

IN THE CONTEXT OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP  
„DRAFTS IN ACTION.  
CONCEPTS AND PRACTICES OF  
ARTISTIC INTERVENTIONS“,

JULY 7 – 8, 2023

WITH: RAPHAEL DAIBERT / AGATA JAKUBOWSKA /  
ANNA KIPKE / IRYNA KOVALENKO / PREMESH  
LALU / RACHEL MADER / NATALIA MOUSSIENKO /  
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FISCHEDICK / PAULA SERAFINI / BEATE SÖNTGEN /  
SIMON TEUNE / ANNETTE WERBERGER /  
MIMMI WOISNITZA

AN EVENT OF THE COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH CENTRE 1912 "INTERVENING ARTS"  
AND THE ORG-RESEARCH TRAINING GROUP "CULTURES OF CRITIQUE" IN COOPERATION  
WITH THE ICI BERLIN

KEYNOTE LECTURE

**AMELIA JONES**

(ROSKI SCHOOL OF ART  
AND DESIGN, USC)

**PERFORMING ABSENCE  
AS INTERVENTION: THE  
CASE OF LEE LOZANO**

COLLABORATIVE  
RESEARCH CENTRE  
"INTERVENING ARTS"

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ICI BERLIN INSTITUTE FOR  
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10119 BERLIN

PUBLIC KEYNOTE LECTURE

# PERFORMING ABSENCE AS INTERVENTION: THE CASE OF LEE LOZANO

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The artist has long been understood in conventional Western art history, art criticism, and curatorial practice as the site of active agency, the origin of the meaning and value of the work of art. By the later twentieth century, during a period of social crisis across Europe and North America, however, theorists such as Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida put pressure on this model. At the same time artists began mobilizing their agency in radically different ways as part of a broad societal challenging of Western hegemony, patriarchal and white dominant models of subjectivity, and structures of power more generally. Jones

examines one extreme example of such a mobilization from the 1960s New York art world — the case of American woman artist Lee Lozano, who ostentatiously proclaimed her plan to “drop out” and leave this vibrant scene at the height of her career — to explore how artistic authorship itself could be seen as a key site for the interrogation of power in the world. The case of Lozano allows to pose the question: is a performance of withdrawal from art institutions the ultimate intervention in a period of social crisis? Or was she effectively “copping out” just at the moment when many of her colleagues (for example, in New York, feminists such as her friend Lucy Lippard, and the anti-racist protesters participating in the 1970 Art Strike) were publicly agitating on the streets and in the museums for equity and inclusion?

## Amelia Jones

is Robert A. Day Professor at Roski School of Art & Design, USC. Publications include *Seeing Differently: A History and Theory of Identification and the Visual Arts* (2012) and *Otherwise: Imagining Queer Feminist Art Histories*, co-edited with Erin Silver (2016). Her catalogue *Queer Communion: Ron Athey* (2020) was listed among the “Best Art Books 2020” in the *NY Times*, and the curated show was listed among Top Ten 2021 exhibitions in *Artforum* (December 2021). Her book entitled *In Between Subjects: A Critical Genealogy of Queer Performance* was published in 2021. Her current work addresses the structural racism and neoliberalism of the twenty-first-century art world and university.