

# GUGGENHEIM BILBAO

Press release



The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao presents on November 4, 2021

**Sharon Lockhart: *Rotation Notation***

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## *Sharon Lockhart. Rotation Notation*

- From November 4, 2021 to February 27, 2022
- Curated by Manuel Cirauqui
- Film & Video Gallery (103)

From November 4, 2021 to February 27, 2022, the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao will be running *Sharon Lockhart. Rotation Notation*, the third and last exhibition of 2021 in the Film & Video Gallery, a Museum space devoted to showing fundamental works of video and moving image art, and sound and video installations.

This exhibition shows a video installation and photographs by Sharon Lockhart (b. 1964, Norwood, USA) based on her encounter with the works of Israeli choreographer Noa Eshkol (b. 1924, Degania Bet kibbutz– d. 2007, Holon, Israel) soon after Eshkol died. Lockhart's discovery of Eshkol's works led her to further her formal exploration of human motion and expand the collaborative dimension of her work through her engagement with the choreographer's manifold and largely communally-enacted practice.

The works of Lockhart pay particular attention to human activity and its modes of organization, be it social or solitary. Ranging from labor to sport, and from child's play to choreography, Lockhart's films specifically confront the complexity and poetic depth of seemingly simple movements. Tight and disarming, her works are exercises in observation where the world's existence turns palpable in the very fact of its being documented. As the stillness of the lens emphasizes the modern aspiration to technical objectivity, situations are presented as though they were recording themselves.

Lockhart pushes the mechanics of cinema into a form of meditative self-reflection, a framework in which performers —actors, subjects, bodies— manifest as concrete bearers of presence, gesture, and relation. The artist's consideration of the consistency and limits of authorship are intrinsic to her research on objectivity and the automated reproduction of visual reality at 24 photographic frames per second. Reality makes the film as much as the filmmaker, and once movement and light are encoded into film, they can be reanimated and analyzed through endless playback.

The video and photographs on show bring forward the American artist's idea of artistic mediums as vehicles for welcoming and collaborating with other artists. In the installation *Four Exercises in Eshkol-Wachman Movement Notation* (2011), the dancer Ruti Sela — a collaborator of Eshkol's and member of her Chamber Dance Group from 1969 until the choreographer's recent passing— executes calculated movements among four identical grey volumes, designed by Lockhart to reference the space that the dancer's body occupies as she moves through each exercise. Changing composition for each of the four dances featured, the volumes are sized according to the dancer's measurements. The height of each volume is equal to her height with raised arms, while the width of each is her wingspan. In an act of tribute and appropriation, the careful succession of actions in Lockhart's work epitomizes the notation system developed by Eshkol and the architect Avraham Wachman in 1958. This rigorous method, known as EWMN, is capable of registering the entire range of a body's potential motions and is still used today in dance scores, the study of animal locomotion, and the diagnosis of behavioral disorders such as autism or

# GUGGENHEIM BILBAO

Asperger's syndrome. In developing an inventory of numerals and symbols, Eshkol and Wachman used a set of spherical models in which the possible rotations of the joints and limbs of the human body could be inscribed.

The spheres appear in a series of photographs by Lockhart, titled *Models of Orbits in the System of Reference, Eshkol-Wachman Movement Notation System* (2011), which can be seen at the entrance of the Film & Video Gallery. Within a circular framework of metallic wire, conical shapes made out of mesh represent the path of a gesture in space. Bearing resonances from Eadweard Muybridge's pre-cinematic studies of bodies in motion, Lockhart's photographs capture the spinning orbs, yielding entirely different forms. These may be correlated to the performer's action in the video, as her moves materialize various sequences from Eshkol's scripts.

## About Sharon Lockhart

Sharon Lockhart (b. 1964, Norwood, USA) is an American artist living and working in Los Angeles. In a diverse practice that includes installation, photography, film, painting and sculpture, Lockhart creates compelling and complex interactions between the various media and forms she employs, the histories she encounters, and the communities and people she collaborates with.

In 2017, Lockhart represented Poland at the 57<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale with her multidisciplinary project *Little Review*. Her solo exhibitions include those at Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary–Augarten, Vienna; the Jewish Museum, New York; Contemporary Art Center, Vilnius, Lithuania; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Fondazione Fotografia Modena, Italy; Museu Coleção Berardo, Lisbon, Portugal; and Kunstmuseum Luzern, Switzerland. Lockhart's films have been presented in the New York Film Festival, the Vienna International Film Festival, FIDMarseille, the Berlin International Film Festival, and the Sundance Film Festival. She has been awarded the Herb Alpert Award, the Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant, the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, the Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship, the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program Fellowship, Mike Kelley Foundation Artist Project Grant, and a Radcliffe Fellowship at Harvard University, among other accolades.

This exhibition is the result of a special collaboration between the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary (TBA21), and The Wellbeing Project.

## Film & Video (Gallery 103)

The Film & Video Gallery is a room dedicated to video art, sound and video installations and the moving image. It exhibits works from collections of the Guggenheim Museums and other international galleries. Since its opening in 2014, the Film & Video Gallery has shown works by unique artists such as Christian Marclay, Ragnar Kjartansson, Fiona Tan, Ken Jacobs, Amie Siegel, Pierre Huyghe, Michael Snow, Javier Téllez, Diana Thater, Allora & Calzadilla, Jesper Just, Jesse Jones, and William Kentridge, among others.

# GUGGENHEIM BILBAO

## Learning activities:

### **Talks with Artists: Sharon Lockhart (November 4)**

Manuel Cirauqui, curator of the Film & Video Gallery at the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, will talk with Sharon Lockhart on the occasion of the opening of her exhibition *Rotation Notation*. Addressing Lockhart's career and the key aspects of her practice, the discussion will place in context the artist's collaborative investigation on the work of choreographer Noa Eshkol, as well as her conceptual approach to human motion, abstraction, and film.

## Cover image:

### ***Sharon Lockhart. Rotation Notation***

*Four Exercises in Eshkol-Wachman Movement Notation*, 2011

single-channel HD video installation (color/silent)

16:03 minutes, continuous loop

Produced with the support of Outset Contemporary Art Fund, The Philip and Muriel Berman Foundation, Ostrovsky Family Fund, and Art Partners

Collection Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary

© Sharon Lockhart, 2011

Courtesy the artist, neugerriemschneider, Berlin, and Gladstone Gallery, New York and Brussels.

## For more information:

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All information about the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao is available at [www.guggenheim-bilbao.eus](http://www.guggenheim-bilbao.eus) (press room).

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Press Images for  
***Sharon Lockhart. Rotation Notation***  
Guggenheim Museum Bilbao

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For further information, please contact the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao Press Department: tel. +34 944 359 008 and email: [media@guggenheim-bilbao.eus](mailto:media@guggenheim-bilbao.eus)

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## ***Sharon Lockhart. Rotation Notation***

*Models of Orbits in the System of Reference, Eshkol-Wachman Movement Notation System: Sphere Three at Five Points in Its Rotation* (detail), 2011

five framed chromogenic prints

50 x 39.7 cm

© Sharon Lockhart, 2011

Courtesy of the artist, neugerriemschneider, Berlin, and Gladstone Gallery, New York and Brussels



# GUGGENHEIM BILBAO

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*Models of Orbits in the System of Reference, Eshkol-Wachman Movement*

*Notation System: Sphere Three at Five Points in Its Rotation* (detail), 2011

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