

## PRESS RELEASE

Martine Syms  
The Easy Demands  
January 13 - February 18 2017  
CONDO: Bridget Donahue, NYC  
hosted by Sadie Coles HQ  
62 Kingly Street W1, London

Dear T,

You can't worry about a car that isn't there, right?

That's a metaphor of some kind. I'll let you figure it out. It's impossible for me to write these days. I'm angry and I'm frustrated and I'm incredibly depressed. It's wild that we have to fight to be treated like people. What do you think it would take?

A few weeks ago I followed a link titled What if Black Women Were Free hoping to find some answers. (Now that's my kind of clickbait.) One quote, from Naava Smolash: "Speaking, simple naming is incredibly hard. The gap between word and lived reality can make people feel crazy; talking together can help clarify reality, to get it back."

When I was in New Zealand I went to the book launch for No Pride in Prisons' Abolitionist Demands. It's structured around short-term, intermediate, and long-term actions. Some of them will take an enormous effort and many never happen. Others are simple and relatively easy to implement. They called these the easy demands.

I can relate to this way of operating. I told Sophia that there are no good or bad decisions because any action creates change. You might look back and say 'what the fuck what I was thinking?'. That's fine. That's life. What are my easy demands?

I'm still speaking when I can even though everything I do feels like nothing. What's the worst that could happen to me if I tell this truth? (I think Audre Lorde wrote that.) I just hope no one describes my work as "powerful."

Love you,

M

Martine Syms (b. 1988, Los Angeles) uses video and performance to examine representations of Blackness and its relationship to American situation comedy, Black vernacular, feminist movements and radical traditions. Her artwork has been exhibited and screened extensively, including presentations at the New Museum, The Studio Museum in Harlem, Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, MCA Chicago, Green Gallery, Gene Siskel Film Centre, and White Flag Projects. She has lectured at Yale University, SXSW, California Institute of the Arts, University of Chicago, Johns Hopkins University, and MoMA PS1, among other venues. Syms' recently presented exhibitions include Borrowed Lady, SFU Galleries, Vancouver; Fact and Trouble, ICA London; COM PORT MENT, Karma International, Los Angeles; Vertical Elevated Oblique, Bridget Donahue Gallery, New York. From 2007-2011 she was the co-director of the Chicago artist run project space Golden Age, and she currently runs Dominica Publishing: an imprint dedicated to exploring blackness in visual culture. She is the author of Implications and Distinctions: Format, Content and Context in Contemporary Race Film (2011).

Checklist:

Half Sheet, 2017, archival pigment print, 22" x 28"

Insert, 2017, archival pigment print, 36" x 14"

One Sheet, 2017, archival pigment print, 40" x 27"

Three Sheet, 2017, archival pigment print, 80" x 41"

40 x 60, 2017, archival pigment print, 60" x 40"

Window Card, archival pigment print, 14" x 22"

Belief Strategy XIII, 2016, colored window film, dimensions variable

Lesson LXXV, 2017, video, endless loop