

BPA//
Berlin program
for artists

Bertrand Flanet

I was
looking
for some
old notes—
I had made
no notes
Bertrand
Flanet

I would have seizures when I was young, my parents were not well off but rather than one of them staying at home they could more easily afford to pay for, as we endearingly if not also half-creakingly joked, my 'step-nanny', this was funny because I was in my teens, you grow and gain the distance you need to see certain things in a different light, but back then spontaneity also meant laughter, not just waking up confused and coming through understanding whoever else was in the room with that look on their face needed reassuring, I've seen enough concerned faces to last many lifetimes, still though back then it was very much me who felt sheepish and coddled when the box of my head finally dilated itself back to waking life, she held me afterwards simply but matter-of-factly, always the same diffuse confusion, a constant glare that would draw itself down into light bulb overhead, there is a fluency in desperation and its shadows, learning to let go is closer to a stutter, the first thing I'd hear was a low and distinct—yet higher than a whisper, "hey... heeey, heeey there, here we are," followed by "hey, can you hear me?" as it clears whatever you latch on to determines how the transition goes "hey, we're just right here, we haven't gone anywhere," a wince in her voice would tell me if it had been a bad one, i.e. if I'd been long out, after coming around and I'd changed pants, still woozy I'd often end up cooking, for the life of me I can't

remember her cooking, but that's a lifetime ago and she cut ties last year, not, how to say, completely unexpectedly, we were aware of the same thing happening with other friends, though as I've learned even though some things are predictable they can still surprise—what was unexpected was despite a high functioning life with seizures I never actually expected to go through with the surgery, after all went quiet how to say—stress is the term used in the office as if we're works of engineering, a load-bearing threshold somewhere between capaciousness and capacity—it is the widest blank that you could never imagine—the chances of coming back fully cognizant after surgery though—I don't need to go into the details of how bad the seizures have to get before it starts looking like the better option, a whole brain is one connecting left hemisphere and right hemisphere, and then it is cut in two, no alcohol, maintain the diet, having thankfully survived surgery there are the drugs, the initial month on which there were these sharp pangs of anxiety like a running wave rushing up from beneath, office suddenly feeling too large, a long enough rhythm of metabolism however and these terrors subsided to something less—it's as if, on a hot day and home office if I'm without a shirt and I get up to fetch a glass of water in the kitchen and there's a warm breeze there can be this weird moment and I feel her presence pressed to me, a warmth of air passing and the closest form of absence, coddled is not the word, our memory has a body—often just after I'd come through and the sudden rush over, I imagine it's what a child feels like having woken up suddenly and realizes they're still being held by their parent, not to say I'm not close to my folks, it's just a constancy of familiarity even today, the seizures are no longer present but the moment before I've come around to myself fully and being held—it's still there, what doctors don't tell you or perhaps I failed to take in at the doctor's office is the predictable ways in which having your hemispheres split will have an effect on you, the framed picture stands on the left-hand side of my desk, also in the same picture are my folks and my now-ex, but for some reason or other I think of this picture as it is one of the few I have in which she relented to allow having her picture taken, perhaps for this reason it's a picture

of her, in the drawer on my right is a small bottle of oxytocin, my daily's, at the end of the day's sit it's always the same routine, with the computer turned off the room goes dark, I open the drawer to my right to pick out this bottle, as I take one I can read its label in my mind's eye, the strange thing happens when, as on routine, I reach for the picture with my left hand which before surgery used to be connected to the right hemisphere and as such language, without sight in the dark no words connect with my left hand despite its touch having a depth of familiarity, there is nothing ineffable here, it's simply a lack of ability in the body to process, I somehow wish to get to the point where this is boring but as I pass this thing from my left hand to my right it releases the word 'photo' again; —*how for instance?*—my right hand's sense of touch and with words available again—” dear step-... we might miss you”—then passing the photo back to my left hand—*how for instance could distinguish and discern mean the same thing?*—a glimpse of memory, though when asked afresh what is this I hold and am holding in my left hand? it's as if my digits can no longer disagree with each other, left hand gone mute and photo finally back in my right hand—*how for instance could distinguish and discern mean the same thing when their sounds produce such different sights smells touches and tastes?*—”hey, hey there, here we are”

—Catellani (figura delegata)

Bertrand Flanet

Bertrand Flanet (b. 1986 in Schiltigheim, France) lives and works in Berlin. He obtained a Master Degree in curating in France before graduating from the Städelschule art school, Frankfurt am Main.

He has participated in a variety of international shows and festivals amongst which the 2015's IFFR, Rotterdam; 2015's Jakarta Biennale; 'And this is us!', Frankfurter Kunstverein, 2019; 'Some hollow crowns', Eigen&Art Lab, Berlin, 2019.

In 2021, he will be a resident at TOKAS, Tokyo, to investigate the history of the Sugamo prison. The same year, he will take part in the 65th Salon de Montrouge.

BPA // Berlin program for artists was founded in 2016 by Angela Bulloch, Simon Denny, and Willem de Rooij, facilitating exchange between emerging and established Berlin-based artists. The mentoring program organizes reciprocal studio visits, public lectures, and joint exhibitions.

BPA at Gropius Studios is a new collaboration between the Gropius Bau and BPA // Berlin program for artists, which begins in autumn 2020. Running up until the end of that year, eleven participating artists will use rooms at the Gropius Bau as studios and show their work in public presentations.

BPA at Gropius Studios
1. Oct–31. Dec 2020

Opening hours
Fri–Wed 10–19,
Thu 10–21, Tuesday closed

Gropius Bau
Niederkirchnerstraße 7
10963 Berlin

1. Oct, 16–20, BPA Talks 3
with Anne Fellner, Bertrand Flanet,
Katrin Winkler and BPA mentors
Calla Henkel & Max Pitegoff

Cinema at Gropius Bau,
(limited number of seats, please register via
contact@berlinprogramforartists.org)

5.–11. Nov
BPA at Gropius Studios:
Rob Crosse, Bertrand Flanet,
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