

Outsourced Affects

Davide Balula

October 18 - December 22, 2018

Opening on Thursday, October 18, 6-9 pm

During the opening reception, Davide Balula will present two new performances: ATTENTION SPAN COLOR METER (Brain Activity) and SELF BREATHING LUNGS



Davide Balula, *Self Breathing Lungs (Air Filter)*, 2018
Modified air filters, speakers, mp3 player, sound track.
30,5 x 15,2 cm (12 x 6 in.)

For going on two decades, the body, ecology and technology have been Davide Balula's central interests. Whether using a canvas to collect sediment and organisms from a riverbed, creating wifi antennae that emit monochromatic signals, or installing heat lamps in the gallery to amplify the audience's body heat, the material and the immaterial have always been of equal concern. The prosaic and poetic never assumed to be antithetical.

But it is with Balula's most ephemeral works that the human body has been an ongoing site of examination. The digestive system, the muscular system, the body's relationship to architecture and environment have often been explored through performance — movement, improvised music, edible experiences and pyrotechnics.

For his 5th solo exhibition at galerie frank elbaz, Balula hones in on human functions that relate to emotion, empathy and focus. He has created mechanisms which consume, redistribute or abstract body fluids and brain activity.

Saliva, tears, sweat and bile, all synthetically produced in a laboratory for the show, have never come in contact with the world of the body, the biome, a person's unique set of bacteria, which incidentally, cause these secretions to release their distinctive body odor. The disposable fluids, which the body secretes and abandons, are circulated throughout the gallery via rudimentary machines which act as proxies for basic body functions. For instance, with *Automated Tear Drop*, synthetic tears stream down a chain into a kick bucket, effectively creating a crying machine so you don't have to waste your own tears. The works in the exhibition which remotely cry, breathe, spit, etc. function as poetic simulacra to our current technological moment, where machines are increasingly part of our everyday lives, inseparable from how we think, communicate and feel. Emails and text messages have replaced phone calls, *emoji* have replaced words.

The inundation of information brought forth by technology has not only altered our affect, but has also resulted in a pandemic addiction to distraction. With *Attention Span Color Meter*, Balula uses a brain sensor to read the electromagnetic frequencies of the focused and unfocused brain. These frequencies are wired into the gallery lighting and produce a fluctuating hue, so one's focus literally colors the walls and the works on view in the gallery. Far from reading someone's thoughts or emotions, the data collected is basic human brain function, both highly specific yet somewhat arbitrary, in that whether the brain being monitored is from an individual who is educated or uneducated, privileged or oppressed, old or young; the results remain indistinguishable from one another. Balula's interest in principles of subjectivity versus preconceived universality, or the dismantling of power structures from a biological standpoint has been partly influenced by different feminists thinkers with a particular take on science, like Isabelle Stengers or Catherine Malabou.

In a work titled *Self Breathing Lungs (Air Filter)*, a recording of breath moving in and out of a harmonica is projected through speakers installed inside engine air filters. So the human presence, as opposed to mimicked byproducts of humans, is represented through both the lighting and the sound of the exhibition. Ephemeral, but still physical if one considers (as Balula does) the fact that light and sound, while intangible, are in reality fading photons and sound waves.

Julia Trotta

Davide Balula wishes to extend a special thanks to Laboratoire Rheonis for their collaboration.

galerie frank elbaz.

66 rue de Turenne, 75004 Paris - France
+33 1 48 87 50 04 - info@galeriefrankelbaz.com
www.galeriefrankelbaz.com

ATTENTION SPAN COLOR METER (Brain Activity)

6-9 pm
October 18, 2018
galerie frank elbaz, Paris
with the participation of Talia Elbaz, Fatima Soualhia Manet

SELF BREATHING LUNGS

6-9 pm
October 18, 2018
galerie frank elbaz, Paris
with the participation of Julien Derancy, Louis Laurain, Laurent Pascal, Elisabeth St James

THE ENDLESS PACE | YOU x ART x CENTRE POMPIDOU

10:30 - 11:30 pm
October 18, 2018
Level 4 and Forum
Centre Pompidou, Paris

For the second edition of YACP, the amis du Centre Pompidou have given carte blanche to Davide Balula, who will present *The Endless Pace*, a sound piece for 60 musicians. For exactly one hour, Members of the Orchestre Lamoureux will be scattered within the contemporary collection on the 4th floor, each playing one note per second, mimicking the mechanics of a clock.

37,5 °C | An exhibition-workshop by artist Davide Balula

October 10, 2018 - March 11, 2019
Galerie des enfants
Centre Pompidou, Paris

37.5°C refers the temperature of the human body, which typically hovers around 37°C. Balula's immersive exhibition for children will feature variations in temperature to transport young audiences to a sensory world exploring their internal organ system. The installation will be accompanied by movement workshops and a sound piece in collaboration with Stéphane Laporte (Domotic) featuring bodily beats and organic sounds.