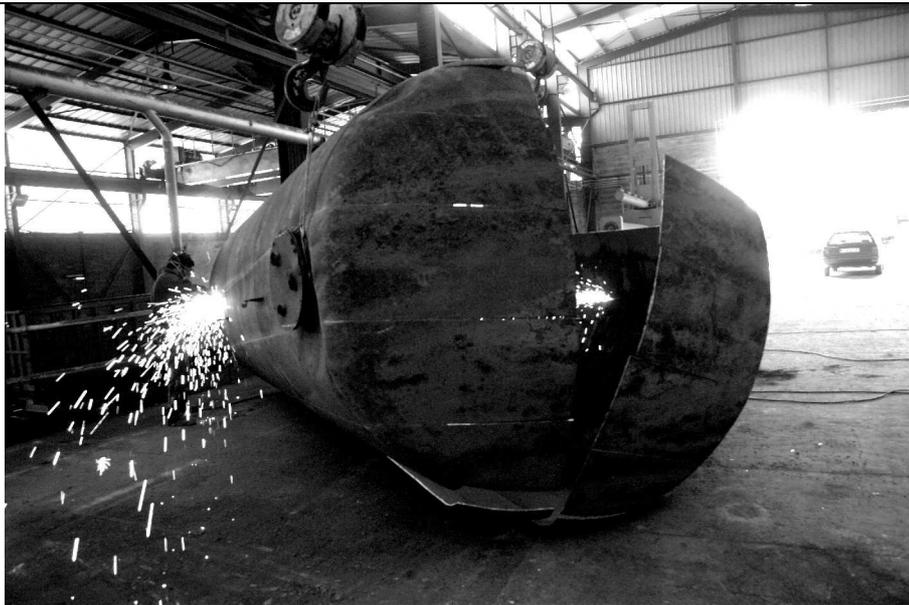


PRESENZA ACTIVA. Acción, obxecto e público

PRESENCIA ACTIVA. Acción, objeto y público
ACTIVE PRESENCE: Action, Object and Audience

Maja Bajević
John Bock
Gary Hill
Thom Kubli
Mads Lynnerup
Alastair MacLennan
Sergio Prego
La Ribot
Carlos Rodríguez-Méndez
SUE-C+AGF



Carlos Rodríguez-Méndez. Production of the work *Residuo Boca*, 2012

DATES

February 9th – September 2nd, 2012

VENUE

Ground floor exhibition rooms

VISITING HOURS

Tuesdays to Saturdays (including bank holidays) from 11am to 2.30pm and from 5pm to 9pm
Sundays, from 11am to 2.30pm

PRODUCED BY

MARCO, Museo de Arte Contemporánea de Vigo/
LABoral, Centro de Arte y Creación Industrial, Gijón

With the support of:
Backstage/Esmerarte Servicios Artísticos

CURATED BY

Sergio Edelsztein & Kathleen Forde

PRESENTATION

Both performance art and installation art are based on the principle of presence – of *ACTIVE PRESENCE*. This exhibition focuses on the myriad of relationships between these two branches of contemporary art. Its aim is the conflation of performance and installation into a diverse landscape of dynamic installations activated by the artists and/or the audience within the museum's gallery walls.

OPENING EVENTS

Thursday 9th, Friday 10th and Saturday 11th of February

The opening at MARCO will be held throughout three consecutive days, on which the performances will be activated by the artists and/or the audience

[Opening events download](#)

EXHIBITED WORKS

The exhibition brings together ten installations – most of which are new productions specifically created for this show – presented throughout the spaces of MARCO ground floor.

SUMMARY OF THE EXHIBITION PROJECT

Everything about installation art's structure and modus operandi repeatedly valorized the viewer's first-hand presence – an insistence that ultimately reinstates the subject (as an unified entity), no matter how fragmented or dispersed our encounter with the art turns out to be. Perhaps more precisely, installation art instates the subject as a crucial component of the work – unlike body art, painting, film and so on, which (arguably) do not insist upon our physical presence in a space.

This paragraph embodies the main conclusion to which Claire Bishop arrives in her book *Installation Art: A Critical History* (2005). In this study, Bishop develops the reading of installation art since its beginnings in the 1930's to this day based on the role the presence of the spectator takes – either physically or psychologically – within the work.

We can exchange, in this quote the word *spectator* for *artist*, and we can introduce *performance* instead of *installation* and thus, Bishop's definition is equally relevant for Performance Art. Only the subject in this case would be the artist.

Until now, most of performance study was undertaken starting from its narrative development, while installation art research – as we see in Bishop's book – was centered in the role of the spectator and the different ways he or she is *activated* by the art work.

This methodological disparity accounts for the fact that these two branches of contemporary art can be seen as a mirror image of each other. In fact, both are based in the principle of presence – of *Active Presence*. In performance art, it is the presence of the artist that is tantamount – in installation, the spectator. When reflected onto one another installation and performance art develop in divergent directions that are opposed but also superimposed, thus creating an axis between two poles. Along this axis are infinite possibilities of interaction. Performance becomes *transitive*.

'ACTIVE PRESENCE: Action, Object and Audience' is comprised of works – most of which are new productions specifically created for this show – that gain significance at this juncture. Its aim is the conflation of performance and installation into a diverse landscape of dynamic installations activated by the artists and/or the audience within the museum's gallery walls. There are works in which the audience take a more passive role, while the artists are the activators. Conversely, there are also installations whose existence depends upon the participation of the public. There is work that also functions in both domains. In all is found a unique territory betwixt and between genres where conceptually layered relationships uncommon to the experience of pure performance or installation reside.

ARTISTS AND WORKS

Maja Bajević

Slogans Remix

The world is ruled by slogans and catchphrases that conceal more than they outwardly convey. Since they often reference specific historical events or particularly obscure periods, and are sometimes even freely shared amongst opposing political parties, their messages are complex and leave little room for anything else in the political, economic and social spheres.

Along with the band Basheskia & Edward EQ, Bajević has set music to a hundred or so slogans which form the basis of her performance at the MARCO. These slogans will later be “activated” at different locations around Vigo for the duration of the exhibition thanks to the collaboration of a group of amateur singers. The political slogans of the past (many of which are now fortunately outdated) are thus reinserted into an everyday context and given back a cultural dimension, thereby triggering a much-needed dialogue between the political and the social.

Bajević’s work addresses significant issues in recent history: collective identity, tragedy and fate, the construction and deconstruction of History, ideology and sociology. She creates catalysing narratives that refer to notions of memory and identity, reflect upon the past and present of local social and political events of international importance, and allude to a collective destiny and fragments of a shattered history.

Maja Bajević (Sarajevo, Bosnia Herzegovina, 1967) lives and works in Paris, Berlin and Sarajevo, and has participated in some of the most important exhibitions of the last two decades. Last year, at the Palacio de Cristal (Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid), she presented *Continuará*, her first exhibition in Spain, following other individual projects in venues such as the Kunsthauus Glarus, Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa in Venice, Moderna Museet in Stockholm, and PS1 in New York. Her work has been showcased at documenta 12 in Kassel and at the biennials of Moscow, Sharjah, Seville, Istanbul and Venice.

John Bock

Vas-y!

John Bock’s work combines the theatre of the absurd with other unlikely settings and installations. His stage sets and “verbose” actions always spring from cultural, neo-scientific, Surrealistic, grotesque and often violent sources.

In *Vas-y!*, a piece originally presented at the Lyon Biennale in 2005, Bock creates a “dwelling” in a barrel that looks like a cross between a spaceship and a rodent wheel. It rotates by someone walking on the wheel inside of it making it impossible for those inside to remain still. In this piece, as in others of his creation, Bock alludes to an absurd existence within an irreconcilable quandary between setting, its function, and human aptitude.

PRESS RELEASE



John Bock (Schenefeld, Germany, 1965) has taken part in many international exhibitions including the Venice Biennale and the documenta 11 in Kassel. He has also had individual exhibitions in international venues such as the MoMA and the New Museum of New York, the Kunst-Werke Institute for Contemporary Art in Berlin, the Kunsthalle of Basel, the Secession de Vienna and the ICA in London.

Gary Hill

Writing Corpora

Faithful to his interest in language and its shades of meaning and double entendres, Gary Hill plays with commonly known idiomatic expressions involving parts of the human body used to illustrate an accepted set of related concepts. He appropriates these phrases or expressions and represents them in their most literal sense, thereby revealing their incongruous or absurd nature. The allusions to the body thereby lose their reference to anatomic functionality and become part of a metaphoric and associative linguistic structure.

Writing Corpora is about translation. The expressions are translated from English to Spanish and vice versa, and from the spoken language to the physical language. In addition, through technology the artist's body is "translated" into a virtual existence in which the artist himself is given form. However the translations are quickly found to be impossible and start a chain of distortion and paucity of which the viewer is also a part, since he or she interacts with the artist's virtual presence and the "materialised" phrases.

Gary Hill (Santa Monica, USA, 1951) has featured in museums and institutions all over the world. He has had individual exhibitions at the Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain in Paris, the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Guggenheim Museum Soho in New York, Museum für Gegenwartskunst of Basel, MACBA Museu d'Art Contemporani in Barcelona and Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, among others.

Thom Kubli

Record Attempt

This installation and performance platform presents a live stage for and an archive of attempts by participants trying to beat the record for the "Longest Guitar Solo Ever Played". At the time of the opening of the exhibition the record is 6 hours and 18 seconds.

The piece will kick off with an attempt by the artist. Thereafter the competition is open to the public to respond to the challenge throughout the duration of the museum exhibition, by appointment. All performances are supervised by a notary and will be streamed online. During the actions, the audience is physically separated from the activities that take place within a closed sound booth that provides a peep window for viewing. When the booth is empty it functions as a silent witness of the preceding attempts. In both cases the installation space is referring to the aesthetic potential of a live performance event introducing the idea of spectacle and competition as ambiguous musical parameters.

PRESS RELEASE

Additionally, the room is layered by a silent video documenting the first record attempt by Kubli synched with an audible confession-like text by the artist revealing candid motives that finally led to perform "The Longest Guitar Solo Ever Played". As the search for biographical initiatives proceeds, a particular mental and social image unwinds.

Thom Kubli (Frankfurt, Germany, 1969) works in the field of sound installations. He studied guitar and composition, and in 1998 set up BMB-Lab. In 1999 he moved to Koln to study at the Kunsthochschule für Medien. His work has been shown in exhibition spaces and festivals such as the ICA in London, Akademie der Künste in Berlin, Ars Electronica in Linz, Prague Contemporary Art Centre, the Transmediale in Berlin, Podewil in Berlin, Deutsches Museum in Munich, and the EMPAC in Troy, New York.

Mads Lynnerup

Plastic Gymnastic

As an artist who recently started exercising in earnest, Lynnerup became fascinated with how generic gym equipment looks and operates as objects in fitness centers. This everyday life observation was a natural hook for the artist's ongoing investigation that attempts to break open the static nature of art objects displayed in galleries and museums.

The installation *Plastic Gymnastic* is a result of his exploration of making objects that can be used to get a full workout while transforming an exhibition by having the viewer literally work out in the exhibition space.

Likewise this work engages Lynnerup's fascination with the similarities of seemingly disparate worlds. In this case he highlights the antithetical landscapes of contemporary art and that of fitness. In the words of the artist "I think the two worlds have a lot in common: They are both obsessive and become fanatic in their own way (as in one thinks only about working out or making art etc.) and I like the idea that as an artist in my studio I am working out something." In this case this is quite true not only conceptually but physically.

Lynnerup's work wryly engages and analyzes built environments and the widely accepted social behaviour inherent in them in order to get at larger issues of alienation and perversity. Calling attention to the peculiarities of contemporary existence, Mads' work looks to specific objects and the potential they have to both adhere to and subvert these peculiarities.

Mads Lynnerup (Copenhaguen, Denmark, 1976) lives and works in New York City and Copenhagen. He received his MFA from Columbia University, and has shown his work internationally at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, The Mori Art Museum (Tokyo, Japan), PS1, and the Zacheta National Gallery of Art (Warsaw, Poland).

PRESS RELEASE



Alastair MacLennan

Lain Nail

Alastair MacLennan is a pioneer of the experimental genre of action art. In his work ordinary and familiar situations are filtered through an artistic context that provides him with a site for action.

The elements MacLennan employs in his installation are heavily charged with emotion and his actions draw on allegory, paradox, metaphor and contradiction. The installation is enacted during the opening days of the exhibition with a durational performance in which the artist, in a previously constructed setting, realizes only the slightest of actions that reveal his presence. *Lain Nail* alludes to the former use of the building that today houses the MARCO museum as a prison, while at the same time evokes future possibilities of creativity and cohabitation.

Alastair MacLennan (Blair Athol, Scotland, 1943) lives in Belfast, Northern Ireland. In the 70s and 80s he executed some very long performances in the UK, USA and Canada, one of which lasted up to 144 hours without a break for either food or rest. Since 1989 he has been a member of Black Market International, a prestigious organism dedicated to performance art across the world. In 1997 he represented Northern Ireland at the Venice Biennale.

Sergio Prego

Sin título

Sergio Prego's installation consists of a division of the architecture of the gallery space into different levels by means of traversable, transparent and translucent tunnels. These rubber tubes divide the space into six sections, the symmetry of which suggests a mirror that is more conceptual than optical in nature. A spatial relationship is thus established between horizontal and vertical activity in which each axis has a correlative or a double.

The action consists of moving through the rubber tunnels and of its documentation on video, for which several cameras advance at the same speed and angle. The work, as a whole, invites viewers to pursue a narrative line by means of a spatial movement executed beyond the more immediate limits of space and time.

Sergio Prego (San Sebastián, 1969) studied Fine Art in Bilbao before completing his formation in Arteleku, San Sebastián. Since 1996 he has lived and worked in New York. Among the international exhibitions of his work is the recent installation *Ikurrina Quarter*, created specially for Art Unlimited en Art 41 Basel. Other venues that have shown his work are the Palazzo delle Papesse Contemporary Art Centre of Siena, The Museum of Contemporary Art in Denver, PS1 MoMA in New York, and the Guggenheim of Bilbao.

PRESS RELEASE

La Ribot

Laughing Hole

La Ribot's work blurs the traditional limits of contemporary dance and installation and performance art. In *Laughing Hole*, the duration of the action (6 hours), the site, the randomness of the movements and the improvisation of sound, combine to produce a piece that is more akin to durational performance art than to spectacle.

The treatment of the pieces of cardboard and the texts and their random occupation of the space create an existentialist narrative. The phrases allude to extreme situations of repression and incarceration, while the participants' laughter, which provides the installation's soundtrack, highlights man's inalienable right to insubordination and personal freedom.

La Ribot (María Ribot; Madrid, 1962) is a choreographer, performer, and visual artist of international renown. Her works have been represented in art museums and galleries and theatres alike, including the Tate Modern in London, the MNCARS in Madrid, the Centre Pompidou and the Théâtre de la Ville de Paris. In the early 1990s her work took a different and highly personal direction that can be best appreciated in *Piezas Distinguidas*: short solo pieces that explore the limits between performance, dance and the visual arts. Lasting between 30 seconds and 7 minutes in the case of the shorter ones, and some six hours, as in the case of *Laughing Hole* on view in the MARCO, these solos gained her notoriety in the world of performance art and the visual arts. La Ribot's work is structured according to a system that enables her to research, expand upon and question the space-time boundaries of dance and leave behind the frontiers between public and artist.

Carlos Rodríguez-Méndez

Residuo Boca

Carlos Rodríguez-Méndez's work connects MARCO with the public sphere through a series of actions executed in different places. These actions explore the semantics of sculpture using such notions as introduction and decomposition, receptacle and deposit, residue and transformation.

These concepts are made manifest in "heroic" actions – like the dismantling of an enormous vat for liquids, its introduction into the museum's "sancta sanctorum" and the search for the lower angle of the panopticon through these sculptures (*Residuo Boca*). Likewise a visitor who will be invited by the MARCO to take his breakfast each morning in a cafeteria of Vigo for the length of the exhibition (*Hombre en Mañana*) – and other more minor actions, such as (*Insecto Alto Cavidad*), in which the artist chews food in the presence of another, taller, man before dropping it onto an insect whose carcass has been removed; or (*Congelar Aceite*), which takes place simultaneously in the LABoral in Gijón: an industrial deposit in which vegetal oil is frozen also investigate the power of action. These activities and the traces they leave create a continuum in the time of the duration of the exhibition and in the space of the city, museum and various receptacles, both inanimate and human.

PRESS RELEASE



Rodríguez-Méndez employs primary materials, forms and languages to build his sculptures, installations and interventions. From conception to installation in the exhibition space, the work process has a determining role in his oeuvre. In his actions and in the processes of constructing and installing a piece, the artist behaves like his sculptures, appropriating the space – its history, meaning, reason for being, relationship with man and environment – in such a way that the artist's body acquires in the public space the appearance and bearing of a sculpture.

His interest in sculpture, action and the word, the analysis of these languages, and the manner of absorbing himself in their semantics through projects and interventions, installations and sculpture, leads him to create works that surpass the space for which they are intended. The cylinder, conducts, peat and the oil, the sound and the body – all are interpreted as inapprehensible forms and materials; basic geometries that question and alter the construction process, address the constriction of space, the decision regarding the visibility and conclusion of a work, temporality and error.

Carlos Rodríguez-Méndez (As Neves, Pontevedra, 1968) lives in Madrid. A graduate of the UCM in Madrid, his work has been exhibited at the CA2M in Móstoles, S.M.A.K. and Vooruit Arts Centre in Ghent, CGAC in Santiago de Compostela, IVAM, La Casa Encendida in Madrid. Individual exhibitions have been held in the S.M.A.K. in Ghent, Matadero Madrid, Instituto Cervantes in Madrid, MARCO de Vigo, and the Yaddo Foundation in New York.

SUE-C + AGF

Infinite Jest

Infinite Jest lives both as an installation and as a live handmade film inspired by the complex and remarkable novel of the same name by the late author David Foster Wallace. When the piece lives as an installation, the audience experiences the space as an environment comprised of projected videos, a text based soundtrack, a gaming console and mini tennis court intended for the audience to walk through and play with. During the performance, the film is brought to life through the lens of live cameras that follow the manipulation of photographs, drawings, scale models and various three dimensional objects by visual artist and performer SUE-C, along with the live lush electronic soundtrack and vocals by AGF and narration from Francis Deehan. Set in a slightly futuristic world the film is an attempt to create and re-create what character James Orin Incandenza, optics expert and filmmaker considered to be his life's major works. After many unseen failures, his "film", an Entertainment, is eventually released, which proves to be fatally seductive. With this as a jumping off point, long time audio-visual collaborators SUE-C and AGF explore the expression of seduction in sound and image.

SUE-C and AGF have spent most of their lives separated by 5,000 miles of land and ocean. Upon meeting a decade ago they began feverishly collaborating on audio-visual projects and life itself. The cd/dvd release "Mini Movies" (2006) was featured and performed at dozens of film and electronic music festivals worldwide. Known for bringing an organic and intimate experience to their audiences, the duo combines live imagery, voice and electronic music into acoustic holograms.

SUE-C was born Sue Costabile in 1974 in Long Island, NY. For the past 10 years she has created handmade videos for both the stage and screen as a visual and performing artist based in the San Francisco Bay Area. Her works

PRESS RELEASE

challenge the norms of photography, video, and technology by blending them all into an organic and improvisational live performance setting. Employing a variety of digital tools to create an experimental animation “instrument”, SUE-C synthesizes cinema from photographs, drawings, watercolors, hand-made papers, fabrics and miniature lighting effects. Dark, moody, textural, and physical, her live films inherit equally from the kinetic languages of Stan Brakhage’s abstract cinema and Nicolas Schöffer’s lumodynamic sculptures. She employs the same techniques in her recorded work to emphasize the beauty of the banal street corner, public parking lot, forgotten winter beach, torn remnant of a found photograph, cast-away super 8 vacation footage, and other half-forgotten, often-unnoticed, in-between spaces in her surroundings. www.sue-c.net

Antye Greie aka AGF, born and raised in East Germany, lives and works in Hailuoto, Finland. She is a singer and digital songwriter, producer, performer, e-poet, calligrapher, digital media artist known for artistic exploration of digital technology through the deconstruction of language and communication. Her poetry, which she converts into electronic music, calligraphy and digital media, has been presented on records, live performances and sound installations in museums, auditoria, theaters, concert halls and clubs in Europe, America and Asia. Other projects include the German electronic duo Laub, The Lappetites, AGF/ DELAY (with Vladislav Delay), THE DOLLS (Vladislav Delay and Craig Armstrong) and Zavoloka/AGF, collaborations with Craig Armstrong, Ellen Allien, Gudrun Gut, Eliane Radigue, Kaffe Matthews. AGF runs her own production company AGF Produktion; in 2004 she won an Award of Distinction at the 2004 Ars Electronica festival, in 2006 she was on the Cover of the Wire magazine UK. www.poemproducer.com

ABOUT THE CURATORS

Sergio Edelsztein

Sergio Edelsztein was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1956. Studied at the Tel Aviv University (1976-85). Funded and directed Artifact Gallery in Tel Aviv (1987-1995). In 1995 funded The Center for Contemporary Art in Tel Aviv and has been its director and chief curator since then. In the framework of the CCA he curated seven Performance Art Biennials and five International Video Art Biennials - Video Zone. Also curated numerous experimental and video art screenings, retrospectives and performances events. Major exhibitions curated for the CCA include, among others, shows of Guy Ben Ner, Boaz Arad, Doron Solomons, Roe Rosen and Jan Tichy – and international artists like Rosa Barba, Ceal Floyer, Marina Abramović. Since 1995 curated exhibitions and time-based events in Spain and China and elsewhere, as well as the Israeli participation at the 24th São Paulo Biennial and the 2005 Israeli Pavilion at the 51st Biennale in Venice. Lectured, presented video programs and published writings in Israel, Spain, Brazil, Italy, Austria, Germany, China, the USA, Argentina, etc. Wrote extensively for catalogues, web sites and publications.

Kathleen Forde

Since 2005, Kathleen Forde has been the Curator of Time-Based Arts at the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (EMPAC) in Troy, NY. EMPAC – opened in October 2008 – is an institution for the presentation and production of adventurous multidisciplinary work spanning new media installation to experimental performance. Prior to her current position, Kathleen was the Curatorial Director for Live Arts and New Media at the Goethe Institut Internationale in Berlin and Munich. This post was held in conjunction with an Alexander von Humboldt research scholarship (2002-2003). As Curatorial Associate then Assistant Curator for Media Arts at SFMOMA (1999–2002), she co-curated the large-scale interdisciplinary show 010101 Art in Technological Times in addition to ongoing work with both temporary and permanent collection exhibitions. She has concurrently written and curated on a freelance basis for various organizations that have included the Eyebeam Center for Art and Technology, Independent Curators International; ATA Cultural, Peru; Kunstverein Dusseldorf and Cologne; and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

PRESS RELEASE

GENERAL INFORMATION

COMPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES

Educational Programme

'ACTÍVATE!'

From February 15 to May 31 2012

Visits and workshops for school children based on ACTIVE PRESENCE exhibition

GUIDED TOURS

The staff members in the rooms are at visitors' disposal for any question they may have or information they may need about the exhibition, as well as for the usual guided tours:

- Every day at 6pm
- Customised visits for groups by appointment. Please call 986 113900

Should you need further information, please contact:
MARCO, Museo de Arte Contemporánea de Vigo
Press Office (Marta Viana / Pilar Souto)
Príncipe 54 - 36202 Vigo, Spain
Tel. +34 986 11 39 08 / 11 39 03 / 11 39 00
Fax. +34 986 11 39 01
Email: marta.viana@marcovigo.com pilar.souto@marcovigo.com
www.marcovigo.com
www.facebook.com/marco.vigo