PUBLIC DEFENCE
STACEY SACKS

11 May at 13.00–17.00
Welcome to Stacey Sacks’ public defence, defending her artistic research project *This Untethered Buffoon or the Trickster in Everything*. Stacey is a doctoral candidate in Performative and Mediated Practices.

Stacey Sacks is a performer, writer, director, teacher, researcher and clown. Born and raised in Zimbabwe, Stacey Sacks studied Performance and Social Anthropology at the University of Cape Town and later completed the MA program ‘A Year of Physical Comedy’ at the Stockholm Academy of Dramatic Art in 2012. Sacks is the co-author of *The Clown Manifesto* (Oberon Books, 2015) and is now completing a doctoral candidate in Performative and Media-Based Practices at Stockholm University of the Arts.

Based in the Acting department and titled *This Untethered Buffoon or the Trickster in Everything*, this artistic doctoral project explores haunting intersections of history while performing, animating, parodying and satirising questions of whiteness, privilege and colonial logic. It unfolds at the intersections of clowning, mask performance, race, history, collective and individual memory and trauma.

Interested in trans-generational and intra-cultural haunting, Sacks experiments with auto-ethnography and productive discomfort in multi-modal ways, attempting to discover sharper ways of giving attention, while making safe space for generative failures.
The research evolves via a series of trans-disciplinary corporeal and material experiments into an impulsive studio of uncertainty and paradox.

The fragmented texts emerging from this exploration are collectively entitled *SQUIRM (the book)* and are freely available online, together with films and online expositions.

**External Opponent**

**Karmenlara Ely** is Professor in acting and Artistic Director of the BA Acting and MA Performance programs at Østfold University College/Norwegian Theatre Academy (NTA). Before NTA, Karmenlara taught full time at New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts with a special emphasis on exploring the impact of ethical philosophy and erotics on contemporary acting technique, She holds a PhD in Performance Studies from the same University. As a multidisciplinary artist, she collaborates internationally on theatre and performance works and other collective events.

The work often concerns topics such as archives and spectres, intergenerational relations and the boundaries or limits of performance. She is the author of several public performance lectures and articles, and co-editor of the books “Infinite Record: Archive, Memory, Performance” and “Responsive Listening: Theater Training for Contemporary Spaces” both released in collaboration with Brooklyn Arts Press. Karmenlara is also a member of the board of Norwegian Program for Artistic Research / DIKU and SAAR, and continually supervises PhD students in artistic research in the Nordic context.

**Examination Committee Members**

**Joachim Robbrecht** works as a theatremaker, performer and playwright in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. Besides, he is part of the educational team of Das Theatre, master’s program for research-based art practices in Amsterdam. After having earned a master’s degree in German and English literature and linguistics in Ghent (BE), he studied Theatre Directing at the Academy of Theatre and Dance (AHK) in Amsterdam.
His work is text-based and discursive, with a satirical tone. It evolves around questions on cultural identity, ethical sensitivity, historical awareness and more. Collaborating with performers of various educational backgrounds (dance, theatre and visual arts) he seeks to create a theatre that combines sensorial experience with narration and semiotic deciphering.

Robbrecht’s work is driven as much by the need to poetically reflect upon themes of topical social relevance as by the desire to experiment with structures of story-telling and worldbuilding, with the tools, codes and conventions of performing arts, and with modes of presentation and representation.

Besides creating performances independently, he co-produces and collaborates as a writer and performer with various theatre directors, collectives and ensembles, such as Sarah Moeremans, Dood Paard, de Warme Winkel, Andcompany&co and tgOost-pool. He has been involved in education in multiple roles at the University of Amsterdam, the University of the Arts in Arnhem (NL), KASK in Ghent (BE) and Master in Expanded Theatre in Bern (CH).

**Jyoti Mistry** is Professor in Film at HDK-Valand, University of Gothenburg. She has made critically acclaimed films drawing from cinematic traditions but then re-contextualized for galleries and museum exhibition. Recent works: Cause of death (2020), When I grow up I want to be a black man (2017), Impunity (2014). Her work has screened at numerous festivals including Berlinale International Film Festival, Toronto International Film Festival, Kurzfilmtage in Winterthur, Rotterdam International Film Festival and Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume in Paris.


She has taught at University of the Witwatersrand (South Africa), New York University; University of Vienna; Arcada University of Applied Science Polytechnic in Helsinki.
Mistry was been artist in residence at California College of Arts (San Francisco), Sacatar (Brazil), Netherlands Film Academy and DAAD Researcher at Babelsberg Konrad Wolf Film University (Berlin). She is 2016 recipient of the Cilect (Association of International film schools) Teaching Award in film education. Currently, she is the principal research investigator on a BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) cross cultural project that explores image-making practices.

**Jennifer Miller** is a NYC based artist working across performance platforms. She is a director, a writer, a performer, a dancer and a producer. She spent her early years as a dancer researching improvisational strategies, working with Screws Loose, They Wont Shut Up and a myriad of informal collaborations of the kind that marked “below 14th street” in the mid 80’s early 90’s. She acted in many of Sarah Schulman’s and Robin Epstein’s early plays. She worked the club scene performing dance/theater pieces at the Limbo Lounge, 8bc, the Pyramid Club, and spent the summers outdoors with various circus’s and outdoor theater projects - Make-a-Circus in San Francisco and the Protean theater in Hartford among other projects.

All of these influences came together in the creation of Circus Amok. Circus Amok is a one ring, no animal, political, queer circus theater extravaganza that tours the parks of New York City. All outdoor Circus Amok shows are free. Circus Amok speaks to publics and counter public. It's a form that engages many theatrical languages at once, employing tropes of old school popular theater such as juggling and stilting alongside post-modern dance, high camp and drag.

Miller wrote and acted in the plays Cracked Ice and The Golden Racket, which were produced at La Mama and Performance Space 122. She maintains ongoing collaborative relationships with several dance makers and performance artists including Cathy Weis, Jennifer Monson, and Vaginal Davis. She spent seven seasons working at Coney Island Sideshow by the Seashore. She is a Professor of Performance at Pratt Institute and the Coordinator of Pratt’s Performance + Performance Studies MFA program.
Schedule

Time: 13.00– approx 17.00

• Chair opens
• Respondent’s short introduction to the project
• Opponent’s summary of the artistic research project
• Opponent + respondent discussion

Short break

• Committee’s questions, followed by the audience’s questions

Audience break - Examination committee meeting

• The result is proclaimed by the leader of the Examination Committee.