

Lost Without Your Rhythm

November 16, 2018–February 24, 2019

This publication accompanies the exhibition *Lost Without Your Rhythm*, curated by Courtenay Finn and Lauren Fulton, and on view in Galleries 2 & 3 at the Aspen Art Museum from **November 16, 2018**–February 24, 2019.

AAM exhibitions are made possible by the Marx Exhibition Fund. General exhibition support is provided by the Toby Devan Lewis Visiting Artist Fund. AAM education programs are made possible by the Questrom Education Fund.

All texts © 2018 Aspen Art Museum. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any manner without the written consent of the publisher.

Nancy and Bob Magoon CEO
and Director
Heidi Zuckerman

Senior Curator
Courtenay Finn

Chief Operating Officer
Luis Yllanes

Registrar
Jackie Zorn

Installation Director
Jonathan Hagman

Editor
Sarah Stephenson

Graphic Designer
David Wise

Printer
Independence Press

Aspen Art Museum
Aspen Art Museum
Aspen Art Museum
Aspen Art Museum

637 East Hyman Avenue
Aspen, Colorado 81611

aspenartmuseum.org
970.925.8050

Hours
Tuesday–Sunday, 10 AM–6 PM
Closed Mondays

Admission to the AAM is FREE
courtesy of Amy and John Phelan.

Lost Without Your Rhythm

Helena Almeida

Simone Forti

Felix Gonzalez-Torres

EJ Hill

Bruce Nauman

B.Ingrid Olson

Yvonne Rainer

Oscar Tuazon



November 16, 2018–February 24, 2019

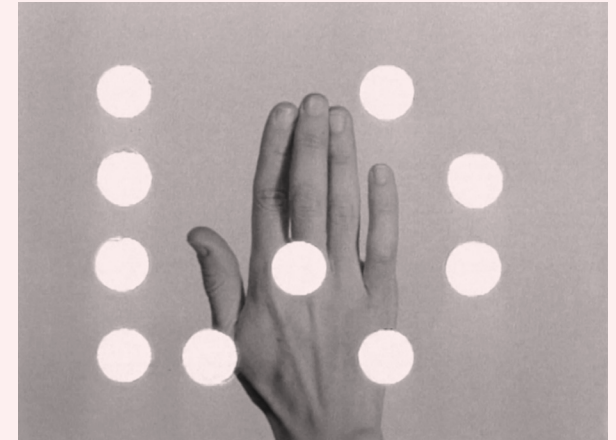
The title of the AAM exhibition is derived from Johanna Billing's *I'm Lost Without Your Rhythm* (2009). Her looped video documents dancers and students in lasi, Romania, participating in a live choreography workshop led by renowned Swedish choreographer Anna Vnuk as part of the 2008 Periferic 8 Biennial of Contemporary Art. The audience was made up of the entire city of lasi and was free to watch the actions unfold. No final performance occurred; instead, footage of dancers' everyday movements, the city, and local musicians are weaved into this

video that includes a rhythmically transfixing looped soundtrack. It combines improvised live music from the event in lasi and a version of the song "My Heart" (originally written by the Swedish group Wildbirds & Peacedrums), performed by Billing and other musicians in Stockholm. The video explores bodies, both alone and within social settings, sometimes just being and existing. The project is also inspired by Yvonne Rainer's work.

In the early 1960s, a group of choreographers, artists, composers, and filmmakers, interested in challenging traditional ideas about dance, held a series of workshops in Judson Memorial Church in New York's Greenwich Village—calling themselves the Judson Dance Theater. Taking its departure from this groundbreaking program, *Lost Without Your Rhythm** juxtaposes this historical lineage with the work of contemporary artists today. Focusing on the celebration of ordinary gestures, like running, walking, opening a door, or swinging on a swing, the exhibition invites and propels the body toward action. Including work by Helena Almeida, Simone Forti, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, EJ Hill, Bruce Nauman, B. Ingrid Olson, Yvonne Rainer, and Oscar Tuazon, *Lost Without Your Rhythm* emphasizes the physical reality of the here and now, proposing that any kind of motion or gesture can serve as a dance movement.

Sizing Up The Situation

Lauren Fulton



Previous
Helena Almeida, *Dentro de Mim \ Inside Me*, 1998

Opposite
Yvonne Rainer, *Hand Movie*, 1966

1 This derives from a letter written by Yvonne Rainer to the artist James Lee Byars, titled “Some Thoughts on Improvisation (for the painter James Byars),” ca. 1963–64. Within the correspondence, Rainer uses the phrase “sizing up the situation” a few times, coupling this cadence with her description of arriving at decisions for the stage: through a process of experience and acting on physical impulses. Reproduced in *James Lee Byars: 1/2 an Autobiography* sourcebook (Mexico City & New York: Fundación Jumex Arte Contemporáneo & MoMA PS1, 2014), 23–25.

2 Statement published in Rainer’s *The Mind is a Muscle* program, Anderson Theater, New York, 1968. Ingrid Olson’s relief *Pulled Curtain, Turning Torso* (2018) suggests a liminal status of the body, as described by Rainer.

3 Never a member of the Judson Dance Theater, Forti was active in the now-legendary somatic, improvisation workshops of Anna Halprin on the West Coast before moving to New York.

In the 1960s, a group of young choreographers challenged the traditional, specialized standards of dance when they founded the Judson Dance Theater. This troop—including Trisha Brown, Deborah Hay, Steve Paxton, Yvonne Rainer, and Elaine Summers, among others—introduced a new bodily language that, in its unrefined nature, was both democratic and imprecise. Mental and physical energy, as Rainer explains, was entirely reallocated: “It is my overall concern to reveal people as they are engaged in various kinds of activities—alone, with each other, with objects—and to weight the quality of the human body toward that of objects and away from the super-stylization of the dancer. Interaction and cooperation on the one hand; substantiality and inertia on the other”² [Fig. 1].

The Judson school, along with Simone Forti, another pioneer of postmodern dance, embraced pedestrian, task-based movements; and gravity—a new force within the medium of dance—took on an emphasized role.³ Pacing, spoken word, monologues, and objects were all taken from everyday life and incorporated through improvisation and chance—concepts that were only just beginning to permeate visual art. With direct gestures (not theatrical, not entertainment) that could be encountered in any public space, their new vocabulary defied meaning and even language in many cases. In the case of Brown, it was even possible to see dancers leaping between the rooftops of New York City buildings.

These then-unprecedented qualities are clearly demonstrated in Rainer’s *Hand Movie* (1966; Fig. 2). In this 16mm film, a hand assumes the role of the performer, exhibiting its own mechanics and testing its physical limits, ingloriously. Rid of any ego and tightly framed against a cool, blank background, the androgynous fingers float, twist, turn, bend, and straighten, seemingly detached from an arm or physical frame. It is a body in itself, as its vertical position suggests. Without meaning, without sound, and without rhythm, these simple gestures are untimed movements in space.

Forti created *Huddle* in 1961 [Fig. 3], another foundational work that highlights the body as weighted material. Requiring a handful of people, this dance is formed by collective bodies moving and meshing together to create a tight unit. One after another, each member of the huddle climbs on top of the mass, pulling themselves up and over using their partners’ bent knees and shoulders. Accented by the hushed noises of exertion, the intimate, awkward intertwining of bodies, lasting around ten minutes, is largely based on reliance and trust.



Fig. 1
B. Ingrid Olson, *Pulled Curtain, Turning Torso*, 2018

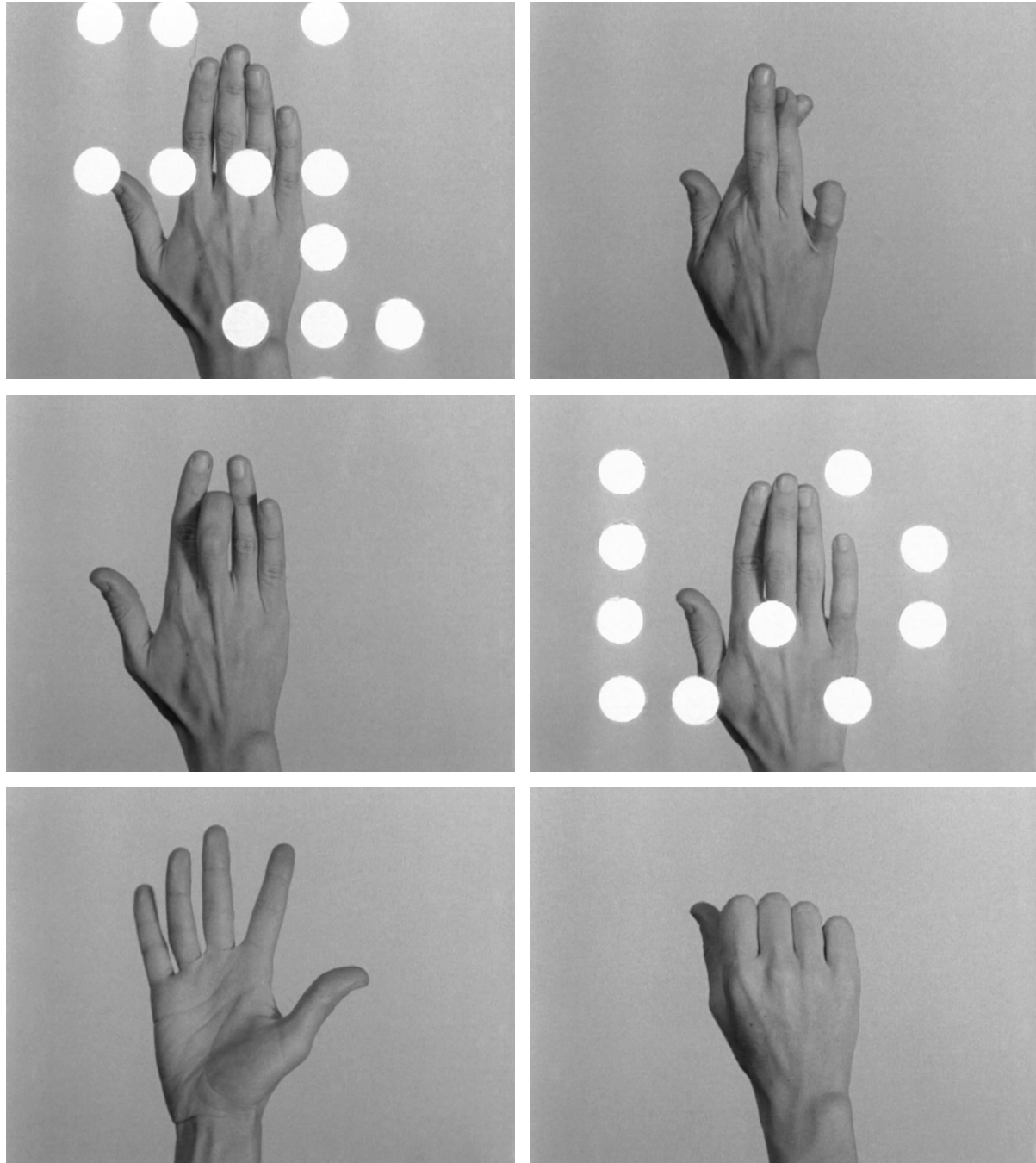


Fig. 2
Yvonne Rainer, *Hand Movie*, 1966



Fig. 3
Simone Forti, *Huddle*, 1961



Fig. 4
Simone Forti, *Solo No. 1*, 1974



Fig. 4
Simone Forti, *Solo No. 1*, 1974



Fig. 5
Bruce Nauman, *Device to Stand In*, 1966



Fig. 6
Bruce Nauman, *Body Pressure*, 1974



Fig. 7
Felix Gonzalez-Torres, *"Untitled" (Orpheus, Twice)*, 1991

Fig. 8
B. Ingrid Olson, *To scatter, call them bodies*, 2015



Figs. 9 & 10
Helena Almeida, *Dentro de Mim \ Inside Me*, 1998

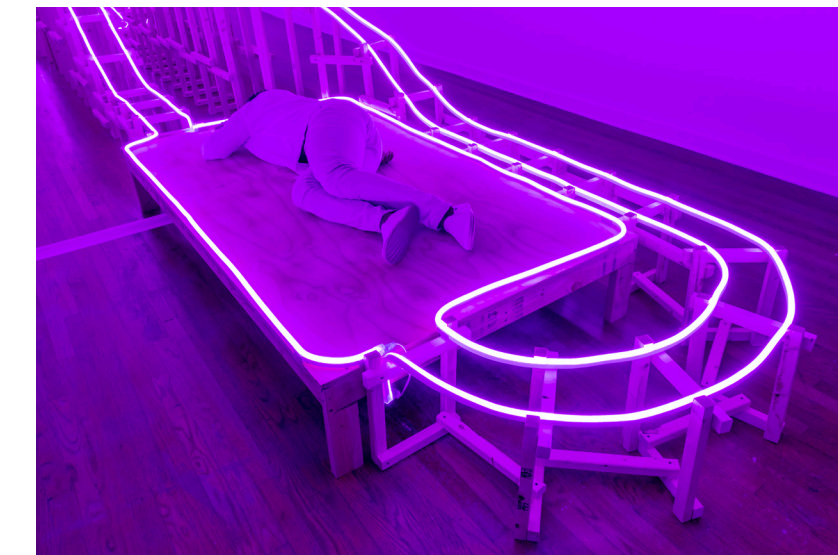


Fig. 11
EJ Hill, *A Monumental Offering of Potential Energy*, 2016



Fig. 12
EJ Hill, *Black Joy*, 2017 (foreground) and *Midnight Summit*,
2017 (background)

Fig. 13
Oscar Tuazon, *Another Person*, 2015

The body as a site for the unusual is further reflected through Forti's interest in animal movements. Filmed at Sonnabend Gallery in New York, *Solo No. 1* (1974; Fig. 4) opens with Forti walking in circles in an almost trancelike state before suddenly falling to the ground and progressing into an improvised animal-impersonation study. After some time, viewers begin to feel physically engaged in the activity and are able to anticipate Forti's unknown shifts in direction.

In the mid-1960s, Bruce Nauman began manufacturing situations that, unlike Forti's, provoke tension, instability, and call upon individuals to complete the work before them. *Device to Stand In* (1966; Fig. 5) appears to have no function at all, aside from being a wedge on the floor in which we might insert our foot—a scenario that is only made real within our imagination. Nauman has described this as choreography for a dance, in which the performer must work within highly confined boundaries and imagine their shoe nailed to the floor.⁴ With *Device to Stand In*, we reflect on the absent body and the difficulty of successfully coordinating a task that, in the current context of the object, cannot be performed. Many sculptures from this period define and encapsulate portions of the artist's body with certain postures and proportions that are really only a trace, a shell, a leftover.

After 1969, Nauman began producing textual instructions, to be carried out by others, which were even more conceptual. Like *Device to Stand In*, they solicit our imagination, but also a physical awareness. The works require concentration as audiences become attuned to their own bodies, perhaps registering physical strain, the oddities provoked by the image on the pink paper, or even bodily odors. *Body Pressure* (1974; Fig. 6) is a physical and psychological proposal described on unlimited editioned posters that are free for visitors to take, allowing the action to be repeated beyond the galleries.

Absence is further explored through the minimal, melancholic approach of Felix Gonzalez-Torres. Communicating the sociopolitical realities of the AIDS crisis, his message is best understood through contemplation that calls upon memory. Within his practice, Gonzalez-Torres addresses the public and the private and mortality and loss as they relate to the body, but rarely depicts the body itself. This is the case with "*Untitled*" (*Orpheus, Twice*) (1991; Fig. 7), two mirrors hung side by side and alluding to the Greek myth of Orpheus (with whom the artist identifies) and Eurydice.⁵

4 Kathy Halbreich, "Social Life," in *Bruce Nauman* (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1994), 101.

5 Orpheus traveled to Hades to rescue his love, but the only condition of her release was that he not look at her until she was free. Temptation got the best of him, resulting in the forever loss of Eurydice.

Viewers become active participants, the reflections of their bodies adding to the work's meaning by including their own personal histories. More strikingly, in that moment, they also become both Orpheus *and* the vanished. When only one of the two mirrors is filled, and the other remains vacant, it provokes memories of someone lost. Or perhaps, instead, it's filled by a loved one. Whether hopeful or in memoriam, the personal nature of the work emphasizes that life is never fixed and always fleeting.

B. Ingrid Olson's sculptural installation in Gallery 3 addresses temporality in a different manner. Alongside Forti's *Solo No. 1*, it establishes a cadence palpable throughout the space. Described as "punctuations," *Projection, Body Parsed* (2018) is a multipart work of sexless, impressed cavities (small of back, cinched torso, thighs, and crotch) hung at corresponding heights based off of Olson's own body. The effect is a heightened awareness of the viewer's own anatomy.

Olson often refers to her gestures as pertaining to language, functioning "like a run-on sentence; gathered together, layered, and staggered, covering and revealing, building towards a fixed vantage point without reaching it."⁶ Like an ellipsis within a text, we receive information one bit at a time—pauses accompanied by building tension.⁷ The same can be said of her photographic compositions where, just when we feel we are honing in on meaning, or deciphering what it is we are looking at, we are firmly refused. These works fragment the body in a completely different way, framing it in space, contained, and deconstructing our gaze in doing so. As with Olson's *To scatter, call them bodies* (2015; Fig. 8), the photographs incorporate blur, flash, layering, and multiple perspectives through the use of mirrors, resulting in a wild field of energy.⁸

Performance and conceptual artist Helena Almeida explores the parameters of framing by using the figure to disrupt the picture plane and experiment with space and time. Inspired by the Brazilian Neo-Concrete movement, Almeida uses her body as the canvas, often wearing her paintings—the medium in which she trained and spent much of her career investigating and testing boundaries. This is done with a radical use of photography and drawing, in which she applies vibrant paint colors to overlay and obscure images of her body. In her series of eighteen photographs *Dentro de Mim \ Inside Me* (1998; Figs. 9 & 10), the artist's body is shown at near life-size, her movements reduced to a black outline or shadow. Revealing an everyday choreography

comprised of common actions occurring in the studio, *Dentro de Mim* emphasizes the physical limits and malleability of the human figure, aptly echoing her statement: "My work is my body; my body is my work."⁹

Central to EJ Hill's practice is the elevation of marginalized bodies that, through the artist's work, are seen as valuable and resilient within an oppressive society that threatens to render them invisible. Predominantly influenced by experiences of racial discrimination, Hill's endurance-based performances activate his installations and, in the past, occupied a precarious space in positioning the body as somewhere between subdued and powerful [Fig 11]. More often, his meditative, durational practice firmly asserts his presence as a queer African American man and celebrates black identity. Hill's work highlights identity as not only outwardly physical, but also as a nonsingular formation that develops within a social sphere. Constructed by the artist on-site, his installation asks visitors to complete it by using their bodies and ascending upward [Fig. 12].

Oscar Tuazon has said that he considers a house to be the ultimate sculpture. Undermining tradition and influenced by survivalist architecture, Tuazon builds objects intended for people to occupy. These modular structures, compounding both soft and crude materials, are spaces for a single person (a phone booth or a shower) and designed for functions not yet known. Described as possessing "useless usefulness," they either connect people with or provide shelter from the outside world.¹⁰ *Another Person* (2015; Fig 13) offers a dynamic framework for bodies and objects to interact: the revolving movement generates structural and spatial tension, and the circle sends us off into a potentially never-ending activity.

Tuazon describes living as a sculptural process, and this emphasis on existence also frames Rainer's perception. Now in her mid-eighties, she no longer dances: "My preferred mode of self-presentation is 'existence,'" and her body is the "enduring reality."¹¹ It's worth noting that, decades earlier, Rainer filmed *Hand Movie* while being treated in the hospital under life-threatening circumstances. Sizing up her situation, and with help from a friend, the film was conceived as a way to dance while the rest of her body could not. Watching it, we notice the fade-out that functions as a conclusion, but never really ends the film. For all we know, that hand is still dancing, still existing, and living out its enduring reality.

8 *Projection, Body Parsed* is essentially a sculpture reimagining *To scatter, call them bodies*. Conversation with the author, October 2018.

6 Olson, "Statement" (2013), <<http://documentspace.com/exhibitions/b-ingrid-olson/>> (accessed October 17, 2018). In a text included in Olson's 2018 solo exhibition at the Albright-Knox Gallery, writer Kate Zambreno ruminates on this state of becoming within Olson's work: "To fold one's thoughts into another," comparing it to the ellipsis. Reprinted in exhibition booklet: Zambreno, "Introduction," in *B. Ingrid Olson: Forehead and Braith*, 2-9.

7

9 The curators of *Lost Without Your Rhythm* dedicate this text to Almeida, who passed away during the planning of the exhibition in September 2018.

10 Oscar Tuazon, Whitney Museum of American Art, <<https://whitney.org/WatchAndListen/775>> (accessed October 17, 2018).

11 Yvonne Rainer, "The Aching Body in Dance," in *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art* 106 (2014): 6.

Fig. 1*

B. Ingrid Olson
Pulled Curtain, Turning Torso 2018
 PVA size, acrylic paint, latex paint, vinyl paint, sand,
 and polyurethane foam
 20 x 13 x 2 1/4 in (50.8 x 33 x 5.7 cm)
 Courtesy the artist and Simone Subal Gallery

Fig. 2

Yvonne Rainer
Hand Movie 1966
 8mm film transferred to video, black-and-white, silent
 8 min
 © 2018 Yvonne Rainer
 Courtesy Video Data Bank (vdb.org), School of the Art
 Institute of Chicago

Fig. 3*

Simone Forti
Huddle 1961
 Performance view: Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 1982
 © 2018 Simone Forti
 Courtesy Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam

Fig. 4

Simone Forti
Solo No. 1 1974
 Video, black-and-white, sound
 18:40 min
 © 2018 Simone Forti
 Courtesy Video Data Bank (vdb.org), School of the Art
 Institute of Chicago

Fig. 5*

Bruce Nauman
Device to Stand In 1966
 Enamel on steel
 8 5/8 x 27 1/8 x 17 3/8 in (21.91 x 68.9 x 44.13 cm)
 San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, The Panza Collection.
 Purchase, by exchange, through the bequest of J.D.
 Zellerbach and gifts of Mrs. Charles DeYoung Elkus,
 Mr. and Mrs. William C. Janss, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Jaretzki,
 Jr., Harriet Lane Levy, and anonymous donors, and the
 Accessions Committee Fund
 © 2018 Bruce Nauman / Artists Rights Society (ARS),
 New York
 Photo: Katherine Du Tiel

Fig. 6

Bruce Nauman
Body Pressure 1974
 Text on paper
 25 1/4 x 16 1/2 in (64 x 42 cm) each
 Friedrich Christian Flick Collection im Hamburger Bahnhof,
 Berlin
 © 2018 Bruce Nauman / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York
 Image: courtesy Dia Art Foundation, New York
 Photo: Bill Jacobson Studio, New York

Fig. 7

Felix Gonzalez-Torres
“Untitled” (Orpheus, Twice) 1991
 Mirror
 Overall: 75 x 55 in (190.5 x 139.7 cm); 75 x 25 1/2 in
 (190.5 x 64.77 cm) each
 Installation view: *Felix Gonzalez-Torres*, Massimo De Carlo,
 Milan, 2016
 © Felix Gonzalez-Torres
 Courtesy The Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation
 Photo: Roberto Marossi

Fig. 8*

B. Ingrid Olson
To scatter, call them bodies 2015
 Inkjet print and UV-printed mat board in aluminum frame
 30 x 21 in (76.2 x 53.3 cm)
 Courtesy the artist and Simone Subal Gallery

Figs. 9 & 10

Helena Almeida
Dentro de Mim \ Inside Me 1998
 Black-and-white photograph
 60 x 41 in (151.7 x 104.3 cm)
 Courtesy the artist and Galeria Filomena Soares

Fig. 11*

EJ Hill
A Monumental Offering of Potential Energy 2016
 Wood, LED neon flex, and durational performance
 Sculptural dimensions: 492 x 108 x 85 in (1249 x 274 x 215.9 cm),
 performance duration: 512 hours (July 14–October 30, 2016)
 Installation view: The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, 2016
 Photo: Adam Reich

Fig. 12

EJ Hill
Black Joy 2017 (foreground)
 Molded rubber, steel, and link chain
 99 x 22 x 6 in (251.5 x 55.9 x 15.2 cm)

Midnight Summit 2017 (background)
 Acrylic on marine canvas mounted on birch panel and
 structural wood platform
 Panel: 40 x 60 in (101.6 x 152.4 cm); Platform: 82 1/2 x 197
 x 48 3/4 in (209.6 x 500.4 x 123.8 cm)
 Private collection

Courtesy the artist and Commonwealth and Council,
 Los Angeles
 Photo: Ruben Diaz

Fig. 13*

Oscar Tuazon
Another Person 2015
 Steel, wood, aluminum, glass, and marble
 122 x 86 1/2 x 80 2/3 in (310 x 220 x 205 cm)
 Installation view: Oscar Tuazon, *Studio*, Le Consortium,
 Dijon, France, 2015
 Courtesy the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris
 Photo: André Morin

* Works not in the exhibition

Helena Almeida

Helena Almeida (b. 1934, Lisbon, Portugal; d. 2018) lived and
 worked in Lisbon. She studied at Escola Superior de Belas-
 Artes de Lisboa. Recent exhibitions have taken place at: Art
 Institute of Chicago (2017); WIELS Contemporary Art Centre,
 Brussels (2016); Serralves Foundation, Porto, Portugal,
 Hamburger Kunsthalle, Germany, Espaço Novo Banco,
 Lisbon (all 2015); Tate Liverpool and Museu de Arte Moderna,
 Rio de Janeiro (both 2014).

Simone Forti

Simone Forti (b. 1935, Florence, Italy) lives and works in Los
 Angeles. She studied at the California Institute of the Arts,
 Valencia, Hunter College, New York, Merce Cunningham
 Studio, Westbeth, New York, and Anna Halprin Studio, San
 Francisco, among other institutions. Recent exhibitions and
 performances have taken place at: Kunsthau Zürich, Centre
 Pompidou, Paris, Carré d'Art-Musée d'art contemporain
 de Nîmes, France, Emily Harvey Foundation, New York (all
 2017); Muzeum Sztuki, Lodz, Poland, Kunstmuseum Bonn,
 Germany (both 2016); Museum der Moderne, Salzburg, and
 Moderna Museet Malmö, Sweden (both 2015).

Felix Gonzalez-Torres

Felix Gonzalez-Torres (b. 1957, Guáimaro, Cuba; d. 1996)
 studied at Pratt Institute, New York, Whitney Museum
 Independent Study Program, New York, and the International
 Center of Photography, New York University. Recent
 exhibitions have taken place at: Rockbund Museum of
 Art, Shanghai (2016); Metropolitan Arts Centre, Belfast
 (2015); and Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul (2012). A survey
 of his work, *Felix Gonzalez-Torres: Specific Objects
 without Specific Form*, was organized by WIELS, Centre
 d'Art Contemporain, Brussels (2010), and then traveled to
 the Fondation Beyeler, Basel (2010), and the Museum für
 Moderne Kunst Frankfurt am Main (2011).

EJ Hill

EJ Hill (b. 1985, Los Angeles, CA) lives and works in Los
 Angeles. He studied at the University of California, Los
 Angeles, and Columbia College, Chicago. Recent exhibitions
 have taken place at: Hammer Museum, Los Angeles
 (2018); Institut d'art contemporain, Villeurbanne, France,
 Underground Museum, Los Angeles, 57th Venice Biennale,
 Italy (all 2017); The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York
 (2016); EFA Project Space, New York (2015); and Nichols
 Gallery, Pitzer College, Claremont, CA (2014).

Bruce Nauman

Bruce Nauman (b. 1941, Fort Wayne, IN) lives and works
 in Galisteo, New Mexico. He studied at the University of
 California, Davis, and University of Wisconsin, Madison.
 Recent exhibitions have taken place at: Schaulager, Basel,
 Casa Luis Barragán, Mexico City (both 2018); Musée Fabre,
 Montpellier, France (2017); Philadelphia Museum of Art,
 Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (both 2016–17); Fondation
 Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris, and Musée d'art
 contemporain de Montréal (both 2015).

B. Ingrid Olson

B. Ingrid Olson (b. 1987, Denver, CO) lives and works in
 Chicago. She studied at the School of the Art Institute of
 Chicago. Recent exhibitions have taken place at: Museum
 of Modern Art, New York, Museum of Contemporary Art
 Chicago, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo (all 2018); the
 Renaissance Society, Chicago, Lumber Room, Portland (both
 2017); and Sullivan Galleries, Chicago (2015).

Yvonne Rainer

Yvonne Rainer (b. 1934, San Francisco, CA) lives and works
 in New York. She studied at the Martha Graham School,
 New York, Anna Halprin Studio, San Francisco, and Merce
 Cunningham Studio, Westbeth, New York. She is the
 cofounder of New York's Judson Dance Theater. She has
 produced numerous films, and recent exhibitions and
 performances have taken place at: Serralves Foundation,
 Porto, Art, Design & Architecture Museum, University of
 California, Santa Barbara (both 2017); Museum of Modern
 Art, New York (2015); Raven Row, London (2014); Kunsthau
 Bregenz, Austria (2012); and MAK Center for Art and
 Architecture, Los Angeles (2011).

Oscar Tuazon

Oscar Tuazon (b. 1975, Seattle, WA) lives and works in Los
 Angeles. He studied at the Whitney Museum of American Art
 Independent Study Program, New York, and Cooper Union
 for the Advancement of Science and Art, New York. Recent
 exhibitions have taken place at: Skulptur Projekte Münster,
 Germany, Eli and Edythe Broad Museum at Michigan State
 University, East Lansing, Cà Bembo, Venice (all 2017);
 Fondation de France, Belfort, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles
 (both 2016); and Le Consortium, Dijon, France (2015).

2

3

