

Media Information: Monday 5 January 2009

BALTIC

A SPOKEN WORD EXHIBITION

Friday 16 January – Sunday 15 March 2009

From Friday 16 January, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art presents **A Spoken Word Exhibition**, composed only of verbal artworks. This exhibition will flow throughout the building as the works will be repeated by **BALTIC staff** to the visitor on request.

BALTIC staff will read the words, haikus or texts as written and instructed by 15 artists. Using only language the artworks are spoken and exchanged as a verbal gesture from one person to another, thus generating an exhibition that only last the time it takes to hear it.

A Spoken Word Exhibition is an exhibition of the same nature & material as that of the artworks that constitutes it, which are words. Using the simple premise of an artwork that can be spoken, curator Mathieu Copeland sets up a bridge between several generations of artists, with spoken works by major artists such as **Lawrence Weiner, James Lee Byars, Yoko Ono** and **Vito Acconci** alongside more recent voiced proposals from younger international figures such as **Tris Vonna Michell** and **Mai-Thu Perret**.

Alessandro Vincentelli, Acting Head of Programme at BALTIC added: "It is very timely that Copeland's work is being presented at BALTIC from January. The exhibition has been programmed to run concurrently with two adventurous shows that question the role and form of an artwork; This new initiative, created around only spoken word, will run alongside two major exhibitions **George Maciunas: Dreams of Fluxus** and the major presentation of **Yoko Ono's** work.

A Spoken Word is very much a contemporary exhibition that draws together artists that are committed to continuing this way of questioning the form of art, and places an emphasis on 'experiencing' an exchange rather than centring discussion on an object."

The show includes simple word instructions from a tightly curated international list of artists (full list of artist available below). With this unconventional show the public are invited to select from the list of works which will then be performed by BALTIC staff.

A Spoken Word Exhibition is an on-going & travelling exhibition curated by **Mathieu Copeland**. It has previously been presented at the **Swiss Institute NY** in November 2007 (part of Performa07), and **TranzitDisplay** in Prague in the spring of 2008.

END

For further information on the exhibition and transcripts of the texts please contact:
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NOTES TO EDITORS

CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS

Vito Acconci, Fia Backström, Robert Barry, James Lee Byars, Nick Currie (aka Momus), Douglas Coupland, Karl Holmqvist, Maurizio Nannucci, Yoko Ono, Mai-Thu Perret, Emilio Prini, Tomas Vanek, Tris Vonna Michell, Lawrence Weiner, and Ian Wilson.

BIOGRAPHY

Mathieu Copeland, born in France in 1977, is a curator living in London who questions the conventional format of exhibitions. Recent exhibition includes **A Choreographed Exhibition** at **La Ferme du Buisson** (November/December 2008); **L'Exposition Continue** (the continuous exhibition) at **Circuit & 1m3** in Lausanne (September/November 2008), and again **The Saints, the films and music of Amy Granat** in London (May 2008).

He also publishes artist films on DVDs, including films by Amy Granat, by Mai-Thu Perret, or again Arnaud Michniak.

Forthcoming exhibition include **Voids, A Retrospective** at the **Centre Pompidou** in Paris, France, February/March 2009.

www.mathieucopeland.net

BALTIC is a major international centre for contemporary art situated on the south bank of the River Tyne in Gateshead, England. BALTIC presents a constantly changing, distinctive and ambitious programme of exhibitions and events, and is a world leader in the presentation, commissioning and communication of contemporary visual art. BALTIC has welcomed over 3 million visitors, since opening to the public in July 2002.

GALLERY INFORMATION:

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Opening hours:

Monday - Sunday 10.00 - 18.00 (excluding Tuesday)
Tuesday 10.30 – 18.00

ADMISSION FREE

