

NO SENSE OF PLACE

BERGEN KUNSTHALL

NO. 5

11. NOVEMBER — 22. DESEMBER 2011

DAVID ADAMO

EINAT AMIR

KEREN CYTTER

CAROLE DOUILLARD

BRENDAN FERNANDES

DORA GARCÍA

DAVID ADAMO, EINAT AMIR, LILLY REN CYTTER, BRENDAN FERNANDES, CAROLE QUILLARD, DORA GARCÍA

ABETH BYRE

of Place” is an attempt to
interplay between perfor-
physical spaces and media.
t title is inspired by Joshua
book of the same name from
w electronic media, primarily
were dissolving the historical
between social behaviour
d place. Of course, the digital
a of today have far exceeded
original observations. Still,
f place and placelessness in
social interaction trigger rela-
tions when applied to the rela-
between performance-based art,
based on live performance, and
documentation and reproduc-
ilities.

form historically existing out-
times also in opposition to the
iverse of art objects, perfor-
as nonetheless always relied
entation (written, recorded,
ed) as evidence of its existence
math. In the gap between past
, between performance and
a, the significance of place
cial. How does the context of
uence our understanding and
f the performance? And how,
can the artist manipulate the
between performer and audi-
ne performance is transferred
ce and time to another?

se of Place” presents some
practices in contemporary
on that address the issue of
isting of various media and
on techniques such as video,
ding, dance, or text, the
se artists operate somewhere
assic’ performances, taking
ere-and-now with performer

and audience present, and reproduction.
“No Sense of Place” is therefore a double
construct: it is an independent exhibition,
presenting installations, video, photogra-
phy, texts and objects; but it is also a per-
formance programme that took place on
26 November, and for which the exhibi-
tion will function as a backdrop and raw
material.

The six artists presented in the exhibi-
tion have different approaches to perfor-
mance art, and – rather than describing
them as ‘performance artists’ – one could
say that they have all integrated perfor-
mance in their diverse artistic expressions.

David Adamo often alters familiar
objects to create new, distorted read-
ings of our everyday surroundings. In
“No Sense of Place”, Adamo introduces
four works that together link this exhibi-
tion with the past, present and future of
other spaces and performances. *Untitled*
(*Column*) (2010), is a tall, slender wooden
column which has been chopped and
cut into, surrounded by wooden chips
as evidence of these violent acts. A small
door, *Untitled (Door)* (2011), is painted
in alluring red and cannot be opened. A
video projection the size of a post card,
titled *Untitled (My Skull Is Too Small)*
(2010), documents the performance *My*
Own Private Marathon from the Whitney
Biennial in New York, where Adamo tried
to walk the same distance as a marathon
within the space of the Whitney Museum.
Alone in the museum at night, he slept in
front of another artist’s work and ended
up dancing a waltz with himself in an
empty video room. As a continuation
of this project, Adamo conducted and
documented a live performance within
the space of another exhibition at Bergen
Kunsthall (by the artist Tauba Auerbach),

and, hopefully, present the performance
elsewhere in the future.

Brendan Fernandes presents a new
installation titled *Encomium* (2011),
where he draws on his background as a
dancer and questions related to place,
language and identity. Inspired by Plato’s
Symposium, where the men gathered must
give an ‘encomium’ or speech in praise
of love, Fernandes creates three differ-
ent movements: a blinking neon sign, a
morse-coded pattern and a dance perfor-
mance. Morse code messages mark the
floor of the exhibition space, creating cho-
reographic patterns; as a second non-tex-
tual language in the exhibition, the coded
messages lead the audience through the
space. Fernandes has written a narra-
tive text describing and giving instruc-
tions for a dance performance for two
men. Printed on posters and presented
as take-away mementos to the audience,
the posters open up the performance for
later reinterpretations in other forms and
places, with the audience as possible par-
ticipants or actors.

In Einat Amir’s works, the viewer
is often invited to participate, or even
to take the role of the protagonist. She
presents the work *Ideal Viewer* (2009), a
video installation based on three video
performances. Two male actors, playing
an art critic and the artist’s ex boyfriend
respectively, speak directly to the viewer
in consecutive monologues. Against the
backdrop of abstract paintings, their faces
appear on a pair of flat screens on the
wall. On the floor are two screens: one
is similar to the wall screens, but broken,
while a small screen shows a woman cry-
ing bitterly. Through the three actors,
Amir plays with our understanding of an
exhibition as a place for reflection upon

art in general, but also of this specific art work in itself. The relationship between what is explained for us by the performers and what is actually happening becomes unclear. For the live performance, the female actor is present in the exhibition space, adding another level of disorientation for the 'ideal viewer'.

Keren Cytter is presenting two videos, *Konstruktion* (2010) and *Peacocks* (2009), as well as the new performance *Show Real Drama* (2011). All three works share a notion of disorientation and uncertainty within their constructed universes, caused by complex narratives. Playing with the conventions of the language of mainstream film, television, and theatre, Cytter deconstructs the linear storytelling into bits and pieces. *Konstruktion* is based on Cytter's own experience with a 48-hour long poetry reading at a dive bar in Berlin. Transferred to video, the poems are joined with fragments of conversation and the cityscape of Berlin as a backdrop. *Peacocks* explores the memory of a broken relationship. Cytter tells the story in five chapters, each inspired by random photographs collected in flea markets across Berlin. *Show Real Drama* is staged as a theatre performance where the two actors' lives are woven into a script they are writing about characters and scenes they would like to perform. With the help of a back-projected video, the audience is guided through several stages in the performer's life.

Carole Douillard is occupied with themes such as the presence of the audience, the space of the performance and the significance of signs. Douillard often uses her own body as the main material of her work, as she does in the large colour print *This Sign I Make* (2011) which depicts a single gesture: a hand making a circle. The title of the work can be seen as a leitmotif in Douillard's performance practice, where the act of performing itself is discussed. The photograph precedes and points towards the performance she will carry out in the performance programme. The performance has the same title as the photograph, and will deal with the influence of the artist's presence in the room.

Collaboration is a crucial element in the artistic practice of Dora García. She delegates full responsibility to the performers she engages, often neither artists nor actors, diverse in age and occupa-

tion. Within a given framework, she only presents a starting point and guidelines for the performance. For this exhibition García presents the work *Prayers* (2007-2011), an ongoing performance project started in 2007 and hitherto performed in Madrid, Jerusalem, Bristol, Cartagena de Indias, and Cracow. In Bergen, six performers will be placed in six different public locations. Their instructions will be to describe their surroundings non-stop for a given period of time on a given day and to record the process. The recordings will later be uploaded to a website that will make it possible to combine the different recordings in complex patterns of sound. A give-away map in the exhibition space describes the location, date and times of 'recorded sites'. The exhibition space functions both as an information platform for the performances that will take place, and as a mapping of the city.





