

English **Eliana Beltrán, *The Reading Room #3, Aparatos del habla y materialismo histœrico.***<sup>1</sup> April, Saturday 14, 2018. Live performance project. *Barcelona Producció is an initiative of La Capella.*

*With the collaboration of Rocío Campaña*

Shared reading or commented reading is the idea behind *The Reading Room*, and so too is staged reading, a performative reading where the communication of the form transforms the communication of the content, the text. The latter undergoes an expansion of its meaning, rendering it more polydirectional. It is the old strategy of bards with their popular musical skits, which, besides making the lyrics unforgettable, manage to imbue them with multiple meanings depending not only on the sounds and gestures, but also on the mere presence of the poet; in this case, the poets-performers-drummers.

Eliana Beltrán arranges her audio and visual apparatus in space according to criteria of performance rather than practical use. Dragging the drumsticks on the floor to create a line of sound and also to emphasise the rough flooring of the room, they walk in a strange way, like Esther Ferrer in her action entitled *Andar y hablar sin parar*. Here they use the sharpener strategy.<sup>2</sup>

The philanthropist Rose Sélavy<sup>3</sup> said that sound has sculptural qualities because it occupies space. Eliana Beltrán employs this sculptural sense

of sound by arranging for her partner Rocío Campaña to echo her, face to face with her *femme-machina* attributes, the drums, the drumsticks, the plastic covering of the drum.

The words of the texts occupy the space in every direction, with projections that simultaneously compress them into miniscule typographical gestures and “shrink” them to lines on a colour where they wait to be spoken out loud in order to ultimately occupy the space of the room and the bodies of those within it, since the sound also touches us as if it were an invisible hand...

Eliana talks enthusiastically about her metal membrane. In earlier versions, it formed a wall between the two sets of drums, but in the current version it has fallen down and wanders around the rooms with its tinny murmuring. It is the fallen acousmatic, a voice whose provenance we are unaware of, whose source we cannot see. The radio is the acousmatic apparatus par excellence, a modern-day version of Pythagoras's strategy of talking to his students from behind a veil. There is something acousmatic or neo-acousmatic about cordless microphones because they extend, amplify and, at the same time, hide the source of the voice. The membrane symbolises Pythagoras

and, in this third version, it has fallen down and is dragged about, but, as a sculptural object, it also reinvents itself.

The action pools an excerpt of Miran Božovič's “The Omniscient Body” text,<sup>4</sup> with the following cast: “Pythagoras as the broken membrane / Rocío Campaña as Rocío / Rocío Campaña on drums as *Femme-machina 1* / Eliana Beltrán as Eliana / Eliana Beltrán on drums as *Femme-machina 2* / Miran Božovič as the embodied philosopher / Michel Chion as the voice on the telephone. [...] Božovič's voice in Eliana's body: Diderot's first novel becomes a serious philosophical treatise about the true seat of the soul. It presents a series of female characters whose souls, on their journey through the body, have ended up stopping at its charms. Rocío: A euphemism for ‘vagina’! Charms, a euphemism for ‘vagina’! *Femme-machina 1* and *2*: 9 bars of PUNK-ROCK.” That is how the action kicks off in *The Reading Room*. A hysterical critique of the history of women's voices as an acousmatic phenomenon, a voice whose provenance we are unaware of...

Joan Casellas

Les Escaules, Spring 2018, with a yellow ribbon

<sup>1</sup> *Histœrico*: A fusion of the Spanish adjectives *histórico* and *histérico* (historical and hysterical). Philosophical licence of the author.

<sup>2</sup> The sharpener poem is short, practical and repetitive, but its communicative effectiveness is second to none.

<sup>3</sup> Marcel Duchamp is usually credited with this phrase, but since Marcel Duchamp has two identities, we have chosen his female identity to give voice to this thought. PS. Rose Sélavy's philanthropy involved giving voice to Marcel Duchamp's most daring and/or dubious proposals.

<sup>4</sup> A chapter from the book entitled *Lacan: The Silent Partners*, edited by Slavoj Žižek.

**Eliana Beltrán** (Medellín, Colombia, 1984) lives in Barcelona and is a long-term artist-in-residence at Hangar Centre for Artistic Research and Production (2016-2018). She did her master's degree in sound art at the University of Barcelona Faculty of Fine Arts (2015-2017) and studied architecture at the Pontifical Bolivarian University in Medellín (2001-2006), where her end-of-course project was on the special subject of theory, critique and project. She is a drummer and taught herself how to play the drums while a member of experimental musical projects on the alternative scene in Colombia (2005-2014). She started to study at the music school of EAFIT University, focusing in particular on symphonic percussion (2012). At Hangar, she has been selected in the last two calls for applications for the Encura grant by the winning curators. Her work has been shown in group exhibitions in Medellín (at the 43rd National Art Salon, 2013) and in Barcelona (in the Zeppelin Festival, organised by the Chaos Orchestra at the CCCB, 2015). She has received a number of awards for her work as a professional architect, including an honorary mention at the 23rd Colombian Architecture Biennial (2012). Her recent spatial practices include various forms of production and they engage in reflection through ambits such as architecture, fiction and the ephemeral nature of audible things, in tension and/or juxtaposition with other forms of the idea of spatial elements and the body.