

**Liz Magic Laser** was born in New York City in 1981. She is a graduate of the Columbia University MFA program, Whitney Independent Study Program, and Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. In 2013 Laser had solo exhibitions at DiverseWorks in Houston, Texas, and at the Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster, Germany, for which she received the Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach Foundation Grant. She was the Armory Show 2013 Commissioned Artist. Her work has been exhibited internationally at venues including Lisson Gallery, London; Malmö Konsthall, Malmö, Sweden; the Moscow Museum of Modern Art; Various Small Fires, Los Angeles; The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; the Performa 11 Biennial, New York; The Pace Gallery, New York; the Biennial of Graphic Arts, Ljubljana, Slovenia; MoMA PS 1, New York; Artisterium, Tbilisi, Georgia; and the Prague Biennale 4, Czech Republic. Laser is the recipient of grants from the Southern Exposure Off-Site Graue Award (2013), New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship (2012), the Times Square Alliance (2010) and the Franklin Furnace Fund for Performance Art (2010). She has been in residency at the Marie Walsh Sharpe Foundation Space Program, New York (2012), Forever & Today, Inc.'s Studio On The Street artist-in-residence program, New York (2012), Smack Mellon, Brooklyn (2011) and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, New York (2009). Laser lives and works in Brooklyn. Liz Magic Laser is her real name from birth.

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#### About EAI

Founded in 1971, Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI) is one of the world's leading nonprofit resources for video art. A pioneering advocate for media art and artists, EAI fosters the creation, exhibition, distribution, and preservation of video art and digital art. EAI's core program is the distribution and preservation of a major collection of over 3,500 new and historical media works by artists. EAI's activities include viewing access, educational services, extensive online resources, and public programs such as artists' talks, exhibitions and panels. The Online Catalogue is a comprehensive resource on the artists and works in the EAI collection, and also features extensive materials on exhibiting, collecting and preserving media art: [www.eai.org](http://www.eai.org)

This program is supported, in part, by public funds  
from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.



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## LIZ MAGIC LASER: NEWS CYCLES

### Screening + Artist Talk



**September 24, 2013**

**ELECTRONIC ARTS INTERMIX**



## LIZ MAGIC LASER: NEWS CYCLES

### Screening + Artist Talk

EAI is pleased to present a screening and talk with artist **Liz Magic Laser**. Laser's work in performance and video reverses the media's spotlight, shining a critical light on the people and methodologies working behind the scenes to construct persuasive statements, beliefs and political action. Laser's art asks questions about the use of public relations practices in business, politics and journalism.

Laser will present recent works that investigate the techniques and tropes of the news media, including the American premiere of her most recent video, *Public Relations / Öffentlichkeitsarbeit* (2013), in which she turns "man-on-the-street" interviews with the public into a new kind of critical theater.

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**Liz Magic Laser's** performance-driven videos examine how the media packages and presents information for—and acquires information from—the public. At EAI, Laser will screen her newest video, *Public Relations*, a two-channel piece recently created for her Spring 2013 solo exhibition at Kunstverein Münster in Germany, and *Push Poll* (2012), a video originally commissioned by CNN for the network's website during the recent US presidential election, which explores how polls can influence public opinion. The program will also include special edits of *The Armory Show Focus Group* (2013), *In Camera* (2012), and *I Feel Your Pain* (2011). In *The Armory Show Focus Group*, Laser used focus groups to determine how she would lend her identity to The Armory Show as the art fair's 2013 commissioned artist. *In Camera* (2012) is an adaptation of Jean Paul Sartre's *No Exit (Huit Clos)* recast with an anchorman in the studio, a reporter on location, and a "real" person giving testimony from a domestic space. *I Feel Your Pain* (2011), Laser's commissioned performance for the 2011 Performa biennial, was a romantic drama filmed live in a movie theater with actors performing dialogues adapted from interviews with famous American politicians.

Laser sees performance training and market research as the indispensable tools of politics and business. Time-tested methods for eliciting an emotional response, drawn from the theater, are combined with and amplified by polling data and a century's worth of honed, empirically-tested procedures and practices from psychology and public relations. Laser deliberately adheres to this successful and highly effective workflow, assembling a post-studio toolkit that includes video, actors, focus groups, vox pop interviews, news anchors, TV studios, marketing experts, stage sets, and leading questions.

Staged with video in mind, her activities as an artist mirror the carefully planned public activities of powerful figures in our society—people who use their lives in the public eye as a form of propaganda and advertising. A devout believer in surprise and intervention, Laser frequently ventures outside formal exhibition contexts to create her work, bringing her critical theater to semi-public spaces such as bank vestibules, movie theaters, and newsrooms. Laser appropriates the performance techniques and psychological strategies used by the media and politicians to sway their audiences, allowing market research and public relations advisors to help her communicate more effectively with her audiences. In her work, Laser asks if the public can "level the playing field by understanding how to engineer empathy as well as our leaders do?"

## PROGRAM

### **I Feel Your Pain**

2011, 8:00 min (excerpted from 80:00 min), performance and single-channel video, color, sound.

### **In Camera**

2012, 5:00 min (excerpted from 121:00 min), five-channel video, color, sound.

### **Push Poll**

2012, 10:00 min, single-channel video, color, sound.

### **The Armory Show Focus Group**

2012, 8:00 min (excerpted from 30:00 min), single-channel video, color, sound

### **Tell Me What You Want to Hear**

2013, 5:00 min (excerpted from 60:00 min), performance and three-channel video, color, sound.

### **Public Relations / Öffentlichkeitsarbeit**

2013, 17:00 min, two-channel video, color, sound.