

THE WOR(L)D

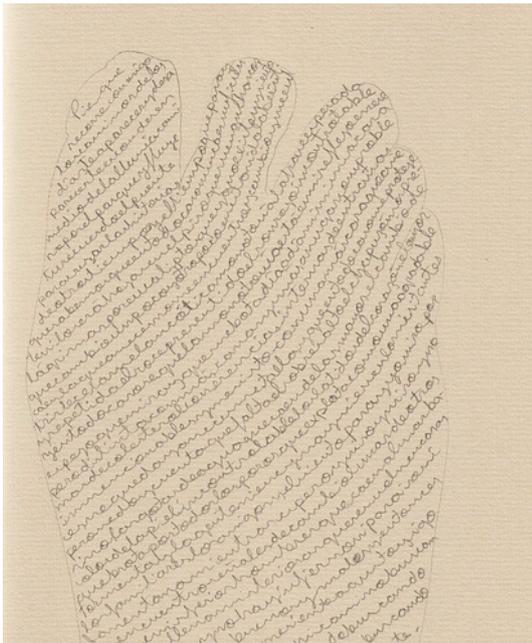
18 May – 19 June, 2015

In conjunction with the symposium *Getting There and Falling Short*, we are pleased to announce *The Wor(l)d* at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, Fabianinkatu 24 A. The exhibition includes work by **María Clara Cortés** and **Taina Riikonen**, and is curated by Juliette Kennedy and Merja Polvinen.

"The 'signifying function' of words in the sixteenth century, according to Foucault, depends not upon our acquaintance with them or with their use, 'but with the very language of things'. For its inhabitants,

"[t]here is no difference between marks and words in the sense that there is between observation and accepted authority, or between verifiable fact and tradition. The process is everywhere the same: that of the sign and its likeness, and this is why nature and the world can intertwine with one another to infinity, forming, for those who can read it, one vast single text."

In the seventeenth century, we are told, things are different. Language is believed to be arbitrary, its relationship to the world contingent on the details of its fallible design and conventional use. 'As a result,' Foucault urges, 'the entire episteme of Western culture found its fundamental arrangements modified. And, in particular, the empirical domain which sixteenth century man saw as a complex of kinships, resemblances, and affinities, and in which language and things were endlessly interwoven—this whole vast field was to take on a new configuration.' ---Curtis Franks, from his essay "Logical Completeness, Form and Content: An Archaeology", in *Interpreting Gödel*, Cambridge 2014. Inserted text Foucault, *Les Mots et les Choses*.



María Clara Cortés, from the series *Dificultades Barrocas*, 2006

With *The Wor(l)d* we think about the complex and difficult harmonisation of language and world, and how this harmonisation can rupture and fall into dissonance. We follow *dissociativity*, holding the slippage between sign and its likeness in view as these emerge and make themselves known to us--*in the mist*. Foucault's prelapsarianism, namely the idea that the natural and lawlike correspondence of the written word and the world of things was the fundamental *episteme* of the 16th century—until, as Foucault has it, "Don Quixote wanders off on his own"—sparks our setting out.

The image that functions as a conduit, that fundamental *episteme*, the idea of a "total system of correspondence", makes possible the very investigation of the world. "The world shows up for us"—the world is *right there*—and everything in it has a sign, is *labeled*.

With Foucault we look away from such lost harmonies. We want the *chasm*; the open sea that lies between word and world, and it's filling by newly configured narrative and rationalistic modes of coping.

María Clara Cortés is a Colombian artist known for her photographs, videos and mixed media works. She studied Art and Art History in Bogotá, Colombia, Painting in Wisconsin and Photography in Pittsburgh; as an Art Historian her research focusses on Conceptual and Political Art. Her current artistic work has as starting point the conversations between the ancient Greek painters Zeuxis and Parrhasius on representation. Currently she is an Associate Professor at Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

Taina Riikonen is Postdoctoral Fellow in the Arts at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, with a PhD in musicology from the University of Turku. She is a sound practitioner who moves in the liminal spaces between sound studies and arts. Her current projects meander around body sounds, radiophonies, artistic research, philosophers' voices, and performative writing.

