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Helina Lorenz, Everybody talks about the weather... We don't, 2017 Installation view, Participant Inc, New York City. Includes microphones, theater spots, rotating stage. Photo: Mark Waldhauser

# Everybody talks about the weather... We Don't

Noam Segal on Renate Lorenz and Pauline Boudry

"Everybody talks about the weather... We Don't" is Pauline Boudry and Renate Lorenz's first exhibition in the US, and is currently traveling to the Contemporary Art Museum of Houston after recently closing at Participant Inc. in New York City. Comprised of sculptures and a new moving image work, *Telepathic Improvisation*, the show's central motifs include the appropriation of political events, including the title of the show, taken from Red Army Faction member Ulrike Meinhof, and the re-reading of queer history.

In *Telepathic Improvisation*, Boudry and Lorenz take cues from American composer Pauline Oliveros (1932-2016), a pioneer of post-war experimental electronic music. Notable for her exploration of new ways of focusing on sounds, Oliveros articulated the concept of Deep Listening, an aesthetic exercise based on improvisation, electronic music, and meditation, meant to foster listening to environmental conditions. Boudry and Lorenz take up the practice to create new relationships between humans, voices and various agencies in the piece. Although their performance doesn't use only instruments as in Oliveros' original proposal, they produce sound by the use of various makeshift objects. As a result, relations are created not only through subjects or the participating group members but by lights, objects, colors, gestures and mostly, sounds.

Viewing the film, which was created as part of a residency at Rensselaer's Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (EMPAC), one first encounters several light projectors staged on microphone stands, an electric guitar, a small white square platform on the floor, and a projection hovering above the black floor with a passing resemblance to the moon. As the projection drifts to the wall, its size alters, while next to it a projected patch of color changes from red, to blue, orange, green, and purple. The performers, Marwa Arsanios,

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Werner Hirsch, MPA, and Ginger Brooks Takahashi, all dressed in red and white work attire, attempt to telepathically interact with the objects and the unseen audience according to Oliveros' score, as her aim was to erase subject-object or performer- spectator relations, by carving out archaic forms of communication. Arsanios asks the audience to look carefully at the performers, close their eyes and imagine their next movements and actions. She then prompts them to telepathically deliver their desired actions to the performers, or “send an action by seeing or hearing it mentally.”

The performers leave the room while objects takes center stage. The lights change while the white platform moves on the ground, creating its own distinct sound. Other lights flicker to create a rusty-sounding noise and a smoke machine travels throughout the stage, padding the environment with smoke and hisses. The performers drift on and off stage. Other non-human actors appear in the form of purple lights and floating handcuffs, which are also hung at Participant Inc. White platforms in the shapes of a square, a circle, hexagon and rectangle shift around the stage in an obscure accordance with the performers who perform multiple gestures and movements in relation to the objects. Their joint actions create a singular sound of their encounter, in a sculptural (non) human (sound) installation.

Abstract as they may be, a connection is suggested between the entities; the guitar effects the light, the lights cause sounds, gesture affects movement, the instruments positioned on center stages orchestrate a number of things simultaneously, affecting their “behavior.” Alternative apparatuses and shifting power structures are revealed by emphasizing the unique set of traits and facets each participant, human or not, bring to this abstract dynamic chorus. In the exhibition space, the audience has been positioned on white square objects, which formulates the viewers as potential activists, in light of the last part of the work. In the last part of the piece, MPA faces the audience and recites a political text written in 1968 by Ulrike Meinhof, prior to the establishment of RAF in 1970. “Protest is when I say I don’t like this. Resistance is when I put an

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end to what I don't like. Protest is when I say I refuse to go along with this any more. Resistance is when I make sure everybody else stops going along too.”

*Noam Segal is an independent curator and writer based in NYC. Her recent curated project Inter-Passivities was made with artist Jesper Just for the Royal Danish Ballet.*

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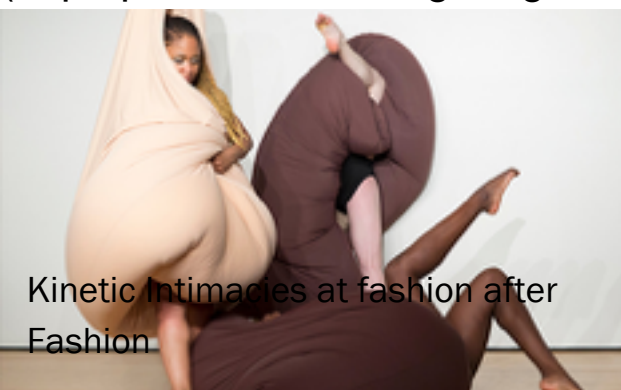
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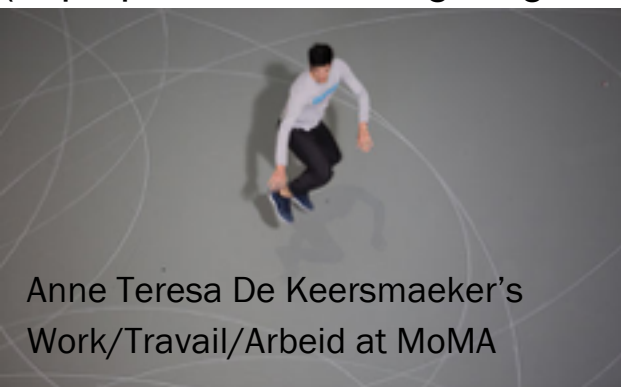
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