

Aimée Zito Lema and Becket MWN

The Actress

24.9.–17.12.2021

The Actress is a project in which questions of language, enunciation and subjectivities are addressed. Through this collaborative work, artists Becket MWN and Aimée Zito Lema explore the relations between speech, memory, and movement by working with actors through a process of documented rehearsals. Central to this process is a script authored by Becket MWN and inspired by Clarice Lispector, wherein patterns of thought weave their way from termite hills through cigarette smoke to shoreline holes in the mind of an imaginary character.

Back on dry land, in the black box of a rehearsal studio, an actress works with a theater director to practice the language of this script, connecting words and phrases to lightly choreographed movements of the body. Through recurring motion and repetitive motifs words are gradually internalized. Shot between Amsterdam and Buenos Aires, this same scenario is repeated with another director and another actress of a different age, reciting the same script but in a different language, in order to explore the shifts that occur across these gaping differences. Documentation of the entire process is captured by cameras that offer two different perspectives on the situation, one from the outside watching the learning process unfold, and the other representing the internal perspective of the actress. The result in the gallery is a multi-channel video installation that immerses the visitor in multiple scenes of enactment simultaneously.

Aimée Zito Lema and Becket MWN do things with words. They also do things with people, ideas, subjectivities, cameras, bodies, gestures, screens, and time. *The Actress* is a live investigation of a thinking process, in search of a moment when *thinking* is distracted or displaced, by memorized words and speech acts and movements, to the point of performative transformation.

The visual artist Aimée Zito Lema (born 1982) engages in her artistic practice with questions around social memory and the body as an agent of resistance. She was born in Amsterdam and grew up in Buenos Aires, which is why she strongly identifies with historical narratives of both the Netherlands and Argentina. Zito Lema works with photography, sculptural installations, and video. She studied at the University of the Arts (UNA), Buenos Aires, the Gerrit Rietveld Academy, Amsterdam, and

completed a master's degree in Artistic Research at the Royal Academy of Art, The Hague. Her work has been displayed in solo exhibitions at Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon (2018), and Kunsthall Trondheim (2017). She was part of group exhibitions at De Apple, Amsterdam (2018), MACBA, Barcelona (2017), and Centre Pompidou, Paris, and Málaga (2016). She has participated in the Gwangju Biennial (2016). From 2015–2016 Zito Lema was artist in residence at the Rijksacademie voor Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam.

Becket MWN (born 1984) is a writer and artist who is based in Amsterdam. His recent projects have focused on the relation between language, speaking and the production of the self to question current forms of political subjectivity. His artistic work is mostly text based and includes (sound) installations, publishing projects and performances. He received his MFA from the University of Southern California in 2014 and was a resident artist at the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam from 2015 to 2017. He has recently exhibited at Broadway, Amsterdam (2020), Motto Books, Berlin (2020), SculptureCenter, New York (2019), TG Gallery, Nottingham (2019), Kunstfort bij Vijfhuizen, Haarlem (2019), Root Canal, Amsterdam (2019), and Vleeshal, Middelburg (2018).

Credits

The Actress, 2021

multi-channel video installation, 20' 47", sound, curtain.

Graphic design curtain: Paul Gangloff

Amsterdam shoot:

Performer: Alicja Gimblett

Acting direction: Juan Miranda

Director of photography: Manel Pino Braga

Sound recording: Andrés García Vidal

Production assistance: Andrea Chehade

Lighting design: Roy Taylor

Buenos Aires shoot:

Performer: Maya Kosow

Acting direction: Helena Nesis

Director of photography: Alan Segal

Sound recording: Mariana Delgado

Production assistance: Regine Bergmeijer

Script translation English to Spanish: Camila Zito Lema

Editing: Sebastian Días Morales

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The Actress is co-produced by If I Can't Dance, I Don't Want To Be Part Of Your Revolution, Amsterdam, Mercer Union, a center for contemporary art in Toronto, steirischer herbst '21, Graz, and Grazer Kunstverein.