PERFORM REPEAT RECORD

LIVE ART IN HISTORY AMELIA JONES & ADRIAN HEATHFIELD

Perform, Repeat, Record

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Chapter 4

Can Photographs Make It So? Repeated Outbreaks of VALIE EXPORT'S Genital Panic since 1969

Mechtild Widrich

"Presence," in its dual significance of immediacy and being in the right place at the right time, has long been considered the key term for artists and historians conceptualizing performance art. In recent years, however, the intense interest in the status of the documentation of performances – mostly photographs and films – has challenged the dominance of this term. While some dismiss these documents as commodification of an originally irreproducible encounter between the performer's and the audience's bodily presence, others have concluded that the document is an equal ally or even a privileged link between performer and the public. Simultaneously, artists have begun to destabilize the one-time experience of performance art by re-enacting their own or their colleagues' works. Mike Kelley and Paul McCarthy's desublimatory look at the 1970s in their *Fresh Acconci Portfolio* from 1996 (in which they hire aspiring Hollywood actors to redo key Acconci works), Dan Graham's reflection on his own 1975 videotaped performance *Performer/Audience/Mirror* under the title *Video/Architecture/Performance* in 1995, and Yoko Ono's redoing of her most famous performance, the mid-1960s *Cut Piece*, in a small theater in Paris in 2003 as a protest against the war in Iraq are some of the most prominent examples of this recent trend.

In my case study, an "action" by Austrian artist VALIE EXPORT from 1969 that was re-performed by Marina Abramović in 2005, I will neither advocate "presentness," nor attempt to efface all differences between mediated and unmediated modes of interaction. Rather, I will show how ephemeral art practices create more than just one performative moment. We need to differentiate discrete levels of mediation, without simply favoring one of them a priori. Considerations of medium specificity do not play a prominent role in my discussion – though photographic practice is important – because labels such as "photo-performance,"

or "performance for the camera" do more to obscure the complexity of the performative action that unfolds than to reveal the actual dynamics of the interaction between the piece, its context, and its audience(s).

Therefore, I will draw upon another set of "specificities," namely reception, history, and memory. These terms are neither interchangeable nor strict analogues, although they fuse at times to play their part in the field of representation. Because of its centrality to the historical reception of live art, the document will surface in all of these settings – and with it the question of whether it is self-contained or discursive in its effects and to what extent it can reach its own audience. In my reading of re-performance, the body in public will become legible as a monument to past eventness, participating in the performative unfolding of the so-called original rather than offering a belated repetition.

First, let me address the construction of presence where it is most emphatically asserted: in a catalogue text on Marina Abramović, performance scholar RoseLee Goldberg finds "presence" to be the artist's "overriding obsession."[1] Indeed, Abramović has been famous since the 1970s for exhausting, often dangerous performances, some of which have depended on direct audience participation – for example *Rhythm 0*, 1974, in which the spectators were asked to use tools, among them knives, a gun with one bullet, and scissors, on the "objectified" body of the artist, until the performance ended in disarray.

In the fall of 2005, Abramović staged and re-performed six performances of the 1960s and 1970s, five of which were initially not her own, together with a newly created performance, under the title *Seven Easy Pieces*. Among the chosen pieces were Joseph Beuys' 1965 *How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare*, Bruce Nauman's 1974 *Body Pressure*, and EXPORT's *Genital Panic*. One could read these re-enactments along the lines sketched out by Goldberg, arguing that Abramović replaced the body of the original performer with her own, painstakingly redoing the action decades after the fact, in order to overcome (for herself and the audience) the most obvious limitation of performance art, namely the unavailability of the "original" experience for all those not present at the earlier event. But things are not so simple. An investigation of the different relocations and re-emergences of *Genital Panic*, from its first occurrence in 1969 to Abramović's re-enactment in the Rotunda of the Guggenheim Museum in 2005, will allow me to interrogate the concept that the live act provides unmediated access to performance through the artist's body.

Performative Panic Attacks

It is said that, in 1969, VALIE EXPORT went into a cinema in Munich, wearing jeans with a triangular cutout in the pubic area. Once inside the auditorium, she walked slowly through the rows, with her "crotch and [the audience's] nose on the same level."[2] The intention of this "action," as EXPORT herself described it, was to confront the voyeuristic male moviegoer with a "real" female body, instead of the mediated one that could be consumed clandestinely – thus anticipating and inverting Laura Mulvey's famous 1975 feminist manifesto "Visual

VALIE EXPORT, *Action Pants: Genital Panic*, 1969. Photo: Peter Hassmann. Courtesy Charim Galerie, Vienna.

Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" by several years. "People in the back of the cinema got up and fled the situation, because they were afraid I would come up to them as well," EXPORT recalled in a recent interview, thus confirming that the titular "panic" had in fact taken place, and stressing that the presence of the real woman was pivotal.[3]

Let us examine the images associated with this "action" of VALIE EXPORT's more closely. Two of them became the stand-ins for *Genital Panic* in surveys of postwar art throughout Europe and the United States. Taken in 1969, one photograph shows EXPORT, with teased hair, seated on a bench outside what looks like a house in rural Austria, with bare feet, her crotch in the center of the composition, pointing a machine gun in the general direction of the camera. In the second photograph we see EXPORT inside the same building, sitting with one leg propped aggressively on the wooden crossbeam of a second chair, thus emphasizing her pubic area, the gun's barrel directed at the ceiling. A third photograph, with EXPORT standing in front of the bench, has also been published in recent years.[4]

None of the photographs is a document taken during the actual performance. None tries to re-stage the ostensible setting of the performance. On the contrary, all three focus on the carefully posed artist, exchanging the cinema in the metropolis for a suburban milieu – in fact the studio of the photographer, Peter Hassmann, located on the northern outskirts of Vienna. The compositions resemble movie posters, while the grainy texture links them

to the mid-twentieth-century tradition of documentary photography. They seem to be a distillation of the *idea* of the action rather than film stills, and, given the iconic nature of the images, it is no surprise that Hassmann became locally famous at the time for political advertisements commissioned by the Austrian Socialist Party (SPÖ).[5]

The photographs are detached from the supposed location of the original performance, begging the question of how we know what took place during the action. Thus this particular case reflects larger issues attendant on any study of live art: how does one link textual or verbal descriptions of the event, which often circulate in conflicting versions, with the few documentary images or films that remain? What, in short, does the *picture* have to do with the *narrative explanation* of the event? Accounts of *Genital Panic* from the time of its execution do not exist, which is surprising, given the fact that EXPORT received extensive, often outraged press coverage for other actions such as *Touch Cinema* in 1968. EXPORT's own extant accounts tend to appear a few years later. Take the following interview from 1979, in which EXPORT describes the situation in a way that closely follows the photographs in some respects (supplying a gun) while elaborating on other aspects of the 1969 performance (the movie theater):

> Genital Panic was performed in a Munich theater that showed pornographic films. I was dressed in a sweater and pants with the crotch completely cut away. I carried a machine gun. Between films I told the audience that they had come to this particular theater to see sexual films. Now, actual genitalia was available, and they could do anything they wanted to it.[6]

Twenty years later, however, EXPORT renounced this combative stance, stating: "I never went in a cinema in which pornographic movies are shown, and NEVER with a gun in my hand," a position she confirmed in an interview in February 2007, contradicting her own 1979 description of the event and instilling confusion about the origin of the description of the theater as "pornographic." Almost parenthetically, EXPORT remarked that if she had actually gone into the theater with a gun, "[t]he security would have shot me."[7] The weapon in the photograph - confirmed by Hassmann to have been an actual firearm - seems unlikely indeed to have been wielded in public, given the politically tense German climate of the time, with the terrorist Red Army Faction about to launch their first attacks, and particularly in conservative Bavaria.[8]

What are we to make of these multiple revisions, besides the commonplace that art historians should not trust the oral accounts of artists or interviewers, or, more accurately, should not trust published narratives claiming to be artists' oral accounts? Most conspicuous is the correlation of EXPORT's 1979 interview to the photo-pieces featuring the machine gun, a prop that appeared also in Abramović's re-performance in 2005. If EXPORT could not have used the gun in public, then is Abramović's gun an *Ergänzung* (addition, or replenishment) to the 1969 performance, as EXPORT characterized it when asked about Abramović's re-

Marina Abramović performing VALIE EXPORT, *Action Pants; Genital Panic*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 2005, photograph by Kathryn Carr.

enactment?[9] Abramović's use of the weapon clearly derives from the photographs, and her stance is an exact merging of EXPORT's in the images.

I will return to the significance of the machine gun in a moment. First, however, I want to propose that EXPORT's 1979 account of her own piece is not simply a true or false statement; rather we have to consider it an accomplice in the performative production of meaning. The pornographic cinema, the weapon, her role as the feminist warrior – is a performance in its own right, detached from the bodily presence of performer and audience in the "here and now" (ten years later, *there and then*) of the Munich theater.[10]

The interview becomes performative by re-instantiating the earlier performance. British philosopher J. L. Austin describes performative speech in the following manner: "by saying or in saying something, we are doing something" (e.g. the wedding vow, "I hereby take you to be my husband").[11] In this sense, although legally her statements might have been dubious or false (being unverifiable by witnesses and contradicted by her own later accounts), EXPORT is not *narrating* the performance either truthfully or untruthfully, nor are we dealing with a "fake" work of art. On the contrary, EXPORT's statements in the 1979 interview must be considered what Austin calls a "happy performative," namely an utterance being taken for the action of that which is being uttered, an utterance with concrete consequences in contrast to a descriptive statement.

One of the requirements that Austin wishes to find in every "happy performative" is "appropriate circumstances" or a "situation" that makes possible the concrete consequences of the performative. In this case, the situation encompasses the public nature of the magazine in which the interview was printed and the willingness of members of the art world to historicize the event in the reassuring form of the pictures, and also, through these pictures, to forget that they were not present at the "original" event.

These "circumstances," however, are not arbitrarily plucked out of an infinite "context," as Jacques Derrida argues in his post-structuralist reading of Austin.[12] Rather than the concrete conditions serving as a crutch for stabilizing an infinite and shifting range of performed meanings, we should, with Austin, conceive the utterance and its conditions interacting without hierarchy in the "total speech act."[13] The total speech act in the case of EXPORT's *Genital Panic* ranges from the embodied act in 1969, through the 1979 interview (contextualized in its specific site and through its particular disseminations), up to Abramović's re-enactment and beyond. In this sense, the 1979 interview in its mediated condition, as it was received at the time or as we read it today (for example, through my citation of it here), draws its authority from but also itself *enacts* the belief in the bodily presence of the artist, which is thus retrospectively projected back into the event. The interview, along with other re-articulations of the work, thus creates a new form of audience to which that body is (imaginatively) "present," a *reading audience*. The readers of 1979 could thus connect the event to the photograph, affirming or even producing a new historical version of the performance ten years after it was done: an audacious and aggressive act in public.

Happiness is a Warm Gun

The question of motivation remains, however, haunting our relationship to *Genital Panic*. Why would EXPORT insist on the shock value of the real in a 1969 *Genital Panic* "action," and also produce an image of it, only to question the visual "facts" she thus established in her later reminiscences about the piece? Why does the gun enter the picture at all, and why does EXPORT then dispute its "presence" in the original performance in her later statements? EXPORT, I want to claim, needed to alter the set-up of the action for the photographs in order to achieve a functioning performative action in itself. The photographs in fact circulate under a slightly different title, namely *Aktionshose: Genitalpanik* (*Action Pants: Genital Panic*), instead of the mere *Genitalpanik* of the performance, as if EXPORT were presenting to us the *prop* or the remnants of the action. The most conspicuous addition, the machine gun, is crucial to the performativity of the photographic piece: it must be seen as a necessary substitute for the most prominent "loss" in the photographic version of the work, namely the absent bodies of her presumably male audience in an encounter outside the art world.

In short, the machine gun brings the potential aggression of the encounter with the audience in public space symbolically into the picture, appropriating the signs of sexual

VALIE EXPORT, *Action Pants: Genital Panic*, 1969. Silkscreen poster by Kari Bauer. Courtesy of Charim Galerie, Vienna and of VALIE EXPORT.

VALIE EXPORT, *Action Pants: Genital Panic*, Installation in public space in Berlin, 1994/95. Photo: Torsten Monschein. Courtesy of Charim Galerie, Vienna and of VALIE EXPORT.

aggression (generally coded as male) for the female protagonist; in the photographs EXPORT returns the putative male gaze directed toward her genitals with a feminist appropriation of an obvious phallic symbol. For the reading audience this prop was and is the necessary cue, providing the tension within the picture that performs and thereby instantiates the tension of the movie-theater action. EXPORT had to transfer the gender conflict into the photograph through visual cues in order for the confrontation to remain legible.

At the same time, however, the machine gun redirects the gaze away from the genitals, transforming the genital panic into a possibly terrorist one, replenishing the effect of the original performance by introducing what Austin might call fresh circumstances, through the performative function of the photographs. The complexity of the (narrated) encounter is recreated in the photographs, which indeed means that the images stand as solid performative pieces on their own. The performative utterance can, as Austin points out, be conveyed in written form or through a gesture, and also, I would argue, be transposed from a gesture into a photograph, as long as the narrative conventions and the situational cues enable one to make sense of the action. In fact, photography must be seen as a privileged medium of performance, due to its dual capacity of acting as quasi-legal document of the past (applicable even when the photographs are staged) and at the same time as a persistent re-enactment.

Indeed, the balance of autonomy and reference in the photograph has underwritten the long and varied history of *Genital Panic*. EXPORT's idea after producing the photographs was to disseminate the bench image as a poster in public space in Vienna.

Silkscreen posters of this image, reversed, as if to bring in another perspective, and stamped with EXPORT's name logo, were printed by Kari Bauer the same year. As EXPORT claimed in a recent interview, however, after having the posters made she was not able to get the necessary permission from the city to disseminate the posters publicly, nor did she have the means and the workforce to put them up; she thus ended up "giving them to friends."[14]

EXPORT had a similar poster displayed in the streets of Berlin as a contribution to the 1994 exhibition *Gewalt/Geschäfte* (*Violence/Business)* of the Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst. Both of the original photographs were sold as photo editions in galleries, shown in exhibitions, and of course disseminated in volumes such as this one.

I have been arguing that these images cannot be seen as documentary proof of the performance. But are they still dependent on it, their meaning inherently linked to the original "action," or are they self-sufficient art projects? EXPORT did experiment with photographic stagings around the time of *Genital Panic* that resemble the ones Cindy Sherman would produce years later, notably the *Identitätstransfer (Identity Transfer)* of 1968, in which she presents herself in a stereotypical male posture for the camera. From the beginning of her career, photography was never simply a medium for documenting her actions, but one that self-reflexively opened up complex performative interactions – anticipating the current tendency of staging performances expressly for the camera.[15]

EXPORT's persistent use of photography might at first glance suggest that she privileges the photograph over the actual performance. Some performance scholars have in fact

recently argued for the general priority of documentation for performance art and its afterlife. Is in fact the image the performance "as such?" A provocative conclusion not far from this has been drawn by Philip Auslander in a discussion of work by Yves Klein and Chris Burden: "*The act of documenting an event as a performance is what constitutes it as such.*"[16] Auslander ascribes the performative content of a live act exclusively to its documentation.

Taking Auslander literally, in our case the contradictions between versions of the event would be irrelevant, since the photograph would constitute the performance itself: it would be of little interest that EXPORT's photo pieces are not of the public performance, nor that the gun is present in the pictures and then reported in the Munich action in her 1979 interview but disclaimed in recent publications and statements of the artist. It would also be of little interest whether the artist ever went into a cinema with her "Action Pants." True, the photographs have all the ingredients of a performative gesture, as we have seen, and they seem perfectly to illustrate EXPORT's oral utterance (or verbal performance) of the piece in the first interview. And yet, Auslander's argument rules out the complexity inherent in the tension between acts and performative documents. He cannot account for what I am interested in, namely the oscillations between different instances of the performative, oscillations that in turn reveal the different audiences and the different meanings produced in each instance.

A subtler argument might insist that the radicality of performance art lies precisely in its ability to bridge bodily presence and its image. Amelia Jones writes:

> Precisely by using their bodies as primary material, body or performance artists highlight the "representational status" of such work rather than confirming its ontological priority. The representational aspects of this work – this "play within the arena of the symbolic," and, I would add, its dependence on documentation to attain symbolic status within the realm of culture – expose the impossibility of attaining full knowledge of the self through bodily proximity.[17]

Jones justly points out that the documentation of performance art plays its role in "enacting the artist as public figure," and acknowledges that it is the moment of the performance where cultural representation, and thus history, begins.[18] One could add that history continues to be built through palimpsests of discourse and image that continue inexorably from this moment – including critical reviews, interviews and artist's statements, art historical texts, exhibitions and catalogue essays, and a range of performative enunciations and visual images from the artist's documents of the supposed original event to later reproductions of these images and re-enactments. How can we then bind this reception history to the performative force of the images?

I have made the case that photographs refer not so much to the staged version of the performance, the mechanical reproduction of which we are allowed to see, but to an "imaginary" performance, one that is performatively defined through its descriptions, disseminations, and other permutations in the public sphere. The reading and viewing public uses the image to point (imaginatively) back to the action; the photograph becomes

a metaphorical version of an indexical sign: a sign causally connected to its referent, not necessarily resembling it.[19] The photograph provides the imaginary performance with an image. If we accept this broader concept of the index as a sign pointing to an action, as a sign that indicates an event has occurred, we can allow into the interpretation of photographs of performative acts such as EXPORT's a broader context of historical references inside and outside the image. This context is not a supplement, but the medium within which performative action unfolds – which is also how Austin understood the "circumstances" of his "total speech act."

A Monument to Performance Art

When Marina Abramović re-performed *Genital Panic*, she based her seven-hour-long performance consciously on the photographic documents she knew. The body she "brought back" was yet another imaginative constitution of presence for a viewing public, informed by mediated historical fragments rather than ensuring at last an "authentic" return to bodily presence. Abramović herself wrestled with the problem of historical amnesia, as we can gather from a statement about her motivation for the *Seven Easy Pieces*:

> I'm one of these artists of the 70s and I'm just fed up with the copying of not just my work – of all the artists of the 70s in different ways in MTV, in theater, in dance, in fashion, in young artists, I'm also fed up with young critics who actually evaluate the young artists' work and tell us they are original, without referring to the past works at all. They deny history.[20]

Abramović's attention to history is a model to artists and scholars, and yet, her suggestion that somehow there is an authentic version of the performance that is waiting to be excavated for history (and that this version can be retrieved through the work's re-enactment by an artist such as herself) contradicts the fact that the circumstances have changed since the original performance. In addition, Abramović's claim that amnesia has fully removed the famous pieces from history is not convincing, since the works she re-enacted in 2005 have had pronounced historical visibility (otherwise, her versions would hardly be recognizable as "redos"). I would argue, rather, that history itself has transformed and recontextualized them.

Abramović's 2005 project is extremely complex in terms of how it shifts our historical understanding of re-enacted works such as EXPORT's *Genital Panic*. First of all, there is the issue of reconstruction of the "original" event itself. The organizers of *Seven Easy Pieces* at the Guggenheim Museum ran into various difficulties while trying to unearth the original course of events. The confusion reached a climax when EXPORT stated in a 2005 e-mail to curator Nancy Spector that she "did it [*Genital Panic*] two times, one time in a Art Cinema in München and second for the poster," but only then with the weapon.[21] Abramović herself

Marina Abramović performing VALIE EXPORT, *Action Pants; Genital Panic*, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 2005, photograph by Kathryn Carr.

recently recalled the difficulty of accessing the performance through the oral descriptions of the artist:

> I was the most critical and most careful about this piece because in reality she stated that she originally performed the piece in this theater at the erotic film festival in Vienna, but at the same time she made the poster as well. *Genital Panic* is a great contradiction because she also made the photograph in her studio and there are lots of different images of that poster.[22]

Having rather unclear information, Abramović decided in her re-enactment to carry the gun, thus indicating that the images had become central to the historical imagining of *Genital Panic*. The solution at the Guggenheim was to title the evening *Action Pants: Genital Panic*, after the photographic work, but to describe the Munich action as a historical reference point both on the website and in the catalogue.[23]

These complex and often competing histories of *Genital Panic* make it clear that audience members approaching performance must mobilize a version of history that we might call mnemohistory – a history that is not necessarily based on facts (whatever these may be),

but rather on the myths or traditions associated with the "original" performance but also with its subsequent narrations and documentations. Abramović understood very well that she performed *her Genital Panic* for a new public. The already-historical sources were therefore made transparent by Abramović's choice to explicitly "quote" EXPORT's images. Consequently, the performance consisted of Abramović posing statically as if doing a *tableau vivant* – using the props of the chairs, the gun, and the cutout pants, alternating her posture in accordance with EXPORT's several photo pieces.

Occasionally – every hour or so – Abramović slowly rose from her seat, walked to the edge of the platform, paused, and walked back to the chair to sit down again.

Abramović's re-enactment of history, in a distillation of reception and memory (prompted and informed by photographs and EXPORT's reminiscences), proposed a new canonical status for the performance pieces she staged. The weapon – according to the files at the Guggenheim a replica of an American M16 rifle – played a particular role for Abramović. It externalized the potentially violent gender conflict the photographs had staged – an important strategy of visualization since the Guggenheim public was also not the fabled male audience of the supposed porn theater. On the other hand, because it appeared only in the photographic versions of the piece (according to EXPORT's later claims at least), the gun became an inverted index making us aware of the reception history of the performance. Abramović as the female protagonist becomes the re-enactor as well as the transmitter of history and the guarantor of recollection – a recollection that changes our conception of the "original" once again.[24]

In the European culture of commemoration, female bodies have always played an important part, most manifestly in the iconography of the monument as abstract personifications of virtues or countries. Could we say that Abramović is monumentalizing EXPORT's performance, and performance art in general? After all, she decided to re-stage the performances in the Guggenheim Museum – an institution known for canonizing works of art. Aside from the change of venue and audience, the obvious particularity of the re-performance – apart from the props fairly closely matching the photograph – was Abramović's bodily presence, a presence that was tempered by the use of a tall white cylindrical platform, which served as her base. Instead of the intimate encounter between the audience's faces and EXPORT's crotch – which, EXPORT had argued, was supposed to have ensured the shock value with the original piece – Abramović was now visible from all sides but untouchable. The audience walked around as in any museum setting, and Abramović's operational zone was additionally demarcated as "forbidden" by the use of black tape on the floor.

At one point during the performance a young man with a ponytail tried to climb onstage and was immediately removed by the museum's security personnel. This attempted interaction, prevented by the guards, did not stir Abramović. She sat in her chair, impassive as a statue – or photograph. She had to, because the intruder did not understand the recreated piece, which was not, as in EXPORT's case, about a "real encounter," about acting out gender relations. Rather, Abramović made herself into what we might call a performative monument

– what in German is termed a *Denkmal*, a mark for thinking or remembering. A monument does not ensure "authentic" remembering, since it addresses an audience with disparate experiences of the past. What a monument allows is *commemoration*: a conventional act establishing a new, public version of the past event. The very length of Abramović's version of *Genital Panic* served to bring together a temporally disjointed public at the Guggenheim around an idealized feminist performance from the 1960s.

With *Action Pants: Genital Panic*, as with each of the other re-enactments in *Seven Easy Pieces*, Abramović consolidated the consequences of different performative actions, mediating through her body both the document and the imagined historical gesture of the action. Abramović infused the performance with her own memory, which has evolved almost solely through mediation – Abramović was not present at any of the performances which form the "score" for her *Seven Easy Pieces*, excepting her own earlier piece, *Lips of Thomas* (called *Thomas Lips* in 1975).[25] In this adaptation, the artist split complex actions into smaller units that were repeated several times, as if fragmented pieces of memory had been reactivated. This suggests that even her own memory was combined with the reception of the piece, including the images that have circulated in the decades since.

In Abramović's re-enactment, documents and memories merged into a performative monument that refers to the past by re-instantiating it in the present. Abramović acted for a historically informed public, not because its members might have been present at the event in the Munich cinema, but rather because they heard or read about it (or *will* hear or read about it in the Guggenheim publications). History and memory, or to be more exact, cultural memory based on mediated experience, were embodied equally in the performer and the audience.

One question remains. Did EXPORT's *Genital Panic* ever actually take place as a performance? Certainly, it continues to do so. But the act of the artist in a movie theater in Munich might not have taken place. An indication that *Genital Panic* remained in the planning stage is the entry on the piece in the anthology of Actionist works co-edited by EXPORT in 1970, which printed the bench photograph for the first time with a text that uses the conditional "should happen."[26] This indicates the work's preliminary status; but *should* (in German *sollte*) can also be taken as an imperative. This ambiguity is at the center of the piece. The "should happen" may become an Austinian "it is so," and indeed it has in the brief history of this performance. It is for this reason that the "original" continues to work in our heads, and is inseparable from the later performative utterances that we again and again connect to a presupposed live act.

Notes

1. RoseLee Goldberg, "Here and Now," in *Marina Abramović: Objects, Performance and Video Sound*, exh. cat., Oxford: Museum of Modern Art Oxford, 1995, p. 11.
2. Peter Weibel and VALIE EXPORT, *Bildkompendium Wiener Aktionismus und Film*, Frankfurt am Main: Kohlkunstverlag, 1970, p. 290. Translation by the author.
3. VALIE EXPORT, interview by author, audio file, New York, 19 February 2007. Translation by the author.
4. The lesser known photograph of EXPORT standing is published in Roswitha Mueller, *VALIE EXPORT: Fragments of the Imagination*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994, p. 18, and in Hedwig Saxenhuber (ed.), *VALIE EXPORT*, exh. cat., National Centre for Contemporary Art and Ekaterina Foundation, Moskow, Vienna , Bolzano: Folio, 2007, p. 32.
5. The outdoor photographs were taken in the secluded courtyard of a house in the 22nd district of Vienna. Hassmann used a Pentax 35mm camera, which explains the grain when blown up to poster size. Peter Hassmann, interview by author, audio file, Vienna, 13 August 2007.
6. "VALIE EXPORT interviewed by Ruth Askey in Vienna 9/18/79," *High Performance Magazine*, Spring 1981, p. 15.
7. The first quote is EXPORT cited by Kristine Stiles, "Corpora Vilia: VALIE EXPORT's Body," *Ob/De+Con(Struction)*, ,exh. cat., Philadelphia: Moore College of Art and Design, 1999, note 7; the 2007 quote is from my interview with EXPORT noted above. EXPORT described the theater as an art cinema; this is consistent with the Guggenheim catalogue.
8. While Hassmann did not remember the details, Hermann Hendrich, photographer of EXPORT's *Body Configuration* series as well as producer of some of her films, recalled that the gun was acquired from Udo Proksch, businessman and weapon collector, who was later convicted of murder in the course of one of the greatest insurance frauds in Austria's history, the shipwreck of the *Lucona* in 1977. Hermann Hendrich, interview by author, audio file, Vienna, 29 January 2008. Translation by the author.
9. VALIE EXPORT, interview by author (see note 3).
10. The phrase "here and now" could serve as a talismanic summation of the concerns of early performance studies; it is also the title of Goldberg's text on Abramović, who herself uses the phrase (see note 1).
11. J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962, p. 12.
12. Jacques Derrida, "Signature, Event, Context," in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982, p. 322, esp. note 11.
13. Cf. Austin, op. cit., p. 52.
14. VALIE EXPORT, interview by author (see note 3).
15. This trend is finely exemplified in Jens Hoffmann and Joan Jonas (eds), *Art Works Perform*, New York: Thames and Hudson, 2005.
16. Philip Auslander, "The Performativity of Performance Documentation," *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art*, September 2006, vol. 84, 5, pp. 1–10, and reprinted in this volume.
17. Amelia Jones, "'Presence' *in absentia*: Experiencing Performance as Documentation," *Art Journal*, Winter 1997, vol. 56, no. 4, p. 13; with the phrase "play within the arena of the symbolic," Jones cites Kathy O'Dell, "Toward a Theory of Performance Art: An Investigation of its Sites," PhD dissertation, City University of New York, 1992, pp. 43–4.
18. Amelia Jones, *Body Art/Performing the Subject*, Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press, 1998, p. 6.

19. On the index, see Charles Sanders Peirce, *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, vol. 2, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960, pp. 147–9 and 304.
20. Marina Abramović, Q & A Session at the conference *Feminist Future* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, 26 January 2007, audio file available online at: http://www.wps1.org/include/shows/moma.html, accessed 1 April 2007.
21. Email from VALIE EXPORT to Nancy Spector on 3 January 2005, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum Archive, New York.
22. Marina Abramović in dialogue with Amelia Jones, "The Live Artist as Archaeologist," New York, 5 August 2007; in this volume.
23. *Marina Abramović: Seven Easy Pieces*, Milano: Edizione Charta, 2007, p. 118; and available online at: http://www.guggenheim.org/exhibitions/abramovic, accessed 23 July 2008.
24. Abramović gives us a hint to the task she had in mind through her title. *Easy Pieces* is a common title for musical compositions: Ferdinando Carulli (eighteenth century), Niccolo Paganini (nineteenth century), and Ernst Krenek (twentieth-century) wrote musical works called *Seven Easy Pieces*. They are often used to instruct children or beginners, which means that Abramović is alluding ironically to herself as a beginner, but also as the instructor of the audience. Abramović herself cited Richard P. Feynman, *Six Not So Easy Pieces: Relativity, Symmetry and Space-Time*, 2004, based on the physicist's lectures at Caltech in the 1960s, as a text pivotal to her production. From a selection of artist reading lists originally in *Frieze*, reprinted in Lioba Reddeker (ed.), *ACA Art Critics Award Lesebuch*, Vienna: basis wien, 2007.
25. The change of title to *Lips of Thomas* is another interesting episode in reception history. See my dissertation, *Performative monuments: public art, commemoration, and history in postwar Europe*, PhD dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), 2009.
26. "Anstelle einer vorführung sollte ich mich mit entblösster fut (an der Hose ausgeschnitten) durch die zuschauerreihen drängen, ergo fut und nase in gleicher höhe, indirekter sexueller kontakt mit dem publikum. VALIE EXPORT." [Instead of a screening I was supposed to push through the rows of the audience with exposed crotch (cut out from the pants), ergo crotch and nose on the same level; indirect sexual encounter with the audience. VALIE EXPORT] Text printed in Weibel and EXPORT, op. cit., p. 290. Translation by the author. The ostensible date of the performance remains unclear. The Guggenheim Museum and some other recent sources date the original action 22 April 1969. EXPORT performed her *Touch Cinema* in Munich on 15 April 1969, not for the first time, a performance that is well documented, for example, in the article "Exhibitionisten an die Front," *Der Spiegel*, 21 April 1969, p. 194. She performed in Zurich on 18 and 25 April 1969 (cf. Archive of the Generali Foundation, Vienna), making an appearance in Munich on 22 April possible but unlikely. The Guggenheim catalogue gives the theater *Augusta Lichtspiele* as location (*Marina Abramović: Seven Easy Pieces*, p. 118). The live performance of *Genital Panic* in a cinema has not been questioned in the literature: Roswitha Mueller describes the performance briefly in the context of "sexual liberation," without mentioning the gun (Mueller, op. cit., p. 18). A recent Austrian publication revives the myth of the porn cinema: Carola Dertnig and Stefanie Seibold (eds), *Let's Twist Again: Performance in Wien von 1960 bis heute*, Gumpoldskirchen: DEA, 2006.

PERFORM REPEAT RECORD

LIVE ART IN HISTORY AMELIA JONES & ADRIAN HEATHFIELD

Bringing together contributors from dance, theatre, visual studies, and art history, *Perform, Repeat, Record* addresses the conundrum of how live art is positioned within history. Set apart from other art forms in that it may never be performed in precisely the same way twice, ephemeral artwork exists both at the time of its staging and long after in the memories of its spectators and their testimonies, as well as in material objects, visual media and text. These multiple occurrences and iterations offer new critical possibilities for thinking and writing the histories of performance. Among the artists, theorists, and historians who contributed to this volume are Marina Abramović, Guillermo Gómez-Peña, Rebecca Schneider, Boris Groys, Jane Blocker, Carolee Schneemann, Tehching Hsieh, Orlan, Tilda Swinton, and Jean-Luc Nancy.

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