

# ART HAPS (1)

Artists on \_\_\_\_\_

## **Without**

by Naama Tsabar

August 09, 2014

Without (<http://www.naamatsabar.com/without>) was a Frieze Projects NY commission by Naama Tsabar, curated by Cecilia Alemani. For Without the floor from a booth inside the art fair was cut out, leaving a hole that exposed the grass of the park. The booth's floor was placed outside the main tent, where it functioned as a stage for a four day, seventeen band music festival that coincided with Frieze Art Fair. Tsabar invited Mindy Abovitz of Tom Tom Magazine (<http://tomtommag.com>) to curate the music festival. All the bands that performed had a female drummer or beat-maker.

### Removing the Floor

\*A very partial list of twentieth and twenty-first century musicians and artists who have influenced me:

Richard Serra, Nick Cave, David Bowie, Charles Ray, Donald Judd, David Hammons, John Zorn, Bruce Nauman, Michael Jackson, Gerhard Richter, Elliot Smith, Chris Burden, Sol Lewitt, Trent Reznor, Vito Acconci, Joseph

Beuys, Jarvis Cocker, Bas Jan Ader, John Coltrane, Matthew Barney, Jannis Kounellis, Lou Reed, Robert Morris, Juan Munoz, Jimi Hendrix, William Kentridge, Robert Gober, Andy Warhol, Marcel Duchamp, Glenn Ligon, Piero Manzoni, Jeppe Hein, Jon Kessler, Louis Armstrong, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Gilbert and George, Fred Sandback, Mark Dion, David Byrne, Menashe Kadishman, Haim Steinbach, Christian Marclay, The Clash, Felix Gonzalez Torres, Ram Orion, Prince, Gabriel Orozco, Brian Eno, Anri Sala, Aphex Twin, Olafur Eliasson, Angelo Badalamenti, Berry Sakharof, Yoav Shmueli, Bob Dylan, Bryan Ferry, The Cure, Deus, Eran Zur, Jeff Buckley, Dan Flavin, Johnny Cash, Leonard Cohen, Pierre Huyghe, Steve Reich, Dan Graham, Sparklehorse, Phillip Glass, Tino Sehgal, Morrissey, Maurizio Cattelan, Nick Drake, Tricky, Richard Artschwager, Jack White.

Excerpt from a conversation between Mindy Abovitz and Naama Tsabar:

N: When I started thinking about how to curate and who to curate into this festival, I mentioned this specific band from Brooklyn that is really hyped right now called DIIV

M: Oh?!

N: Yeah, you had the exact same response...

M: Did I know them?

N: No

M: So weird, is there a woman in the band?

N: No

M: Oh! There you go, that's why!

N: That really blew my mind.

M: Nah...I'm so focused, intentionally, and because I spiritually grow from leaving that stuff out, I am the curator of my own life, and of the magazine, and I love it.

N: What do you mean by that?

M: I like to think, read, consume music and music media, made by, about, for women, I feel as if there was a drought of it in my childhood and in my early teens and I feel as though I am still scrambling for more all the time. I am completely bored with guys in the music world doing amazing things...can't explain it, I think I was over saturated as a kid, and as an adult. It's not sexist...its like a survival skill for myself, its a way to stay powerful and focused, a way to build a world that I really want to be a part of.

I first learned how to use a drill when I moved into my first apartment in Tel Aviv, nineteen at the time, my father helped me put up shelves in my room. He explained the process - how one must hold the drill, what size anchor one must use for the screws and what size hole should be made for the anchors.

\*Email sent to Christopher Taylor - Project Manager – Frieze Projects, May 1st 2014.

Hi Chris,

Wanted to check in and see when I would be able to see the hole in the fair? I would be interested in checking it out as soon as it exists.

Thanks!

Naama

I came out to my parents a day or two before the twin towers fell. I remember alternating between sitting in front of the TV and at the far corner of my parents bed, crying.



Naama Tsabar, images from the performance Untitled (Babies), taken at Zacheta Gallery, Warsaw, Poland, 2014.





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### Staring at the hole

M: I can't tell you how many times I am in a room full of guys and when they find out what I do they say name after name after name of guy drummers and I draw blanks, happily! I don't care...I am not engaged in the conversation until they bring up the one female drummer they know, and then that is my entry point to talk to them about other great women drummers that they don't know about.

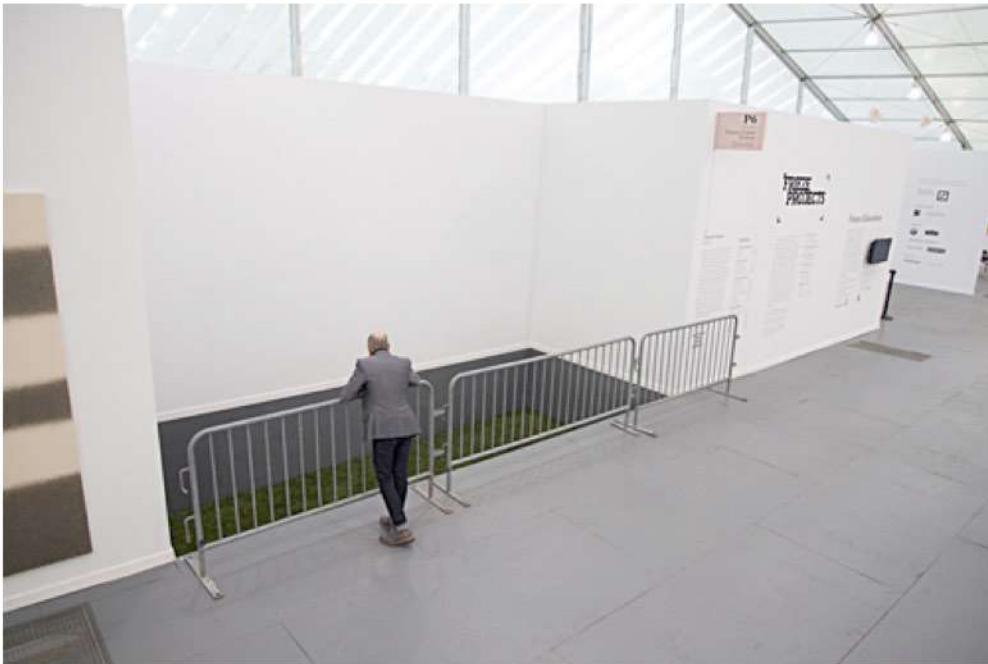
I think they think that I am a non-reputable source, because I don't know the guy drummers they know, but I am actually an expert about something they know very little about, if not nothing at all.

N: So you are a reverse mirror to their knowledge.

M: I love it, and I intend to stay that way...and my drummers who work with me, or who I cover in the magazine, know about all those guys, so we are not an uninformed magazine, it's just that the editor doesn't give a shit.



Naama Tsabar, Without, 2014. Commissioned and produced by Frieze Art Inc. for Frieze New York Projects 2014. Photo by Timothy Schenck



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Misusing/Desire

N: When we had a meeting for the festival you got this email that really shocked you.

M: Yes, it was from a college-aged kid, writing me to say thank you for the magazine, and for introducing him to drummers. Then he proceeded to tell me about his early infatuation with girl drummers, and it quickly evolved into him telling me that he is more attracted to women drummers than any other women, and then saying thank you to me for introducing him to women he can



fantasize about. He was simultaneously belittling our craft by telling me that while we are good drummers we are hot, and that it's great to see a bunch of hot drummers in one place. He then continued to ask me to introduce him to one of the drummers that I know.

I wrote him back and I was really clear about how his entire email was offensive, and while I recognized he was trying to pay us a compliment, I explained that he actually did the opposite and that he offended me and belittled our work and all the women that he so called respected. His next response was apology after apology. Ultimately, the whole thing felt really creepy, and I just don't know what to do with that information.

Growing up I used to have a white writing desk in my bedroom, which was used mostly for doing homework. It also had two drawers to keep all my papers in. Lying underneath the table, pencil in hand, I would push open the bottom of the drawers of the table, and write my inner most private desires on the back side of the table's writing board. The desires that I felt at the time exceeded what the outside world could accept. The table's hidden belly soon became full and dense with shapes, names and feelings.

### Outside

The Saturday of the festival at Frieze started off as a beautiful sunny day, with a six-band lineup, food trucks and people picnicking on the grass. It looked to be a more attended day then the rainy days before, shifting the surrounding area into a true festival.

Three quarters into the lineup, at 5pm, Fielded went on stage. As a one-woman band, she gave an intense performance full of surprising vocals, beautifully constructed songs and sounds, and a strong stage presence. It was the first time I saw her perform and I was extremely moved by the intensity of her performance.

Very strong rain began to pour down as Fielded was nearing the end of her first song. We began covering and sheltering the sound gear. People who didn't clear away were huddling underneath umbrellas still listening to the show. The storm, which was accompanied by very strong winds, loosened three straps of the fair's tent. Disconnected from the hooks in the grass, each strap hit the tent like a sling, producing a loud alarming noise and shaking the enormous tent.

Three songs into the show a lightning storm began. Once the thunder started we knew it would be seconds before we would need to shut down the sound. Before we could do that, a man from the fair's staff ran our way to cut our sound and power, instructing everyone to clear the project tent and go inside the main tent. Mindy, a few of the musicians and I ran towards the main tent, noticing that the fair goers were stuck inside the main fair tent as the guards blocked the entrance.

Avishag from the band Laila resisted going inside by saying "its like a giant death trap in there". Looking again at the entrance with the mass of people stuck inside, I agreed that we should stay outside.

N: I like it that you're non-apologetic about it!

M: Someone has to be. I can't believe I am the only one for female drummers. If you think about it it's insane. The phone calls I get from people who head major companies saying things like "Hi I was just wondering if you can talk to me for a minute about girls and drums?" I am like "Ok, lets talk, yeah, thanks for calling, what do you want to talk about?" There is literally nobody else who said, "enough of this shit, it's not a boys club, it's not a brotherhood," which they call it sometimes.

N: A brotherhood?

M: The brotherhood of drums

N: Really?

M: Yeah!

N: Who calls themselves that?

M: Guys in the industry. And then when they're called out on it from women like me or women at the head of other companies, they say, "Oh, no brotherhood includes women." "Does it? Would you like to be a part of the sisterhood?"



Fielded performing in Without, 2014.

AH

Looking in both directions

In undergrad I titled an installation by putting together the names of four different albums by female musicians from different generations. This new title talked about desire and projection. When I had a group critique of the work, Roe Rosen (a well known male Israeli artist) commented that there is no connection between these four musicians, and more so, that I was out of tune with what my musical influences should be as a twenty-one year old woman living in 2003. He commented, "P.J. Harvey is what I would expect your older brother to listen to" and "Joni Mitchell is a musician that your parents might have listened to." At the time I didn't have the words to verbalize my frustration at such a simplified reading. It was as though the historical contribution of women musicians didn't matter at all. Rosen was overlooking what was in front of him—a twenty-one year old female student in Israel in 2003 choosing to appropriate these album titles to form a new title for her installation in order to claim her own cultural history. Looking back at that installation, eleven years later, I would change some of the decisions I made around it, but the title would not be one of them.

N: I wanted to know what you gained from the project and what were your concerns going into it?

M: People often ask me - "wow that sounds like such a niche, a magazine about female drummers, are you afraid you are going to run out of content?" There are a majority of people out there that still don't think girls play drums. So when you approached me, I knew it was going to be easy to do, but I know that in the minds of the majority of people they would say, "that's impossible - a four day festival with all female drummers?"

N: They say - "how are you going to find so many..."

M: And so it is a fun challenge for me to take it up ten notches, and say we are going to curate it in such that we cover all the genres, different locations and different skill levels, that's where it gets fun. I hope that when people look later at my body of work, that they see this festival and they say -"ok that's dope! Everything has been taken into consideration."

N: So do you feel that your role now as a publication/platform is to equal things out? And do you think when you equal things out it will still be relevant?

M: I think that won't happen in my life time, so yes I think it will be relevant during my life time...there is just so much work to be done.



\*A very partial list of twentieth and twenty-first century musicians and artist that influenced me:

Rebecca Horn, P.J. Harvey, Louise Bourgeois, Roni Horn, Planningtorock, Eva Hesse, Tatiana Trouve, Marlene Dumas, Fever Ray, Bikini Kill, Janine Antoni, Lauren Hill, Suzanne Vega, Mona Hatom, Beth Gibbons, Marianne faithfull, Malka Spigel, Angela Bulloch, Patti Smith, Kiki Smith, Kim Gordon, Rachel Whiteread, Corinne Allal, Sarah Sze, Rona Keinan, Yehudit Ravitz, Janis Joplin, Valie Export, Michal Naaman, Ghada Amer, Sinead O'connor, Tracy Emin, Dganit Berst, Rosemarie Trockel, Hila Lulu Lin, Ella Fitzgerald, Nan Goldin, Barbara Kruger, Peaches, Isa Genzken, Meira Asher, Dana International, Rineke Dijkstra, Kara Walker, Diamanda Galas, Charlotte Gainsbourg, Siglit Landau, Shirin Neshat, Joni Mitchell, Annette Messenger, Monika Sosnowska, Elizabeth Fraser, Andrea Zittel, Cindy Sherman, Katharina Fritsch, Ahuva Ozeri, Chicks On Speed, Marina Abramovic, Bjork, Savages, Anna Calvi, Kitty Kraus, Siouxsie X, Tanita Tikaram, Susan Philipsz, The Witches, Tal Gordon, Jenny Holzer, Sheila Ferber, The Breeders, Andrea Fraser, Kate Bush, Elizabeth Peyton, Sophie Calle, Billie Holiday, Janet Cardiff, Throwing Muses.



Naama Tsabar, Without, 2014. Commissioned and produced by Frieze Art Inc. for Frieze New York Projects 2014. Photo by Timothy Schenck

Naama Tsabar (<http://www.naamatsabar.com>) (b. 1982 Israel) lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. She received her MFA from Columbia University in 2010 and her Bachelor's from the Hamidrasha School of Arts, Israel in 2004. She is currently represented by Dvir gallery in Israel and Spinello Projects in Miami. Her installations and performances were included in Frieze Projects, New York; at MoMA PS1, New York; The X

Initiative, New York; The Tel Aviv Museum, Israel (solo); Art Statements, Art Basel 38, Switzerland; ExtraCity, Antwerp, Belgium; The Haifa Museum, Israel; Herzliya Museum for Contemporary Art, Israel (solo); Casino Luxembourg, Luxembourg; Zacheta Gallery, Warsaw, Poland; The Bucharest Biennale for Young Artists, Romania; Dvir Gallery, Tel Aviv (solo); Spinello Projects, Miami; Thierry Goldberg Gallery, New York (solo); Pianissimo Gallery, Milan (solo); Ford Project, New York; White Box Gallery, New York. Tsabar's work has been featured and reviewed in the New York Times, New York Magazine, Artforum, ArtReview, Art Asia Pacific, and Fader Magazine, to name a few.

Mindy Abovitz is a drummer and drum machine programmer with a Masters in Media Studies who is the founder and Editor-in-Chief of Tom Tom Magazine (<http://tomtommag.com>); the first and only magazine about female drummers. Tom Tom is full color print magazine based out of NYC that is currently distributed globally and is carried by Guitar Centers & Barnes & Noble nationwide. Mindy has lectured, performed and held panels at: Sarah Lawrence, Carnegie Melon, Smith College, UCSD, UCLA, CalArts, RISD, Perez Art Museum Miami and MoMA PS1 amongst other institutions. She has received press in FADER Magazine, Paper Magazine, BUST, Bitch, OUT Magazine, Miami New Times, LA Weekly, Miami Herald, Gawker, Smithsonian and Autostraddle.