

POST-PERFORMANCE FUTURE

BY MARIE DE BRUGEROLLE

Post-performance is a concept I invented in 2011, in response to a certain vacuity of the term “performance” when used as a cheap means to distract audiences. “Post” in this sense is not an “after” —it doesn’t mean the “end” of performance but thinking about its dimensions today, as a continuous investigation, inchoate.

This is the second chapter of an ongoing project, dealing with performance as a practice in the age of post-medium and hyper-objecthood, investigating new etymologies beyond binary definitions such as theater and anti-theater, objecthood and the nonobject, the here and now and reenactment. Involving conversations with artists who have participated in seminars, workshops, and projects, it is a way to reflect on and share new paths toward understanding performance today and for the future.

The future of post-performance is an oxymoron by which to envision the world from an asymmetrical point of view, but not in terms of a binary opposition of modern versus past, nor a strict teleological versus ontological dogma of modernism, but by using new lenses to look at the margins of art history. In the context of the research program Post Performance Future in ENSBA’s art school in Lyon, HEAD art school in Geneva, and UMRUM Praha, Czech Republic, some experimental seminars and workshops have taken and will take place, such as “High Heels” (2014-2016) and “Chair” (2016-2018), with such guest artists as Violeta Sanchez, Jennifer Lacey, Cally Spooner, and Than Hussein Clark. These two, and now “Spacey Forever,” have been “critical objects” to understand modernity, such as the crisis of “canons” and the body as a weapon, but also the “Greek Style Problem,” which announced the political crisis in Europe.¹ It has been a way to address the ancient Greek crisis of the “people of the sea” (fifteenth to thirteenth century BC), which effected an economic and cultural change of axis in Europe. “Chair,” as a coercive object, a tool for power, a daily torture object for the body, has been a support to rethink behaviors today, as in Tyler Coburn’s *Ergonomic Futures* (2016, created for Lafayette Anticipations and now in the collections of the Musée de l’Homme and the Centre Pompidou in



Agnieszka Kurant, *The End of Signature*, 2015, installation view at Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. Collection of Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. Photo: Kristopher McKay

Paris). The “Uberization” of the world and postcolonial objecthood have been studied through comparisons with contemporary models, as in Addis Ababa (the Mercato and the FabLab but also presentation and re-presentation in the process of traditional icons).

The current “type fossil” of research is Kevin Spacey, taken as a paradigm of our modernity: erasing the human figure, sexual harassment, the power of images, and the banality of the “middleman’s evil.” “Spacey Forever,” or the Kevin Spacey case study, is the new thread for 2018-2019. Julie Béna, Dora García, Marie Canet, Marc Camille Chaimowicz, Than Hussein Clark, Andrea Fraser, Charlie Hamish Jeffery, Agnieszka Kurant, Jennifer Lacey, Jérôme Mauche, Charlotte Moth, Nick Oberthaler, Italo Zuffi, Margherita Morgantini, Jimmy Robert, Cally Spooner, Violeta Sanchez, and Catherine Robbe-Grillet have given time and energy to create this program.

What follows are some considerations regarding the post-performance future at its stage of dematerialization, involving questions of objecthood and hyper-objecthood, performativity and anti-performativity, taken as a reflection on work, power, and production in the time of “invisible work.” The text also rethinks the question of the “use” of art and its efficiency in real life, as part of the real and not a metaphor. Performance is no longer a series of more or less mythographic actions by an isolated artist. It is not about heroes, as they have fallen from the chairs or become “Chairs” themselves. It is about dealing with new forms, collective authorship, awareness of business, and the expenditure of time as a new currency. It is about new forms of incarnation that can be incorporated in a non-naive way (Cally Spooner, Agnieszka Kurant). It is no longer about opposing theater and the place of performance (Than Hussein Clark, Julie Béna). It is about regarding the object as an art piece when activated and acted, “post-action” (Anna Wittenberg, Julie Béna), when it had “performed the function.” And it is about gossips as the real history of art. As Allan Kaprow told me in 1994, “Drop your books; art history is not in books, it is in gossips.”

The following thoughts come from interviews with Agnieszka Kurant, Cally Spooner, Julie Béna, and Anna Wittenberg that address each question above. Than Hussein Clark and Tyler Coburn join with some comments.



Agnieszka Kurant, *A.A.I. System's Negative No. 7*, 2016. Courtesy: Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York. Photo: Dylan Wilson

1. The “Greek Style Problem” workshop and seminar originated from a quote by Jean-Luc Godard, who declined the Cannes Film Festival’s invitation in 2010, arguing that he had a “Greek type problem.” Here we have chosen the word “style” because it was addressing what remains in art, after all.



Agnieszka Kurant, *Assembly Line*, 2017. Courtesy: MIT CAST and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York. Photo: Jerry Liu



Agnieszka Kurant, *A.A.I (10-15)*, 2017.
Courtesy: Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York.
Photo: Dylan Wilson

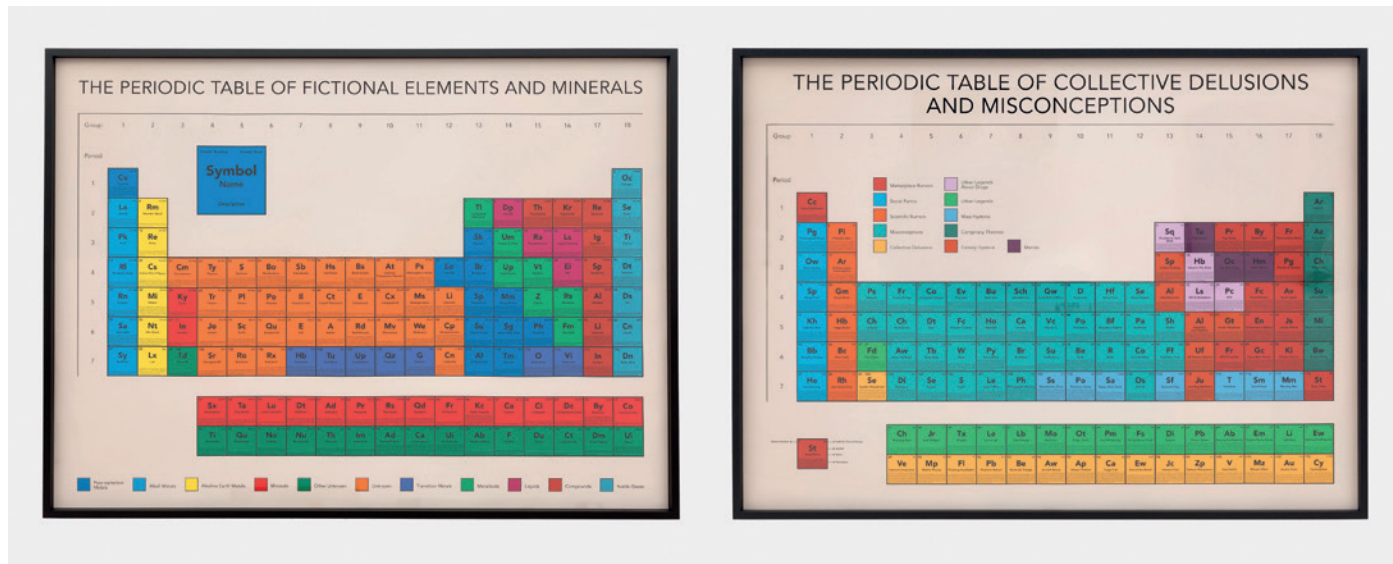
AUTHORSHIP-DEMATERIALIZATION:
AGNIESZKA KURANT, CALLY SPOONER

Since Roland Barthes's text about the death of the author published in *Aspen* magazine in 1968, many artists have addressed the question of authorship. However, Agnieszka Kurant and Cally Spooner have developed specific ways to use collective creativity, which are detached from questions of appropriation or postmodern "beyond recognition." It is about dealing with the primary kind of violence today, which is economic, specifically the disappearance of work and workers as "ghost workers" hidden behind screens, the new "mechanical Turk." Cally Spooner, with her current project *OFFSHORE* (for instance *OFFSHORE IN BELGIUM*, Stuk Playground [2017] and *OFFSHORE IN KINGSTON* [2018]), which she has been developing for two years now and showed in the context of the *DRAG DRAG SOLO* (2018) exhibition at Geneva's art center, and her ongoing attempt to invent new ways of inverting business processes but without a product, is dealing with the question of authorship and scripted reality. In the end, she speaks about herself as a "writer."

Agnieszka Kurant, outsourcing her artworks to termite colonies—*A.A.I (From Minimalism into Algorithm at The Kitchen*, New York, 2016); anonymous online workers—*Assembly Line* (SCAD MoA, 2017) and museum visitors or social movement members—*The End of Signature* (Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 2015), thinks of the world in the age of dematerialization of work, and money. She reminds us that the dematerialization of art started when U.S. President Richard Nixon broke with the gold standard in 1971:

My interest in dematerialization came from the analysis of the dematerialisation of money and labor in contemporary political economy. The dematerialisation of money has recently manifested itself in the development of cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin and Ethereum. The only thing needed for the creation of value of these currencies is electrical energy, which powers the server farms. Many historians observed that the dematerialisation of art coincided with the end of the gold standard and the beginning of the dematerialisation of money.

Agnieszka Kurant, *The Half Life of Facts*, 2017. Courtesy: Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York and Galeria Fortes D'Aloia and Gabriel, São Paulo. Photo: Jean Vong



In cognitive capitalism, we are dealing with a new set of issues surrounding value, such as the transformation of information into value by computer algorithms. Human surplus value of factory workers is replaced by "machinic surplus value". Last month Venezuela issued a crypto currency, the value of which is guaranteed in oil. Energies start to resemble currencies. Many of my works refer to transformations of energy into and out of form. I was particularly interested in the ways in which the movement called energetics in the 1880s tried to adapt the conservation principle from thermodynamics and apply it to economics in terms of conservation of value. When social capital starts to replace financial capital, social energies, just like coal, oil or gas, are captured and quantified by private corporations, which use behavioral forecasting to predict and value our future decisions, movements and habits. Our interactions become a dispersed social factory.

With the crowdsourcing platforms, such as Amazon Mechanical Turk, the system has found a perfect worker, unable to unionize, alienated from the products they work on. Corporations and global digital platforms acquire personhood and a similar autonomy to sovereign nation-states. The exploration of this "extra statecraft" of invisible powerful autonomous entities shaping the global politics of labor, gentrification, or mining and exploitation of social energies had a major impact on my work. My recent projects employ collective agency of humans and non-humans through outsourcing and crowdsourcing.²

2. Agnieszka Kurant, interview with the author, March 2018.

Today new cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin create a new relation to energies rather than material gold (or matter in general). It is no longer the "representation" of money as the "boggs" reproductions of paper money (J. S. G. Boggs died last year at age sixty-two). The Ethereum richness can be linked to the new ideas of ecology by Emanuele Coccia in *The Life of Plants: A Metaphysics of Hybridization* (2016), and also to Werner Heisenberg's ideas about nature³ and maybe their impact on the invention of *Event* (1959) by George

Brecht and its consequences ever since. Cally Spooner develops works that don't deal with the here and now of the mystic definition of performance, but rather "delegate" the work to several bodies, and in this she plays against the mythical "original" idea of the "here and now" presence of the artist:

Contra the traditional historical precedent of the performance medium, I choose distance over presence and within that is my enquiry. I'm not a fabulator; I'm an instigator then a manager, overseeing others from the wings. Text, recorded image, bodies are all media. There is distance between text and speech, a distance between bodies hired to deliver my work, and my ideas. But I'm wondering whether I need to hold such drastic binaries. If the binaries are real, how wide is the distance between? Can I operate in the ambiguous moment these oppositions fold over each other, and muddy? A mediation, mediator or medium bridges a distance—between that which you can say or do, and that which you can't quite reach on account of it being too impossible, too far away (like contacting the dead, or being heard by a person who is angry with you and with whom you are angry, or reaching a remote island, accessed only through TV). Outsourcing may conjure a mental image of offshore call centres, but I'm considering it in the broadest sense: as how we delegate to a stand-in; to language engineered by bodies or institutions or industries outside of our own body, which have the power to organise our thinking, and provide us with their language to do our speaking, thinking, even our emotional work for us. In my work, I am becoming more mediated, less present, as I outsource my live events to hired bodies.⁴



Above - Cally Spooner, *Warm Up*, 2016. Stretches, dancer. *DRAG DRAG SOLO* installation view at Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, 2018. Courtesy: the artist and Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève. Photo: Mathilda Olmi
Below - Cally Spooner, *DRAG DRAG SOLO* installation view at Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, 2018. Courtesy: the artist and Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève. Photo: Mathilda Olmi

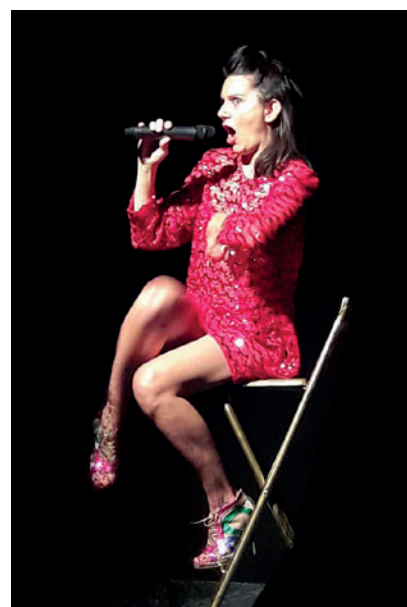


3. Karl Werner Heisenberg, *La nature dans la physique contemporaine* (Paris: Editions NRF Gallimard, Collections Idées, 1962).
4. Cally Spooner interviewed by Cecilia Alemani, *Biennale de l'Image en Mouvement 2016 catalogue* (Milan: Mousse Publishing, 2017).

FAKE TEARS AND TRUE STORY:
CALLY SPOONER AND JULIE BÉNA

It is also a way to use facts and fiction at the same semantic level. Fake tears and real tears lead to the same result in the end. In a conversation we had with students and Andrea Fraser in 2013, we kept asking her if her tears “on stage” were real. And she kept not answering, saying that our question was a symptom of our desire to believe that the story is “real.” And that’s exactly what’s at stake in Cally Spooner’s work. It is also a way to use fact and fiction at the same semantic level, and it might be present in the *Half Life of Facts* of Agnieszka Kurant. *Half Life of Facts* is a collection of phenomena based on collective intelligence and fictions that emerged in various societies or social groups together with their socioeconomic impact. The artist explains her interest in contemporary anthropology and writers such as Yuval Noah Harari, who remind us that fictions are the most important building blocks of our society. Returning the tricks of corporate and commercial strategies using pedestrian and intimate facts, Spooner inverts the system by creating an “IN-company” that produces time and an ongoing warm-up but never a finished product.

Julie Béna, in her ongoing *Have You Seen Pantopon Rose?* series, whose three chapters she has been developing since 2011, keeps repeating, “Until now, it is a true story, I promise,” and, as she says, “You know it’s funny, ’cause the fact I’m telling a ‘true story’ is calling out the fact it could be fake, the possibility I would lie, saying ‘it is true, I promise.’ So I’m saying I’m telling the truth, and I’m also maybe not. Or better, because I tell it is, it must not be.”⁵ This principle of truth effect by quoting real facts is used to produce distance and a critical point of view. Andrea Fraser in *Men on the Line*



Julie Béna, *Have you seen Pantopon Rose? The one-person show*, 2017, performance at ICA London, 2017. Photo: J. Riff



Cally Spooner, *DRAG DRAG SOLO* installation view at Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, 2018. Courtesy: the artist and Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève. Photo: Mathilda Olmi

(2012), as well as in many other performances, like *Official Welcome* (2009), uses quotations and factual discourse. “To quote say the Kabyles is bring back to Life” (2002) is the title of one of her important texts, and it comes from Pierre Bourdieu. We know how Bourdieu looked after the Kabyles’ habits, and especially their villages and social structures, and how they were destroyed by the French army—not just destroyed literally, but also in terms of attempting to impose new systems without studying the actual efficiency of the existing ones. From these tragic events comes tragic analysis of real times (Fraser’s *L’1% c’est moi* [2011] is a good example); using humor as a weapon, Béna and Fraser reactivate a form of “non-tragic” tragedy. “Humor is tragedy plus time,” as Mark Twain famously and supposedly said, defines some ongoing principle.

However, this is a way to understand tragedy not only as a dead-end story, as William Marx has noticed in his investigation *Le Tombeau d’Oedipe, pour une tragédie sans tragique* (2012), as half the lost tragedies were comedies indeed. And a most interesting fact, as Béna has noticed, is Marx remarking that all tragedies are linked, even “owned,” by places, cities, and that none would exist if not “from the ground.” There are the origins, there is the “territory”: “And of course, for me, it strongly resonates, because what I’m writing is from the country, the city. The texts, the words, exist in context, they exist because of the language of the place, of the people I meet. I’m not writing the same stories, characters, or situations in different languages, as I’m not writing the same stories being in L.A. or Vilnius. The context is principal.”⁶ And more precisely, the site of the theater in a Greek city is open to the landscape, nature, and horizon. It is an open space and a performative space; it performs the place.

This is true for comedy and deep humor, and this is true for some conceptual art, and artists such as Dan Graham recognize it completely. Indeed, we could link many conceptual forms, such as the work of Mel Bochner or Sol LeWitt, to a deep spiritual approach coming from certain migrants from Eastern Europe to America in the early 1930s. The same for Jerry Lewis, Mel Brooks, and others who became the first entertainers and had the first TV shows. If we study the forms of the furniture in these early shows and early conceptual and minimal sculptures, we might notice some analogies.

5. Conversation with the author, March 2018.
6. Ibid.



THE HUMAN CONDITION OF OBJECTS:
ANNA WITTENBERG, THAN HUSSEIN CLARK, TYLER COBURN

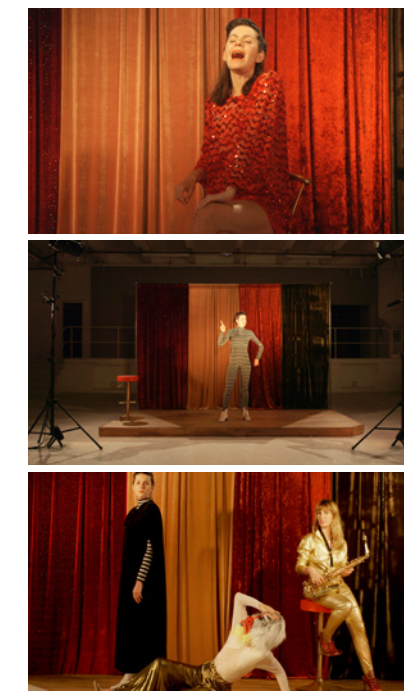
Indeed, one of the etymological roots of “performance” is the old French *perfourner*, which also existed in Middle English—a verb that means “to finish a form, give a shape,” and leads to “furniture.” Than Hussein Clark and Tyler Coburn are making “decadent” furniture or furniture that is non-useful per se but that nevertheless reveals a use. Coburn’s *Ergonomic Objects* (2016) are meant to be used and are comfortable. Clark deals with the double meanings of stage effects, cinematic effects, and the in and out of stage effects. At Silencio (David Lynch’s club) in Paris, his performance *Said the Assassinations* (2017) involved three actresses on stage behind a magnifying mirror, preparing as if backstage—the moment of transformation from a person into a persona, which in Japanese Noh theater is called *kagami no ma*, the moment of “in-between” the face and the mirror. This specific threshold space-place is the one of performance; something is happening, passing from one state to another. Grotesque figures, the dandy ladies resemble the ones in the famous restaurant scene in *Brazil* (Terry Gilliam’s Kafkaesque science fiction movie from 1985, which is not so far from our evolved society), when the pathetic old skins droop as the wrinkled jowls give in to gravity. This is a situated moment, like the one Timothy Morton described in his text *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World* (2013), a moment when one can doubt whether one is actually a person or a mask. A moment in which a replicant can think it is a human, or a human is a replicant, like in the film *Blade Runner* (1992). The mask is the moment of truth for a person.

Here we can think again about the etymology of “person,” which has a juridical meaning (forensic) and can be an entity (a firm) or a human. We all know that *persona* is also an ancient (Latin) word for mask, though which the voice of the actor passes (*per/sonare*). As Béna notes, it refers to a scandal of the speaking body:

Yes, Rose Pantoponne, this character, I built for few years was also mute until the act 3. But it is not because you don’t have the words, that you are defined by others, that you can’t exist. Rose is everywhere, in fact. She is me and you. A present, a past, and a future. And it is super this quote, “the scandal on of the speaking body,” because for me, at the act 3, when finally she “takes” the voice, when she is presenting herself as herself, for the first time, in this costume revealing her body, so tight it is, she starts to speak, suddenly presenting the truth, and the truth is scandalous.⁷

We can think today about the “#MeToo” movement and how mutiny is a strong reflexive weapon, especially for the oppressed. Thinking about Umberto Eco and the *Open Work*, I reread one of its sources, Luigi Pareyson, and was amazed how its view on objects and persons is so meaningful today:

7. Ibid.



Above - Julie Béna, *Have you seen Pantopon Rose? The one-person show* (stills), 2017. Courtesy: the artist; Ghost House; CAC Passerelle Centre d’art contemporain, Brest; Galerie Joseph Tang, Paris
Left - Julie Béna, *Have you seen Pantopon Rose?* installation view at CAC Passerelle Centre d’art contemporain, Brest, 2017. © CAC Passerelle Centre d’art contemporain, Brest. Courtesy: the artist and Galerie Joseph Tang, Paris. Photo: Aurélien Mole
Below - Julie Béna, *Have you seen Pantopon Rose?* (stills), 2015-2017. Courtesy: the artist; CAC Passerelle Centre d’art contemporain, Brest; Galerie Joseph Tang, Paris



Seeing things as “persons” means to confirm the impossibility to reduce persons to “things”: as it is not possible to know persons if they are reduced to objects or if they became necessary parts of our individualities. As well, it is not possible to know things if we don’t personify them, i.e., if we don’t see their originality, by the fact that they are independent and animated. Who is used to reduce persons to “things,” meaning objects, instruments or utensils, put himself in the state of being unable to which unconsciously leads to consider persons as “things.”⁸

We know how persons became objects in the early twentieth century, and this consideration of objecthood and hyper-objecthood by artists today, through the tools of humor and the grotesque, not to mention investigations of the new rules of labor, of seduction and disjunction between efficiency and the symbolic use of art, is an active political weapon.

SCREEN, MASKS, AND FILM, ONSTAGE, ONLINE

Anna Wittenberg’s films are sharp and perform the objects and the subjects. *Skidplate* (2018), a double projection with three sculptures, puts us in the position of active watcher, between the hammer and the anvil. This creates a breach in the flat-screen representation and opens the film to a double presentation, which is a performative activity. Old cars with cobbled-together parts, reused wheels, and skid plates on the back tires to make the machines slide and slip on the asphalt. The auto race with only one car is like a bullfight with one animal, a monstrous engine covered in scars like an old elephant, desperately fighting against the laws of gravity and speed, the aging facts. Wittenberg quotes Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818), and indeed her objects look like bits of things assembled as little Frankenstein monsters. They are a piano bench, a tandem bike without wheels, rocking chairs made from plastic chairs, and improbable tools by which to engage in difficult exercises. Wittenberg doesn’t make it easy. These are objects to think with. They are painful, not restful. That is why they are sculptures, not design. They are sculptural furniture, meant to be performed. The video components of

Skidplate take place as a double projection on two walls face to face in a garage-like gallery in Los Angeles. We imagine Quentin Tarantino’s races, Monte Hellman’s *Two-Lane Blacktop* (1971). We think about the arena.

The film is to be looked at as a strange object-sculpture. It is not autonomous. Our bodies are movable, too—allowed to act. To make a decision. “Do I look right or left?” If something happens here, I won’t see it there. There is always something lost. There is always some discomfort involved in looking. It is not easy. This makes me think about some pieces by Bruce Nauman that put us in the position of being between the hammer and a hard place. Wittenberg’s objects are tools and sculptures. They become sculptures when they are acted upon or activated. If not, they are dead objects.

Skid plates are thick, square plates of steel welded onto rear wheels that prevent the wheels from turning and force the car to slide like a sled. The lore is that they were invented (discovered?) when a couple of L.A. demolition derby guys slid plastic In-N-Out (a SoCal burger chain) trays under their back tires and skidded around the restaurant’s parking lot. Like the old actors in Kurant’s *Cutaways* (2013) in the scene at Monster Joe’s scrap yard, the furniture of the room is made from discarded yet entertaining objects.

Wittenberg’s films are made with abandoned or reused objects, sometimes from theater. The *Maypole* (2017) curtains are theater curtains like the ones used in schools for Thanksgiving plays. The time of theater is the time of ritual. It is a cycle, the same returning always. The time of performance is the one of history, never the same again. The maypole that the eight strange pedestrian non-actors build, turning around, is a



Than Hussein Clark, *Said The Assassinations*, Paris, 2017. With Laura Schuller, Ruth Connick, Catherine Luedtke. Courtesy: the artist; Crèvecoeur, Paris; Mathew, Berlin / New York; VI VII, Oslo. Photo: Hugo Stempczynski



Anna Wittenberg, *Maypole* (still), 2016. Courtesy: the artist

complete failure. The way Wittenberg films the machine is the way a body is filmed for a war scene or a sex scene. Jean-Luc Godard said: “The gestures of work are the gestures of love.” In *Maypole*, Wittenberg uses an actual theater curtain representing nature, trees, and wood, and real actors—who are quite bad actually, but employees. They are men at work, doing a job, which is making this maypole. They don’t act in the sense they don’t incarnate the characters, and this produces a shift in the theatricality. It is a kind of delegated performance and disturbed myth: *Maypole* looks like more an after-drunk party.

From *monumentum* to *momentum*, the ongoing dematerialization of performance seems the moment of post-performance, as a flip of coin. Antiheroic, non-tragic, investigating negative spaces and residues, dealing with what remains not as trash but exformation/extrudation as possible next tools, to dig more deeply.

Anna Wittenberg, *Skid Plate* (stills), 2018. Courtesy: the artist



From left to right - Anna Wittenberg, *Progressive Sidestep*, 2018; *Doggs caution sign*, 2018. *Dog Mod* installation views at BozoMag, Los Angeles, 2018. Courtesy: the artist. Photo: Danny Bowman

8. Luigi Pareyson, *Esthétique. Théorie de la performativité* (1954; repr.: Paris, Editions de la rue d’Ulm, 2007), 218–19.



Anna Wittenberg, *Doggs*, 2018. *Dog Mod* installation views at BozoMag, Los Angeles, 2018. Courtesy: the artist. Photo: Danny Bowman



WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT KEVIN

Lately, a star has fallen. Kevin Spacey is being erased from Ridley Scott's last movie, *All the Money in the World*, replaced by Christopher Plummer. We will not enter here in the specifics of the case, and of course we support and agree with the #MeToo movement, but we take Spacey as a paradigm of our modernity, as a case study. I have been a fan and follower of Spacey's career since *The Usual Suspects* (1995), and for some years have developed a study around the thread of redemption running through the different characters he has enacted. The question of healing and redemption is at stake in different movements—for instance the Care, among others. The first artist to give Spacey a role in her work was Cally Spooner:

In the summer of 2015 I was invited to exhibit in a group show at Lisson Gallery, London. It was called *The boys the girls and the political*, curated by Hana Noorali and Lynton Talbot. I was bingeing at the time on *House of Cards*, season two, developing a fascination with Frank Underwood and Kevin Spacey's exceptional portrayal of this corrupt politician. To legitimize my nightly multiple episode viewings, I thought back to something Richard Sennett talks about in *The Fall of Public Man* [1977]: that public life and politics have a great deal in common with acting. For Sennett this was a positive concept, because a good actor knows how to visit the public sphere wearing a "mask." This mask, a public character of sorts, self-distanciates the actor from his personal immediate needy "self." The public actor is therefore less likely to narcissistically dump his personal life all over a public and communal situation—helpful, given that such narcissism, holds Sennett is seed that could completely erode public life. We therefore have much to learn politically from the good actor: he who can mask his private "self" and carry out a public character that is not an emotional or irrational imposition on others.⁹

9. Cally Spooner's email exchange with the author, March 2018.

KEVIN SPACEY: THE INTERVIEW (EXCERPT)

I would like to propose as my work for the Lisson summer show to interview the actor Kevin Spacey. This would be an interview from me to him about being on stage, climbing into another person's mind and body, about protective acting shields, masking, adrenalin, affective labor, speculation, growth, projection, and the impossibilities of private life, as well as whether lying in public can be a force of imagination...¹⁰ One thing we now know about Kevin Spacey's private life is that he has sexually abused young men, making it very complicated to bring this figure (Kevin Spacey) to the pages of an art magazine, let alone into an artwork, except that he's already very much in an artwork of mine, and yours, and neither you nor I are sure how this should be talked about.¹¹

As an "absent muse," Kevin Spacey has partially joined the "ex-formation" process, and also interests Agnieszka Kurant, who looked at the potential of phantom capital and the political role of editing in *Cutaways*. As the first artist to explicitly use the term "ex-formation" in art, she leads an important investigation about the negative of information and its value. Kevin Spacey is not "valuable" any longer; he has been erased, mostly for financial reasons, out of fear of public boycott. An amazing thing is to replace him by Christopher Plummer, who played the father in the "perfect family" for *The Sound of Music* (1965), whose action takes place in Austria in 1939, just before the Anschluss. Paul McCarthy played this film backward in one of his exhibitions. As Spacey is disappearing from the scene, melting out of the map, his star is still glowing on Hollywood boulevard, point to point with that of Donald Trump! Than Hussein Clark has followed Spacey's master class and develops his own point of view about his bad behavior. We started an ongoing research investigation dealing with these questions, which is developing in several ways, including films, a TV series, workshops, and seminars. It is an open gate to explore what is behind the walls of Dan Graham's *Homes for America* (1966-1989), and consider the furniture as part of the set. Indeed, remember that *perfourmir* is the old etymological root of "performance," meaning to give a form, furnish the interior. Under the mask, under the walls, performance can be politically and critically alive.

Here I've tried to show, explain, and share some elements of an ongoing project in which inchoateness is a main characteristic; the intent is not to label works that exist on their own developments, nor to create a group or a program. It is more an open umbrella to think in another way, making theory in practice and off the main motorways and borderlines—off track. It is a way to breathe and make breaches in univocality, to show how performance has extensions today and is still an open field.



Tyler Coburn, *Ergonomic Futures*, 2016—, *The Eighth Climate* (*What does art do?*) installation views at the 11th Gwangju Biennale, 2016. Courtesy: the artist. Photo: Tyler Coburn



Tyler Coburn, *Ergonomic Futures*, 2016—, *Faisons de l'inconnu un allié* (*Joining Forces with the Unknown*) installation view at Fondation d'entreprise Galeries Lafayette, Paris, 2016. Courtesy: the artist. Photo: Tyler Coburn

Marie de Bruguerolle is an art historian, curator and author. Her work focuses on the history of performance art, from the 1960s to its current state of dematerialisation and absorption by the society of the spectacle. This focus complements her on-going theoretical project, Post Performance Future, supported by ENSBA, Lyon. She has curated exhibitions at many European museums, including CNAC-Le Magasin, Grenoble, where she organized *Where's AI?* (1996), a retrospective of Allen Ruppersberg, in collaboration with Paul McCarthy, and *...and gravity*, an homage to Bas Jan Ader, Wolfgang Stoerchle and Guy de Cointet. In 2004, she organized the first international exhibition of Cointet, *Who's That Guy?*, at MAMCO, Geneva and in 2006, she curated the group exhibition, *Faire des choses avec des mots / Making Words With Things*, at the CRAC in Sete. Featuring works by Cointet, Paul McCarthy, Mike Kelley, and Catherine Sullivan, the show examined art from the angle of theatricality. She was invited by the Carré d'art Musée in Nîmes to curate *From Life* (2005) and Larry Bell's *In Perspective* (2010) which were the first retrospectives of the Californian artists, John Baldessari and Larry Bell, in Europe.

10. Cally Spooner's email exchange with the curators of the Lisson Summer Show, 2015.

11. Cally Spooner's email exchange with the author, March 2018.