

January 19 - February 24

going to go out now

Juliette Blightman
Ellie Epp

Curated by Jacob
Korczynski

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To journal is to have a practice of everyday life, and also to produce a portrait. A journal isn't only a means to communicate with others – it also sustains us in the moments when we find ourselves alone – either by choice, circumstance or default. To journal is to persist, to document and maintain a history – a history that isn't always seen, supported or understood.

going to go out now stages a second meeting between Juliette Blightman and Ellie Epp following their exhibition *holding one's own in an unfinished system* at the Badischer Kunstverein in 2015. Both Juliette and Ellie take as material the accumulation of affect in the places we live, finding forms to make those same spaces manifest in our presence. Here that includes the debut of a suite of works by Ellie that are imbricated in the sixty years of her lifetime journal, while Juliette revisits extant projects that act as portraits in sculpture and sound.

I must confess to being without my own journal. I always have a notebook, of course, but it is all point form ideas for cutting, pasting and repurposing rather than tracing the lines of a life. However, each year I do

revisit a journal which is also one of my favourite artist's books – Simone Forti's *Handbook in Motion* (1974). Inside, the American choreographer and dancer produces a portrait of her life as an artist as formed by the places she lives and works, sites we sometimes have the opportunity to choose and other times are forced to occupy.

From her I learned that a succession of pages can produce not one, but many portraits and furthermore, a portrait need not necessarily be visible at all:

“For two weeks I kept track of my perpendicular journey up and down buildings and subways. We were living on the sixth floor, I was teaching kindergarten on a sixth floor, and doing a lot of working, and rehearsing, and performing. During the whole of the second of the two recorded weeks, I was sick in bed. At the end of the two weeks I drew up a musical staff and placed the different stations up and down the scale. I came out with what I called an elevation tune. One day I handed the elevation tune to La Monte to hear what it sounded like. He whistled it to me, and in a palpable sense it had very much the feeling of those two weeks. It seemed to me that it was their ghost.”¹

Upon arriving in the gallery at Western Front, you could begin to trace the contours of two lives lived, or maybe more. Your entrance may be met by silence, or perhaps a low rumble. The bass frequency of Juliette's *From Berghain to the Balaeric Islands* (2015) rises and falls from a single subwoofer every ten minutes. The title of the work gestures to both the iconic nightclub in Juliette's adopted city of Berlin, as well as the Mediterranean archipelago that was home to a number of infamous dance clubs frequented by her fellow UK citizens from the mid-1980s onwards. Given these references, the submerged sound may immediately bring to mind the rhythms of distant revelry. And yet, the longer you stay, it may synchronize with your own breath, your own pulse as it beats. It reverberates along the walls and floor of the building, resonating in the spaces beyond the immediate exhibition.

While Ellie is best known for her 16mm films and more recent work in digital video, the practice to which she has devoted most of her time as an artist is her writing. This has resulted in a number of published and unpublished texts as well as the sixty years of her lifetime journal, maintained continuously since she was twelve years old. While available

in its entirety on her website (elliepp.com), material from her lifetime journal is featured here in an exhibition for the first time, acting as an anchor to a series of forty SketchUp drawings. Two colour coded sets of texts divide our reading with the black print denoting a historical text pulled from the pages of her journal and the blue print indicating a contemporary text written about the process of creating the drawings themselves. After teaching herself the SketchUp program four years ago, Ellie has made, from memory, drawings of the places she has lived, beginning with her family farmhouse in rural Alberta and including former residences in Vancouver as well. This series also includes homes that only exist in fantasies and daydreams. Clustered together with the texts from her lifetime journal, the result is a sensuous grid, the configuration of each set of drawings and the accompanying text(s) finding their way around and alongside the works of Juliette.

One of the oldest artist-run centres in Canada, The Western Front is a constantly occupied, living space – home not only to this gallery and its programme but also a number of production suites for residencies, a dance studio, an auditorium for performance and screenings, an apartment where I'm staying and finishing this text, and also serves as

the residence of two of its founding members. It is an institution not structured by the opening and closing of exhibition cycles, but rather constantly subject to the rhythms of daily life. In the gallery, this passage of time is marked directly by a single window that opens up the artworks exhibited to both the surrounding landscape and mutable cycles of light. *Berlin, 2018* (2018) is from an ongoing series of works by Juliette begun in 2011 that takes the site of each exhibition as material, with an improvised curtain covering the single window in the gallery, gathering the colour and quality of the local daylight in its fabric as each day passes. The title of each of these works refer to an imagined elsewhere, a potential place the artist could be while you're encountering the exhibition in Vancouver.

The contributions of both Juliette and Ellie in *going to go out now* work with forms of portraiture. Unlike the figurative work that has historically dominated these forms, their portraits were produced without bodies with the exception of *core* (2008), a digital photograph by Ellie. Here, a figure is implied through the casting of a shadow onto the uneven finish of a wall. I first encountered *core* on her

website when I was developing the exhibition at the Badischer Kunstverein – a dense but rewarding web to navigate. The artist's website is a dense but rewarding web to navigate. Alongside her archive of texts that were mentioned earlier, *core* was embedded amongst a body of photographs that she has made and/or manipulated digitally. On her site, it is through the process of clicking and closing hyperlinks that a view onto her recent work in photography can either be encountered, or bookmarked for later. Here in this exhibition her digital image is made material beyond an individual encounter with a single viewer – it's going to go out now.

Like *Berlin, 2018* Juliette's third and final contribution to *going to go out now* forms part of a series. *Better together, still* (2018) is a sculpture she composed from furniture loaned from the residence of Pablo de Ocampo, Exhibitions Curator at Western Front. Here, Juliette requested images of the interior of Pablo's home and then made her view onto his private home public by taking these as the elements of her assemblage. Dominated by a vintage botanical chart that could be seen in the past at schools or public gardens, *Better together, still* also includes a monstera plant on a stand and a framed mirror. The chart was

acquired in Detroit during one of his travels there and bears the name of Hilary Jurica PhD, its author. A patina of water stains and dust coat the surface of the mirror, evidence of the busy state of family life with a daughter, just like Juliette's home, just like my home. The stand used for the monstera plant is actually returning to the gallery where last year it was made as a support for Maria Hupfield's slide projector during her solo exhibition at Western Front. Unbeknownst to the artist it has now taken on a third role and maybe not its last. It is a trace of an artist, their work and a relationship with a curator. However a trace can also be a trail – a means to find your way back home, or perhaps away from it.

What? What?

Wisely

A few twigs were left

For the old

To throw into the fire

I would visit all the places I have left

Then I would know myself differently

Bank the fires 2

—Jacob Korczynski, Curator

1. Forti, Simone, *Handbook in Motion*, Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design, Halifax, 1974, p. 71.

2. *Ibid*, p. 108.

Artist Biographies

Juliette Blightman (b. 1980 in London, UK) lives and works in Berlin. Her most recent solo exhibitions include; *Loved an Image* at Fons Welters Gallery, Amsterdam (2017), *Extimacy* at the Kunsthalle Bern, Bern (2016), *Portraits and Repetition* at the South London Gallery, London (2015-16), *Juliette Blightman / Ellie Epp* at the Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe (2015), *Come inside, Bitte* at Eden Eden, Berlin (2015), *Eden Eden* at Karma International, Los Angeles (2015), *Gerry Bibby / Juliette Blightman* at the Kunsthau Bregenz, Bregenz (2014), *I hope one day soon you'll come and visit me here* at Isabella Bortolozzi Galerie, Berlin (2011). Her works and performances have also been shown in the following exhibition spaces: Cubitt, London, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo, Artists Space, New York, Centre Parc Saint Léger, Pougues-Les-Eaux, Staatliche Kunsthalle, Baden-Baden, Tramway, Glasgow, Künstlerhaus Stuttgart, amongst others. Blightman's work has appeared in international publications such as *ArtForum*, *Frieze*, *Texte Zur Kunst*, *ArtReview* and *Starship*.

Ellie Epp (b. 1945 in Northern Alberta, Canada) lives and works in Merritt, BC. After a Queen's University Honours BA in philosophy, psychology and English, she earned a postgraduate diploma in film studies at the Slade School of Fine Art, University College London. Best known as an experimental filmmaker, Epp later returned to philosophy to investigate new approaches in the epistemology of perception and representation. *Being about: perceiving, imagining, representing, and thinking*, her PhD thesis in neurophilosophy, can be found online along with other work in theory, photography, garden design and experimental writing. Her 16mm films and digital video have most recently been shown at the Festival International du Film sur l'Art in Montreal, Images Festival, ExiS2016 Festival in Seoul, Fol Cinema in Istanbul, a London NFT3 50th anniversary celebration of the London Film Co-op, the International Film Festival Rotterdam, and *Elements of Contact*, a TIFF Lightbox evening in Toronto.

Jacob Korczynski is an independent curator and the editor of Andrew James Paterson's Collection/Correction (Kunstverein Toronto & Mousse Publishing). He has curated projects for the Stedelijk Museum, Oakville Galleries, *If I Can't Dance*, *I Don't Want to Be Part of Your Revolution* and the Badischer Kunstverein. His writing has been published by art-agenda, *Girls Like Us*, *Flash Art* and *Little Joe*.

List of Works

1. *house*

Ellie Epp
digital print of SketchUp renderings, text,
2014 - 2017.

2. *Better together, still*

Juliette Blightman
mirror, poster, potted plant on a stand,
dimensions variable, 2018.
Courtesy the artist, Galerie Isabella
Bortolozzi, Berlin.

3. *Berlin, 2018*

Juliette Blightman
cotton sheet, potted plant, dimensions
variable, 2017.
Courtesy the artist, Galerie Isabella
Bortolozzi, Berlin.

4. *From Berghain to the Balaeric Islands*

Juliette Blightman
digital audio file, subwoofer, dimensions
variable, 2015.
Courtesy the artist, Galerie Isabella
Bortolozzi, Berlin.

5. *core*

Ellie Epp
digital print, 9in x 12in, 2008.

