

# WHEN FLOWERS ARE KNEELING

## 24.3. – 22.4.2023

Jerlyn Heinzen

"When Flowers Are Kneeling" sheds light on the often neglected migrant communities in Switzerland, their history of immigration, the influence of colonial structures, as well as the weight of assimilation and social integration. It is a work that speaks of life journeys, between precariousness and possibility, personal determination and external influences, stigma and exoticism, between present time and memories; impressive encounters and multifaceted communities, but also the artist's own fragmented story.

During a research trip in the past months, Jerlyn Heinzen spent time taking notes, uncovering old-forgotten notebooks, documenting and rediscovering the sound of her own story in the Upper Valais, where she partly grew up as well as stories of Asian migrant communities in the US. She transformed these into two large-scale ceramic puzzles accompanied by respective soundscapes. These two puzzles scattered across the two rooms are part of a series of oversized ceramic puzzles that Jerlyn Heinzen started in 2022. They create a space that invites people to come together, to perform a common activity, to have an exchange and to assemble individual pieces into a larger whole.

With this collective yet very personal work, Jerlyn Heinzen highlights the heritage of Asian migrant communities, focusing on their life stories and collective and individual memories.

Sat, 1.4.2023, 12:00 - 17:00  
Puzzle with Jerlyn Heinzen

Sat, 8.4.2023, 12:00 - 17:00  
Puzzle with Jerlyn Heinzen

Sat, 15.4.2023  
Workshop and listening sessions  
19:00 Fhunyue Gao, Geneva  
20:00 Valentina Demicheli, Zürich

Sat, 22.4.2023, 12:00 - 17:00  
Puzzle with Jerlyn Heinzen

Jerlyn Heinzen was born 1989 in the Philippines. She studied at the Zurich University of Arts and Design (ZHdK) where she obtained her Bachelor in Art and Media with a specialization in photography. Jerlyn then continued her studies at the Haute École d'Art et de Design de Genève (HEAD) where she graduated in Master of Arts HES-SO in Fine Arts, major in WORK.MASTER - HEAD Contemporary Artistic Practices, in 2018. She is active in an artist collective DOMINGO and was co-curator of Zabriskie Point in Geneva. Jerlyn currently lives and works in Geneva, CH.

The wealth of practical knowledge that she obtained during her years of study, naturally comes to serve her interest in narrative processes and symbolism. Jerlyn incorporates many languages and vocabularies in her practice that are necessary for the weaving of worlds, which one often does not access by any means of the game. Not that it is strictly speaking for the spectator to be in a playful activity, but rather to set rules that go beyond the passive appreciation of the artist's works. The cosmologies that unfold are not infantilizing, and the take on all the accuracy or the finesse of a language, does not lie in its intentions, it reveals them with gentleness and patience. The ceramics she produces are sometimes marked with her words and unfold according to the order of prose on the floor that welcomes them. Often arranged horizontally, the profusion of these objects are the vehicles of Jerlyn's poetry, that advocates humility and meditation. In a similar vein, her photographs are the expression of a caring and discreet gaze. Glorifying those things that we only dare to say or whisper. All of her works finally seem to read like the same dreamed outside worlds, a hot summer night in which, you have to accept, to trust, that sometimes strange beings are populating her.

Dear S

Today I realized that I always sit against the direction of travel in a train, looking back. Funny how this inherent tendency to look back at memories, situations, things informs your present and can so easily refrain you from moving forward, from looking into the imminent future around the corner. Frozen. With a thick layer of dust and seemingly so far away. *Objects in mirror are closer than they appear.*

Love, K.

Dear E

Today I was thinking of migratory birds, how they have an inner compass that they follow in any weather, come hell or high water. They just know where to go. Consider the word migrant. Migratory. On the move. The notion has an inherently negative overtone. Unstable. Yet the concept of migration is intrinsic to life, to its circular nature. We are all originally migratory, we are not settlers. Maybe that's why I respond to Zygmund Baumann's notion of liquid modernity so personally. Liquid present, where everything is on the move, not stagnant, but moving from one place to another, adapting and learning anew. Not guided by customs, traditions, codes of conduct and rules to which one could conform, which one could select as orientation points or by which one could be guided. These traditions are in short supply these days anyway. There are only followers and forgetters.

Love, K.

Dear S

Today I dreamt of my first room. It's only a few hours away, yet we are years apart. I never felt at home there, but then, I don't really feel at home anywhere I go. Since I left that place, independent, yet divided and filled with aliens, I haven't really looked back. *"An alien's passport is a travel document that may be issued to a person who is stateless or of undefined citizenship"* Alienation can be like that, official and with a document.

Love, K.

Dear E

Today I learned a new word - solastalgia. Apparently, it's a form of emotional and existential distress caused by environmental change. When we have extracted all there is to extract in this place we call home, when all the houses have been flooded and all the forests have burned, where will our home be then?

Love, K.

Dear S

Today I heard someone speak my language and I was transported. Even if I don't know it well, even if we are not friends, even if we are not really related. Even if it's too hard to think of going back, you are still drawn to it. Because it seems easy. Because there's no need to explain. Because there are memories. No need for that overwhelming distance. And yet, you're a stranger.

Love, K.

1. *Hangry Eyes*, 2022

375 x 270 cm

ceramic tiles

2. *Hangry Eyes Playlist*, 2022

1:21 min

in collaboration with Valentina Demicheli

3. *When flowers are kneeling*, 2023

375 x 270 cm

ceramic tiles

4. *When flowers are kneeling Playlist*, 2023

1:07 min

in collaboration with Valentina Demicheli

