

Savoir-Faire 2013
September 3 – September 28

Featuring performances by Caitlin Baucom, Sophia Peer and Rachel Blackwell and Jesse Gelaznik of the Dirty Churches.

Wednesday September 4th, 7pm / Round table discussion with participating artists on "Collaboration in Art"

Thursday September 12th, 7pm
Caitlin Baucom / Idle: A Gesamtkunstwerk

Thursday September 19th, 7pm
SOPHIA PEER / I'D RATHER BE SLEEPING

Thursday, September 26th 7pm
The Dirty Churches / An Orchard of Echoes

Savoir-Faire celebrates its 5th year of presenting new work by emerging women performance artists. This year we are pleased to present new work performed for the very first time by artists Caitlin Baucom, Sophia Peer and the Dirty Churches Jesse Gelaznik and Rachel Blackwell.

The strong general tendency to collaborate in contemporary art brings up new forms of shared authorship and socially engaged art, and marks important shifts in the production and distribution of art. Collaboration is also the link between the three performing artists / artist groups in Savoir-Faire. Through the adoption of collaborative forms, art serves as a fascinating mirror of complex shifts in society and becomes independent from the idea of the artist as a figure that stands outside of society engaged in an internal singular dialogue. Performance art has always been democratic, by relating directly to the role of human inter-relations and encouraging interaction, it nowadays shows a clear implicit critique of authorship and allows the artist to act site-specifically and in relation to the 'social context'. While performer Caitlin Baucom works with other performers, serving her, almost as if they were a further prop, this form of collaboration raises questions of authorship as well as the role of the muse. Sophia Peer collaborates with her parents, which represent not only a crucial part of her own creative identity but also reflect behavioral patterns of American immigrants with different backgrounds. The emergence of socially engaged artistic practice points out the inevitable intertwining between fate of individuals and the hybridization of cultures, making the universal link between all beings more and more obvious while categories become more and more void. Jesse Gelaznik and Rachel Blackwell of "The Dirty Churches" perform music based performances, which include multi-media art installations. Their work is a merge of sampled sounds and electronics with conventional acoustic instruments, which reflect the blurring boundaries of authenticity.

Caitlin Baucom's performance title unites two different ideas in art. The term 'Gesamtkunstwerk' can be traced back to Wagner's aesthetic ideal of unifying all works of art via the theatre. The idea of a union between opera and drama includes a subordination of the individual arts to a common purpose. It is the spirit of collaboration – on one hand between the two performers, on the other between the different media combined - that determines the art work. The focus is set on the female body and on the culturally determined expectations of the recipient, which are about to be neglected. The expectations of how female bodies are expected to move are distorted by a sensual and playful interaction with the music, empowering the female body to discover archaic forms of movement and interaction. The ambiance of the performance is characterized by the unlikely combination of drama and opera and on the other hand the art performance. To decide whether the performers are acting or are leaving socially stigmatized forms of actions and body movements is left to the recipients.

In her performance *I'd Rather Be Sleeping* Sophia Peer brings up a very personal reflection on her parents' way to deal with their past and their immigrant life in the USA. At the same time, she uses media like songs and film material to interpret and visualize their wishes, dreams and fears as part of the collective memory. As a spectator we are placed in between these personal associations and these artifacts trying to define a society and a country. The performance instigates an empowering act for the artist's parents, which is ambivalent in provoking both hope and despair. The choreography's vacillations are based on the mingling of acting, performing and the quoting of written text. As in our everyday life, these actions create an environment that deals with the insecurity of how authentic statements and sources are a troubling part of the experience.

Rachel Blackwell and Jesse Gelaznik of the Dirty Churches combine experimental sound and music making with sculptural installations and ritual-based performance in what they describe as a manifestation of the collective conscious. *An Orchard of Echoes* will bring together aspects of story-telling and mythology to fabricate and ancient and untold experience. The group's fluctuating body of members is an ever-changing factor, which can accommodate any number of aesthetics, ideas and directions. Among a world so desperate for control, Dirty Churches defy the notion the we must rely on a constant reality to exist.

- Monika Hardmeier, August 2013

Thursday September 12th, 7pm
Caitlin Baucom / Idle: A Gesamtkunstwerk



Useless, shiftless, not gainful, non linear, not turned to normal or appropriate use. Rejecting useful and appropriate functions for female bodies, *Idle* distorts their perceived values. In an intimate opera, three bodies perform a choreography of real time pleasures, grabbing at the imagined glamour of a woman's body, twisting it and bringing it to life. Invaded and overpowered by music, the viewers' own assumptions, fears, secret fantasies may be turned on them. Deep in the pleasures of female-to-female drag, the performers are real time vessels for ecstasy and power.

Caitlin Baucom received her MFA in Performance from The School of The Art Institute of Chicago, and BA from The Evergreen State College. Her interdisciplinary performances indulge freely in divergent musical, poetic, performance and visual/technological practices. Recent performances and screenings include Chicago's Defibrillator Gallery, Links Hall, and High Concept Laboratories; The Kinsey Institute, Indiana; Verge Fair, Miami Beach; Stockholm Fringe Festival, Stockholm; Dimanche Rouge Festival in Paris; and

ABC NO RIO in NYC. In 2013 she is in residence at Soho20 Gallery in Manhattan, and the International Artist-in-Residence of the ACC Galerie Weimar and the City of Weimar, Germany. Upcoming performances include Bull Sessions at The Frontier in Chicago and Performance Mix Festival with New Dance Alliance and Dance New Amsterdam, NYC.

<http://vimeo.com/caitlinbaucom>

Thursday September 19th, 7pm
SOPHIA PEER / I'D RATHER BE SLEEPING



I'D RATHER BE SLEEPING is a live performance, featuring artist Sophia Peer in collaboration with her parents Alice and Aaron Peer. Sophia, who directs and choreographs the performance, employs various

actions that attempt to make connections in the wake of unreached goals and unfulfilled desires.

Peer's parents, who emigrated from Israel (via Bulgaria and Greece) in the 1970's, currently live in Flushing, Queens, where Sophia was born and raised. In researching her parents' paths, Peer finds herself as a removed outcome of her family's years of tragedy and fear. Peer's work serves as a catalyst for forming relationships as she seeks to dissolve the isolation that her parents live in.

As a way of understanding her family history as well as her parent's present day regrets, Peer creates scripts for the three of them to act out, using AAA guidebooks, synchronized movements, tutorials and miming.



Sophia Peer's performances, videos and installations invite you to a familiar place disguised and re-organized, where day-to-day reality has been mangled into a fiction of false intimacies. By examining the source of failed dreams Peer is able to create unlikely emotional connections that heal and demonstrate the potential for change.



Brooklyn based video and performance artist, Sophia Peer, was born in Queens, New York. She received her B.A. from SUNY Purchase and her M.F.A. from the School of Visual Arts, New York, NY. Most recently she has performed at the Sculpture Center and the Clemente Soto Velez Cultural & Educational Center, and screened work at The Museum of Modern Art, Louis V E.S.P. Gallery, Vaudeville Park, Secret Project Robot, Littlefield and The Body Actualized Center. Peer is a member of the Kate Bush Dance Troupe and she has been directing music videos since 2007 for artists such as The National, Paul Banks, Yeasayer, Woods and Ponytail. Her work has been shown at Horton Gallery, Kate Werble Gallery, Canada Gallery, Art 101, Dixon Place, the Queens Museum and her debut solo exhibition, *I Still Live With Them*, was held at Scalo Project Space.

<http://sophiapeer.com/category/videos>

Thursday, September 26th 7pm
The Dirty Churches / Rachel Blackwell & Jesse Gelaznik
An Orchard of Echoes



The Dirty Churches multi-media installation *An Orchard of Echoes* is a mystical synthesis of sound and visual experiences inspired by ritual, occult philosophy and mysticism. Inside the orchard a masked oracle performs a ritual as a thunderstorm approaches. A live soundtrack of synthesized tones and cascading electric melodies describe the storm. Their performances include provocative imagery such as pyramids, witches, the zodiac and various forms of elemental symbols as an invitation for viewers to leave behind their worldly thoughts and venture into the unknown experience of an ancient knowing. By performing these rituals Dirty Churches provides a looking glass into their collaborative and unified psyche. Dirty Churches presents their work in the form of an abstract personal mythology, creating new scenarios, environments and characters with each installation and

performance. A firm believer in the collective conscious (or Noo Sphere) the Dirty Churches view this sphere of consciousness as a collection of fragmented images, narratives, sounds and emotions.



Dirty Churches was formed in 2003 by Jesse Gelaznik, Joe Robinson, Alex Beard and John Delassi. In 2005 Rachel Blackwell began collaborations with the collective, adding her signature video collage projects to the experimental live soundtracks. The group has worked with more than 30 artists in their ten year career and performed live scores and recordings with galleries, music venues and projects spaces in New York and internationally. By combining musical composition with experimental sounds, Dirty Churches creates sonic environments of haunting textures and ethereal energy.

Rachel R. Blackwell is a visual artist working in video, collage, and installation. Blackwell attended New York University and studied at the San Francisco Art Institute. Blackwell studied New Genres at the San Francisco Art Institute under Sharon Grace. There she filmed improvised shorts and started creating architectural video installations for bands and theatrical performances. Her work has been featured in numerous exhibitions, film festivals, art fairs and music venues including Gene Frankel Theater, Theater for the New City, Secret Project Robot (Brooklyn), the Knitting Factory, Zero Film Festival, Pendu Gallery, and was a featured artist at the 2009 Scope Art Fair, Miami. Blackwell is a co-founder of The Ouroboros Play Company, of which Blackwell is the Design Director. As a curator she has worked on various video and multi-media projects including the Pool Art Fair at

the Chelsea Hotel, NYC, and *Monitor*, a 2-day video expo at Gallery X in Harlem, NY. Her work and projects have been covered in the New York Times, The Irish Times, the Huffington Post and Art in America. Since meeting her partner and collaborator Jesse Gelaznik, Blackwell has furthered the use of music and sound in her work with video collage. Their collaborations and work with The Dirty Churches have been presented at the 92YTribeca, Galapagos, St Cecilia's, Theater Lab, Diverse Works and other music and art venues in New York, Texas, Miami and internationally.

<http://rachelrblackwell.com/>

Jesse Gelaznik is an artist working in sculpture, installation, performance and experimental sound. Some of his artistic collaborations include The Dirty Churches and PWR&\$\$\$ (with Daniel Garcia) and have included additional projects with Party Expo, The D.U.M.B.O. Arts Center and the Brooklyn based project space The Convent of Saint Cecilia. His work has been featured in various galleries such as Yes Gallery, Invisible Dog, and Mindy Wyatt Gallery in New York City. In 2011 Gelaznik's collaborative project *PWR&\$\$\$* received a commission from the Sharjah Art Foundation for their Biennial X and was later displayed in November of 2012 at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. His most recent Dirty Churches performance titled *A Guest in the Cavern* premiered at the Northside Town Hall Community and Cultural Center, Inc.'s 2013 Arts Happening series. Jesse Gelaznik currently lives and works in Brooklyn NY.

<http://jessegelaznik.com/>