam during the open days of 2010. As it was impossible to sell or store this piece, the car was sold to a shady figure after the exhibition and may now be driving through the streets of Amsterdam.

The short film *Perfect Europe (They)* was shot when the car was discovered, on the evening before it was removed from the port of Antwerp. Thus one piece bears witness to another, of which nothing remains.

MARK GEFFRIAUD

Every time you pass through a doorway, your thoughts are somehow reset. Most of what you had in mind is erased to make room, to adapt to the new space that you are entering. Though we usually don't even notice, it does happen that a person enters a room and then suddenly finds themselves unable to remember what they wanted to do there, or what they went there looking for. Scientists call it the 'doorway effect'. It is a feeling akin to waking up.

A door spindle – being the only element connecting both sides of a door – measures the distance between these two states of mind,

making room for a whole new way of looking at this very simple piece of metal.

Measure it and several striking coincidences emerge. The distance range between the holes made to allow knobs to fit doors of different thicknesses are exactly the same as the distance range between the two eye pupils of a human adult, which is to say between 5.5 and 7 cm. The holes themselves measure 0.2 cm, which is the maximum contraction of a pupil, and the piece of metal itself has a thickness of 0.8 cm, which is the maximum dilation of a pupil.

In fact, this object marks a whole set of coincidences. It is a hyphen – a hyphen between different spaces, different territories, different states of being.

And remember, kings don't touch doors.

HENDL H MIRRA

Pathetic coverlet for concrete. Made of rectangles of typical American sidewalk size, connected with a slightly darker, fuzzy-mossy stripe. The sculpture can be installed at full length, or with some part of the length accordion-folded at one end only. The fabric was dyed green in sections at a laundromat on the corner of Division and Paulina in Chicago, where Mirra lived at the time. The rectangles were thus in slightly different shades of the same hue, and have since become further varied by inconstant sun-bleaching.

SHIMABUKU

Trying to Wake Up

The night leaves me cadaverous.

The corpse has to be revived.

However, I don't have the impression of being a dead body in the morning.

If someone could see me at that time in accordance with my impressions, I would appear as a sea of clouds, a globulous sea of masses of flakes, a huge object that no doubt borders on the stratosphere.

Cloud though I may be, I am well aware that this state has its enemies, that I will soon have to become active again, de nite, reduced in size ... and that it would be wise to start moving in that direction (if it isn't too late for me to wake up, ever). I get busy immediately.

[...]

Courage! In this mass a will remains.
This headstrongness without a body is
vaguely growing.

[...]

Soon I'll be able to get up. I am now just a few minutes away, and with no obstacles on the road to the near future, I am now a man like minutes away, and with no obstacles on the road to the near future, I am now a man like any other.

It happens, but much more rarely, that I awake (from this half-sleep I've been talking about) on four legs. In that case I need more time to return to biped shape, because – I think – of a certain propensity I have for living in that state, which I don't have for my cloud shape. I'd certainly be prevented from doing so even if I wanted to, and I would be too afraid to stay that way. Although, after all... I've come out of it many times in the course of my life. But all it takes is once, when you forget how to deal with it and you stay that way forever, until you die.

[...]

— Henri Michaux, 'Trying to Wake Up' [Arriver à se réveiller, 1950], translated from French by David Ball, in: *Darkness Moves*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, pp.95–100.

IAN KIAER

Cylindrical House Studio, 1929

The distinctive shape of Konstantin Melnikov's two conjoined cylinders and strange hexagonal windows speak of a structure beyond everyday dwelling. Its geometry, white surface, and remote, singular poise appear designed to provoke rumour of more complex workings within, as if the circular solution and eclipsing diameters might conform to some mystical planetary alignment or map an overlapping design of halos for an icon of orthodox saints. There can be few buildings with this many windows, over sixty in all, that remain so insistently insular. It may even be the quantity that works to deny any notion of view and emphasises their alternative function as luminaries. They absorb light from outside but hardly provide an inward glimpse in return. There can be no looking in.

It is somehow appropriate that their origin can be traced to a fortification surrounding Moscow's ancient Belgorod dis-

trict, as they affect to alienate and repel the world.

It's not only the windows' honey-comb shape that might prompt the idea of bees, but the way in which its smooth exterior wall, if sliced open, would reveal a complex of interlocking work and living spaces where the incubation of thought and sleep meet. The architect wanted to integrate sleeping and working, dwelling, and thinking throughout his building; hence living-room, studio, and bedroom alternate and dissect like a layered Venn diagram. It is said of the cylindrical motif that he had the Russian hearth in mind⁷ – the hearth as core of the house with the notion of warmth enclosed, its most interior part. To conceive this notion of hearth/heart is to turn the whole building inwards. To think of Melnikov's building is to think from its inside.

In the house, work and sleep are curiously connected. The circular bedroom is directly below the circular studio. The walls are painted warm yellow; the beds are stone slabs that rise up from the floor like altars, rendering sleep an almost sacred inactivity. For Melnikov, sleep was an area of intense study.⁸ He wrote about a lifetime of sleep, twenty years of lying down without consciousness, without guidance as one journeys into the sphere of mysterious worlds to touch unexplored depths of the sources of curative sacraments, and perhaps of miracles.⁹

Here sleep becomes a means of passing from one world to another, mysterious and indeterminate, a place for work's reserve to be restored and nourished. However, such spaces have a way of shifting tone, from sleep's place to death's space. From the thirties on, sleep's curative sacraments turned to restless slumber as Stalin's censure became the architect's incubus, frustrating any possibility for practice. In such light the warm glow darkens into night, and those concrete beds come ever closer to mortuary slabs. Without recourse to sleep Melnikov turned to dreaming, closing inwards to past projects and painting pictures.

The beginning of those concrete beds perhaps lay in the commission the architect received to design Lenin's glass sarcophagus. In this, his first built structure, he had to provide a plinth of sleep for a cadaver forever

preserved, a place of pilgrimage and peering – a windowed tomb. There is something determinedly circular in how this first work, which signals his professional birth, presents itself as a death work. As if somehow opportunity demanded he earn through experience what he had conceived through commission. He could not know that his cylindrical house studio – designed with such optimism as an ideal space for living and work – would eventually become a place for sleep, a house for a corpse.

— Ian Kiaer, 'Cylindrical House Studio, 1929', in: *Picpus*, issue 4, Autumn 2010.

GABRIEL KURI

From the dimensionless void that is sleep 'we are thrown into the body, into the world, into time',¹⁰ Peter Schwenger writes in his book on the threshold between sleep and wakefulness, and this inevitable and disastrous setback repeats itself every morning. 'It is our fated placement in the world – fated because we do not choose this place, which is not like any other because it is us.'

We're washed ashore. We leave behind wrinkled sheets resembling a coastal landscape of frozen waves as our feet hit the floor and we open the bedroom door. No longer asleep, but awake? Not quite yet. It takes us a while and sometimes a while longer to shake off that subtle smell, that hint of melancholy coming from within.

Mourning for a loss will pass, or can pass. We can expect the intensity of the feeling to fade at some point, but this melancholy of waking stays with us, forever on repeat, every morning anew. And precisely because we do not know what we're grieving for, or even identifying it as a loss, we cannot learn to understand and accept it.

NOTES

- 1 Lewis Carroll, 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland', in: *Jacqueline Mesmaeker. Œuvres 1975–2011*, ed. Olivier Mignon, Bruxelles: (SIC) – Couper ou pas couper, 2011, p.12.
- 2 Exhibited in BOZAR in 2020, we could see that the door 'hall' was already completely colourless.
- 3 You could see in the (SIC) catalogue that the 'open' door still contained a trace of pink.
- 4 The thirty-two watercolours end here.
- 5 *Until It Fitted!* became the title of a 2007 exhibition at Etablissement d'en face, perhaps as a way to make up for the remaining part of the quote. *Les Portes Roses* was documented during this exhibition. If the bleaching process continues at the same pace, we will see the 'little golden key' disappear in thirteen years time, the 'solid glass table' in twenty-six years ...
- 6 This and subsequent quotes appear in: 'Leaving It to the Wind', a conversation between Ismail Bahri, Guillaume Désanges, and François Piron, in: *Instruments, Jeu de Paume*, Paris, 2017, p.158.
- 7 A.A. Strigalev, 'The Cylindrical House-Studio of 1922', in: *Konstantin Melnikov and the Construction of Moscow*, eds. Mario Foss and Maurizio Meriggi, Milan: Skira editore, 2000, p.90.
- 8 In 1929, Melnikov designed a 'Laboratory of Sleep' for workers in the 'Green City', see: S. Frederick Starr, *Melnikov: Solo Architect in a Mass Society*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978, p.179.
- 9 Ibid., p.177.

¹⁰ All quotes from Peter Schwenger, *At the Borders of Sleep, on Liminal Literature*, University of Minnesota Press, 2012

Volume III, Part 5:

Untitled

08.03.2025, 23:00 – 07:00

GERLACH EN KOOP (2024–ongoing)

Om zeven uur?

Slapen.

Ring.

Hello.

Hello. This is Isabelle. How are you?

Asleep.

Goodbye.

Goodbye.

This dialogue, this true story was recorded by Ray Johnson in *The Paper Snake* in 1965 and it serves to tell you now – sixty years later – that during the night of 8 March Rib will be open from 23:00 until 07:00 the next morning. Eight hours straight. A good night's wake. Not an event, not nothing, but an exhibit. It will be watched over. Ring at the door.

You are invited.

Volume III, Part 4: Dormitorium

LISA IVORY (2024 – 2025)
Paintings

Lisa Ivory's paintings point to an evolving story with a seemingly clear narrative arc yet the stories do not easily yield to identifications and sympathies. They undermine our certainties about where we are in relation to what we are looking at. They lead one into a painterly universe; a shadow world, a natural habitat for nudes, skeletons, and domesticated monsters.

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GERLACH EN KOOP (2024–ongoing)
Om zes uur?
Slapen.

How unpredictable is sleep. It is not a skill you can acquire or learn. The sleepless are powerless. Sleep is granted, it just cannot be forced. The only thing you can do is imitate your own sleeping body. Restage the conditions of the night before when it worked – same position, same routine – hoping that at some point the copy will again be convincing enough to merge with the original.

In 2020 gerlach en koop displayed works by other artists in an exhibition titled *Was machen Sie um zwei? Ich Schlafe*. at the GAK, Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst in Bremen, Germany. In this exhibition they tried to approach the elusive phenomenon that is sleep from both sides, with works that either correspond to the disintegration of falling asleep or the reintegration of waking up.

Throughout the year a restaging of this rather unusual solo-exhibition will unfold in Rib. What was stretched out in space in Bremen will be stretched out in time in Rotterdam. Small gatherings of works each time, four or five, six at the most. Trying to find a position that worked before, trying to merge with the original, like an insomniac.

In a chapter about the apartment in his famous book *Species of Spaces*, Georges Perec tries to imagine a space without a use. 'It wouldn't be a junkroom, it wouldn't be an extra bedroom, or a corridor, or a cubby-hole, or a corner. It would be a functionless space. It would serve for nothing, relate to nothing.

"For all my efforts, I found it impossible to follow this idea through to the end. Language itself, seemingly, proved unsuited to describing this nothing, this void, as if we could only speak of what is full, useful, and functional."¹ Then, in the last part of this section, he says something difficult to grasp – something mysterious that we keep coming back to: "I never managed anything that was really satisfactory. But I don't think I was altogether wasting my time in trying to go beyond this improbable limit. The effort itself seemed to produce something that might be a statute of the inhabitable"

In the beginning of the 1960s, Perec found a job as a *documentaliste*, or scientific archivist, at a big institution for sleep research. He stayed a long time – until 1978 – and although he got the position by chance, sleep became a recurring theme in his work.

Thinking about the *Empty Room* by Daniel Gustav Cramer, it occurred to us that Perec might actually be describing the impossibility of meeting his sleeping self.

Feel free to take home a copy of the booklet *Empty Room (III)*.

The written instructions Kasper Bosmans gives to execute the mural *No Water* are very precise in some respects and very imprecise in others. All deliberate, of course. The specific hues for the blue and the brown and the height of their separation were to be decided upon by *gerlach en koop*. According to Bosmans the border between the two colours is not just a division; it is a horizon.

If you draw a line on a wall from left to right, saying 'This is the horizon' as the start of something – a story, a performance, a mural – then that line would only correspond to the real world for people who are exactly your height or, more precisely, people whose eyes meet yours exactly. This horizon would bind all of those people. Everyone else would see it as a representation of the horizon. They would follow along, but from an ever so slightly different perspective. By drawing the horizon very low (say 60 cm) or very high (say 275 cm) we can be fairly sure that it will be a representation for everyone who visits the exhibition.

For the paint, *gerlach en koop* decided to approximate the brown hue in the eyes of a very specific person and the blue hue in the eyes of an equally specific other. They didn't want to reveal the names when the work was executed the first time in Bremen, but could not keep their mouths shut then. So here they are, Andy Warhol and John Giorno, cameraman and protagonist of *Sleep*.

MELVIN MOTI

A vintage *LIFE* magazine from 1967 with the actress Mia Farrow on the cover. For her role in the movie *Rosemary's Baby* (1968), Roman Polanski asked Farrow to slowly lose weight to coincide with her mental dissolve, which is completely at odds with the weight increase one would expect from a pregnancy. The viewer sees how Farrow's character turns into something gruesome simply by becoming paler and skinnier. Disturbance is implied not by excess, but by reduction.

The magazine is exposed to a lot of sunlight, thus repeating what happened in the movie, draining life from Farrow. And yet the blue of her eyes becomes brighter and brighter.

Miamilism can be defined as the perfectly 'natural' appearance of something that keeps

the 'natural' unseen. It is a 'vehicle word' for the theatrical minimalism that is characteristically embodied by Mia Farrow. Farrow's make-up in *Rosemary's Baby* made it appear as if she had no make-up on, as if she were showing her most 'natural' face. But Farrow also visually blended into the background of the set, epitomising the manipulation of the seemingly 'natural' like no other silver-screen personality.

KITTY KRAUS

To Fall Asleep

I'm falling asleep. I'm falling into sleep and I'm falling there by the power of sleep. Just as I fall asleep from exhaustion. Just as I drop from boredom. As I fall on hard times. As I fall, in general. Sleep sums up all these falls, it gathers them together. Sleep is proclaimed and symbolized by the sign of the fall, the more or less swift descent or sagging, faintness.

To these we can add: how I'm fainting from pleasure, or from pain. This fall, in its turn, in one or another of its versions, mingles with the others. When I fall into sleep, when I sink, everything has become indistinct, pleasure and pain, pleasure itself and its own pain, pain itself and its own pleasure. One passing into the other produces exhaustion, lassitude, boredom, lethargy, untying, unmooring. The boat gently leaves its moorings, and drifts.²

VOEBE DE GRUYTER

A busy, two-lane road lined with trees in Fuzhou. Traffic noise drowns everything out. To the left are old wooden houses undergoing demolition; to the right is a construction site where new concrete apartment blocks are being built. The air is incredibly dusty and polluted, as it is in most Chinese cities. I not only smell the particles with every breath I take, I can almost taste them as well. Several people are trying to pick fruit from the trees with long sticks. I do not know what kind of fruit it is; I've never had it. They are shaped like apples, but hairy.

A row of shops lines the wide sidewalk. Large display windows show all kinds of lacquered objects. I enter one of the shops. The lacquer master offers me tea. Zheng Chongyao is his name. I look around. The space is really long and

successive paper screens mark the space's transition from shop to workshop. Several people are at work.

At the very back – about 30 metres from the street – is a room with water on the floor where no one is allowed to go. I am told that the lacquered objects dry here, where there is no dust, only to be re-lacquered 12 hours later. One layer per day, one per night. The whole process is repeated again and again, sometimes for weeks on end.

I step back out onto the street.

I am struck by the contrast.

I return to the shop a week later with apples sculpted from memory. I need all of my skills and charm to convince Zheng Chongyao to do something that goes against everything his workshop is set up for, and that is to take my apples outside to lacquer.

Each apple is a record.

GUY MEES

Verloren ruimte

In a conversation between herself, Wim Meuwissen (WM), Dirk Snauwaert and Micheline Szwajcer, Lilou Vidal (LV) says: Guy Mees approved a six-line text that defines *Lost Space*. You, Wim, had originally written the text in the 1960s as an introduction to a play, but the text was subsequently re-worked by Willem-Joris Lagrillière, who was at the time a junior copywriter at an advertising agency. This sort of ghostwriting and appropriation of language raises the question of the author, the work, and intention, all issues that Guy explores throughout his trajectory.

LV: Can we read it, then, as a sort of anti-manifesto?

WM: Yes, though at first it was not called *Lost Space* but *Ongerepte Ruimte*, which translates as *Untouched Space*. A space that's intact, virginal, tangential. I would like to show you a sketch I made for you that might help us understand where that comes from. This is the house Guy lived in on Keizerstraat. His children slept here, and maybe he did too. The kitchen and all of that were over here. That's where he lived, but I've never been in there. He lived with incredible simplicity. And this space

here was totally empty. It was an attic, entirely painted white. There was nothing there, nothing at all. Nothing but the 1830s architecture. Here you see the hallway leading to this white space, which was also totally empty, except for an armchair that he had covered with white fabric. And here was an Yves Klein table. That was all. Over here was a skylight that illuminated the blue table.

LV: It wasn't his studio, just an unused space on the periphery of the domestic area?

WM: Right. And people would come to see it. A poet, for example, and other people I knew. Artists. That's how *Lost Space* came into being. Guy and Lagrillière agreed on it, maybe, and I accepted it. Also, the text I wrote became ... another text. It was no longer my reaction to the void. And because Guy didn't write, the text became a manifesto for his work. You can call it an anti-manifesto if you want, but it is a manifesto nonetheless.³

The Lost Space is an adjoining space.

The Lost Space is complementary to present-day living space.

The Lost Space does not have a clear-cut function.

The Lost Space is space as utility object, in which bombast becomes more difficult, and tangibility easier.

The Lost Space is simply the body defined by shape, colour, taste, smell, and sound.⁴

In the absence of Gerrit Dekker

For the exhibition *Binnen en buiten het kader* (1970) at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Gerrit Dekker closed a gallery with two doors. There is a photograph documenting the work, the empty room photographed from the inside, from a very low vantage point. If you were lying on the floor and looked sideways, this is what you'd see there. Overhead light, walls covered in what appears to be, a parquet floor, the skirting board recessed, a single electrical outlet, lamps with an air vent next to them, and a closed door.

For Dekker, spending time in exhibition spaces was important. In a sense, his installations – though that term was not yet in use – are the result of performances without an audience.

We make a jump in time to 2003. Dekker is invited to participate in a group exhibition titled *Now What!* at BAK in Utrecht. His voluntary withdrawal from the structures of the art world had been going on for thirteen years. He hesitates but finally agrees to have a so-called sheet framed – a photograph depicting his collaborative partner Ben d'Armagnac leading him through the halls of the Brooklyn Museum New York – but also decides to make an intervention in the space. Large pieces of cardboard are taped to the floor, guiding the visitor from the entrance door to the exit door of the room in one straight stretch, subtly discouraging them from entering the room itself and see the sheet up close. In this work the closed gallery from 1970 strongly resonates, but if the connection was picked up at the time, we don't know.

A few years later a solo exhibition in the same institution titled *About no below, no above, no sides* followed, after which Dekker pulled out permanently. This retreat, however, did not mean abandoning art: on the contrary. Although he no longer referred to himself as a visual artist, Dekker insistently kept engaging with aesthetic practice, exploring its various potentials in everyday life, according to BAK in their press release. Volunteering to help the homeless for example, in Arnhem where he lived, until his death, October last year.

NOTES

1 This and subsequent quote appear in: Georges Perec, *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces* [Espaces d'espaces, 1974], translated from French by John Sturrock, New York: Penguin Books, 1997, p. 33–35.

2 Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Fall of Sleep* [Tombe de sommeil, 2007], translated from French by Charlotte Mandell, New York: Fordham University Press, 2009, p. 1.

3 About Guy Mees', a conversation between Wim Meuwissen, Dirk Snauwaert and Micheline Szewajcer, conducted by Lilou Vidal, in: Guy Mees: *The Weather Is Quiet, Cool and Soft*, ed. Lilou Vidal, Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2018, pp. 161–162.

4 Guy Mees, 'The Lost Space', in: Guy Mees: *The Lost Space*, ed. Lilou Vidal, Paris: Paraguay Press, 2018, p. 18.

Volume III, Part 3: The Recipient

LISA IVORY (2024 – 2025)
Paintings

Lisa Ivory's paintings point to an evolving story with a seemingly clear narrative arc yet the stories do not easily yield to identifications and sympathies. They undermine our certainties about where we are in relation to what we are looking at. They lead one into a painterly universe; a shadow world, a natural habitat for nudes, skeletons, and domesticated monsters.

In *Part 1: Beating Death With His Own Arm*, we presented two paintings titled *Tourist In Your Town* and *Love And Communication*.

In *Part 2: Errors*, we presented three new paintings titled *Foal Phantom*, *Hard Times*, *Call It Something Nice*.

In *Part 3: The Recipient*, we present three new works – *What The Goat Saw*, *Outside Love*, *A Summer Evening*.

GERLACH EN KOOP (2024–ongoing)
Om vijf uur?
Slapen.

Sleeping can neither be learnt nor mastered. It's an unpredictable force that cannot be forced. The sleepless are also powerless. Sleep is granted. The only thing one can do is imitate one's own sleeping body, to re-stage the night before, hoping that at some point the copy will again be convincing enough to merge with the original – and that is when you fall ...

In 2020 gerlach en koop displayed works by other artists in an exhibition *approaching sleep* at the GAK, Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst in Bremen, Germany. During the year a faltered re-staging of this unusual solo-exhibition will unfold in the space of Rib. A few works at a time, two, three, maybe four. A full re-staging will follow, later on, in a somewhat larger space. Not all works exhibited in Bremen will be exhibited in Rotterdam however, and the ones that are will be changed by the very act of re-staging.

This third display will bring together three artworks and an artefact in an exhibition that also includes other works. All three have an author, certainly, we know the names – Jean-Luc Moulène, Kasper Bosmans, Bojan Šarčević – and all three have been made by someone who is not the author, we also know most of these names¹ ... but let's forget names for now. We propose to consider the artworks for what they are, to look at them and look again, to take the time to see how they relate to each other, to the architecture, to the previous exhibitions in the space and to the darkness surrounding them that we have so carefully tried to protect and preserve.

KASPER BOSMANS

The written instructions Kasper Bosmans gives to execute the mural *No Water* are very precise in some respects and very imprecise in others. All deliberate, of course. The specific hues for the blue and the brown and the height of their separation were to be decided upon by *gerlach en koop*. According to Bosmans the border between the two colours is not just a division; it is a horizon.

If you draw a line on a wall from left to right, saying 'This is the horizon' as the start of something—a story, a performance, a mural—then that line would only correspond to the real world for people who are exactly your height or, more precisely, people whose eyes meet yours exactly. This horizon would bind all of those people. Everyone else would see it as a representation of the horizon. They would follow along, but from an ever so slightly different perspective. By drawing the horizon very low (say 60 centimetres) or very high (say 275 centimetres) we can be fairly sure that it will be a representation for everyone who visits the exhibition.

For the paint *gerlach en koop* decided to approximate the brown hue in the eyes of a very specific person and the blue hue in the eyes of an equally specific other. They didn't want to reveal the names when the work was executed the first time in Bremen, but could not keep their mouths shut then. So here they are, Andy Warhol and John Giorno, cameraman and protagonist of *Sleep*².

JEAN-LUC MOULÈNE

In sleep, the brain still receives signals from the senses but they are blocked by the thalamus, the switching station that causes a kind of sensory blackout. You lose touch with reality completely. Your body is relaxed, even if some muscle tension is still present.

There are also periods during the night when the brain is as active as during the day, known as REM sleep, which is why it used to be called paradoxical sleep. When this happens, your body is not just relaxed but completely paralysed. This state is called 'atonia', the absence of tonus or muscle tension. Your skeletal muscles have no strength whatsoever. You can no longer move anything, you are trapped inside your own body³. Only muscles for automatic actions such as breathing still work, but at half strength. This

paralysis is necessary because otherwise you would act out your dreams.

At this point, the thalamus can reopen the portal of the senses, but it is not sensations from the outside world that enter the cortex now, but your emotions, desires and memories, all of which are played back on the big screens of the visual, auditory and tactile parts of our brain.

And sometimes the timing is off.

You have already come to your senses, are in fact awake, while the atonia has not yet been lifted. Now you experience the terrifying sensation of a heavy weight on your chest—someone, or something sitting on it—making it difficult to breathe and no possibility to get rid of the thing. What causes this scary sensation is precisely the atonia that includes breathing at half strength.

On the other end, you may have already embarked on a violent dream even before atonia has set in, finding yourself in bed, kicking and beating about, screaming yourself awake.

BOJAN ŠARČEVIĆ

He had visited this park a few times already. He didn't make a habit of falling asleep in the middle of the day in an unfamiliar place and so he was frightened more than usual by this rather insignificant fact of having woken up there. On waking he paused for some moments; and although the situation itself wasn't threatening at all, he still felt a little sick. After all, he found himself pressed—that was his word—against the slightly wet grass, possibly in the company of people he knew nothing about. The only voices he could hear were ones he didn't recognize. Being frightened in that way was an old habit of his.

We forcibly pricked up our ears. Having been asked and after a few moments of uncertainty, he told us what it was that was holding him down. These were his words—he was convinced it was the arm belonging to someone else lying beside him resting across his neck, softly touching his cheek. He told us the arm was especially heavy. Grateful for this clarification, though not actually a satisfying one, he had then calmed himself down by convincing himself it wasn't anything threatening. He even joked: 'If an arm is the only thing pressing you to the ground, then at least you can search for a way out with your eyes wide open!'

—Fragment taken from 'Almost as if he had', a short story by Daniel Kurjakovic, in: Bojan Šarčević, *Une Heureuse Régression*, Kunstverein München, Köln: Snoeck Verlag, 2004, p. 332

NOTES

- 1 In Bremen *Head Box* by Jean-Luc Moulène was on display, made by an unnamed Japanese craftsperson. In Rotterdam it will be the exhibition copy of the *Head Box*, which was made to be displayed for an entire year in a former donkey stable in Misileo, a small village in the hills of Tuscany. This stable was the temporary annex of lxhxb, the gallery of artist Guus van der Velden, who fabricated the copy.
- 2 *Sleep*, a 321 minutes long, silent black-and-white film (16mm) that premiered on January 17, 1964 at the Gramercy Arts Theater in New York City.
- 3 See footnote 1.

Volume III, Part 2: Errors

MATHEW KNEEBONE & TOM ALDRICH
Piano Unplugged: Variation I

Performance:
Saturday, 11.05.2024, 21:00

Piano Unplugged: Variation I is a piano piece conceived by artist Mathew Kneebone and composed and performed by musician & composer Tom Aldrich.

The composition draws from Kneebone's archive of musical improvisations performed and posted online by people experiencing a black-out. These brief melodies vary in modality and complexity, from children's recitals to elaborate jazz riffs. Taken collectively, they convey a spontaneous form of cultural production born as a direct response to disruption caused by infrastructural failure. The score for the performance arranges these improvised samples according to interpretive compositional systems from Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Klavierstücke* series, Henry Cowell's *New Musical Resources*, and Tom Aldrich's intuitive play.

Piano Unplugged: Variation I is the first rendition in a series of acoustic musical works based on improvised music created during power failure.

LISA IVORY (2024 – 2025)
Paintings

We have presented two paintings by the British artist Lisa Ivory titled *Tourist In Your Town* (2023) and *Love And Communication* (2023) in the first part of Volume III.

In *Part 2: Errors* we will reveal two new paintings as part of a two-year-long exhibition of her works at Rib consisting of eight parts totalling about sixteen paintings by the end of 2025. In the process a number of art historians with distinct specialisations in 18th and 19th century painting and unfamiliar with Ivory's work will share their readings of her paintings.

Ivory's paintings point to an evolving story with a seemingly clear narrative arc yet the stories do not easily yield to identifications and sympathies. They undermine our certainties about where we are in relation to what we are looking at. We are aware that showing only a small portion of her works in each exhibition might form a challenge to a contemporary visitor, however, we want to see if time-stretching her exhibition across such a relatively long period might better reveal her painterly progression and at the same time allow space for them to resonate with works by other artists.

They lead one into a painterly universe; a shadow world, a natural habitat for nudes, skeletons, and domesticated monsters.

GERLACH EN KOOP (2024–ongoing)

En om vier uur?

Slapen.

In *Part 1: Beating Death With His Own Arm* Rib began with re-staging a solo exhibition by the artist collective gerlach en koop titled *Was machen Sie um zwei? Ich schlafe.* (GAK, Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst Bremen, Germany, 2020). In this exhibition at the edge of sleep the collective displayed works by other artists. Over the course of the coming year, this solo exhibition will be re-staged at Rib. One work, two, maybe three at a time. Not all works on view in Bremen will be on view in Rotterdam however and the very act of re-staging the ones that are, will influence their presence.

Sleeping can neither be learnt nor mastered. Sleep is a fickle force that cannot be forced. Sleep is granted. All one can do is imitate a sleeping body as best one can. To re-stage the night before and the night before and the night before hoping that at some point posture and breathing will match and the copy will again be convincing enough to merge with the original ... and that is when you fall.

Anticipating that the three-centimetre void in Rotterdam—reminiscent of the three-centimetre void in Bremen—would dissolve into thin air soon, we asked Daniel Gustav Cramer to send the object that isn't a work of art when seen in broad daylight. Details are disappearing from Alex Farrar's suit, a new addition to the exhibition. The silent abyss of Laurent Montaron's Melancholia will be rebuilt to once again be the exhibition's 'onrust'. Emilio Prini's confirmation to participate remains in suspension. These works together shape Om vier uur? Slapen.

—gerlach en koop

ALEX FARRAR

In 2007—without any prior experience or technical advice—Alex Farrar made a suit from scratch to wear whenever representing himself as an artist. When it needed replacing he made a new one. After five 'suits' Farrar was able to make a suit that was indistinguishable from a professionally crafted one, and that concluded the project. This last suit is not on display, nor will it ever be. It is not an artwork. The artist keeps it the way one usually stores their best suit, in a garment bag, hanging in a wardrobe, but he will not wear it.

An exercise for insomniacs: imagine a room and then slowly strip it of everything inside. The objects, every little thing, the furniture, then continue with the windows, the doors, the skirting boards. Then remove all colour and the corners with their shadows until a completely white space remains. No details. No dimensions. A cloud-like nothing. Now your thoughts will have difficulty finding anything—a damp spot, a half-finished drill hole, a collapsed cobweb—to attach to and thus keep you from sleeping.

The first 'suits' were not only ill-fitting, they also showed all sorts of striking details, odd seams, unusual stitching ... details that stood out. Ten years were used by the artist to gradually eliminate them. The 'suits' attracted less and less consternation in the public. If his suit is desire materialised, as Laura van Grinsven writes in her text about the work¹, after the sixth one the desire became weightless. We imagine the artist standing in front of his wardrobe, staring at the garment bag.

LAURENT MONTARON

Endlessly undulating magnetic tape inside a machine from which the lid has been removed. It's a Roland RE-201 or Space Echo, a machine that musicians use to add an artificial echo to their instruments. It was the first of its kind in the 1970s but is still popular today, despite digital alternatives. Two different kinds had been invented at the time; one artificially reproduced the acoustics of space to create reverberation, or 'reverb'. The other artificially reproduced the acoustics of a canyon, an abyss, returning the sound as an echo. The Roland belongs to this last type, carrying in its interior an artificial canyon.

The properties of this canyon can be adjusted with all kinds of controls, which brought to mind the shallow abyss described by Polish poet Zbigniew Herbert—the one that follows him everywhere he goes, clingy like a dog, not deep enough to swallow a head, a body, legs or even feet. The one that has yet to mature, to grow up, to become serious.²

The echo effect was achieved by laying down a recorded sound on magnetic tape, which was then looped and read in succession by a series of juxtaposed tape heads. As the tape came back to the start of its loop, the sound was silenced by a final tape head that erased the recording.

The Roland RE-201 has no output as it is not connected to a loudspeaker—not that it would make any difference, because there is no input. We don't hear anything. All we can do is look at it, mesmerised, hypnotised, sleeping.

EMILIO PRINI

'Confirm participation in the exhibition.' A telegram sent to Kunstmuseum Luzern in 1970 as the artist's contribution to the exhibition *Visualisierte Denkprozesse* [Visualised Thought Processes], probably his first use of a statement that Emilio Prini used again and again, always in slightly different formulations and iterations. Like the one typed on A4 paper—a standard—using an Olivetti 22 typewriter, one used as the cover for a book with Germano Celant (a book that was never made). All versions backed—and evidently so—by Prini's presence in the world.

CONFERMA PARTECIPAZIONE ESPOSIZIONE That has changed since 2016. His death has put the work in a state of suspension, it has become a kind of testimony. *Omaggio a Emilio Prini* [Homage to Emilio Prini].

Wait a minute. The window's rattling. 'Se è possibile, non creo.' If possible, I create nothing. Previous works have been repeated in Prini's exhibitions, but never in the same way. These alterations were motivated by the new situation with which he found himself confronted. He introduced a certain limited number of ideas and works to the world that he constantly revisited, re-developed, re-framed or elaborated upon, keeping them in flux almost as if they were living material. At times he just revised a date, changed a title, or isolated a detail of an

image. He might photograph a work as a replacement for the real object, or make a copy (and throw away the original).³ Describing Prini's work in terms of material, technique and dimensions always requires a lot of question marks. Their main dimension is time.

NOTES

- 1 Laura van Grinsven, 'Release me from this thing', in: Alex Farrar, *the 'suits' archived, with an inventory for ten years of performativity* (Amsterdam: 7.45 Books, 2016).
- 2 See the poem 'The Abyss of Mr. Cogito' in: Zbigniew Herbert, *The Collected Poems: 1956–1998*, trans. and ed. Alissa Vallies (New York: HarperCollins, 2008).
- 3 In Rotterdam gerlach en koop display just the glass that in Bremen protected the actual stamp print on cardboard from the Archivio Emilio Prini in Turin, Italy.

Volume III, Part 1:
Beating Death With His Own Arm*

GERLACH EN KOOP
En om drie uur?
Dan slaap ik. (2024)

Sleep can neither be learnt nor mastered.
A force that cannot be forced. Sleep is something that is granted. All insomniacs can do is imitate a sleeper, adopting the posture of a body that sleeps. In fact a re-staging of the night before and the night before and the night before, hoping that at some point their imitation will match, that the faithfully copied sleeper will coincide with the original from last night... and that is when you fall.

In 2020 gerlach en koop displayed works by other artists in an exhibition at the edge of sleep at the GAK, Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst in Bremen, Germany. Over the course of this coming year a faltered re-staging of this unusual solo exhibition will unfold in the space of Rib. One work at a time. A full re-staging will follow, later on, in a somewhat larger space. Not all works exhibited in Bremen will be re-staged however, and the ones that are will be changed by the very act of re-staging. For this first one—*En om drie uur? Dan slaap ik.*—gerlach en koop decided to retrace their steps and invite an artist to discuss a work that had been present in their thinking about sleep from the beginning, a work that was absent in Bremen.

Untitled 2020/2022/2024 by TOMO SAVIĆ-GEKAN is one of three spatial interventions, functional walls initially built for an exhibition at MSU in Zagreb in 2020. This particular wall was reconstructed in Galženica Gallery, Velika Gorica in 2022, and will now be reconstructed once again in Rotterdam. The wall is straight and white and taller than wide. You can imagine this wall for art or thoughts about art. You stop in front of it, standing still. Other walls exist, sure enough, walls you walk along or past, thinking about the art you've just seen or are about to.

LISA IVORY (2024–2025)

For when the animal being supporting him dies, the human being himself ceases to be. In order for mankind to reveal itself ultimately to itself, it would have to die, but it would have to do it while living—watching itself ceasing to be. In other words, death itself would have to become (self-)consciousness at the very moment that it annihilates the conscious being.

—Georges Bataille, *Hegel, la mort et le sacrifice*, 1955

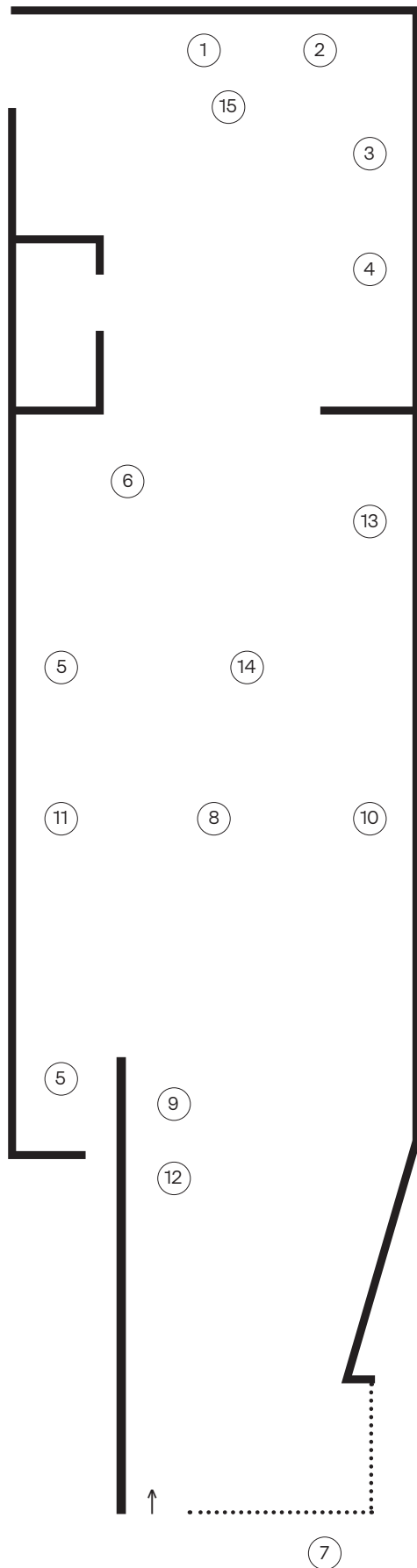
In a recent phone call, Ivory made it clear that the female figure in her paintings does not represent her. She rather identifies with the monster. The female figure in her paintings mostly interacts with a skeleton, a classical symbol of death, and a dark fluffy monster figure. In a painting titled *Upper Hand*, she is slapping death on his meatless buttocks with his own detached radius while the monster is watching from afar, and elsewhere death is returning her the same favour in a painting titled *Cross Bone Style*. Here we see death sitting cross-legged (boned) on a rock, slapping her on her buttocks, while the now tiny slightly shapeshifted monster is watching them passively from close by.

Roles and scales interchange as well as the framing of events. The same scene is sometimes painted twice. Revealing only in a later version an overview of the entire role distribution of all the reoccurring figures, including possible absentees. When paying close attention and reading for an extended period, the paintings seem to enter your soul and then your dreams.

The presentation of a larger collection of Ivory's paintings will be broken down into eight distinct chapters and shown as a developing story over the course of two years.

* Title of a painting by Lisa Ivory

Floorplan Rib



Works

Lisa Ivory

1 *Found and Lost*, 2023
Oil on panel, 13 × 18 cm

2 *Jack of All Trades*, 2023
Oil on panel, 13 × 18 cm

3 *Rough Justice*, 2023
Oil on panel, 13 × 18 cm

4 *Beating Death With His Own Arm*, 2023
Oil on panel, 13 × 18 cm

gerlach en koop

Om acht uur?

Dan word ik wakker.

2024–2025

Jacqueline Mesmaeker

5 *Introductions roses*,
1995–2020
Dyed cotton twill,
dimensions variable,
various positions,
courtesy: Galerie Nadja
Vilenne, Liège; Yves
Goossens Bara and
Hanna Gorjaczowska

Steve Van den Bosch

6 *Il know but when you ask
me I don't*, 2010
Spray glue, dimensions
variable

Ismail Bahri

7 *Saisir*, 2018–ongoing
HD-video, colour, mute,
31:45 min, loop

Annaïk Lou Pitteloud

8 *Perfect Europe (They)*,
04.06.2010, 20:32
Video, colour, sound,
1:48 min, loop

Mark Geffriaud

9 *Bit*, 2015
Brass spindle, engraved,
0.7 × 0.7 × 8 cm

Hendl H Mirra

10 *Sidewalk cover
(Chicago Version)*, 1998
Cotton, 152.4 × 1219 cm
(full length), courtesy:
Galerie Nordenhake,
Berlin/Stockholm/
Mexico City

Shimabuku

11 *Passing through the
Rubber Band*, 2000
Rubber bands, wood,
wall lettering, dimensions
variable, courtesy:
Air de Paris, Paris;
and Amanda Wilkinson,
London

Gabriel Kuri

12 *Spent*, 2012
Wood, silica,
phosphorus, ash,
courtesy: kurimanzutto,
CDMX/New York

Ian Kiaer

13 *Melnikov project,
lab b (silver)*, 2011
Silver foil, plastic,
50 × 140 × 220 cm,
courtesy: Alison
Jacques Gallery, London;
Marcelle Alix, Paris;
and Galerie Barbara
Wien, Berlin

14 *Melnikov, silver
sleep*, 2020

Silver sequins; metal,
dimensions variable,
courtesy: Alison
Jacques Gallery,
London; Marcelle Alix,
Paris; and Galerie
Barbara Wien, Berlin

15 Wooden pillow,
anonymous artisan,
Shaan Xi (China), circa
1930, private collection
of gerlach en koop



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