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Press release:

Word Event – Group show

Curated by Maxine Kopsa & Roos Gortzak

With:

André Avelās, Stuart Bailey & Frances Stark, Becky Beasley, Walead Beshty, Julia Born & Alexandra Bachzetsis, George Brecht, James Lee Byars, Paul Elliman, Aurelién Froment, Dora García, Will Holder, Alon Levin, Amalia Pica, Falke Pisano, Michael Portnoy, Elizabeth Price, Mandla Reuter, Dexter Sinister, Sue Tompkins, Edward Underwood, Emily Wardill

Press preview:

Friday, June 27, 2008, 11am

Opening:

Saturday, June 28, 2008, 7pm

Duration:

June 29 – August 31, 2008

Opening hours:

TUE/WED/FRI 11am-6pm, THU 11am-8.30pm,

SAT/SUN 11am-5pm

Can a gesture be a word?

Word Event looks at a select group of artists who carry on a tradition of subversive methodology in their practice and attitude.

Word Event is a multi-level cross-sectioned exhibition of contemporary works, events, performances and informances, scores, printed matter and film. Taking George Brecht's 'Word Event' (1961), a handwritten Event Card, and James Lee Byars' 'The Golden Hole for Speech (The Perfect Whisper)' (1974/1981), an abstract invitation for speech, as its starting points, the exhibition attempts to displace itself by purposely seeking out confrontation and synchronization thus landing in the exhibition space as an active dialogue. *Word Event* points to a possible return of a fluxus sensibility via a new, contemporary, proverbial linguistic turn.

Artists today - or more precisely, 'cultural producers' - are reactivating a language based and, specifically, narrative based practice. Creating room for conversation and leveling the hierarchy of production between sketch, thought and product, this linguistic turn approaches the surface of the metaphorical page as an 'exchange surface', 'as a space of shift between different mediums, in which, as Rancière puts it, "signs become forms and forms become acts." (1)

Works by the artists in *Word Event* contain an active 'displacement' (or exchange) between word and image, the narrative and the picture, which occurs on many levels, in different media - from the more ephemeral to the concrete, as rumours, scripts, instructions, lectures, posters, objects and a seance. A sculpture turns into a conversation, a lecture into a series of posters, the unassuming viewer into a story; he receives directives by photographs, listens to a score purposefully mirrored while gambling to new rules under the watchful eyes of the Jack of Spades. *Word Event* is

the happy hijacking of space by language where installations, film, the stage, the book and sound live together in one converged setting.

(1) Quoted from 'The Space of Words' by Christophe Gallois, Metropolis M, nr 2, 2008, who cites Rancière's *L'Espace des mots*, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nantes, 2005, p. 13, translation by Christophe Gallois.

A series of **performances** will take place on the opening night, **Saturday, June 28, 2008:**

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| 7 - 9pm | Abstract gambling at the solid felt table with Dir. of Behavior,
Michael Portnoy |
| 7.30pm | Performance by André Avelās |
| 8pm | <i>John Cage: Indeterminacy*</i> , recited by Will Holder and accompanied
by Falke Pisano's <i>A Sculpture Turning Into a Conversation</i> |

This exhibition has been generously supported by:
Annemarie Burckhardt