

Press Release

‘We are for you because we are against them’

A performative installation by artist Noëmi Lakmaier and curated by Liz Burns
Tuesday 9th June 6.30pm – 8pm
The LAB, Foley Street, Dublin 1.

Public Gesture: An Exploration of Practice- Led Research
MAVIS, IADT & Dutch Art Institute, ArtEZ Institute of the Arts

‘We are for you because we are against them’ invites the public to take on the role of voyeur, and observe an elaborately staged dinner party .Eight pre selected volunteer diners will participate in this public gesture which combines both elements of the uncanny and absurd. A normally private dinner party becomes the object of the public gaze.

This installation, developed specifically for the LAB, is an extension of artist Noëmi Lakmaier’s earlier work titled ‘*Exercise in Losing Control*’ performed in 2007. This piece involved the artist wedging herself into a ‘weeble’ – a bright yellow ball 55cm in diameter- for over two hours in the gallery space. Inspired by the child’s toy marketed during the 1970’s with the slogan “weebles wobble but they don’t fall down”, this work highlighted central concerns of the artist’s practice around issues of control and power and how we assert and relinquish both. A sense of the absurd coupled with what the artist terms her “tendency towards dangerous behaviour” is evident in the work, where power shifted uncomfortably from the artist to the spectators in the gallery, who were invited to interact with the piece.

‘We are for you because we are against them’ invites eight pre selected volunteers to partake in a new type of public gesture, where they are simultaneously participants within a private dinner party as well as objects of the public gaze. Notions of ‘we’, ‘them’ and ‘other’ shift across the registers of both the personal and political.

Liz Burns works for the Fire Station Artists’ Studios in Dublin. Her role involves the commissioning of site and context specific art projects which explore relationships to places, publics and communities. Her research interests are in participatory models of arts practice, and the multiple roles of the curator. Some previous projects include *12 Angry Films* (2006) Jesse Jones, *Umbrella Project* (2006) Rhona Byrne, *100 Flowers to Bloom* (2005) David Jacques, and *Daedal (us)* (2003) Esther Shalev-Gerz. www.firestation.ie/projects

Noëmi Lakmaier is the winner of the Fire Station Artists’ Studios Award 2008/9 in partnership with Arts and Disability Ireland (ADI) www.firestation.ie www.adiarts.ie

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For Updates on the programme see www.mavis.ie/publicgesture