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45c

45b



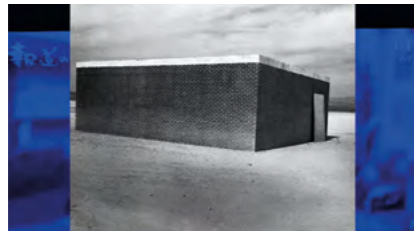
45a

45d

45e

45e

her rhythm into the pace of the unfolding narrative. Throughout, a 10min countdown mechanism kept the viewer perpetually alert to the passing of time, and as the script and changing of imagery increased in speed, a sense of unease and claustrophobia developed. As the pace dropped abruptly, a vinyl record of Roy Orbison's "House without Windows" began to play and the video featured found images of windowless buildings, closed off, breathless, and leaving the viewer with a sense of unbalance and questioning his or her own state of being. (YB)



This Building, This Breath (still), 2015

[Script excerpt from *This Building, This Breath*] As you breathe in, the images enter your lungs. / As you breathe out, those images disperse into the room. / Whisper: Now they are the Room's images. / You awake in the night. You realise you are not breathing. You realise you are not dead yet. For a moment you are the statue, in stasis, a statue, without breath, without thought. Yet the room is full of your thoughts, thoughts like water that become the room. // BREATHE! // When you awake without breathing the body usually takes over and the diaphragm pulls hard into the lungs making an audible rush. / But your chest does not rise this time. Only the room expands. // LONG EXHALE ONTO MIC // MAKING DEEP RUMBLE //... so I have this recurring dream which takes place in my childhood home. And all these dramas play out but they all fade to insignificance when I look out of the window and see that the whole house is in free fall... / but what's really strange is that I can't feel that the house is falling. I don't feel weightlessness or my stomach rising into my chest. The only way I can tell the house is falling is by looking through the window. / Whisper: Look! Nothing!

44/50 Donuts Formed 2015. Anthea Hamilton (44a) responded to the invitation to realise an exhibition at fig-2 by bringing forward a focus group composed of herself and artists Zsuzsa Benke (44b), Beverley Chapman (44c), Rosemary Jane Cronin, Tse Ngo Chun (44d), Linda

Vigdorčika (44e) and Adam J B Walker (44f). Concentrating on mime performance (44g) as their medium of production, the Donuts collective undertook a one-week residency exploring utopian ideals of coexistence whilst investigating forms of relating to the world with responses in mime language.

In pursuit of the potential for collaboration, the group engaged in various outdoor activities and built on collective experiences, looking into ways in which



Mime performance, 2015

cooperative practices can provide an open ground for dialogue and the formation of ideas. At fig-2, they invited various speakers from various disciplines to introduce their field of research, treating themselves as vessels for different formations of knowledge. Thus, multifarious experiences were generated from meetings with a math-



Mime performance, 2015

ematician, a dancer/choreographer and an experienced mime artist. Furthermore, the week hosted a workshop for ideas, in which the Donuts collective screened, discussed and responded to a series of film excerpts, including Étienne Decroux's *The Mime*, 1960–1961, Yves Lebreton's *Corporeal Mime*, 1970, and Marcel Carné's *Les Enfants du Paradis*, 1945.

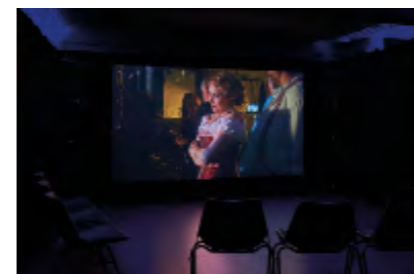
The idea behind their artistic endeavour spanned from designer and architect Mario Bellini's concept car *Kar-a-Sutra*, 1972, created in collaboration with Citroën and presented as part of the exhibition of the same year *Italy: The New Domestic Landscape* at the MoMA, in New York. The utopian vehicle was designed to be a communal temporary living space meant to stimulate imagination, creativity and communication both among its passengers and with the outside world. The archival images documenting the prototype depict a group of



Mime performance, 2015

bohemian mime artists reconfiguring the space in any manner and pattern: stretching out, standing up, chatting face-to-face, enjoying the sun, kissing and sleeping. As if inhabiting the concept car, Donuts engaged in qualitative research in which they shared their opinions and beliefs towards what should be the requirements for a shared living space and what living situation they could envisage. (IA)

45/50 Lynne Marsh b 1969, Vancouver, Canada, lives in London. At fig-2, Lynne Marsh previewed *Tragedy*, 2015, a film installation that tracks the processes at work behind the performance of an opera. Mimicking the framing device of a play within a play, the work focuses



Tragedy, 2015

on the activities happening behind the scenes during two performances of *La traviata* at the Grand Theatre and Opera House in Leeds, UK. The film exposes the way in which the backstage area is organised, through close-ups and hand-held camera views that capture the movement, work and conversations of the stage man-

ers, backstage crew and offstage performers. The individuals seen on screen develop as characters in an alternative performative event during the three acts of the live performance. Thus the deputy stage manager and prompter—who reads the sheet music and controls every



Tragedy (stills), 2015

aspect of the performance by calling the cues for all technical actions, transitions and actor moves—becomes the guiding figure and ultimate main character of this piece, a counterpart to Violetta Valéry, the protagonist of *La traviata*. Marsh draws direct parallels between the urgency and tension of the live performance onstage and the choreography played out offstage, where discrete conversations between characters behind the scenes marry up



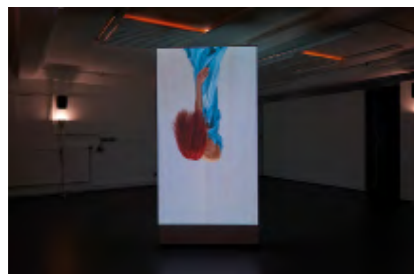
Tragedy (still), 2015

with the dialogue taking place in the libretto. With a focus on the routine labour that takes place around the stage, the film becomes an enquiry into the nature of performance and brings operatic tradition into context with present-day realities.

Highlighting the fundamental relationship between form and content within the viewing experience, Marsh, in her artistic practice, creates very distinct architectural environments in which to receive her work. Hence at

fig-2, the viewer was confronted with a curtained-off space (45a) resembling a backstage set with blue neon work lights (45b) and white arrows taped on the floor (45c) to indicate the entrance to the space. Inside, the film (45d) was projected onto a free-standing screen mounted on a wall in a cinema-like setting complete with chairs (45e) in a skewed distribution. By aligning the eye of the viewer with the camera lens in a disturbed cinematic space, Marsh located the viewer within the latency of the spectacle. (1A)

46/50 Vesna Petresin b 1971, Ljubljana, Slovenia, lives in Berlin. Vesna Petresin's immersive installations create multi-sensory experiences that use sound, light and performance to create a wholly immersive environment. Speculating that all humans are innately synaes-



Chrysalis, 2015

thetic, she plays with her audiences by engaging multiple senses. *Chrysalis*, 2015, was a two-channel video commission that explored notions of transition and transformation, both physically and emotionally, drawing from processes in alchemical transformation and from quan-



Chrysalis (still), 2015

tum mechanics. Projected in vertical format and back-to-back against the smallest of the mobile walls in the fig-2 space, the film's subject—the artist herself—was portrayed upside down and in near-to-life-size. She per-

forms cocooned in lengths of pale blue silk, in a gradual and durational set of movements that convey a state of slow change through inhibited duress. The work was a six-hour-long performance that was made collaboratively with Petresin's cameraman, who filmed it on a smartphone camera held up as an extension of his hand and thereby himself became part of this protracted act. Both projections were edited down to 30min videos and their particular display method created a sense of an inside and outside and a front (46a) and back (46b), which allowed the audience to circumnavigate the projection and thus evoke its interchangeable nature. The



Chrysalis (still), 2015

soundtrack (46c) was composed of vocals performed by the artist—with further contributions by an avant-garde musician and a music producer—in direct response to Petresin's elongated movements and with no fixed tonal or harmonic structure. The sounds stretched, twisted and pulled as their composition created continuous and endured choreography. An intense baseline with infra bass reverberated through the space, affecting the surrounding lights (46d) so that they pulsed in a delicate and ambiguous way.

Amidst this intricate constellation, the agency of the viewer in the space was crucial. Petresin brought to light the presence of her audience, asking them to be aware of their very being. Using the help of a guided movement workshop session during the exhibition, she further explored, with her audience, ideas of fluidity, body consciousness and mindfulness, by borrowing techniques from butoh, Fluxus and sonic topology. In a commentary on the self and its interconnectedness with the world around it and all other beings, Petresin's ontological studies highlight what it is to be human. (YB)

Vesna Petresin at Bicester Village: Commissioned to create an artwork for fig-2's external programme at

Bicester Village, Vesna Petresin responded directly to the environment of the luxury outlet venue. Working with a telephone booth, Petresin played with what might be seen as a nondescript everyday object to create an



Wearing the Sound of Your Light, 2015

unlikely portal for visitors to retreat to from the frenzied atmosphere of the shopping district, in her immersive installation *Wearing the Sound of Your Light*.

The scale of the booth and its mirrored interior were suggestive of a clothes shop changing room, whilst warm, pulsating lights and whispered lyrics to a soundtrack—whose drumbeat was based on a heartbeat—enveloped the viewer like a comforting garment to create a state of



Wearing the Sound of Your Light (detail), 2015

relaxation. This soft delivery was used to convey a subliminal message, which is a tool said to be used in advertising. This allusion to advertising aimed to highlight how ideals around beauty and desire are used by the fashion industry in a drive for profit, often distorting one's body image and hence self-worth, as well as bringing to light issues of child labour in the clothes manufacturing industry worldwide. Further, it impressed on the listen-

er how the source of these Western aesthetics are a mere small part of an overriding universal language that we can all listen to, connecting each individual to their surrounding microcosm and the wider cosmos. (YB)

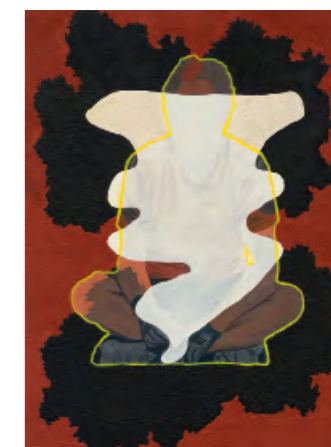
47/50 Allison Katz b 1980, Montreal, lives in London. Presenting two paintings and a take-away poster, Allison Katz's show was fig-2's first painting exhibition. In a response to the programme's transient structure, weekly shifting layout and high-speed turnover, Katz manipulated the mobile wall system by encasing the shelves to create large white monolithic structures that stood like



Installation view, 2015

two tall islands in the space. Each painting was hung from one of the structures, angled so that they could never be seen together from any one vantage point, and so requiring the viewer to navigate consciously around the space.

The scale of the paintings was dictated by the size of the walls on which they were hung. *Dad Sand*, 2015 (47a), filled the height of its wall, making it appear to float on the structure, while *Tailpiece*, 2015 (47b), was framed



Dad Sand, 2015

like a portal on the structure. The latter painting, depicting the interior of a car looking out to another car passing, refers back to fig-2's time-based structure, and also to a memory of a past time, the vermilion of the window mimicking the shade of pink behind one's eyes when