

The Serving Library Workshop by Benjamin Seror

April 18, 19, 10-6pm & April 20, 10-2pm

In response to an invitation to contribute to the Dexter Sinister Serving Library at Objectif Exhibitions, French artist Benjamin Seror has selected a corpus of novels and writings to add to the growing library collection. These books include characters and situations that are recurrent in his narrative work—where improvised storytelling is the key to investigating language's ability to allow different perceptions of reality to coexist. The structures of the selected narratives can be seen as a compilation of chronicles, thereby raising the question of how the structure of a story can repeat itself daily, or, more simply: how can we confront drama in the everyday? Drama here is defined as an occurrence that disturbs the regular flow of events. The two-and-half-day workshop will involve deep immersion into these narratives in an attempt to get close to the way they echo our experience of life, researching into a methodology by which we can recognize the mythical in our regular encounters and understand that their opposite is equally as true.

The workshop will involve going collectively through the selected books and investigating parallels between the characters, situations and structures used in their narratives. One of the workshop's central ideas is that Dante's *Inferno* describes a world—a real world—hidden behind the metaphor of hell. Through a comparative reading with Bertolt Brecht's *Journal*, a working diary mainly written in exile during World War II describing his struggle to work, and Richard Brautigan's *The Tokyo Montana Express* (amongst others), a reading of Dante's writing as a chronicle of everyday life will be attempted.

Benjamin Seror's work consists mainly of performances where speech is the principal subject and tool. He narrates long improvised stories inspired by a mix of phantoms of literature and art history and everyday adventures. The stories he tells often lead the audience far into the heart of the *Inferno* or to dancing all night long to the delicate sound of the *Perfect Kiss* by New Order. Also a musician, Seror plays different instruments, backing up his narratives with emotive songs that switch the modes of language, underlining the complexity of what it can do. Most recently, Seror performed at le Plateaux, Frac île de France, Bétonsalon, and Fondation Ricard in Paris, Mac-Val in Ivry sur Seine, and participated in group exhibitions including *Repetition Island* at Centre George Pompidou, Paris and *The Clifford Irving Show* at Objectif Exhibition, Antwerp, both curated by Raimundas Malasauskas, *Les interlocuteurs*, curated by Mathilde Villeneuve for Printemps de Septembre, École des beaux art, Toulouse, and the cycle *Concept aventure*, curated by Elfi Turpin and Solenn Morel, at la Box, Bourges.

The workshop will be conducted in English. Lunch will be provided.

Informed by the workshop's investigation, on April 20 at 7pm, Seror will give an improvised public performance at Objectif Exhibitions.