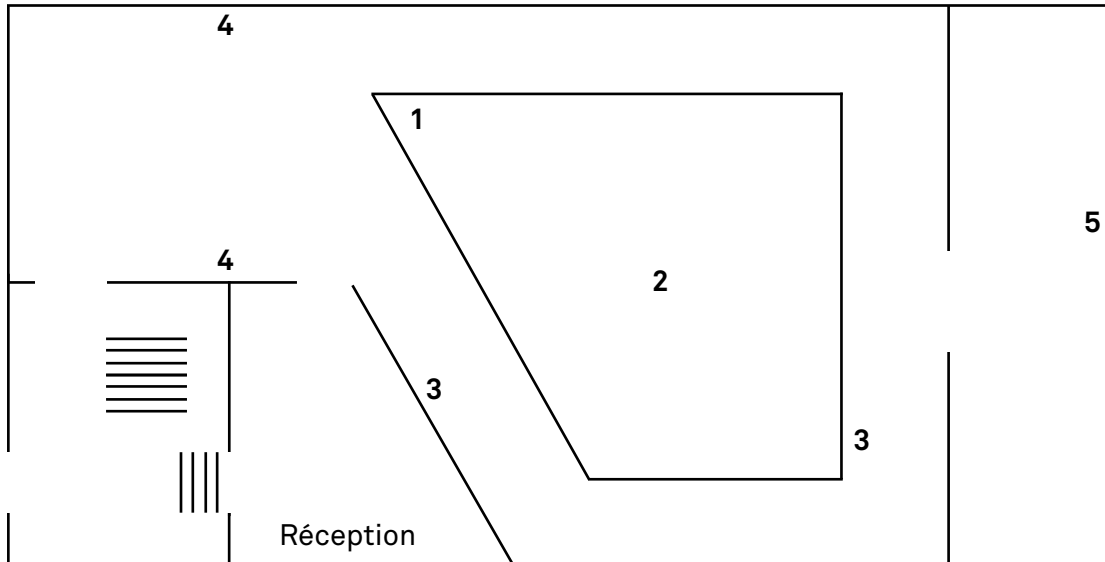




# Michèle Graf and Selina Grüter *Contradictory Statements*

3.3 – 17.3.2018  
Ground floor



**1** Platform

**2** Performance on:

Saturday	3	March	2018	5pm, 7pm, 9pm
Sunday	4	March	2018	1pm, 3pm, 5pm
Wednesday	7	March	2018	1pm, 3pm, 5pm
Thursday	8	March	2018	1pm, 3pm, 5pm
Friday	9	March	2018	1pm, 3pm, 5pm
Saturday	10	March	2018	1pm, 3pm, 5pm
Sunday	11	March	2018	1pm, 3pm, 5pm
Wednesday	14	March	2018	1pm, 3pm, 5pm
Thursday	15	March	2018	1pm, 3pm, 5pm, 7pm, 9pm
Friday	16	March	2018	1pm, 3pm, 5pm
Saturday	17	March	2018	1pm, 3pm

With:

Julia Barmettler, Livio Casanova, Lea-Nina Fischer, Vanessa Gageos, Michèle Graf, Selina Grüter, Toni Hildebrandt, Fiona Könz, Varun Kumar, Marinka Limat, Manuela Luterbacher, Vera Lutz, Alizé Rose-May Monod, Aldir Polymeris, Andrea Raemy, Christoph Studer-Harper, Benjamin Sunarjo, Zacharias Wackwitz, Hannes Zulauf

**3** Transcription

**4** Access to the translations

English translation: Felix Mura, French translation: Tina Odermatt

**5** Poster

Follow the immediate text transcription at [www.fri-art.ch/de](http://www.fri-art.ch/de)

Follow the English translation of the transcription at [www.fri-art.ch/en](http://www.fri-art.ch/en)

Follow the French translation of the transcription at [www.fri-art.ch/fr](http://www.fri-art.ch/fr)

## Contradictory Statements

Michèle Graf and Selina Grüter

The exhibition *Contradictory Statements* consists of a platform, a recurring spoken word performance, its transcription, its text projected on the wall, an online pad communicating the text in German and its translation into English and French, and a poster using the typeface *Marianne Baum* hanging in the adjacent room.

At its heart is the performance *Contradictory Statements*, which takes place during the Fri Art's opening hours throughout the duration of the exhibition. Six performers stand on the platform. The first starts by stating the only rule, a reference to John Miller's 1977 video work: 'In this piece, each person will contradict the person that came before'. Each then contradicts the performer speaking before them, generating a never-ending improvised dialogue. This dialogue has no theme and has the potential to cover any topic. Within the confines and latitude of its own premise, it is as predictable as it is unpredictable.

The statement that initiates this linguistic experiment with semantic negation is not constructed as a negative sentence in grammatical terms. Rather the negation is expressed contextually. This is exactly where the project is pitched, a level at which meaning is both understood and lost at the same time. In a continuation of this, the other elements of the exhibition are infused with the same ethos. The written transcripts of the spoken statements shape and confirm and yet also oppose each other in terms of the possibilities of oral and written text. The translations create non-identical twins including semantic failures trying to communicate the original words and meanings. *Contradictory Statements* – note the plural – is not simply the structure for the performance. As the title of the exhibition, it is also a key to understanding each of its components as a set of variations. The shape of the platform is based on the room it is in and is only as high as one of the steps leading up to the space. It is not exactly a stage, but plays its own role and ultimately, the entire display, the performance itself, the performance genre and the artists' choice to operate within it are called into question by the poster.

To return to the linguistic experiment, negations maintain a close relationship to their positive equivalents and are therefore always in motion. The contradiction in *Contradictory Statements* is all-encompassing. Not only does it deny itself but it generates infinite waves, whether this be in the performers' dialogues, our personal thoughts, or the understanding of art.

Michèle Graf and Selina Grüter (\*1987, \*1991, Zurich, Switzerland) are based in Berlin and Zurich. Recent exhibitions and performances include *Throws and Catches*, Plymouth Rock, Zurich (2017); *Lunar Intervals*, Swiss Institute New York City/Emily Harvey Foundation, New York City (2017); *in relation to a Spectator*., Kestnergesellschaft, Hanover (2017); *Rehearsing Intra-Activity*, LISTE Performance Project, Basel (2017) and *Unruly Relations*, Kunsthaus Glarus (2016). Graf and Grüter co-run the artist-run space Taylor Macklin in Zurich.