

A DOCUMENTATION DOCUMENT

Malin Arnell

June 6

Today is not the day of an opening, but it is the first day the show is open to the public, to the audience. I'm from now on becoming audience, part of an audience I yet don't know. This is my work.

Remember that, I say to myself.

For some two weeks I've been in-between having a cold and not. Yesterday I got knocked over and stayed in bed all day. I had to cancel therapy. First time during this one and a half year period, I think.

I stay in the sofa under the blanket with a cup of ginger and lemon tea by my side. Alone, watching something in the computer. Not taking part. Not showing up. A non-present audience in presence.

June 7

Don't remember the opening hours. Need to rest some more. 39th Street is too far. Need to leave the house. I need to feel how it feels out there. Not far.

Walking Kent Ave. north. Find friends in line. Join the line. Occupying the whole sidewalk. The line is long, its not even noon. We are all waiting to get in to the Domino Sugar Factory to take part of the first large-scale, public project by Kara Walker presented by CreativeTime. A Subtlety or the Marvelous Sugar Baby. It's not the first day and it's not the last. Somewhere in between and we are many and it is free entrance. We had to sign an agreement before entering. Agree on the terms. Walk in.

Becoming audience together.

The building. Enormous. The smell of burnt sugar. Bodies. Those of flesh and bone and those made of sugar. Brown sugar bodies, smaller, collecting dripping sugar. One huge white sugar body and then all these other ones trying to find their way through this space filled with a critical call. A story made trough sugar. The sweet taste of exploration. A desire to be part. To be on the right side. Being aware. Being the one that cares. Being the ones that take responsibility.

We all fail. I just want to suck those white enormous tits too. There will be no more exploitation of our shared resources and bodies. Instead I hide my cough into my armpit and leave.

June 8

I forgot. For a moment I forgot.

June 9

The show is closed. I could maybe go there. As an artist. Not as an audience. It's not

the time for viewing or taking part.

Instead I go to the bank. Chase let me open an account even if I don't have a social security number. I could show them that I have an account at ConEd. That I pay the electrical bill where I stay. I'm trustworthy, or am I? For what and for whom, I wonder?

Waiting in the corner of Havemeyer St. and Broadway Ave. standing outside McDonald's, thinking this is today's location. People are passing me. Sometimes standing next to me. Talking Spanish or languages that I'm less familiar with. I hear some Swedish words passing by. Recognize and continue to concentrate on what is happening. I move a bit from one side to the other. On Havermyer St. a van is parked. It's an information van from Medicaid. Keeping America Healthy. That's all we need to know.

I do engage, I watch.

June 10

I have been invited to be part of a performance event at Paço das Artes in São Paulo in October. Today I had to decide which date I'm going to fly back and forth. Leaving, September 16. Arriving back, October 10.

I did not get the grant that I applied for, from the Swedish IASPIS, to cover my trip and my participation. The budget is tight. The space is enormous.

*What are we not allowed to do in/with the space or with ourselves, or the audience?
Are there any limitations we need to take in to account?*

*love,
Malin*

I ask for permission to act, to act within the framework. To activate. The building?
The concrete floor? The trees? Who is the audience?

Some weeks ago I was sitting in a circle with a group of lives, saying. When I perform I am the audience!

- How do you mean?

- I don't know, I just think that is important!

I don't know why it's so hard for me to answer, to find the words to describe. I don't trust them. The words. I don't trust that it will make sense, and I'm better off if it doesn't.

June 11

Slowly woke up this morning while someone was licking my anus.

Later I lay in the sofa reading a text by Petra Sabisch, "Relation 3: the Relation with the Audience". She asks the question: "What is it that is actually performed in a performance?"

Further down in the text she claims that passivity is not the opposite of action, and watching is not the opposite of doing.

What is my distant to you as a reader? To me as a writer? I watch you through the words. I cannot see you. I don't want to.

June 12

What do we mean when we use the word audience? To be an audience? To be the audience? To be part of an audience? or to be a spectator?

On the way to therapy I was thinking about how to be an audience in my own therapy session. Then I realize that that is what happens every time.

June 13

Fuck you! A voice in the room speaks out. It's not directed to me. It enters in to my ears and it gets stuck there as an energy, as a feeling that spreads through the body. It's a relationship towards the surrounding within us. It affects me. It has nothing to do with me.

Speak up! Let your voice be heard. Nothing changes. Everything changes all the time. Now, different. Something has moved, is moving. Finding connections. Colliding. We are.

June 14

When will you come and be the audience? Someone asks me. I'm the audience all the time, I answer. There is no beginning, there is no end.

June 15

Today someone drove me to the beach. Someone said that the air and the sun would be good for me. Hidden under the umbrella. Starred out over the ocean.

-Look, look, someone says, hitting me on the arm. There is a whale jumping out there in the ocean, look!

I see a whale. We see a whale. The whole whale's body in the air! My body not moving, heavy against the sand.

June 16

I fell asleep on the sofa in the afternoon. After that I went with C to have a pizza at Driggs Ave. Sitting by the open window we watch the people coming out from the subway. Spreading out in all direction. On a screen opposite, the World Cup in soccer. USA against Ghana.

June 17

Today I went to Dr. Gu. My friend J made an appointment. I'm too afraid to make phone calls.

Dr. Gu tells me that I have bronchitis. I get antibiotics. But maybe I'm also allergic. Maybe I'm allergic to my cat Division. That would be the saddest. I will take my

medication and wait for the results of the blood test.

June 18

Today I got to dog sit my friend S's dog Kobe. We were hanging out in the loft, then we took a walk to the McCarren Park. We were watching the dogs together.

Reading: „I am on the edge of the crowd, at the periphery; but belong to it; I am attached to it by one of my extremities, a hand or a foot. /.../To be fully part of the crowd and at the same time completely outside it, removed from it; to be on the edge, to take a walk like Virginia Wolf (never again say, 'I am this, I am that.')

Sitting in the dog park letting my gaze drift, dreaming of being a pack of wolves, a multiplicity.

June 19

Today is the day of the reception.

I walk to the therapy. I want to be prepared but lost the track. The elevator guy now remembers me and knows that I'm going of on the 3rd floor. Nowadays I'm always on time for my therapy.

Did I really want to go to the reception? No. Or maybe. Or actually I did want to go. I went.

June 20

Yesterday at the reception, did the photographer take pictures of me as an artist in the show or as part of the audience?

Did the curator pretended that she didn't know me, as I was just one among many in the audience or did she forgot I was one of the artist in the show, one of the ones she invited to be part of the show. Did I become invisible by occupying two positions? Or was this part of the failure, not to get recognized? Invisible both as an artist and as an audience. I got paid though, I did. In the end I did not get the \$300 we had agreed on. When my work no longer includes a scheduled event, the fee became \$200.

What does this do with our understanding of an event?

I imagine the piece to be an event itself. But to count as such it seems to need a beginning and an end, a time and location. An invited audience. That is what seems to be required to get the extra \$100.

I know, I should have maybe said something about that I do not share this understanding of an event. I did not. Instead I asked to not be listed in the event list. No money. No listings.

Nothing

or everything, always, all over, everywhere.

June 21

„A political difference is always on the shore of its own disappearance.“²

June 22

Sitting on the J train. On my way to Rockaway. Watching out through the windows. We are above the ground. No dark tunnels to get lost in. Nowhere to hide.

June 23

Moving through the materials. Moving through the method of alignment. I do not represent the audience.

“The unexpected can be expected /.../ to perform what is infinitely improbable.”³

June 24

To follow is to initiate. Using the saw. On my knees. Bending over. Everything is temporary. All the angles are queer. Leaning.

Against each other we push ourselves.

June 25

Social space. Spatial space. Sociological temporalities.

J moves in the room. Moves the room. The room moves us. I go to the bathroom to fill up the water pitcher. On the way back I pour water down J’s throat, it overflows and spills all over.

„The body becomes a turbulent performative occasion, one that both constrains and enables action qua embodied situatedness and extension.“⁴

E reached up her hand: why don’t we just ask the questions instead of assuming that or this?

„Choreography can also be more clearly define in its sociological dimension, by examining the order of movements in its social and physical temporality and cultural spatiality and in terms of the rhythm of taking part and involvement.“⁵

June 26

Having dinner with Z. Try to tell the story. Tell my story. I just have these short anecdotes to share. Harsh and straight forward.

(I don’t even trust the “my”, how is it possible to talk from “here” which is not just “I” as mine.)

Trying it out.

2 Jacques Rancière, *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*, 2010, p. 39

3 Hannah Arendt, *Human Condition*, 1998, p. 178

4 Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou, *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political*, 2013, p. 178

5 Gabriele Klein, *The (Micro-) Politics of Social Choreography Aesthetic and Political Strategies of Protest and Participation, Dance, Politics & Co-immunity*, ed. Gerald Siegmund and Stefan Hölscher, 2013, p. 208.

I'm not performing as the audience. My piece is not a performance. It's not about performance. It might include aspects of performativity, presence and absence. An audience is a group of people who participate in... Particular (real) audiences, Immediate audiences, Mediated audiences, Theoretical (imagined) audiences, Self as audience, Universal audience, Ideal audience, Implied audience

Questions: When do we become the audience? How does it happen? When we enter the space or when we listen to someone telling a story about the work or event?

I'm present. Or absent. Or both at the same time. "Presence, in its modality of becoming present to one another, can be an occasion of critical displacement."⁶

June 27

E is screening her video piece. Working title: Time square. We gathered. Lay down on the floor rest my head against the structure. The sound of drums colliding with the flickering light from all the billboards. The camera turns around. Looks at itself through another lens. Mirrors. Shopping windows. Street corners. Cinemas. Another time still flickering.

June 28

- What up next?

- I think I need to focus on finishing my dissertation work!

June 29

Bike to Riis Beach; Kent Ave, Franklin Ave, Bedford Ave, Avenue N, Avenue U, Ryder St, Avenue V, Hendrickson St, Beach 169th St, Beach Channel Dr Cir., and back.

June 30

With friends at an opening at MAD. Top floor bar. When we enter from the elevator five bodies are laying on the floor pressed against the opposite wall. I feel connected.

On the floor a square are outlined with tape.

July 1

Last event. Sit down in the old red velvet cinema chairs constellations again. Move around.

The text about my piece in the "Checklist: as of June 7th, 2014, 5:58" is changed as I asked it to be.

Malin Arnell, *Audience or one of the crowd*. During June 6-July 3 2014, Arnell will become part of the audience at EFA in order to think about the negotiation of passivity/activity of audience in relation to objects, bodies and live events.

6 Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou, *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political*, 2013, p. 14

Maybe I was not clear enough, but I'm not performing. There is no performance taking place in this work. This "I" is not performing as an "audience." The audiences don't need to be surrendered by quotation marks.

Instead I offer you to grab my ass and feel the meat.

July 2

Tomorrow is the last day of the exhibition. Then the de-installation begins. How do I de-install a becoming? Do I really want to de-install this work? Can it be de-installed? I give it here to you.

I give my senses away aligning them with the ending.

July 3

In the end this was the starting point:

October 15th 2011. I was one of the crowd. Among friends on 46th street. OWS at Time Square. We were there to make our voices heard, to mark space with our bodies. At 7pm the NYPD arrived. They formed a line across 46th street and physically pushed us west towards Sixth Avenue. I decided to watch the back of the crowd with the camera in my hand. I became the audience. Recorded my friends and other lives, who decided to hold on to the street and to scream: „this is a non violent protest“ „this is a non violent protest“ „this is a non violent protest“. First I was a demonstrator, then I became an audience, and then I turned into a criminal. They used the plastic handcuffs around my wrists and pushed me into one of the NYPD vans. We were 70 lives that got arrested that evening. We were no longer part of the crowd.

If we are going to continue we need to trust each other.
We will never be a save space.

EPILOGUE

July 11

Arrived in my inbox today. A closure email.

„Hej all..

Just a note to say that we are (officially) de-installed from the space at EFA!“

Malin Arnell, Brooklyn, July 11, 2014