

## **Press Release**

### **Simone Forti, Here It Comes Curated by Roos Gortzak**

January 31 - April 3, 2016

Opening: Saturday, January 30, 5 - 8pm

April 2, 8pm & April 3, 4pm:

Illuminations by Simone Forti and Charlemagne Palestine at Vleeshal Markt

### **Vleeshal Markt & Vleeshal Zusterstraat**

Markt 1 & Zusterstraat 7

4331 KG, Middelburg

The Netherlands

[www.vleeshal.nl](http://www.vleeshal.nl)

### **Simone Forti, Here It Comes**

From January 31 till April 3, Vleeshal presents a comprehensive solo exhibition by artist, choreographer, dancer and writer Simone Forti (1935, Italy) at both of its locations. Although Simone Forti has performed in the Netherlands in the 1980s, this is the first solo show of her seminal oeuvre here.

Simone Forti came to prominence in the 1960s, in a historical moment of rich dialogue between visual artists, musicians, poets and dancers. Despite being a key figure in the Minimal Art movement, she remains relatively unknown in the visual arts world. As Sabine Weingartner writes in a 2014 Frieze review of Forti's retrospective in Museum der Moderne, Salzburg: 'Her exclusion from Minimalism's generally male canon was reinforced by dance's longstanding reputation as an uncritical, "feminized" art form rooted more in physical gesture than intellectual rigour.' Over the last years, Simone Forti's work has received the attention and recognition that it deserves, culminating in the recent acquisition of the 'Dance Constructions' (1960-1961) by the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

Forti's work has made a major contribution to the intersection of sculpture and performance and helped to create a sensibility for 'what we know about things through our bodies.' As early as 1960, at Reuben Gallery in New York, she created the object-centred happenings See Saw and Rollers. A year later, she presented Five Dance Constructions & Some Other Things as part of a series organised by composer La Monte Young at Yoko Ono's studio in New York; radically new dances made up of every day movements, performed in interaction with sculptures and objects.

From January 30 till March 28, this legendary series of 'Dance Constructions' will be performed at Vleeshal Markt by a group of 'movers'. Choreographer Sarah Swenson, authorised representative of Simone Forti, will teach the 'Dance Constructions' to them, except for See Saw which follows a different scheme: artists Mie Frederikke Christensen (Denmark, 1989) and Margaux Parillaud (France 1989) have been invited to develop a new version of this work, which Forti once described as a 'domestic drama'. Nominated for the Gerrit Rietveld Award 2015 with their performance Well Now, it Looks as if You are Armed for Battle, the artist duo is free to direct See Saw in whatever way they feel is fitting.

From March 28 till April 2, Simone Forti and long-time collaborator Charlemagne Palestine will use Vleeshal Markt as a rehearsal space to work on a new version of their Illuminations series, to be performed there on April 2 and April 3. Asked in an interview by Astrid Kaminski whether she is continuing to do new work, Forti replied: 'You could just as well ask: what about breakfast – will you still have breakfast in the morning?'

Both Forti and Palestine, who have collaborated since 1971, have been to Middelburg before: Forti in 1980, when she performed during interdisciplinary arts festival Forum, and Charlemagne Palestine on several occasions, including a solo show at Vleeshal in 1979 and various concerts for the Stichting Nieuwe Muziek (Foundation for New Music).

At Vleeshal Zusterstraat a selection of works by Simone Forti from different periods will be exhibited - with drawings, photographs, videos, and documentation of performances – including material from Forti's first time in Middelburg in 1980, where she performed during interdisciplinary arts festival Forum. From her early minimalist 'Dance Constructions' through her animal studies, news animations and collaborations with musicians, Forti has worked with an eye toward creating idioms for exploring natural form and behaviors. In the introduction to the third edition of her book 'Handbook in Motion'. An account of ongoing personal discourse and its manifestations in dance, Forti writes: "I'm mainly focusing on how movement and language very naturally work together in our everyday lives, in our cognition and communication. I'm improvising from that root behavior, simultaneously dancing and speaking, trying to keep it earnest, light and surprising."

Simone Forti (1935, Florence, Italy, lives and works in Los Angeles) emigrated to the US with her family in 1939. In 1955, Forti started dancing with Anna Halprin, a pioneer in improvisation and working with kinesthetic awareness. In 1959, Forti moved to New York to study composition at Merce Cunningham Studio with musicologist and dance educator Robert Dunn, where she met and began to work informally with choreographers Trisha Brown, Yvonne Rainer, and Steve Paxton. Forti collaborated with artists and composers, including Robert Morris, La Monte Young, Yoko Ono, Robert Whitman, Charlemagne Palestine and Peter Van Riper. Forti's works and performances have been presented at Index, Stockholm; Museum der Moderne, Salzburg; Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam; The Box LA Gallery, Los Angeles; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Henry Moore Institute, Leeds; Guggenheim Museum, New York; Sao Paulo Biennale; Louvre, Paris among many others.

Forti has published several books, among them Handbook in Motion. An account of ongoing personal discourse and its manifestations in dance (Nova Scotia College of Art and Design Press, Halifax 1974) and Oh, Tongue!, edited and published by Fred Dewey (Beyond Baroque Books, Los Angeles 2003).

Margaux Parillaud (1989, France) and Mie Frederikke Fischer Christensen (1989, Denmark) form an artist duo based in between Amsterdam and Copenhagen. They have been working together since 2014 and have recently graduated from the Gerrit Rietveld Academy. Using uncontrollable materials and performance, the artists challenge themselves as well as their audience to balance between restraint and release, making the drama and the theatrical the catalyst for change. Risk and violence enter the controlled atmosphere creating a tension between what is chance and what is purpose.

Funded by Mondriaan Fund and City of Middelburg. With special thanks to The Box LA Gallery, Los Angeles.

An earlier version of Simone Forti's exhibition Here It Comes (curated by Axel Wieder) was on view at Index – The Swedish Contemporary Art Foundation in Stockholm, from September 4 till November 15, 2015.

Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam presents the solo exhibition GesamttkkunnsttMeshuggahhLaandtttt by Charlemagne Palestine from January 29 till May 1.

### **Time Schedule Performances**

For more information concerning the time schedule of the performances, please visit our website: [www.vleeshal.nl](http://www.vleeshal.nl)

### **Press**

For press requests, please send us an email to [office@vleeshal.nl](mailto:office@vleeshal.nl) or call us on +31 (0)118 652200.

