

DIGNITY



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A boy in a tower, at his laptop, sits
Puts
A watermark on his work
Types:

*"It's ironic that I'm a feminist because I looooooove being degraded by men.
I want to be treated like a whore! Just rape my pussy until it's sore...
And when you are done, cum on the floor...make me swallow it all."*

Smiles, uploads

Here's the Emma Watson you've asked for
Soon I'll be posting some more

Cries

Daydreaming
The dance instructor, screaming:

Chair spin
Fan kick
Scorpio with a hand
Extended butterfly to plank

Gemini

Hairflip, to carrusel spin
Sexy push up, Martini sit
Broken doll, Crucifix

Point your fucking toes
Juliette is a bitch
Corkscrew
Reverse Ballerina Spin
Split

Sick

Homesick
Describing greatly how I feel
What will I see when there's no speech
Anymore
Forest, orchard, field
Natural world
Misunderstandings = Home
Extinction
Who killed *The Photos*?
What killed *The Words*?
Summer Winter Spring
Close the door

*

Listening, existing
Soon (Repeating)
Language: how?
Now! Now! Now!

Disappointment
Missed Appointments:

Empowerment and pole?
Government or hole?

Charismatic void

Golden showers
Doomed answers
Pretty flowers

Questions?
Thoughts?
No, no, no

Listening, repeating
Soon (Existing)
Language, sore?
More! More! More!

Dignity, Amalia Ulman 2016

DIGNITY

Opening March 3, 2017, 6-8pm

March 3rd – April 2nd, 2017

James Fuentes is pleased to announce *Dignity*, Amalia Ulman's second solo exhibition with the gallery.

Multi-platform and loosely defined, Amalia Ulman's work constitutes a wide-ranging inquiry into the status of the self, notions of authenticity, the relationship between fact and fiction, and contemporary social and labor relations. While the artist is perhaps most well-known for her online conceptual performances, *Dignity* sees Ulman fully embrace immersive installation, a move which serves to highlight the poetic approach that has long undergirded her work.

For *Dignity*, Ulman has fundamentally altered the gallery space, lining its walls with heavy, red drapes and replacing its ceiling with office tiles, which feature a cloud-like design toward the middle of the room. Below this, at the center of the gallery, Ulman has installed a single, cane-shaped stripper pole, anchored by a rubber tip. Alongside this scene is a large portrait of the artist done in the style of celebrity "fakes" circulated online, in which female celebrities' smiling faces are adorned with male ejaculate through the use of Photoshop.

Posed by Ulman as "the aftermath" of her most recent performance entitled *Privilege* (2016), first presented at the 9th Berlin Biennale, *Dignity* continues and diffracts what may have been the thesis of the earlier work. Repeating several of the more theatrical motifs present in the previous performance, *Dignity* turns the gallery into a sort of cozy, distorted panopticon, where the visitor is both spectator and subject. Within the installation, she sometimes finds herself standing against the backdrop of Ulman's red curtains, which recall cartoonish, clichéd imaginings of the theater, and sometimes gazing up at Ulman's likeness, ironic indignity deliberately fabricated through digital processes. No matter where you stand in *Dignity*, you'll find yourself performing.

In both *Privilege* and the earlier *Excellences & Perfections* (2014), Ulman set out to interrogate this notion of performance, calling attention to the instability of the online self and its precarious relationship to "truth." In 2014—well before our purported post-truth and post-fact era and well after postmodernism's assessment of truth's precarity—Ulman observed that, "When you repeat a lie, it becomes a truth, and a fake truth generated by images has more validity than a verbalized, genuine truth." *Dignity* reflects these concerns as well, though unlike in the aforementioned performances, Ulman now de-centers herself, lessening her impulse to narrative. Instead, she scales up, her relentless self-interrogation becoming more gestural and aesthetic, recalling some of her early installations. Still, traces of her ongoing conceptual preoccupations and personal experiences can be found woven throughout *Dignity*; her fixation on celebrity and clichée are evident, as are biographical details, such as her foray into pole-dancing as physical therapy following an accident that left her with a permanent disability.

"In this world," Ulman writes, "where everything is fiction, the best story wins." In *Dignity*, the artist gently reminds us that all the world's a stage. Everything is a delusion—personal, social, or political. We push on, swaddled in warm lies, the house lights so blinding that we can only see two feet in front of us. Here in the installation, Ulman offers the pole

as a totem of her own personal fiction; she might not be able to run, but at least on the pole she can fly. Looking toward the ceiling, you see the sky, and the only way out is up. Climbing her pole, however, you quickly find yourself curving back downward, dangling over the pit you only just crawled out of. Is escape always the most powerful delusion, the fiction that wins out against them all? - Aria Dean, 2017

Amalia Ulman (b. 1989, Buenos Aires, Argentina) lives and works in Los Angeles, CA. Her recent solo exhibitions include *Labour Dance*, Arcadia Missa, London (2016); *Reputation*, New Galerie, Paris (2016); *Annals of Private History*, Frieze Projects (2015) and *Stock Images of War*, James Fuentes LLC, New York, NY (2015). Recent group exhibitions include *The Present in Drag*, the 9th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2016); *Public, Private, Secret*, International Center of Photography, New York, NY (2016); *Performing for the Camera*, Tate Modern, London (2016); *Electronic Superhighway*, Whitechapel Gallery, London (2016); and *Take Me (I'm Yours)*, Monnaie de Paris, Paris (2015). Her work has been featured in *Art in America*, *Art Forum*, *Art Review*, *Texte Zur Kunst*, *The New York Times*, and *The Guardian*, among other publications.

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