

Murray Guy

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SERGEI TCHEREPNIN

Games

9 September – 15 October 2016

For his second solo exhibition at Murray Guy, Sergei Tcherepnin presents *Games*, a split installation of two interactive sites for playful encounters and introspective stimulation.

The title of the exhibition is also the title of the life size photo sculptures on view in the gallery's main space. In *Games*, a group of young men in futuristic basketball attire reach out at each other's bodies and for a copper ball. The distinctive and theatrical poses are inspired by Vaslav Nijinsky's ballet *Jeux*, as well as representations of athletes in social media, television, and advertising. Each of the photographs has an exterior "limb" that, when touched, triggers a stereo recording. The visitor moves through the game and has the power to activate infinite possibilities of sonic characters and shapes. *Games* sets the stage for another choreography and a queer body of sound.

Created in 1914 for the Ballets Russes, *Jeux* portrays a circuitous game of tennis between three dancers. It quickly reveals itself to be a game of desire and seduction between two women and a man. The ballet was radical for its time in its introduction of sport and modern sexuality, and its meshing of straight ballet with curious body configurations and mechanical maneuvers. Later it was discovered that Nijinsky intended the dancers to be three men, representing the homosexual relationships between himself, Sergei Diaghilev, impresario of the *Ballets Russes*, and a third male lover. The complicated composition and veiled narrative of *Jeux*, is a starting point from which Tcherepnin investigates the body's potential to alter and to be altered through innumerable combinations of movement and sound.

In the second gallery, the artist sets the stage for an intimate encounter within a domestic tableau. Chairs and lamps with tongues to touch and a bed for two or more bodies furnish what Tcherepnin refers to as the 'private locker room' for performer or player. On the wall posed, portraits photographed with backdrops by TM Davy, in a wooded, active gay cruising area on Fire Island known as the Meat Rack, are embedded in a patchwork flag and can also be touched. Here, the players have shed their public, choreographed body and engage through more direct triggers once again activated by the visitor.

The interplay of artist, choreographer, player, cruiser, and visitor, is restructured in haptic fluidity through the public and private space of body and sound.

As Drew Daniel writes in his essay *All Sound Is Queer*, "*Sound, the confusing eruption of the sonic into our life, can reinforce our privacy, our alone-ness. But it is also shared and shareable, and thus makes possible a certain kind of collectivity, or better, a perceptual community that we share by remaining perpetually open to the world beyond that community.*"

The installation *Games*, was commissioned by the Museum der Moderne, Salzburg for the exhibition *Art–Music–Dance: Staging the Derra de Moroda Dance Archives*, 2016.

Sergei Tcherepnin (b. 1981) lives and works in New York. His ambitious installation *Piper's Cave II: Ringing Rocks* was recently on view in *Greater New York*, at MoMA | PS1. In 2016 he collaborated, with DAS INSTITUT with a composition of light and sound at the Serpentine Sackler Gallery, London, as well as Ei Arakawa, Gela Patashuri for *Room & Board & Crate & Barrel & Mother Vertical* at Midway Contemporary Art, Minneapolis. In 2014, Tcherepnin's work was the subject of a solo exhibition at the MIT List Visual Arts Center in Cambridge, MA. He participated in the 2014 Whitney Biennial, the Georgian Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale in 2013, the 30th Bienal de São Paulo in 2012, as well as the exhibition *Soundings* at The Museum of Modern Art, New York in 2013. Recent performances include Whitney Museum of American Art, with Lucy Dodd and Dawn Kasper (2016), and *Maize Mantis*, The Kitchen, (2015).