



Mandragoras Art Space
Performance Program



Cheryl Pope
(In)Voluntary Acts

Opening Reception May 5th, 2012 | 6-8pm
Performance May 5th, 2012 | 6-8pm
On view May 5th - May 26th, 2012

Mandragoras Art Space | MAas
36-01 36 Ave. 3rd Floor
Long Island City, NY 11106

Mandragoras Art Space proudly presents ***(In)Voluntary Acts***, the first New York solo exhibition by **Cheryl Pope**, opening on May 5th and running through May 26th, 2012.

(In)Voluntary Acts consists of performance, installation and sculpture that depict the internal battle one has within as reactions and responses to relationships with the self and with the other. Each work either addresses an involuntary or voluntary action that is made by the body as a result of confrontation, suppression, and restraint.

In the main room, one enters into a field of 738 water filled balloons suspended at head height by gold chains painted white. As the female figure performing aggressively battles each balloon with her head, the balloons and water oscillate with a nervous tension referencing the internal workings of the body both physically and psychologically. Viewers are invited to enter into this claustrophobic head space and participate with their head attempting to "clear the air."

Pope continues this exploration of internal battle with her performance *Restraint*, which is activated when the viewer enters the room into a one on one encounter. Here Pope uses only the body vs the body to depict the inner struggle of when to speak up.

Both performances, *Up Against* and *Restraint*, represent voluntary acts by extracting an internal experience and metaphorically physicalize it into a repeated gesture that is confrontational for the performer as well as the viewer.

Grind and *Perspire* display involuntary acts that the body performs without conscious control, grinding of the teeth and perspiration. A mechanism or motor activates each work as the isolated action continuously performs. The audio and the actions of these works become almost background noise or forgotten as the viewer is drawn to the more spectacle aspects of *Restraint* and *Up Against*, signaling the way these involuntary acts also lose attention in the everyday as emotions and reactions are suppressed and ignored.

Cheryl Pope's (In)Voluntary Acts brings to our attention struggles of confrontation, voice, suppression, restraint, and the results of these reactions. Together these works create an intense psychological space that is uncomfortable and aggressive provoking viewers to ask questions of their own confrontations, debates, and methods to respond and react.

*Photo by James Prinz Photography, courtesy of the artist and Julian Navarro Projects