

**Claude Closky**  
**Dominique Mathieu**  
**Marianne Mispelaëre**  
**Hans-Walter Muller**  
**Gianni Pettena**  
**Matthieu Saladin**  
**les gens d'Uterpan**  
**Lois Weinberger**

**Occupations** | group exhibition | February 15 – April 27 avril, 2019

*A spatial action overcomes conflicts, at least momentarily, even though it does not resolve them;  
it opens a way from everyday concerns to collective joy.*  
Henri Lefebvre, *La production de l'espace*, 1974

*One could write an entire history of spaces, which would be a history of power - from the grand  
strategies of geopolitics to the small tactics of housing [...] It is surprising to see how long the  
problem of spaces has taken to appear as a historico-political issue.*  
Michel Foucault, *L'œil du pouvoir*, 1977

**Beyond the diversity of their approaches and subjects, the works of the eight artists exhibited at Salle Principale all share the same field of investigation – the political challenges of spatial constraint. Each of them, in its own way, appropriates, negotiates, infiltrates, occupies, liberates or comments on an urban, architectural, memorial, advertising, technological or scientific space via its public and private ramifications. As they do this, they are not content with highlighting the boundaries of the artistic field as opposed to that of real life; they resonate with broader concerns – and this is probably why *Occupations* does not operate within an abstract, timeless space but in a precise, current context, no doubt fuelled by a renewal of interest in the spatial implications of collective or personal politics. One might imagine this project to be impregnated by recent phenomena such as Notre-Dame-des-Landes, the Nuit Debout or the Gilets Jaunes movement currently occupying our boulevards, roundabouts and screens, not forgetting longer-term occupations of space such as the Zapatista movement in Chiapas (Mexico).**

**To paraphrase the books *La production de l'espace* and *Le droit à la ville* by the sociologist and philosopher Henri Lefebvre, which seem to form a particularly relevant background to this show, space is a political challenge insofar as it is the medium, the instrument and the object of struggles, conflicts, appropriations and contradictory or even antagonistic processes. As the capitalist mode of production produces a space of its own, a revolutionary strategy must imagine another mode of production for space, based on the collective re-appropriation of the city and the liberation of daily life.**

Emile Oumourov – February 2019

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