



CLEARING

## **LADY TO FOX**

An exhibition of new works by **Lili Reynaud-Dewar**

February 16 – March 31, 2018

- It's cold these days...
- Indeed.
- Can we break the ice ?
- I don't know. It's not even melting, the ice. In fact, it's solidifying, growing around us, proliferating.
- We could talk a bit, maybe it would help ?
- You think so ?
- I mean, I hope so... You remember this show in Paris, in 1994 ? 'L'hiver de l'amour' ?
- Vaguely. I was young.
- There was this giant melting floe, by General Idea, titled *Fin de Siècle*, a self-portrait. They depicted themselves as a trio of baby seals floating atop the ice, an endangered species : two of them died of AIDS the year the work was shown... Ramaya Tegegne referenced them in her piece *Ménage à Trois* recently, a work about kinship, sociability, collective practices. I was with her at the gift shop of Vancouver's aquarium, when she found the three plush toys...
- Love was lethal in the 1990s.
- Politics were.
- Just like now. You know, if we could talk we might be able to make things a bit better, or at least make sense of them. What do you think ?
- I don't think, I dance.
- But you can talk.
- What do you want to talk about?
- Love, politics...
- O.K
- What about this track : 'Love is War for Miles' ?
- It's by Theo Parrish.
- Who is Miles ?
- Miles Davis, the greatest musician of all times.
- How can love be war ?
- Love hurts, love scars, love wounds. You may try to give love and fail entirely, sometimes because of events you have no control on. Miles Davis was in love with French singer Juliette Gréco, and she was in love with him, but they could not be together because she was a white woman and he was a black man.
- Theo Parrish posted something about racism on his facebook account, some time ago... let me find it...
- I remember.
- Here it is : "How do you dance when our very image as a people is used to manipulate sympathy for a system of belief that wants you and your children to be dead or in jail? You better. You better learn to listen with your body, you better play from your heart. It was a preference before, now it's essential. Escapism has always been an adjective used to describe the dance. That's an outsider's view. Solidarity is what it really offers."
- I think he was addressing the community, for its lack of reaction in the face of political events.
- What community ?
- Today's dancers.
- But is it appropriate ?
- What ?
- For you to play fragments of his music in your show?

C L E A R I N G

- You ask this question because I am a fox ?
- I am sorry, I didn't realize. I do not mean to stigmatize you, but still, you look more like a woman to me... Anyway, how did it happen, how did you come to be a fox ?
- It's a long story. Prior to that I have been a machine, a virus, a black dancer...
- But was it appropriate ?
- No.
- What about the fox ?
- It's based on a novel, *Lady Into Fox*, by David Garnett. It's a cruel love story and a satire of bourgeois values. A woman is suddenly changed into a fox. Her husband makes desperate efforts to keep their marriage going "as usual" despite the fact his wife is a vixen. He fails. The only way he will be able to reach her is by acting somewhat like an animal himself. Finally she gets killed by hunters. Of course such a story of emancipation could not end well...
- Are lambs ready for your love ?
- No.
- Why not ?
- They don't need it.
- Why not ?
- They're warm enough, they're a group, a community, they experience solidarity. We don't know what colors they really see, we don't know if they even see any colors at all.
- So what's your relation to them ?
- I am not their enemy. I dance for them. I came alone, vulnerable.
- You used to dance for artworks.
- In museums, you mean ? Yeah, that's right, but I didn't really try to make contact then.
- How did you choose the exhibitions you danced into ?
- I don't choose them, I don't select. I dance in the exhibitions where I have been invited to participate, or in spaces with whom I have a tight working relation. It's like a biography of my work, its contexts, its intimacies.
- But you are always alone...
- Why not ?
- If you like to be alone so much, how come you talk about love and solidarity ?
- Could you please leave now?

**Lili Reynaud-Dewar** (born 1975 in La Rochelle, France) lives and works in Grenoble, FR. Solo exhibitions of her work have been held at Museion, Bolzano, IT; Kunsthalle Basel, CH; New Museum, New York, USA; De Vleeshal Center for Contemporary Art, Middelburg, NL; Kunstverein, Hamburg, DE; K11, Shanghai, CN; Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, USA; Consortium, Dijon, FR; Magasin, Grenoble, FR; Calder Foundation, New York, USA; Serpentine Cinema, London, UK. Her work was also featured in numerous group exhibitions, including the Centre Pompidou, FR; the 56th Venice Biennial, IT; MCA Chicago, USA; Palais de Tokyo, FR; Wiels, Brussels, BE; MAK, Vienna, AT; Witte de With, Rotterdam, NL; Berlin Biennial, DE; Museum Folkwang, Essen, DE; Logan Center for the Arts, Chicago, USA; Generali Foundation, Vienna, AT; Lili Reynaud Dewar's work is part of the collections of Centre Pompidou, Paris, FR; Pinault Collection, Paris, FR; Museion Collection, Bolzano, IT; K11, Hong Kong/Shanghai/Beijing, CN; and Lafayette Anticipation, Paris, FR.