

14.00–14.15	Introduction by Catherine Wood and Bojana Cvejić
14.15–14.55	Claire Bishop and Nina Power in conversation
15.00–15.30	<i>Public good will not be curated</i> lecture by Ana Vujanović
15.30–15.40	Q&A with Claire Bishop, Nina Power and Ana Vujanović
15.45–16.10	<i>Observing the Public in the Turbine Hall: A Running Commentary</i> with Catherine Wood and Claire Bishop, edited footage from past Turbine Hall projects*
16.10–16.35	BREAK and choreographic experiments, Turbine Hall
16.35–17.05	Remarks following the visit to the Turbine Hall with Bojana Cvejić and Christine De Smedt
17.05–17.45	<i>Exploded Views</i> lecture by Goran Sergej Pristaš with Q&A
17.45–18.00	BREAK
18.00–19.20	Screening of <i>Yugoslavia, how ideology moved our collective body</i> 2013 by Marta Popivoda, followed by Q&A
19.20–19.30	Final remarks by Bojana Cvejić

* Projects from *UBS Openings: The Long Weekend* and *The Unilever Series*, in order of appearance, including *Group of Persons Facing a Wall* by Santiago Sierra, 2002 as part of *The Living Currency*, 2008; *Tatlin's Whisper #5* by Tania Bruguera, as part of *The Living Currency*, 2008; *The Sunflower Seeds* by Ai Wei Wei, 2005; *1000* by Paola Pivi, 2009; *Bodyspacemotionthings* by Robert Morris, 2009; *Test Site* by Carsten Höller, 2006–07; *Shibboleth IV* by Doris Salcedo, 2007; *One Pound Turbo Market* by Surasi Kusolwong, 2006; *Merma Never Dies* by Joan Baixas, *Grotesque Puppets* by Joan Miró's, 2006; *Veja meu Bem* by Marepe, 2007; *The Weather Project* by Olafur Eliasson, 2003

Spatial Confessions – Speaking Part is conceived by Bojana Cvejić in discussion with Tate Modern's curatorial team.

BMW Tate Live is curated by Catherine Wood, Curator, Contemporary Art and Performance and Capucine Perrot, Assistant Curator, Tate Modern.

BMW Tate Live is a partnership between BMW and Tate, which focuses on performance, interdisciplinary art and curating digital space.



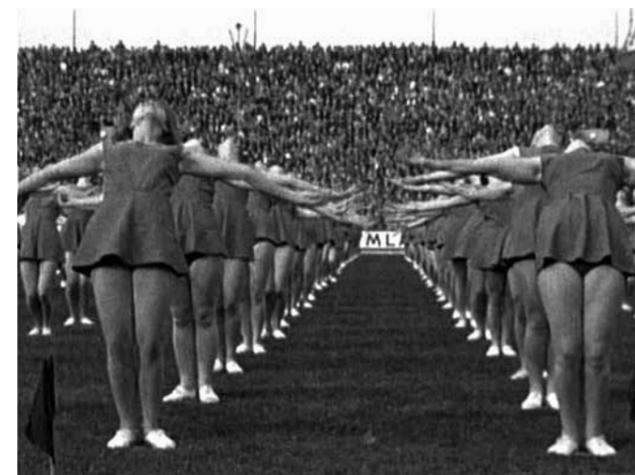
Spatial Confessions – Speaking Part

Is the public going to be instituted?

Saturday 24 May 2014, 14.00–19.30

Tate Modern, Starr Auditorium

Part of the series: BMW Tate Live 2014



As part of *Spatial Confessions (On the question of instituting the public)* a four-day programme that examines publicness in places exhibiting contemporary art, this conference addresses the question of the public with talks, debates and screenings.

Ever since it was established in nineteenth century Europe, the bourgeois public sphere fosters the capacity of individuals to exercise and monitor the performative aspects of their own conduct in public.

Museums have been the spaces in which actions, words, deeds, gestures, and bodily movements of citizens are the aesthetic expressions that constitute the public sphere.

Recently, venues of contemporary art have accommodated performance and dance into their spaces ranging from spectacular immersive environments to clandestine and politically controversial gestures. What is distinctive about how the public is performed in art institutions today?

What are the terms and positions in which artists, dramaturges, critics, cultural workers and theorists, curators and public officials conceive of the public arising from contemporary art?

Can large spaces in public institutions of contemporary art provide the public space that the cities lack?

What can be done on the part of the contemporary art venues for these spaces to participate in the public sphere?

Open Letter

For the stage for one of his farewell speeches two months before resigning from the post of prime minister and leader of the Labour party, Tony Blair chose the Tate Modern's Turbine Hall, thereby addressing Tate Modern as the apogee of success in the decade of New Labour and mirroring the 'art gains' of hugely increased visitor numbers thanks to the free admission policy, which, in Blair's words, made 'museums feel different', that is, 'confident, assertive, creative and live'. By no means is it at odds with the liberal democratic heritage of the public sphere for the outgoing leader to deliver the Culture and Creativity Report in 2007 in a museum of contemporary art. In stating that 'the way the cultural sector develops is crucial to the way the country develops', Blair reminds us of the formation of the bourgeois public sphere in the nineteenth century via public institutions as spaces of public assembly that civilise the crowd by way of polite and rational debate.

As Tony Bennett demonstrated in his seminal study *The Birth of Museum* (1995), the modern museum's instruction of the public is, among other functions, an instrument for managing social behaviour. Ever since it was established, the liberal democratic public sphere exercises the capacity of individuals to internalise and perpetuate the techniques of self-monitoring the performative aspects of their conduct. If the public is instilled and rehearsed by performance, where actions, words, deeds, gestures and bodily movements of citizens count as an aesthetic and performative mode of ideology in public space, then, we might ask, what is distinctive about the 'performances' of the public in art institutions today? In what terms do museums of contemporary art, by welcoming performing arts into its spaces or fusing media in spectacular immersive environments, conceive of public space as a condition for the public sphere?

While modern museums sought to differentiate the public by specializing and classifying knowledge into so many varieties of expertise, the neoliberal turn in cultural policy aligns contemporaneity with openness, inclusiveness and multicultural diversity as well as a synchronic presentism of the visitors' experience within the focus of the contemporary art institutions' mission. Museums of contemporary art aren't alone in this. They reflect broader changes in the current (Post-Fordist) form of capitalism, whose immaterial products are experiences and expressions of subjectivity. The significant shift from the auratic contemplation of the object to the participation in

performance, situation, event or (learning) environment, featured as a key term in the policy of institutions, doesn't mean that the public operates on more collectivist than individualist grounds. There is an uneasy yet intriguing sense of ambivalence to be reflected upon regarding the position of the visitor who is inducted into the museal performance and its vast open public spaces: what kind of publicness is implicated by masses of visitors encouraged to develop a 'personal perspective' or creative, self-expressive response? A supersized venue of post-industrial architecture like the Turbine Hall can at once appear as a site of carnivalisation with a festival-like temporality of events and a domesticated playground of family activities. But it can also be an empty stage, the idleness of which inspires a flashmob or even a political action. The constant refashioning of the appearance of such public spaces, from being a container of monumental sculpture to resembling a public plaza, from acting as a performance stage to symbolising a shelter, raises the question of the potential of deregulated, purposeless openness. Claire Bishop has recently argued in favor of museum practices that present their visitors with 'arguments and positions to read or contest' (*Radical Museology*, 2013), which seems to revive the demand for political discursive publicness in the museum. The privatisation of the cultural sector, which introduces corporate logic and funding into public institutions, often under the fiscal imperative of economic sustainability, aids in the dismantling of the political commitment to art as a public good. In the wake of protests and riots, which can be witnessed as feeble signs of the rise of a politically bewildered public, we might also ask how, in which political and aesthetic terms and techniques from the varying positions and perspectives of artists, curators, critics, theorists and cultural workers, do public institutions of contemporary art partake in a more political, discursive public sphere.

Saturday the 24th of May will feature a day of talks, debates, film screenings and commentaries addressing the questions above as the 'speaking part' of a four-day-long programme that includes choreographic experiments in the Turbine Hall and a performance in the BMW Tate Live room. An opportunity to think out loud together in a setting less formal than a conference.

Bojana Cvejić, February 2014

Biographies

Claire Bishop is a Professor in the Ph.D. Program in Art History at CUNY Graduate Center in New York. Her publications include *Installation Art: A Critical History* (2005), *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (2012), and *Radical Museology, or, What's Contemporary in Museums of Contemporary Art?* (2013). She is a regular contributor to Artforum.

Bojana Cvejić is a performance theorist and performance maker based in Brussels. Aco-founding member of TkH editorial collective (www.tkh-generator.net), Cvejić is also co-author and dramaturg in many dance and theatre performances since 1996, and has written several books (*Choreographing Problems: Expressive Concepts in European Contemporary Dance and Performance*, Palgrave, upcoming).

Marta Popivoda is a filmmaker, video artist and a cultural worker. Her artistic and cultural work explore concerns with the discursive power structure of the contemporary art world as well as with the Yugoslav cultural and political sphere. Popivoda is a member of the editorial collective TkH (Walking Theory).

Nina Power is Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Roehampton and Tutor in Critical Writing in Art & Design at the Royal College of Art. She has written widely on European philosophy and politics.

Goran Sergej Pristaš is a dramaturgist and Associate Professor at the Academy of Dramatic Arts, University of Zagreb. He is co-founder and member of BADco., a performing arts collective and was the first editor-in-chief (1996–2007) of *Frakcija*, a magazine for the performing arts. He was one of the initiators of the project Zagreb – Cultural Kapital of Europe 3000. With his projects and collaborations (BADco., *Frakcija*) he has participated in the Venice Biennale (2011), Documenta 12, ARCO and numerous festivals and conferences. Along with Bojana Cvejić, Pristaš co-edited 'Parallel Slalom. A Lexicon of Non-aligned Poetics', TkH/CDU, Beograd-Zagreb 2013).

Christine De Smedt is a dancer and performer. Her artistic practice draws upon dance, performance and choreography. From 1991 until 2012 De Smedt was a member of the ballets C de la B dance company, performing her own work since 1993. She is currently also pedagogical coordinator at the Brussels-based dance school the Performing Arts Research and Training Studios.

Ana Vujanović is a freelance cultural worker in the fields of contemporary performing arts and culture. She is a cofounding member of the editorial collective of TkH (Walking Theory), the Belgrade-based theoretical-artistic platform, and chief editor of TkH journal for performing arts theory. She publishes regularly in journals and collections and is author of four books, most recently *Public Sphere by Performance* with Bojana Cvejić (b_books: Berlin, 2012). She is currently international visiting professor at the Dept. for Human Movement/ Performance Studies, University of Hamburg.

Catherine Wood is Curator of Contemporary Art and Performance, Tate Modern.