



SCORING LIVENESS

Library exhibition

22 September–14 December 2022

1

Enter the library space, wait to feel what object, body, or desire draws you in as your starting point. Making yourself a cup of tea is also an option.

A quick Google search reveals that the term ‘liveness’ emerged within the field of computation to describe the processual behaviour of certain operating systems. How does that digital genealogy relate to its use in the field of performance where it conventionally references a live moment for performing and witnessing bodies? As part of our institutional research into the field of inquiry *Bodies and Technologies* (Edition IX, 2022–23), this library exhibition explores this question by centering the score as an inherent site for the reproduction of liveness. Scores are binding and open, capable of assembling bodies, temporalities and materialities that generate new meanings with each performance. Bringing the two terms together, *Scoring Liveness* excavates scores, documentation, works and books from within the If I Can’t Dance archive to view alongside works by Amsterdam-based artists Martine Neddham and Jo Baer, all of which exemplify the score as impetus for liveness.

2

Take your time, matching and mismatching written texts with photographs, asking yourself: which one of these figures could have written such a verbal photograph?

In curator Jacob Korczynski's reactivation of an instructional work by Lucy R. Lippard from 1969 for his research commission with *If I Can't Dance* in 2013–14 (Edition V), a photograph is taken daily of a group of ten people at the same place and time for two weeks. The photographs are then responded to and reproduced in writing by the ten participants. In this act of writing, the images become the visual cues for a range of personal readings, or what Lippard terms 'verbal photographs'.

3

Remove the score from its archival folder. Put on the ear phones. Watching the documentation of the two performances, attempt to decipher what lines in the English score the muffled words in Turkish and Dutch are uttering.

In *End on Mouth*, Yael Davids's commission in 2005 (Edition I), the artist's score is interpreted by musicians and actors from within two stages that are carried horizontally and vertically around by other performers, evoking the passing of life, even while liveness continues to be audible from within the dark confined spaces of the wooden boxes. Audio-visual documentation from two different locations highlights the variations in the iterations of the performance as the score travels across different bodies, languages and contexts. 'As the external world enters the interior world you will change', reads the score, reflecting its own porosity and transformative impulse.

4

Make yourself comfortable while watching using the pillows on the floor. Gently nudge the black terrier who might have appropriated them for herself.

Everyday gestures of passers-by are the material or dispersed score for artist and choreographer keyon gaskin, an artist commission for 2017–18 (Edition VII). During a research exercise—in the video documentation by Temra Pavlovic—we can see how gaskin spent an afternoon in the Bijlmer in Amsterdam Zuidooost roaming around and incorporating the body language of people into their own movement, gradually building a repertoire of bodily vocabulary from that context. One senses the at times frantic gaze of Pavlovic, instructed to follow and document the research process from a distance, the images transmitting her searching for, capturing of and losing gaskin at work.

5

Take the essay to read in any place you see fit in the exhibition space.

SCORE FROM BEFORE, SCORE FOR LIFT AND TRANSFER, SHIRT SCORE. These are titles of some of the scores co-authored by artist Constantina Zavitsanos, a current commission in 2022–23 (Edition IX), together with Park McArthur. Zavitsanos long term investigation of the score as a tool for the reproduction of performance, was in fact the inspiration for the thematic of this exhibition.⁵ For the artist, the score extends into gestures performed on a daily basis by those who take care of others. These scores punctuate the authors' essay 'Other forms of conviviality' (2013) that reflects on forms of intimacy that occur during the 'constant rehearsals and routine demands on buttons, joints, and coordinated movements', everyday rituals of care that are executed and experienced in ways that cannot be reduced to mere utility.

6

Once seated in the yellow chair, open the laptop on the side table and enter the password: revolution.

Human and non-human bodies are brought into assemblage through scores, which can include acts of writing, coding and programming. For instance, in Martine Neddam's seminal net art piece *Mouchette.org* (1996–ongoing), the artist used simple online question and response forms to co-create the thirteen-year-old *Mouchette* together with website visitors. The figure of *Mouchette* continues to evolve as users co-write her life-narrative, responding to the website's prompts as well as sensual and haptic qualities. As literary critic Katherine Hayles reminds us, virtual platforms embody and illicit bodily responses.

7

Contact the artist if you would like a copy of this artist book.

Dear Machines (2022), an artists' book by Mariana Fernández M was co-written by the artist together with a group of algorithms: *Replika*, *GPT-3*, *GPT-2* and *Eliza*. The result is what the artist refers to as a techno-poetics: a series of short writing exercises developed over a year in which the algorithms are not used as tools, but inscribed into a relationship with Fernández M, becoming her companions with whom the fabulative potential of working with artificial intelligence (AI) is explored.

8

Look to the far back wall. Imagine two large paintings hanging there amidst the lively chatter during the opening of this show. Now imagine those same paintings hanging in a quiet white cube in New York.

The reinterpretation of worlding narratives over time is central to the two 2022 paintings *The Lord God's Magical Circus* and *Bone Keeper, Adam's symmetry, A Paradise Gone* by artist Jo Baer present for a one-day hang during the opening event of the exhibition. While Baer made a name for herself within the history of Minimalism, in recent decades she has turned to pagan and Christian myths, stories and scriptures, re-inscribing them through a feminist lens in the present. This takes shape in figurative imagery accompanied by texts that challenge the notion of where a painting, as well as storytelling, begin and end. The paintings are not executed by Baer but materialise through instructions she gives to her art assistant (and painter in her own right) Malin Persson, who paints the images.

9

Access the writing group's process through this link via your mobile device as you roam or from the comfort of your home sporadically from October through December 2022.

Throughout the duration of the show a collective writing workshop unfolds. *I want the thing that you had when you wrote that keeps writing itself—unmoored and adrift and alive* is a series of gatherings led by Michał Dawid and Naomi Collier Broms that aims to provide a collective space for explorations of writing as a technology. In bi-weekly meetings participants are invited to approach writing and scoring as a performative practice distinguished by unstable boundaries between bodies: bodies of texts as well as writers and readers. Taking materials from the *If I Can't Dance* library and archive as points of inspiration, the ongoing exercises by the writing group can be followed at ificantdance.studio.

Associated events

OPENING

With Janine Armin, Jo Baer, Malin Persson
Thursday 22 September, 17hr

For the opening of *Scoring Liveness* we are thrilled to present two new paintings by Jo Baer before they leave for an exhibition in New York. Writer and editor Janine Armin delivers a short lecture on Baer's work, which is the subject of her PhD dissertation. Jo Baer and Malin Persson will be present for Q & A (TBC).

WHAT IS A SCORE?

Sunday 9 October, 13–16hr

A workshop for children between the ages of 6 and 12 to be held in the library and surrounding neighbourhood that introduces participants to different forms of scores in art and daily life. The goal is to develop and execute playful scores together.

CO-WRITING WITH ALGORITHMS

Friday 21 October, 17hr

Artists Martine Neddham and Mariana Fernández M will be in conversation about the notion of 'scoring liveness' in their practices, moderated by Anik Fournier.

I WANT THE THING THAT YOU HAD WHEN YOU WROTE THAT KEEPS WRITING ITSELF—UNMOORED AND ADRIFT AND ALIVE

Wednesday 14 December, 17hr

For the finissage, the writing group presents the process and some final materialisations of their experiments in collective writing based on scoring liveness.

EXHIBITION & LIBRARY OPENING HOURS

22 September–14 December 2022

Monday–Thursday, 10–17hr

Scoring Liveness is curated by Anik Fournier (curator of archive and research, If I Can't Dance) in conversation with director Frédérique Bergholtz. The writing workshop and studio page *I want the thing that you had when you wrote that keeps writing itself—unmoored and adrift and alive* is curated by Michał Dawid and Naomi Collier Broms and designed by Marcel van den Berg. The exhibition poster and handout are designed by Maud Vervenne.

Scoring Liveness is part of the Edition IX field of inquiry *Bodies and Technologies*.

If I Can't Dance is structurally supported by the Mondriaan Fund and the AFK (Amsterdam Fund for the Arts), with Edition IX additionally supported by Ammodo.

