



fluent

*Holding breath:
A dying poem. (Act V)*

11 / 10 – 14 / 11 / 2025

Holding breath: a dying poem is a year-long exhibition that considers how transmission, change and affection reverberate on us, once objects and bodies are no longer present. Thinking through logistical and maintenance systems as spectral forces, the exhibition rehearses different temporalities by juxtaposing multiple durations, compositions and assemblages of work.

Across seven acts (overture –act I to V– and epilogue), the exhibition's organising principle aims to reveal the traces that, beyond physicality, movement and connectivity provoke. In doing so, it tests the political configurations that exist within such immaterial space.

The image contained in the title is this of an oxygen curve being exhaled from the mouth, taking the shape of a vertical concavity. As it evaporates into the atmosphere, the body's warmth dissipates into a wider mass of air. We breathe and the self dilutes into the environment cyclically, just as the world enters in us, making space through circulation.

The cyclical patterns of logistic capitalism oscillate between violence and desire, suffocating life and exacerbating extraction, verging towards total mobility. Shaping a space of intersections between sounds, texts, performances and objects, the exhibition's repertoire looks into that jointure where echoes, presences, vibrations and ties, reveal our structural fragilities and shared fractures.

Act V incorporates a sculptural installation by Billy Bultheel with Edwin Nasr. Under the title *Ouverture (Le rachat des cloches)* history goes that two hundred thousand bells across the Western European region were confiscated by the Nazi regime during its savage reign. With that campaign, implemented at the time towards the enrichment of the German war machine, as well as the stifling of dissent, a centuries-old form of craftsmanship, that of bell-making, was wiped out from the collective consciousness. We are here reminded of Baghdad-born thinker Jalal Toufic 's affirmation, told in the aftermath of the Lebanese civil wars: "Past the surpassing disaster, tradition is inaccessible by traditional, 'legitimate ' means. " *Ouverture (Le rachat des cloches)* features an assortment

of bells and foundry equipment borrowed from the atelier of Abel Portilla Bedia in Santander, who inherited and learned the craft from his forebears. The strickles are arranged so as to form an evocative shapeliness, a coat of arms—after all, angel wings are nothing if not protective shields. The work is introduced not as a gesture of retrieval, but as an attempt to draw an analogy with our present conjuncture. Musical composer and artist Billy Bultheel's performance series *A Short History of Decay* (2023 - ongoing), developed in collaboration with writer Edwin Nasr, is concerned with staging both the delirium and sequels of Germany's war on solidarity with the Palestinian struggle for liberation amid Israel's campaign of extermination in Gaza. Then as now, traditions perceived as menacing are forcibly made to disappear from the realm of the possible. When the police, state bureaucracies, educational programs and cultural institutions are mobilized, in synchronized unison and with a fanfare of trumpets, to do away with the practice, method and reception of critique, it becomes incumbent on its guardians to preserve whatever sediments can be salvaged from the wreckage. This work resonates with previous contributions by Seán Being and Theresa Had Kyung Cha, already present in the space since Act IV. Being's vocal score departs from interpretations of lost melodies from the Léon Antiphoner, a manuscript of Old Hispanic Chant that predates pitch-readable Gregorian Chant. Taking the acoustic and psychoacoustic particularities of fluent's space, it configures a centrifugal resonance with what Cha describes as "a Circle within a circle, a series of concentric circles".

The exhibition's complete sequence includes:

22.03.2025

Overture

With: Proteínas, Maya Deren, Gary Indiana and Estanis Comella

24.05.2025

Act I

With: Pol Wah Tse (+ digestivo)

31.05.2025

Act II

With: Joven de la Perla (through Mariano Blatt) + Amaia Urrea

12.07.2025

Act III

With: Marouane Bahkti, Jonás de Murias, Gloria Grace Dennis, Nobuko Tsuchiya 土屋信子

27.09.2025

Act IV:

With: Sean Being + Theresa Hak Kyung Cha

11.10.2025

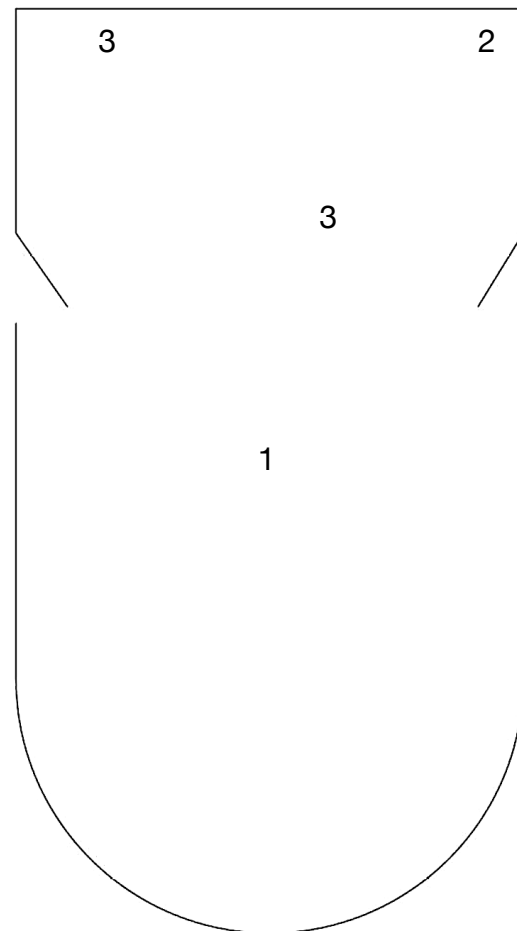
Act V:

With: Billy Bultheel

15.11.2025

Epilogue

With: Reece Cox



1. Seán Being, (.) 9.12 min in a loop.

2. Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, *Dictee*. University of California Press, 1982.

3. Billy Bultheel with Edwin Nasr, *Ouverture (Le rachat des cloches)*. Sculptural installation with bronze bells, fiber-glass prototypes, metal and wood strickles. Dimensions variable.