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EXHIBITION

# COLLECTION' 15

DECEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup> 2015 - FEBRUARY 14<sup>TH</sup> 2016

INSTITUT  
D'ART CONTEMPORAIN  
Villeurbanne/Rhône-Alpes

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**SAÂDANE AFIF, ULLA VON BRANDENBURG, JASON DODGE,  
ALEXANDER GUTKE, UNTEL**

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Since 2008, the Institut d'Art Contemporain has regularly presented a fresh look at its collection. Initiated thirty-three years ago, bringing together over 1 700 artworks, the mission of the IAC's collection is to circulate throughout the year throughout the Rhône-Alpes territory, as well as at the national and international levels. *Collection'15* provides a chance to (re)discover the recent acquisitions and consider them from a new perspective. Associating various generations of artists, the exhibition testifies to the IAC's support of French and international artistic creation. The link between creation and collection is essential to understanding the IAC's policy in developing its collection.

Artists were invited to produce new works that were subsequently presented before an acquisitions committee.

Since the merging of the Nouveau Musée and the FRAC Rhône-Alpes (1998), this original model with prospective intent has evolved by establishing, around the artwork\*, a sustained bond between exhibition and acceptance within the collection, without production becoming systematic.

This form of support, following the act of creation as closely as possible, was reactivated by Laurent Montaron in 2013 within the framework of the 1966 – 79 exhibition, from which a portion of the artworks presented today were derived. The works of Jason Dodge, Alexander Gutke, and Ulla van Brandeburg were united around the notion of reappropriation of gestures, procedures and techniques stemming “from a past so close that it becomes constitutive of the present”. Resonating with the atypical history of the Institute, the specificity of its art programming and the evolution of its collection, the *Collection 15* exhibition convokes the memory of the site.

The presentation of the works plays on various types of spaces and temporalities. It invites a reconsideration of the question of memory and archives, while bringing the notion of exhibition into perspective, as posited by the artists themselves. This is the case with the presentation of *La Boîte UNTEL* (1975-2013) and *Feedback (Blue time versus Suspense)* (2009 – 2013) by Saâdane Afif.

This original presentation of *La Boîte UNTEL* (1975-2013) by the eponymous group, which compiles documentation materials of actions undertaken by this ephemeral collective between 1975 and 1980, recalls the fundamental dimension of the constitution of a collection, while questioning its layout.

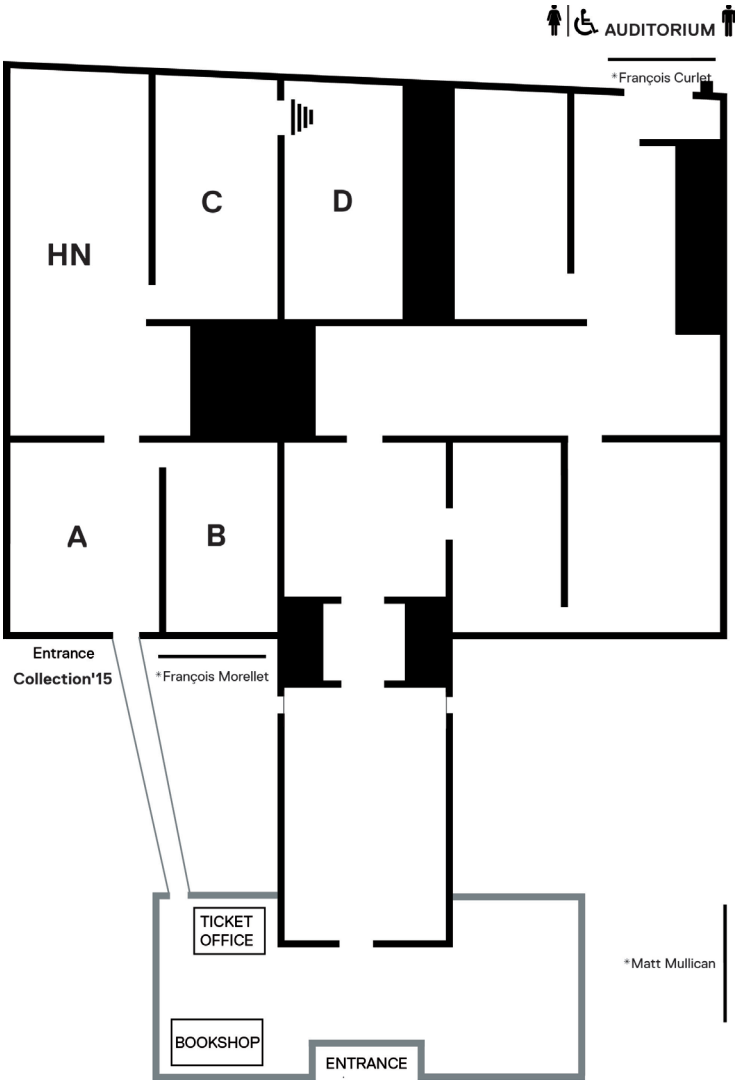
Through the various extensions of the work *Blue time versus suspense* in the form of songs, posters, neon lighting, or a «mise-en-abyme» via the display arrangements of these same works, Saâdane Afif plunges us into the vertiginous question of the status of artworks and their development and fate.

\* For a quarter of the artworks acquired over a given year.

For further information about the technical acquisitions committee

[http://i-ac.eu/fr/35\\_presentation](http://i-ac.eu/fr/35_presentation)

# Exhibition rooms



**ROOM A :** Jason Dodge

**ROOM D :** Saâdane Afif

**ROOM B :** Alexander Gutke

**NORTH HALL :** Ulla von Brandenburg

**ROOM C :** UNTEL

# room A

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## JASON DODGE

Born in 1969 in Newton (United States)

Lives and works in Berlin (Germany).

American artist Jason Dodge obtained his diploma from Yale University School of Art in New Haven in 1996. While travel and distance are notions that are very present in his work, it is above all the distance “between words and things” that gives meaning to his simple installations made out of everyday objects. The favoured source of inspiration for the artist’s work comes from reading and poetry in particular. In this way, each of the artworks devised by Jason Dodge is accompanied by a word, a phrase or a short text that opens up a horizon of meaning by producing distance between what is seen and what is said. It is in this interval between the object and its caption that Jason Dodge’s poetry operates.

It is the way in which poetry interferes with everyday life that interests the artist, since in his creative process “invention comes in relation to existing things or things that everyone does in their daily life.”

### ***Be the Moss-dim Yellow Light if Only by Electric. Electric Current surrounding the Room, 2010***

Two electrical wires, one red and one black, corresponding to the two phases (positive and negative) of alternating current, encircle a room, hung in parallel and at a certain height. Jason Dodge’s electrical installation refers to energy distribution networks that are rarely visible and yet permanently traverse our environment. The artist exhibits the basic elements of modern domestic interiors that usually remain

invisible. Hidden in walls or floors, these wires are nonetheless charged with an energy that the artist wishes to reinvest in his exhibition by exploring its poetic potential. He also personifies electricity through his choice of title for the work, in which he asks it to “[b]e the moss-dim yellow light”.

### **Two Doors, 2012**

A space outside of time, an in-between, providing the transition to the rest of the exhibition, *Two Doors* is one of Jason Dodge’s works based on some of the elements and objects that characterise a domestic space. By inserting *Two Doors*, two solid-wood doors and their frames into a passageway between two exhibition rooms, Jason Dodge focuses the attention on this element that alternatively separates or links up two distinct spaces.

It materialises the threshold to be crossed. But beyond the symbolic dimension of this object, above all, it explores the discrepancy between these two doors and their counterparts in daily life by omitting the addition of a doorknob and lock that would effectively allow them to be closed. This tiny discrepancy between the title *Two Doors* and the two swinging panels over a threshold that only vaguely resemble doors produces, through abstraction, all of the poetry of crossovers, limits and the unknown.

## room B

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### ALEXANDER GUTKE

Born in 1971 in Gothenburg (Sweden).  
Lives and works in Malmö, (Sweden).

Coming from a conceptual and minimalist background, Alexander Gutke works on the relationships between a given reality and the production process of his images. This is why he often uses apparatuses in his works that generate images, such as cameras and film projectors. The artist examines the technical operation of these devices, identifying and highlighting their components (cables, reels, light, rotational movement, etc.). Taking a self-reflexive approach, Alexander Gutke makes the medium both instrument and process, means and end. His films thus often tell the story of their own mode of operation. Through the implementation of projectors he focuses on our experience of time and space, reactivating and rendering concrete mechanisms visible, while producing a form of illusionism.

### *Cine-scope, 2008*

As is often the case in his work, Alexander Gutke adopts a principle of mise-en-abyme by focusing on the technical and mechanical processes of the medium he uses. Stripped of all images, *Cine-scope* emphasises the materiality of the film itself. Here, Gutke explores space, light and the infinite void. Like a journey into 16mm film (which here is digitized) marks, stains, and long black scratches appear in turn on this hypnotic white background, like a

landscape along a roadside with trees flashing before our eyes. With *Cine-scope*, the artist considers the film as three-dimensional space and refers to the works of experimental filmmakers from the early 20th century and to the pioneers of abstract art.

# north hall

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## ULLA VON BRANDENBURG

Born in 1974 in Karlsruhe (Germany).  
Lives and works in Paris.

Based on the exploration of the theatre as a construct, the works of Ulla von Brandenburg question the relationships between illusion and reality, audience and actors. The artist explores theatre's suggestive abilities and seeks to render the theatrical form of language autonomous. In this way, in her installations, the visitor is often led to cross thresholds that are materialised through curtains, to traverse mental landscapes arranged by the artist. As in the overture of an opera, these transitions mark the entrance into the imaginary. When she devises an exhibition, Ulla von Brandenburg considers the spaces as various "chapters" and uses a wide range of media, which she combines in hybrid forms, interlinking them to develop a "looped" form of language.

### ***Wagon Wheel, Bear Paw-Drunkard's Path-Flying Geese-Log Cabin-Monkey Wrench-Tumbling Blocks, 2009***

Inspired by the quilting tradition, this installation consists of seven large strips of coloured fabric hung like stage curtains. Their geometric designs evoke both medieval tapestries, flags (and more generally, the heraldic codes) and tarot cards. Originally, quilts, fabrics made by hand and assembled using the technique of patchwork, could be used as covers or decorative elements for domestic use. In the 19th century, black American slaves used them to flee oppression, elaborating a secret code consisting of a series of quilt motifs.\* The Underground Railroad was the name given to the secret

network that helped the slaves to flee the southern plantations by using this coded language, among others. Each motif had a meaning and the overall design gave the slaves indications to help them escape. Ulla von Brandenburg proposes a pathway here through the enlarged details of these motifs, evoking the historical fact through the lens of visual language and its codes.

\* A few examples of quilt motifs and their meanings:

*Wagon Wheel:* A wagon can transport you, so prepare provisions.

*Bear's paw:* Follow the bear's path, it will show the way through the mountain and help you find water.

*Drunkard's Path:* Take back routes to thwart slave hunters.

*Flying Geese:* Take the same direction as the geese migrating northwards.

*Log Cabin:* A black centre indicates a friendly home.

*Monkey Wrench:* You must prepare your tools and equipment for departure.

*Tumbling Blocks:* It is time to leave; a driver will wait for you. The number of blocks would indicate the number of days until departure.

### ***The Objects, 2009***

The film *The Objects* is a sequence shot in which the camera performs a long tracking shot, encountering objects on its way that become animated one by one, as though by magic: a rope is unravelled and rises up like a charmed snake, a fan folds itself, a compass starts to dance... The whole ensemble constitutes a cleverly orchestrated micro-choreography. A true theatre of objects, the camera literally "animates" these elements, which become effigies, thus liberating themselves from the status of accessories that the theatre or

fairground usually confers on them, gaining their autonomy over the representational space. Shot in black-and-white 16mm, this film is marked by an aesthetic similar to Man Ray and the Surrealists' modernist and experimental cinema.

## room C

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### UNTEL

**Jean-Paul Albinet, Philippe Cazal, Alain Snyers and Wilfrid Rouff (France)**

UNTEL is a group of artists originally comprising Jean-Paul Albinet, Philippe Cazal and Alain Snyers (Wilfrid Rouff took the place of Alain Snyers following his departure in 1978) whose brief but passionate existence, from 1975 to 1980, organised numerous actions within public space.

The common denominator of these actions is the investigation of everyday life, a social and political investigation, to critical ends, heavily permeated by the anti-establishment ideas of May '68 and by Situationist thought.

This spirit manifested itself in particular in one work, *L'Environnement de type Grand magasin*, created for the Biennale de Paris in 1977. Visitors wander between the aisles of what, at first glance, effectively resembles a supermarket. However, they soon discover that there is nothing for sale and that the packaged goods on display refer more to the consumer's own psychological conditioning.

The group conducts a critical analysis of society and its contradictions and continually implements all means at its disposal, by adopting materials that exist in daily life and producing interventions within urban space. The artists' concerns and questions, inserted within social reality, are expressed and visualised through the selection and treatment of various media (posters, photographs, images, objects, notes,

sounds, etc.).

space using display cases, shelves, video screens and newspapers presented on the walls like wallpaper.

### ***La boîte UNTEL, 1975-2013***

[The UNTEL box], 1975-2013

Forming a coherent set, *La boîte UNTEL* compiles several samples of actions undertaken in the second half of the 1970s by the group. Carefully presented in the box are index cards, historical and critical articles, tracts, letters, the famous stamp “PLUS RIEN A VENDRE TOUT À ECHANGER” [“Nothing left to sell, everything to exchange”], or the ironic “tourist” badge, one of their fetish accessories.

There is also the soundtrack to *L'Environnement Vie Quotidienne*, presented for the first time in 1977 at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris and now deployed in the rooms of the contemporary collection of the Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain de Strasbourg, as well as several videos testifying to a selection of their most striking interventions in urban environments, such as the 1975 performance *The Luncheon on the Grass* (the reconstruction at the Grand Palais of Manet's Luncheon on the Grass during the Salon des Artistes Français).

Besides a stamp, an ink well, and a badge, 396 index cards are conserved in *La boîte UNTEL*; they are from the *UNTEL ARCHIVES 1975-1980* catalogue and present photographic documentation in the form of a succession of chapters, for each of the interventions performed in the course of the group's existence. These 396 cards, unbound, accompanied by a sheet of instructions, enable an UNTEL retrospective to be easily arranged, in the manner of an exhibition kit.

For the *Collection'15* exhibition, we opted to present all of the contents of the UNTEL box, arranged within the



## room D

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### SAÂDANE AFIF

Born in 1970 in Vendôme. (France)  
Lives and works in Paris and Berlin  
(Germany).

Since the 1990s, Saâdane Afif has developed a body of work that can be understood from two angles. On the one hand, he establishes many projects that refer to the world of pop music, and on the other, he creates works full of melancholy, echoing traditional vanitas, notably using the image of the skull. In 2004, during the *Melancholic Beat* exhibition in Essen, Saâdane Afif presented *Blue Time (Sunburst)* – a hybrid object, part guitar and part clock. A melancholic metronome, its pounding tick-tock hits home the measure of time passing, throughout the exhibition. On this occasion, and for the first time, he asked the artist Lili Reynaud-Dewar for song lyrics in relation to each of the four artworks presented: *Brume, Everyday, Black Spirit* and *Blue Time*.

These texts are shown on the wall beside the artworks to which they refer, without any distinction in status.

Since then, the artist has regularly commissioned song lyrics in connection with his works. These commissions fulfil very precise rules. As both emanations and extensions of the meanings of a given artwork, these texts have become the very materials of the artist's work.

By playing with the infinite possibilities of interpretation, Saâdane Afif attempts to provide a form for this part of the work that **only exists through** the other's gaze<sup>1</sup>.

1. Marcel Duchamp: "It is the viewer that creates the painting."

From one exhibition to the next, he orchestrates the metamorphoses of these texts, which successively become songs, albums, concerts, performances or radio shows. These are all experiences that borrow from the world of music and performance but that remain above all conceptual propositions undertaken in the visual art field.

In 2013, Saâdane Afif presented a major solo exhibition at the Institut d'Art Contemporain, Villeurbanne/ Rhône-Alpes: *Blue Time, Blue Time, Blue Time...*

***Feedback (Blue Time versus Suspense), 2009-2013***

***Feedback : Blue Time vs. Suspense (L'Entrée), 2013***

The work *L'Entrée* was devised for the exhibition *Blue Time, Blue Time, Blue Time...*

In a sliding door, the title *Feedback, Blue Time vs. Suspense* was cut out, as though prefiguring the artworks presented in the same exhibition space: a light installation comprising neon lights and two miniature theatres or teatrini enhanced by a sound system playing the performances of the texts of the *Blue Time, Suspense and Blue Time versus Suspense songs*.

***Feedback : Blue Time vs. Suspense (Stereo), 2013***

***Feedback : Blue Time vs. Suspense (Néons), 2009***

***Feedback : Blue Time vs. Suspense (Pop), 2004-2013***

It was for the exhibition *Feedback (Blue Time vs. Suspense)*, presented in 2009 in Spain that Saâdane Afif, based on the album *Blue Time Versus Suspense* composed by Vale Poher, imagined a possible extension in the form of a concert.

To this end, he designed a small-scale set containing various stage objects

presented in two teatrini.

*Blue Time, Versus and Suspense* are the names of three light sculptures hung from the ceiling of the room. Each of them consists of a jumbled variation of the letters that compose his name, in neon lights.

In the same room, the two miniature theatres present stage sets comprising small-scale models of works by Saâdane Afif.

One by one, three songs from Vale Poher's album *Blue Time versus Suspense* (2007) are broadcast in stereo from speakers installed inside the teatrini.

Depending on the song playing (*Blue Time or Suspense*) the eponymous neons light up in the room. When the song *Blue Time versus Suspense* is played, the three neons light up simultaneously.



# BLUE TIME

OH I'VE BEEN WAITIN' FOR DAYS  
IT FEELS COOL IN THIS HAZE  
WEEKS, YEARS, IT SEEMS A CENTURY  
BUT THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY  
COS WAITIN' HAS TO BE MY DUTY  
NO I'M NOT SCARED OF INFINITY  
INFINITY'S THE HEAVY DUTY  
OF A SONGWRITER LIKE ME

I'VE BEEN WAITIN' FOR THE PRODUCERS  
FOR THE PRS, FOR THE DESIGNERS  
FOR ANY KINDA SUCCESS MAKER  
I'VE BEEN WRITIN' SONGS, MUSICALS, OPERAS,  
I PLAYED HONKY TONK, BLUES, BLUEGRASS,  
FREEJAZZ, FUNK, ROCK'N ROLL, SALSAS  
TWISTS AND EVEN MODERN CHACHAS  
I'VE BEEN WAITIN' FOR RECOGNITION  
SO FAR NO ONE HAD THE INTUITION  
THAT ALL MY SONGS WERE TO BE BIG  
I LEFT HOME WHEN I WAS A KID  
TO ACCOMPLISH MY DESTINY  
I'VE BEEN ON THE ROAD INDEFINITELY  
WEEKS, YEARS, IT SEEMS A CENTURY  
I PLAYED IN BARS, HOTELS, PARTIES,  
SO MANY BIRTHDAYS, FUNERALS, WEDDINGS  
SO MANY UNPLUGGED, SO MANY GIGS,  
SO MANY WOMEN WITH NO NAME  
NONE OF THE NIGHTS HAVE BEEN THE SAME

OH I'VE BEEN WAITIN' FOR DAYS  
IT FEELS COOL IN THIS HAZE  
WEEKS, YEARS, IT SEEMS A CENTURY  
BUT THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY  
COS WAITIN' HAS TO BE MY DUTY  
NO I'M NOT SCARED OF INFINITY  
INFINITY'S THE HEAVY DUTY  
OF A SONGWRITER LIKE ME



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## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

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### COLLECTION' 15

SAÂDANE AFIF, ULLA VON BRANDENBURG, JASON DODGE,  
ALEXANDER GUTKE, UNTEL

Exhibition from December 11<sup>th</sup> 2015 to February 14<sup>th</sup> 2016

### OPENINGS HOURS

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From Wednesday to Friday from 2 pm to 6 pm  
Weekends from 1 pm to 7 pm

Free guided visits

On Saturday and Sunday at 4 pm and on weekdays by appointment

### ACCESS

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Bus C3 (stop: Institut d'Art Contemporain)

Bus C9 (stop: Ferrandière)

Bus C16 (stop: Alsace)

Metro line A (stop: République)

Vélo'v station 1 minute away on foot

The Institut d'Art Contemporain is located

5 minutes from the Lyon Part-Dieu neighbourhood

### PRICES

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• full price: 6 € • concession price: 4 € • free -18 year-olds

### BOOKSHOP

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specialising in contemporary art,  
accessible during the opening hours of exhibitions

### UPCOMINGS EVENTS

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Sunday 10 January at 3:30 pm: Family Sunday: family visit followed by a nice afternoon snack!

On Friday 15 January and Friday 5 February at 12:30 pm and 1 pm: On the Go Visit: Quick visit and lunch on site.

L'institut d'art contemporain is assisted by the Ministère de la culture et de la communication (DRAC Rhône-Alpes), the Conseil régional Rhône-Alpes and the Ville de Villeurbanne.

# INSTITUT D'ART CONTEMPORAIN

## Villeurbanne/Rhône-Alpes

11 rue docteur Dolard  
69100 Villeurbanne  
France

tél. +33 (0)4 78 03 47 00  
fax +33 (0)4 78 03 47 09  
[www.i-ac.eu](http://www.i-ac.eu)