

CREATIVETIME

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ARTIST CREATES MASS READINGS ON THE POLITICS OF DESIRE AT THE REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTIONS



Sharon Hayes, from *In the Near Future*, 2005.

SHARON HAYES: REVOLUTIONARY LOVE 1 & 2: I AM YOUR WORST FEAR, I AM YOUR BEST FANTASY

Creative Time with Dialog:City presents Sharon Hayes'
REVOLUTIONARY LOVE 1: I AM YOUR WORST FEAR
DENVER, AUGUST 27, 2008

Creative Time with the Walker Art Center and the UnConvention presents Sharon Hayes'
REVOLUTIONARY LOVE 2: I AM YOUR BEST FANTASY
MINNEAPOLIS, SEPTEMBER 1, 2008

(June 18, 2008 New York, NY) This summer, artist Sharon Hayes will gather 100 people at the Republican and Democratic National Conventions to read a text in unison addressing political desire and romantic love as part of Creative Time's summer-long, national public art initiative *Democracy in America: The National Campaign*. To take back the queer agenda and forefront the personal in these fortresses of the political, Creative Time will join forces with Dialog:City, Walker Art Center, and UnConvention in their respective cities.

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Conflating grassroots political activism, performance art, queer theory, and national politics, Hayes' two large-scale, public performances will include speakers drawn from the gay, lesbian, and transgendered community in each city who will become the medium of her work by reciting the text written by Hayes. The 10- to 20-minute texts will be read 3 times over the course of 2 hours.

Drawing on both the history of the Gay Liberation movement, which forged a new and deep relationship between love and politics, and the current political moment, in which the war figures as a central element in the Presidential campaign, this performance challenges simplistic oppositions between love and war. Specifically, Hayes is interested in the militaristic aspect of groups that operated at the beginning of the gay rights movement, many of whom assumed aggressive, reactionary stances to culture at large. Where the classic slogan says, "Make love not war," Hayes references the Stonewall-era Gay Liberation movement and their chant, "An army of lovers cannot lose."

Hayes' performances are intended to be spectacles, and are designed to mirror the spectacular nature of the National Conventions. Reacting against the tendency of groups to polarize feelings about homosexuality for political gain, Hayes describes these performances as personal addresses to the power structure, or a group of people speaking their hearts as one.

ABOUT *DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA: THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN*

Hayes' project is one of 4 commissions (in addition to those of Rodney McMillian & Olga Koumoundouros, Steve Powers, and Mark Tribe) made by Creative Time as a part of its public art initiative *Democracy in America: The National Campaign*. This program offers platforms for artists to address the shifting nature of democracy in this country—from probing fundamental questions about the nature of war, freedom, justice, and the social contract to encouraging open and public dialogue on timely issues from red states to blue, rural communities to urban centers, classrooms to town halls, and artists' studios to public squares. *Democracy in America* will unfold in four parts:

—TOWN HALL TALKS

Democracy in America launched in 5 cities across America in March 2008 with artist-led "town hall"-style gatherings, in which 5 questions were put to local artists and activists in order to gain understanding of strategies and goals for each city, transcripts of which will be published on www.creativetime.org and in print.

—NATIONAL COMMISSIONS

Performative public art commissions—by Sharon Hayes, Rodney McMillian & Olga Koumoundouros, Steve Powers, and Mark Tribe—will take place in six cities across the nation and will examine the roots of American democracy as well as the progressive political ethos of the 1960s and 70s.

—CONVERGENCE CENTER

From September 21 to 27 at the Park Avenue Armory, *Democracy in America* comes home to New York City in the form of a "Convergence Center," a headquarters for a week of numerous art performances, documentation from the national commissions, a group show, and speeches by key artists and thinkers.

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—*DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA* PUBLICATION

Finally, a comprehensive reader containing artists' projects and critical essays that address the political art and activism of the past eight years will be published by Creative Time Books in September 2008, released at the Convergence Center.

ABOUT SHARON HAYES

Sharon Hayes has produced challenging work in performance, video, and installation for over a decade. Staging protests, delivering speeches, and organizing demonstrations, she creates interventions that highlight the friction between collective activities and personal actions. Employing the artistic and academic methodologies of theater, film, anthropology, linguistics, and journalism, Hayes has made work that engages history, politics, and public space. Her work has been shown at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, Andrew Kreps Gallery, Parlour Projects, the Whitney Museum of American Art's Independent Study Program, The New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York, Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, and many other national and international exhibition spaces.

ABOUT CREATIVE TIME

After 34 years of New York-based projects, *Democracy in America* continues Creative Time's national program, which was launched with Paul Chan's *Waiting for Godot in New Orleans* in 2007. By bringing *Democracy in America* to communities around the nation, Creative Time deepens its commitment to artists working outside New York City, sharing our belief in the transformative power of public art with the broadest possible audience. During the lead-up to the 2004 election season, Creative Time presented the *Freedom of Expression National Monument*, a giant megaphone for public address, and Jenny Holzer's *For New York City*, in which the artist's truisms—including "ABUSE OF POWER COMES AS NO SURPRISE"—were pulled by airplanes over the skies of New York City. Recent projects include *Tribute in Light*, which served as a gesture of hope and healing after 9/11; *Doug Aitken: Sleepwalkers*, a film projected on the Museum of Modern Art, NY; and *Who Cares*, a series of projects that explored art and social action.

ABOUT DIALOG:CITY

Dialog:City is an event converging art, democracy and digital media that will involve 10 site-specific art installations in neighborhoods throughout Denver from Aug. 21- 29. World-renowned artists will come together to create a series of innovative commissioned works in conjunction with local organizations and students. Participating artists include Charlie Cannon, Minsuk Cho, Luke DuBois, Lynn Hershman, Sharon Hayes, Daniel Peltz, DJ Spooky, The spurse collective, and others.

ABOUT THE WALKER ART CENTER

One of the most celebrated art museums in the country, the Walker Art Center is known for commissioning and presenting today's most compelling artists; fostering the cross-pollination of the visual, performing, and media arts; and engaging diverse audiences in the excitement of the creative process. Founded in 1879 by lumberman Thomas Barlow Walker, the Walker was established at its current location in 1927. Edward Larrabee Barnes' award-winning building opened in 1971 and was expanded in 1984. A 17-acre urban campus, designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architects Herzog & de Meuron,

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opened in 2005. In addition to traveling exhibitions and its world-renowned collection, the Walker presents a broad array of contemporary music, dance, and theater, and the best in film from around the world and down the block.

ABOUT THE UNCONVENTION

The UnConvention is a non-partisan collective of citizens who have come together to create a forum in which to promote the democratic and free exchange of ideas on important issues. The UnConvention hopes to umbrella the myriad artistic and educational activities (exhibitions, lectures, performances, etc.) that will take place in the Twin Cities during the lead-up and staging of the 2008 Republican National Convention in St. Paul, Minnesota. It will also host alternative media that will converge on the Twin Cities during the Convention.

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