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## MIREIA C. SALADRIGUES

### àngels barcelona

'I move. I move my mouth. I move from my spot ... I recognize ... I learn the indicative pronounce ... I learnt self-control ... I didn't close containers immediately after use.' In Peter Handke's 1966 play *Self Accusation*, an 'I' is sent like an arrow through 30 minutes of becoming. Into this (hilarious) tragedy of entropic personhood – which artist Mireia c. Saladrìgues had playing as an audio piece in her 2012 exhibition at àngels – a prosthetic limb intervened. A pliable latex arm lay on a table atop a series of photographs of hands poised in signs: the OK, the thumbs-up, the clap, an authoritative stop. With her malleable 'copy' strewn on the table, Saladrìgues invited gestural invention: using the photographs as a guide, visitors moulded and modified the hand, reconfiguring recognizable gestures and conceiving of alternatives.

That was the first of three connected exhibitions by Saladrìgues at àngels barcelona. For the second and current iteration, 'Rotations', the photographs hang as a reference just outside the main exhibition space and the floppy arm is draped over a keyboard in the gallery library. I think of other hands: Karen Mirza and Brad

Butler's 2012 film *Hold Your Ground*, in which a language teacher struggles to form a corporal vocabulary of protest, her choreography based on an instruction pamphlet for occupiers of Tahrir Square in 2011. Or Jasmine Johnson and Alice May Williams' *Guide to Critical Hand Gestures* (2013), a poster exhibited at 'Public Assembly: An Alternative Summer School', a recent exhibition at the White Building in London. The poster offers a few witty hand signs as efficient replacement for verbal expression when engaged in contemporary debate: the critical whirl, the point, the flipside. Saladrìgues's phase one, then, might be about occupying the space before gestures become words, before words become sentences. It might be about interrupting automated education; splintering 'I' into otherwise.

In 'Rotations', visitors are now 'en route', as the press release suggests. Bubble wrap covers the entire floor of the gallery. Saladrìgues has often made visible what is usually hidden: for her 2011 exhibition 'Her Museum', she published the diaries of a museum guard. 'Rotations' – essentially an exhibition of art packaging materials – would seem bizarrely outdated, like a version of the untitled 1974 work by Michael Asher, who removed a wall of the Claire Copley Gallery in Los Angeles to reveal the office space behind, if it wasn't for the evidence that Saladrìgues is acutely aware of where power and pedagogy currently reside (in the mouth, in the mind, in the hands).

As I crackle and pop across the space, I read about 'Departure' (which will run from 5–27 September). For this final phase, the artist will show footage of people leaving cultural institutions referencing the first images recorded on film in 1895 of workers leaving the Lumière factory. In a jumble sale of signs staggered over time – the thumbs up, a castrated arm, bubble wrap, Barcelona's cultural tourists – Saladrìgues's three-part exhibition project weaves a lawless but articulate story of a present moment. As factory machinery becomes grammar, and manual labour chatter, the hands would be free if it weren't for all that tapping on the keyboard (perhaps the hand was strategically placed on the keyboard). Maybe 'departure' is exit: defection as a form of disobedience. Maybe Saladrìgues is writing a manifesto. Crackle, pop, crackle, pop and then, finally, silence.

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