

**PIÈGE POUR UN TRAVESTI ;
TOUS LES CRITÈRES CETTE
POSITION TOUT MOMENT ;
JOE DALLESSANDRO ;
PORTRAIT DE CLAUDE
BERNARD VILLENEUVE-
LES-SABLONS ; NATURE
MORTE ; LES FUMEURS ;
TOUTES LES CHOSES
MATÉRIELLES
EN CREUX.**

WITH (in order of appearance)

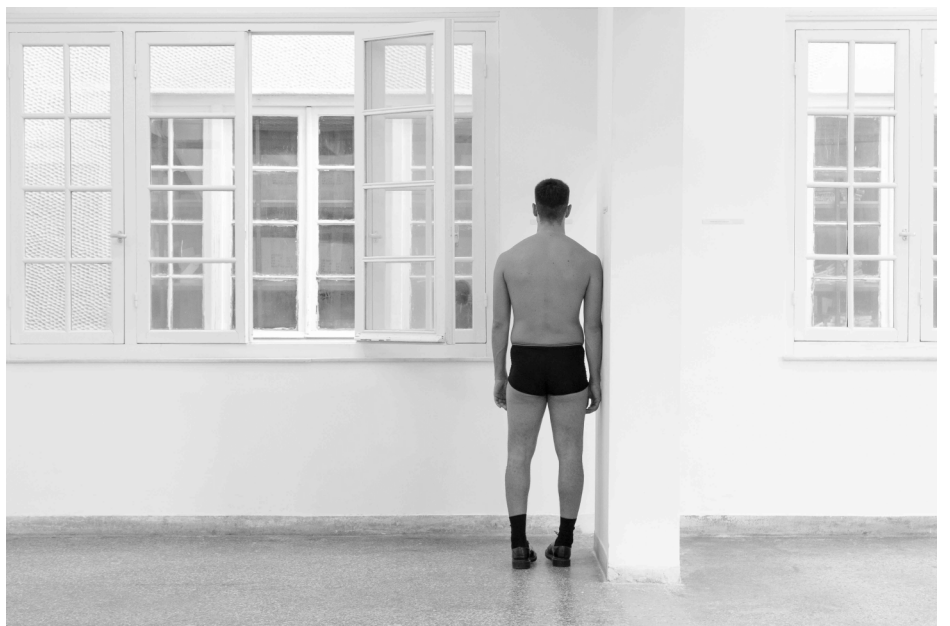
Michel Journiac
Victor Burgin
Cally Spooner
Efthimios Moschopoulos
Duane Michals
Yannis Tsarouchis
Valérie Jouve
La Tierce (Sonia Garcia,
Séverine Lefèvre, Charles Pietri)

18 NOVEMBER 2022–28 JANUARY 2023

Frac Nouvelle-Aquitaine MÉCA

The exhibition – whose title reiterates all the names of the presented artworks in a single sentence – invites us, according to a continuum set on a performance, to renew our perception of a selected number of works from the Frac Nouvelle-Aquitaine MÉCA collection. Following the tradition of conceptual art, which delegates a large part of the creation to the responsibility of the audience, this exhibition questions the limits located within the visitor’s body and written into the place of his or her experience. The physical journey through the exhibition is governed by a curatorial form associated with the actions of artists, choreographers and dancers in order to promote a reception of the works that will carry the visitor to physical (somatic), symbolic (sensitive) and imaginary (unconscious) territories. In sum, the exhibition guides the visitor through a political landscape of behaviours where the most important thing is perhaps that which is left to chance, the degree of the visitor’s attention, their mood, the intensity of their memories.

Victor Burgin’s performative statements – found in the Frac Nouvelle-Aquitaine MÉCA collection – constitute the basis from which this journey, divided amongst four rooms linked by a connecting corridor, unfolds. *All Criteria This Position Any Moment*, 2020, initially created and presented at Haus N in Athens, is a score intended to activate the instructions of Victor Burgin’s works and, without being a substitute, offers an embodied interpretation of his works. The interpretation of *All Criteria This Position Any Moment*, achieved through the eyes of the British artist Cally Spooner and set in motion by the dancer Efthimios Moschopoulos, gives rhythm to the first three rooms of the exhibition. Several works by artists from the Frac collection, such as Michel Journiac, Duane Michals and Valérie Jouve, punctuate the progression through these three ‘mental chambers’ by insisting, in various ways, on the anthropomorphic nature of each artwork, even amongst the most abstract or most conceptual. The score *Toutes les choses matérielles en creux*, 2022, was specifically created and activated by the dance company La Tierce: Sonia Garcia, Séverine Lefèvre and Charles Pietri. Based on *Toutes les choses matérielles*, 1970, an additional statement by Victor Burgin – which is also part of the Frac collection – La Tierce offer this score as a conclusion in the fourth act of the exhibition.





SCORE I

TOUS LES CRITÈRES CETTE POSITION TOUT MOMENT

(All Criteria This Position Any Moment)

SCORE FOR A SOLO PERFORMANCE WRITTEN BY PIERRE BAL-BLANC

2020

After Victor Burgin's performative statements,¹ 1969–70
And Yannis Tsarouchis' painting *The Forgotten Guard*, 1957

1. "Performative statements" is a term coined by Alfred Pacquement in an article published in *art press* magazine in 1972 and used again by Victor Burgin in the catalogue *Passages*. Source Ghislain Mollet-Viéville's website : www.conceptual-art.net/annu_concep2.html.

NOTES

ON *All Criteria This Position Any Moment*, 2020

PIERRE BAL-BLANC
Athens, September, 2020

The conception of the score *All Criteria This Position Any Moment* took place in Athens in 2020 where I keep in my archives the works of the artist Victor Burgin acquired during an exchange in France in 1998. According to the conceptual art expert Christophe Cherix, the performative statements (*This Position*, 1969; *Any moment*, *All Criteria*, 1970) by Victor Burgin can be distinguished "from the statements of Robert Barry who uses language to circumscribe the inaccessible and thereby render it inoperative." The English artist, continues the historian:

strives to set up an open grid aimed at integrating the movements, sensations, or emotions of an ever-changing recipient. He creates a structure that the visitor, through his own experience, is responsible for integrating¹.

The writing of this score for the presentation of Victor Burgin's works converges with the presence of the English artist Cally Spooner, who lives in Athens like me and with whom I wanted to find a terrain for exchange on our respective performance practices. The adjustment of this protocol is thus determined by historical contingencies linked to the need to privilege local relationships after the Covid 19 crisis and by cultural characteristics that shape

1. https://archive.mamco.ch/artistes_fichiers/B/burgin.html

this environment: the ancient canons, the semiotic uses by Byzantine art or the taboo character of the body in Ottoman art. The synthesis of these references is to be found in the art of the Greek artist Yannis Tsarouchis (1910–1989), who combines these different typologies in his own painting. He renews the ancient use of the nude simultaneously with dressed figures, but in scenes of ordinary life. He makes a sacred use of the body but depicts it naked incarnated mainly by men. He is homosexual, but this aspect remains a taboo that runs through his work. *The Forgotten Guard*, 1957, depicting soldiers at rest, naked and clothed, is the work of Yannis Tsarouchis used as a reference by the curator and the choreographer to frame

the exchange, to recruit the model and train him in the reception of Victor Burgin's conceptual works. As the Greek artist notes:

the title of the painting comes from the comments of the carpenter who made the large frame of the canvas. He had been a soldier in the Near East and told that the men of a small garrison in El Alamein were naked because of the heat and only wore their equipment.

The uniform reduced to a harness that one of the guard's wears over his naked body refers to the power he represents and the order he maintains. The disorder of the senses created by Tsarouchis, brought about by the presence of the flesh and the most intimate parts of the policemen, favors the pictorial impact and the tactile force released by the canvas.

Victor Burgin's three conceptual works *This Position*, 1969–*Any Moment*, 1970–*All Criteria*, 1970, each consisting of instructions printed on two A4 sheets of paper, must be presented in isolation from each other in a large room or connected rooms that can accommodate an audience. The presentation of the pieces returns to its original mode (transmitted by the French art agent Ghislain Mollet-Viéville following his conversation with the English artist), which proposes that the instructions are 'cut up' and placed around the wall in order to 'occupy' a room. It is possible to include the signed and numbered originals framed under glass, or placed in a vitrine, and to show them in another adjacent room.

The activation of each piece is carried out by a nude or semi-nude model with reference to *The Forgotten Guard*, 1957, by Yannis Tsarouchis. This painting will be brought to the attention of the audience through documents, or by including the painting itself presented in a separate space in the exhibition. The dancer recruited according to the criteria of the Greek artist's painting will have undergone prior training by the curator and the choreographer to incorporate the principle of the instructions in each of Victor Burgin's works.

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The nude is the paragon of liberal art. The idealized nude reigned in the salons of the 19th century until the scandal of Manet's *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* and *Olympia*. The nude model Victorine Meurent who poses in both paintings is considered obscene because it refers to the naked body of everyday life. The painter nevertheless associates his work with the classic of the ancient world, which frequently called for the naked and clothed bodies of the characters in his scenes. This tradition was taken up again by Manet in the midst of everyday life, which shocked his contemporaries as much as the social status of the model, who referred to the "stony" or the "walker", a prostitute working on public

streets. Manet declares: "I depict the things I see as simply as possible", making the transition to Impressionism after Realism that Courbet had just introduced. With Impressionism, unlike ancient art, which is based on mythology, and Romanesque art on holy history, one can talk about the work without the need for external references. When the subject is about individuals, they are contemporaries. If Courbet uses the technique of absorption of characters that makes them so tangible, Manet, on the other hand, places us in front of the eyes of the model who scrutinizes our present. Tsarouchis undresses the instituted gaze, keeping details of clothing, socks, belts, harnesses or even trainers in the nakedness of his body, he eroti-

cizes the classical figure of power caught in the anecdotal signs of his time.

The use of a nude model to embody the process of reception of Victor Burgin's conceptual works *All Criteria*, *This Position*, *Any Moment* is a way of emphasizing the sculptural work that the English artist operates in hollow with these pieces. Using conceptual instructions, he addresses the body and mind of the receiver who is able to internalize statements and translate them into space. It is in a way an academic work or an inverted anatomical study that would take place in a conceptual (disembodied) way but whose objective is indeed to be embodied by the reader in the space where he or she is located.

Burgin's conceptual practice dematerializes the figure but does not overlook the body which remains its support, the representation is simply displaced, it is superimposed on the reader who incarnates the work, just as one takes the point of view of a literary character when reading a play, whether or not one comes to life following his or her instructions. This score aims to restore the initial installation of the conceptual statement in the space that has been relatively neglected, in favour of a presentation of the instructions on printed on two A4 sheets of paper and framed under glass. Taking the exchanges of art agent and collector Ghislain Mollet-Viéville with Victor Burgin and his companion Francette

Victor Burgin's three statements appeal to the somatic and symbolic memory of the reader. Cally Spooner substitutes these mnemonic traces with three of her own choreographic material: *DRAG DRAG SOLO*, 2016; *Still Life*, 2018; *DEAD TIME (Maggie's solo)*, 2019. The performer led by Cally Spooner will thus draw from this reservoir of gestures and attitudes when Victor Burgin's instructions command him to refer to a past or future time.

The continuum of the three pieces performed will be presented before the eyes of the public, who will also have access to the performative statements and will be able to act freely. The performer's embodiment of the pieces, which varies according to his or her own reading as well as to the choreographer's and curator's instructions, is only an indication of the possible form of reception of the conceptual work addressed to the audience; it does not claim to limit its use.

The title *All Criteria This Position Any Moment*, 2020, articulates the three respective works by Burgin and Spooner according to a new syntax inspired by Tsarouchis. The score demonstrates the intention to connect them in time, in space and in the body of the performer as well as the visitor. The first activation of this score was carried out with the artist Cally Spooner and the dancer Efthimios Moschopoulos in Haus N Athens in 2020.

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as a point of reference, they indicate that the works should be presented at eye level around a room by photocopying and cutting out each sentence according to the numbering so as to create a reading continuum that invites movement around the exhibition room. The use of a third party, a model or a nude dancer is then presented as a modality of reception of the work (among many others) for the spectators who attend the scene of its reading and with which they can freely associate or identify themselves in order to carry out their own reading simultaneously or on a later occasion. However, this is not to propose a theatricalization of Victor Burgin's work; on the contrary, the intention is to underline the anti-theatrical character of the

conceptual forms created by the artist, which invite people to say what they do and do what they say without going through fiction. The intention of this score, which is added to the statements, is to respond, to the letter, to the artist's invitation to act. Victor Burgin's three statements appeal to the somatic and symbolic memory of the reader. Cally Spooner substitutes these mnemonic traces with three of her own choreographic works: *DRAG DRAG SOLO*, 2016, for *All Criteria*; *DEAD TIME (Maggie's solo)*, 2019, for *This Position*; *Still Life*, 2018, for *Any Moment*. The performer led by Cally Spooner will thus draw from this reservoir of gestures and attitudes when Victor Burgin's instructions command him

to refer to a past or future time. Cally Spooner's work operates a revolution of the gaze, literally a reversal of perspective from the point of view of the art object, of its production, towards the counter-field of its reception or more particularly of its listening. It is rather the "conditions of reception" induced or generated by her choreographic objects that inform their ethical character. Consequently, we leave a simple ontology of the object to extend the aesthetic experience to the whole social environment and to all the protagonists, artist and performer, curator and spectator. The score (*partition*, in French), understood in the literal sense of the word (partitioning), written in Athens in 2020, articulates the three respective works by Burgin

and Spooner according to a new syntax inspired by Tsarouchis. It demonstrates the intention to connect them in time, in space and in the body of the performer as well as the visitor.

WORKS
REFERENCED

Victor Burgin
This Position, 1969
Any Moment, 1970
All Criteria, 1970

Yannis Tsarouchis
The Forgotten Guard, 1957
(work not exhibited)

Cally Spooner
DRAG DRAG SOLO,
2016

Collection Nouveaux médias
MNAM Centre Pompidou Paris
(work not exhibited)

DEAD TIME
(Maggie's Solo), 2021

Collection Frac Ile-de-France
(work not exhibited)

Nature morte, 2018
Fresh pears, assistant

SCORE 2

TOUS LES CHOSES
MATÉRIELLES
EN CREUX

(All substantial things hollow)

A SCORE FOR SOLO OR BALLET,

WRITTEN BY PIERRE BAL-BLANC

AND LA TIERCE

(SONIA GARCIA, SÉVERINE LEFÈVRE, CHARLES PIETRI)

2022

Based on Victor Burgin's performative statement
Toutes les choses matérielles (1970),
part of the Frac Nouvelle-Aquitaine MÉCA collection,
and the vocabulary of the choreographic work
En Creux (2014), by La Tierce.

1
TOUTES LES CHOSES MATERIELLES QUI CONSTITUENT CETTE PIECE

2
TOUTE LA DUREE DE 1

3
LE MOMENT PRESENT ET SEULEMENT LE MOMENT PRESENT

4
TOUS LES ASPECTS DE 1 DIRECTEMENT APPREHENDES PAR VOUS EN 3

5
TOUS VOS SOUVENIRS EN 3 D'ASPECTS DE 1 DIRECTEMENT APPREHENDES PAR VOUS A TOUT MOMENT ANTERIEUR A 3

6
TOUS LES CRITERES SELON LESQUELS VOUS POURRIEZ DISTINGUER LES ELEMENTS DE 5 DES ELEMENTS DE 4

7
TOUS VOS SOUVENIRS EN 3 AUTRE QUE 5

8
TOUS LES ACTES CORPORELS EXECUTES PAR VOUS EN 3 QUE VOUS SAVEZ ETRE DIRECTEMENT APPREHENDES PAR DES PERSONNES AUTRES QUE VOUS-MEME

9
TOUS LES ACTES CORPORELS DIRECTEMENT APPREHENDES PAR VOUS EN 3 EXECUTES PAR DES PERSONNES AUTRES QUE VOUS-MEME

10
TOUS LES ELEMENTS DE 9 ET TOUS LES ELEMENTS DE 8 DIRECTEMENT EN RAPPORT AVEC LES ELEMENTS DE 1

11
TOUS VOS ACTES CORPORELS EN 3 AUTRES QUE 8

12
TOUTES VOS SENSATIONS CORPORELLES EN 3 QUE VOUS ESTIMEZ DEPENDRE DE VOTRE CONTACT CORPOREL AVEC TOUT ELEMENT DE 1

13
TOUTES VOS SENSATIONS CORPORELLES EN 3 QUE VOUS ESTIMEZ DEPENDRE DE TOUTE EMOTION DIRECTEMENT EPROUVEE PAR VOUS

14
TOUS LES CRITERES SELON LESQUELS VOUS POURRIEZ DISTINGUER LES ELEMENTS DE 13 DES ELEMENTS DE 12

15
TOUTES VOS SENSATIONS CORPORELLES EN 3 AUTRE QUE 13 ET 12

16
TOUTES VOS CONCLUSIONS DE 9 RELATIVES AUX EXPERIENCES INTERIEURES DE TOUTE PERSONNE AUTRE QUE VOUS-MEME

17
TOUT ELEMENT DE 16 QUE VOUS CONSIDEREZ EN TOUT OU EN PARTIE ANALOGUE A TOUT ELEMENT DE 13

18
TOUT ELEMENT DE 16 QUE VOUS CONSIDEREZ EN TOUT OU EN PARTIE ANALOGUE A TOUT ELEMENT DE 12

Victor Burgin 1970 10/20

Victor Burgin's conceptual work *Toutes les choses matérielles* (1970) consists of instructions printed on two A4 sheets of paper, and can be borrowed from the Frac's collection. The work must be presented in a large room that can accommodate an audience.

The display of this work is based on its initial exhibition mode, transmitted by the artist and the art agent Ghislain Mollet-Viéville. It consists of photocopying and cutting the two A4 sheets of the original so that each sentence is isolated. The sentences are then pasted at eye level and arranged in a row that goes across the walls of the room. The signed and numbered artwork, framed under glass, or placed in a vitrine, can also be included (or not included) in the exhibition in an adjacent room.

In addition to the conventional exhibition of Victor Burgin's work, the score created in collaboration by Pierre Bal-Blanc and La Tierce proposes a protocol for an event-based activation of the performative statement *Toutes les choses matérielles*. In this way, the score can punctuate the exhibition or be carried out simultaneously. La Tierce's work *En Creux* (2014) forms the basis of the choreographic vocabulary that will be invoked during these activations.

The co-authors of this score, Pierre Bal-Blanc and La Tierce, have worked together beforehand in order to integrate a logic of reception, determined by the choreographic piece *En Creux*, into the principle of the instructions of Victor Burgin's work, which will in turn be transmitted to other performers. The activation can vary according to the circumstances, from a succession of three performers – one after the other or the three together – to a succession of as many performers as the exhibition space can hold, with the prescription that at least an equal number of visitors be present. The audience will have access to the performative statements and will be able to act freely before, during or after the activation.

The performers' embodiment of Victor Burgin's *Toutes les choses matérielles* varies according to La Tierce's instructions set by *En Creux* and is based on the score written by Pierre Bal-Blanc. It is nevertheless only a suggestion for the reception of Victor Burgin's work and does not claim to limit its uses. *Toutes les choses matérielles en creux* (2022) articulates the works of Victor Burgin and La Tierce according to a new syntax, demonstrating an intention to connect them in time, in space and in the body of the performer as well as the visitor.

WORKS
REFERENCED

Victor Burgin
*Toutes les choses
matérielles*, 1970

La Tierce : Sonia Garcia,
Séverine Lefèvre,
Charles Pietri
En Creux, 2014





EXHIBITED
WORKS

Victor Burgin
*Tout moment antérieur au
moment présent*, 1970
Tous les critères, 1970
*Toutes les choses
matérielles*, 1970

Michel Journiac
Piège pour un travesti :
Arletty, 1972

Duane Michals
Joe Dallessandro, 1969

Valérie Jouve
Les Fumeurs, 1998

Collection Frac Nouvelle-Aquitaine MÉCA

Pierre Bal-Blanc
*Tous les critères, cette posi-
tion, tout moment*, 2020
(All Criteria This Position
Any Moment)

*All Criteria This Position
Any Moment*, 2020

Visual notations during the first
presentation in Haus N Athens in 2020.
Photography: Constantinos Caravatellis.
Music pieces: *Clavecin 4. Ordre Vingtième*
de François Couperin (interpreted by Mark
Kröll)
Video, 8'05", black & white, sound

Pierre Bal-Blanc
– La Tierce
*Toutes les choses matérielles
en creux*, 2022

Cally Spooner
Still life, 2018

Yannis Tsarouchis
Portrait de Claude Bernard
Villeneuve-les-Sablons,
1971

COLOPHON

Editorial direction

Pierre Bal-Blanc

Texts

Pierre Bal-Blanc
and Frac Nouvelle-Aquitaine
MÉCA

Photography

Constantinos Caravatellis
Image of the work *Toutes
les choses matérielles*: © Victor
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Design

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assisted by Ariane Desplanques

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*To consult the entire programme,
see*

[www.fracnouvelleaquitaine-
meca.fr](http://www.fracnouvelleaquitaine-meca.fr)

and sur @fracmeca

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