

**TITLE OF WORK:** The Ghost of Isaac Newton in Another Vacant Place

**ARTIST:** David Medalla

**YEAR PRODUCED:** 2011

**MEDIUM:** Digital video loop with Audio performance narration

**DURATION:** 3 min

**EDITIONS:** Made as a special commission for Momentum

Commissioned for MOMENTUM's joint exhibition A Wake (2011), "The Ghost of Isaac Newton in Another Vacant Place" features Einstein walking on Biesentalerstrasse in Berlin at the moment he encounters the ghost of Isaac Newton, eating an apple and addressing an empty room in another vacant space. Somewhat ironically, the ghost story's audio file was lost following its inclusion in a program at Tate Britain, rendering the sound as ephemeral as the content.

Medalla labeled this piece one of his numerous impromptu, low key and spontaneous performances that often engage random audiences in public spaces.

- *Josephine English Cook*

## **ARTIST'S BIO**

David Medalla is a pioneer of land art, kinetic art, participatory art and live art. He was born in 1942 in Manila, Philippines. At the age of 12 Medalla was admitted as a special student at Columbia University in New York upon the recommendation of american poet Mark van Doren. Medalla's tutor at Colombia was Professor Moses Hadas under whom he studied ancient greek drama. Medalla also attended the lectures on modern drama by Eric Bentley, modern literature by Lionel Trilling, modern philosophy by John Randall and the poetry workshop by Leonie Adams. In New York City David met the american actor James Dean and the filipino poet José Garcia Villa who encouraged Medalla's early interest in painting.

When he returned to Manila in the late fifties, he met Jaime Gil de Biedma (the catalan poet) and the painter Fernando Zobel de Ayala, who became the earliest patrons of Medalla's art. In Paris in 1960, the French philosopher Gaston Bachelard introduced David's first performance in France at the Academy of Raymond Duncan, the brother of the great american dancer Isadora Duncan. Years later in Paris, the French poet Louis Aragon (cofounder of surrealism with André Breton) introduced another performance

by Medalla and hailed the Filipino artist as a genius. Marcel Duchamp made a metallic object for David.

From 1964 -1966 Medalla edited SIGNALS newsbulletin in London. In 1967 he initiated the Exploding Galaxy, an international confluence of multi-media artists. From 1974 - 1977 he was chairman of Artists for Democracy and director of the Fitzrovia Cultural Centre in London. In 1994 he founded the Mondrian Fan Club in New York with Adam Nankervis as vicepresident, in 2000 the London Biennale, the idea for which occurred to him while he was on a boat en route to Robben Island, off Cape Town, South Africa, during the 2. Johannesburg Biennale in 1998. David Medalla has given numerous exhibitions in many parts of the world. He was included by Harald Szeemann in the exhibitions Weiss auf Weiss (1966) and Live in Your Head: When Attitudes Become Form (1969) (both at the Kunsthalle in Bern) and in the DOCUMENTA 5 exhibition in 1972 in Kassel.

Among solo and group shows David Medalla participated in are: Travels II curated by Chris Dercon at the Clocktower Gallery in N.Y.; Art Lifts Berlin (1998) curated by Friedrich Meschede at the DAAD Galerie in Berlin (when David was in the Berliner Künstlerprogramm); Pinaglabanan in Manila; Micropolitquess curated by Paul Ardenne at Le Magasin in Grenoble, France; Fluxattitudes at the New Museum of Contemporary Art in N.Y.; The Other Story (1989) curated by Rasheed Araeen at the Hayward Gallery, London; Perfortijd (1984) curated by Wink van Kempen at the Theatre de Lantaren in Rotterdam; Live in your Head (2000) at the Whitechapel Gallery, London and the Museo de Chiado in Lisbon; L'Informe (1996/97) curated by Yves-Alain Bois and Rosalind Krauss at the Centre Pompidou, Paris; Transforming the Crown (1998) at the Haarlem Studio Museum, N.Y.; Live/Life (1996/97) curated by Hans-Ulrich Obrist at the musée d'art moderne de la ville de Paris and at the Centro Cultural do Belem, Lisbon; A Quality of Light (1997) at Tate St.Ives, Cornwall; Century City (2001) at the Tate Modern, London; Out of Actions (1998) at the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art and MAK in Vienna and Tokio; 2nd Johannesburg Biennale (1998), South Africa; Force Fields (2000) curated by Guy Brett at the Hayward Gallery in London; etcetera...

David Medalla has been a lecturer at the Slade School of Art, University College London, St.Martins School of Art, Chelsea School of Art, Goldsmiths College of Art, the University of Southampton. In 1989 he gave a series of lectures on global cultures at MOMA, the Museum of Modern Art of N.Y. He has also lectured at the University of Hawaii in Manua, Cooper Union in N.Y., the Universities of Amsterdam and Utrecht, the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Bruxelles, the Fundacion Tapies in Barcelona, the Sorbonne in Paris, the British School in Rome and many otherschools, universities and colleges all over the world.

## ARTIST'S CV

### Education

- 1954** Columbia University, New York
- 1989** Lectures on Global Culture, MOMA, Museum of Modern Art, New York  
University of Hawaii, Manoa  
Cooper Union, New York  
Universities of Amsterdam and Utrecht  
École des Beaux Arts, Brussels  
Fundació Tàpies, Barcelona  
L'Université Paris-Sorbonne, Paris  
British School, Rome
- 2011** Lectures at Slade School of Art, University College London  
Saint Martins School of Art, London  
Chelsea College of Arts, London  
Goldsmiths College of Art, London  
University of Southampton, Southampton

### Exhibitions

- 2015** Mirages, Another Vacant Space, Berlin, Germany
- 2014** The Silence of a Movement, Another Vacant Space, Berlin, Germany  
Other Primary Structures, The Jewish Museum, New York, USA
- 2013** 9th Mercosul Biennial, performance 'Dancing Volcanos of Latin America', 'Cloud-Gates Bubble Machine', Porto Alegre, Brazil.
- 2011** The Secret History of Mondrian Fanclub - Part 3: SO PULO, Baró Galeria, São Paulo, Brasil
- 2010** A Missing History: The Other Story Re-visited, Aicon Gallery, London, UK  
Neu Räume und Schaulager, Gallery Kai Hilgemann, Berlin, Germany  
Transition, Gallery Kai Hilgemann, Berlin, Germany  
A Missing History: The Other Story Re-visited, Aicon Gallery, London, UK

- 2009** Sculpture Show, Eastside Projects, Birmingham, UK
- 2008** Lost In Your Eyes, LeRoy Neiman Gallery, New York, USA  
GSK Contemporary: Event Horizon, Royal Academy of Arts, London, UK  
16th Biennale of Sydney, Sydney, Australia
- 2007** Performa 07, The Second Biennial of New Visual Art Performance, New York, USA  
Sculpture Garden, Gallery Kai Hilgemann, Berlin, Germany  
Rouge Baiser, FRAC, Pays de la Loire, Carquefou, France
- 2006** Willoughby Sharp, David Medalla & Reinhart Buettner, Kunstpunkt, Berlin, Germany  
Metropolis Rise: New Art From London, temporarycontemporary, London, UK
- 2005** ARTISTS OF THE GALLERY, Gallery Kai Hilgemann, Berlin, Germany  
Les merveilles du monde, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dunkerque, Dunkerque, France  
About Beauty, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, Germany  
druck\_”printed matter”, Gallery Kai Hilgemann, Berlin, Germany
- 2004** Our Insular Puerile World: Original Artworks from McSweeney’s No. 13, Jack Hanley Gallery, San Francisco, USA
- 2003** Dubosarskij & Vinogradov: “Berlin-Moskau”, Gallery Kai Hilgemann, Berlin, Germany  
Happiness - A Survival Guide for Art and Life, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan  
Per Berntsen - Liv Mette Larsen - David Medalla, Gallery Kai Hilgemann, Berlin, Germany  
Cloud Canyon no. 14 (1963/2011), New Museum of New York, USA
- 2001** Century City, Tate Modern, London, UK
- 2000** London Biennial, UK  
Force Fields, Hayward Gallery in London; etcetera... Reino Unido Live in your Head at the Whitechapel Gallery, London  
Head at Museo de Chiado, Lisbon, Portugal
- 1998** Johannesburg Biennial, South-Africa  
Art Lifts Berlin, DAAD Gallery

Transforming the Crown, Harlem Studio Museum, New York, USA  
Out of Actions, Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, Vienna, Austria;  
MAK, Tokyo, Japan  
2nd Johannesburg Biennial, South-Africa

**1997** A Quality of Light, Tate St. Ives, Cornwall, UK

**1996** L'Informe, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France  
Live/Life, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; Centro Cultural do Belem,  
Lisbon, Portugal

**1989** The Other Story, Hayward Gallery, London, UK

**1984** Perfortijd, Theater Lantaren-Venster, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

**1972** DOCUMENTA 5, 1972, Kassel, Germany

**1969** Weiss auf Weiss, Kunsthalle Bern, Bern, Switzerland  
Travels II, Clocktower Gallery, New York, USA  
Pinaglabanan, Manila, The Philippines  
Micropolitiques, Le Magasin in Grenoble, France  
Fluxattitudes, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, USA

**1966** Live in Your Head: When Attitudes Become Form, Kunsthalle Bern, Bern,  
Switzerland

### **Works in Collections**

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