

TANYA LEIGHTON

PRESS RELEASE

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SHARON HAYES – IN THE NEAR FUTURE

4 July – 2 August, 2008

PREVIEW 3 July, 7 to 9 pm, 2008

LIVE PERFORMANCE Sharon Hayes (in collaboration with Pauline Boudry,
of The Rhythm Kings and Her Friends), 8pm

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TANYA LEIGHTON GALLERY is delighted to present its inaugural exhibition,
the first solo exhibition by American artist Sharon Hayes.

In the Near Future is a performance-based artwork in which Hayes stages
anachronistic and speculative protest actions in an ongoing investigation
into the figure of the protester, the speech act of the protest sign and
the contemporary political construction of public space and public speech.

In the Near Future is organized into four separate iterations each of which
takes place in locations of current or historic public speech or public protest
in different cities in the U.S. and Europe: New York, London, Warsaw and Vienna.
An audience was invited to document these actions. Some of the signs held by
Hayes derive from past protests: “Ratify the E.R.A. Now!” “Who Approved the
War in Vietnam?” “I Am A Man,” “Abolish H.U.A.C.,” among others. Other signs
are fictional and are constructed to hint to a future moment or to speak of
the possibility that exists within the present: “Nothing Will be As Before,”
or “The American President Might Have to Call in the National Guard to Put
This Revolt Down.” The performative-actions of In the Near Future are not
constructed as a literal reenactment of a past protest but rather function
as a citation of sorts: one that marks both the memory of a past protest
and the possibility of a future one.

In the Near Future extends Hayes’s artistic interest in the critical potential
of performance to re-engage certain historic elements of speech or modes of
speaking in order to interrogate the way in which we participate, as both
speakers and listeners, in the political discourse of the present moment.

Sharon Hayes was born in Baltimore in 1970 and currently lives in New York.
She received her MFA from the University of California, Los Angeles, and
attended the Whitney Museum of American Art Independent Study program.

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Hayes's work has been seen in solo and group exhibitions at documenta 12 (collaborative project), Kassel; Generali Foundation, Vienna; P.S. 1 Museum of Contemporary Art, New York; Museum Moderner Kunst (MUMOK), Vienna; The Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh; Artists Space, New York; Art-in-General, New York; New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York.

She has been invited to make a new commission for Frieze Projects and participate in the Yokohama Triennale, 2008. Her work is currently being presented at Lisson Gallery, and Tate Modern, London.

With special thanks to: Bjoern Alfors, Johanna Chromik, Maike Cruse, COMA, Michele Faguet, Kunst-Werke Berlin, Sophie Hamacher, Jan Hammer, Matt Saunders, Ana Pinto, Dennis Ratzlaff, and Dan Rees.

For further information and images please contact info@tanyaleighton.com
Open Wednesday - Saturday 12 - 6pm and by appointment.

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