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A SPOKEN WORD EXHIBITION AND A SERIES OF
WORD

SPOKEN
RETROSPECTIVES

Curated by Mathieu Copeland
PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

Vito Acconci offers, for the exhibition, the description of an unrealised building for Antarctica, a building that only exist in the mind of who gets to hear its description, a piece where the listener generates in his or hers private mental space the feeling of an architecture.
About the

The piece by the late **James Lee Byars** replays upon his quest for perfection, with a piece that insists that both the one who says and the one who hears become active protagonist in the generation of perfection itself.

Artist and writer **Douglas Coupland's** contribution is, akin to all the pieces, to be experienced only aurally as a shared engagements, and offers hundreds of spams as we all receive, as so many modern truisms.

Each day of the exhibition, **Nick Currie (aka Momus)** releases with his on going piece 'Bob Newart' where on demand, gallery staff at the Swiss Institute will whisper to visitors nonsensical jokes emailed each day.

For **Karl Holmqvist's** work the play by Jean Cocteau *La Voix Humaine (The Human Voice)* will be repeated (and not performed!) throughout the duration of the exhibition, exacerbating the length and the pauses of the original text. Holmqvist, whom in his own words hates the faggoty pretentiousness of Cocteau ('love conquers hate—everything comes to those who wait'), uses readers of both sexes acting as a reminder of the sex-change that took place in 1949 when actor Klaus Kinski played this one-act play that was written for an actress.

Maurizio Nannucci through his iconic piece *MORE THAN MEETS THE EYES* insists on the nature of an exhibition, through the translation and transposition that happens when one is said what one does not see, where the movement is to be seen but the piece is to be heard. An artwork, as all others in a spoken word exhibition, that you see as you hear it!

Yoko Ono insists with her piece on the concept of the word of mouth, highlighting the context of how words are spread, yet without framing any of these very words. A word of mouth piece that has in its very roots its dissemination mechanism, generating a generous artwork that all can share, and repeat.

Mai-Thu Perret, whose concerns for words and literacy are at the roots of her novel in writing, deals with the matter of the words in the context of a commune, at least a temporary commune created between the one who says and the one who listens.

Emilio Prini through his piece both reflects upon the nature of the exchange with, literally, an invitation to reconsider an everyday action only exchanged, as one would speak what one was to read.

Tomas Vanek creates a new distributive situation, by offering several sentences from his on-going project *Particip n°39* each day of the exhibition. All taken from

the collected statements of single sentences that we all experience - that are most familiar to everybody (please send similar statements to tomas.vanek@cbox.cz). Playing on the nature of the sentences and the gender they adopt through the reader, in their accumulation these sentences construct the work, as they contribute to an exhibition in process.

Lawrence Weiner's piece *AS LONG AS IT LASTS*, verbalises its title and as such offers consideration of the nature of the work (after all, the work need not be realised!), and highlights the fundamental principle embedded in all spoken word works; that they only last the time it takes to tell them.

Whenever asked to hear the piece by **Ian Wilson**, the gallery staff will engage the word 'time'. Playing on the time of a piece (*Time* being Wilson's first discussion piece from 1968), the work insists on the main constituent that is ultimately at the core of all spoken word pieces: time.

Through his voice and through his words, **Gustav Metzger** presents the whole accumulation of his artistic career until now days, generating a mental exhibition in the mind of the one who hears it. Bribes of past elements dissolved that mostly do not exist any longer, (and have only been very briefly). An accumulation of moments of time, artworks & histories only existing through the voice, through the spoken word. A retrospective that only exist the time it takes to hear it within an exhibition. To quote Metzger, "Auto Destructive Art ends up with nothing, here we begin with nothing". A spoken word retrospective begins with everything and produces nothing more, only everything.