FLORENCE LOEWY
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Press release

Smiling/Shouting

Projection vidéos

Charlie Hamish Jeffery

From 08 July 2017 to 29 July 2017

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Press Release

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The immense domain of performance

Smiling and Shouting are two filmed performances, made at the very end of the 20th century. The grain of the Super 8 film of Smiling, a kind of self-portrait of the artist, places this image in a definite, and in any case, decisive past, whose subliminal message could very well be: “Charlie, artist of the future 21st century, smile, you’re being filmed. The immense territory of performance to be reinvented is now yours, after Vito, Marina, Chris, Herman and the other ‘actionists’ of the glorious and disastrous 20th century.” Consequently, the artist has decided to show these two films today for the first time as an inaugural and fundamental diptych for all the work he has been developing over nearly 20 years, confounding the possible reduction of art to the fashioning of products that can be categorised. On the one hand then, Charlie Jeffery smiles at any cost at the image, in a determined, even proactive, embarrassing and disarming way. On the other, Charlie Jeffery enters the frame, positions himself, shouts, stops, shouts even louder, stops, shouts and powerfully re-shouts, stamps his feet, jumps, whirls his arms, falls, gets up – all this corporeal agitation comprising a shout dynamo – stops once again, and again shouts, shouts, shouts at the top of his voice, with more rage then with a certain abandon. The alternations between the action of getting a hold of himself and that of shouting continues until this artist-performer considers that the action is accomplished, that there is no more energy, the final glance at the camera seems to be saying: Well, that’s all. And the actor, or actioner, leaves the field vision. The idea of release comes to mind. But release here is a production of energy favouring what the artist discovers in improvising a first shout. The energy released was not “stored,” it was created. The moment of the performance is a continuous creation, finding its own resources, persevering over time for Smiling, or building and structuring itself as the performance continues for Shouting: long segments of silence, concentrated, re-focused, alternating with the shouts, increasingly spectacular, involving, summoning and gradually mobilising the entire body, emancipating these actions from their social meanings, for instance hypocrisy, or more generally forced sociability, hysteria or the social handicap. These very clear alternations between the sudden and intense uttering of shouts, causing the body to start convulsing, and the moments of sudden calming down, striking by their affective neutrality, their impassibility, evoke the theatrical register and the paradox of the actor. The actor is someone who is capable of suddenly changing emotions or appearances, capable of feeling and expressing an emotion sincerely, through a necessary detachment, who is then capable of shouting himself hoarse, as though seized by an inextinguishable fury, then in a second interrupting himself,

instantly recovering his calm. Breaking with a certain tradition of irreconcilable, radical and extreme performance that rejects theatre, Charlie Jeffery plays with theatrical codes and theatricality, rage and detachment, the serious and the derisory, total commitment and distancing. He consequently opens a vista of exploration and experimentation by throwing himself into action corporeally, physically, to be sure, but seeking a singular, alternative path, convinced that he has to define his actions from an anti-heroic angle even though his involvement has to be total. On the one hand, then, the smallest of actions, in the end discreet but tenacious, in appearance anodyne but in reality essential in that it concerns knowing or perceiving what defines us as a human being and, on the other, a grandiloquent, furious, theatrical, lyrical, extravagant action: the alpha and omega of performance, its lower and upper limits. And between these two limits is the vaste field of performance and its infinite variations. The field that these two limits define remains, in fact, infinite. The definitive fall, the one that is unique, could well be the only boundary in this terribly vast field of actions.

Mériam Korichi

Exhibition View

Legend : Exhibition view, Charlie Jeffery, Smiling / Shouting, Florence Loewy, Paris, 2017

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Charlie Hamish Jeffery

Charlie Hamish Jeffery
Smiling, 1998
3'28, video transfers of a super 8 movie
Edition of 3 ex + 1 EA

Charlie Hamish Jeffery

Charlie Hamish Jeffery
Shouting, 1998
VHS digital transfer, one chanel video, 6 min 05
Edition of 3 ex + 1 EA