

Self-Sabotage



Ailer, one of the friends that was arrested on the 30th of December commented to me that during one of her detentions two "segurosos" (undercover Intelligence agents) asked her about the artistic character of *Self-Sabotage* and showed great interest in knowing more about this work. She asked me if the bullet in my performance of the Russian roulette was real. Listening to her I think not about that work of art but in how the State Security agents are thinking of using that information that they are inquiring about. In this "game" that I'm involved in now, personal information is being used with political ends and political information is being transformed into part of your personal life, everything is useful at some moment or in some way.

Lately another friend is calling me "kamikaze", meanwhile one of the cultural functionary (who was present in that first meeting on the 27th of December) told me that my art-action was a suicide act (I interpreted this symbolically in relation to my career as an artist after trying to enact *Tatlin's Whisper* in the Plaza, rather than my own psychological state). I have created a type of instinct these last two months, so when a theme is too recurrent and very different people are bringing it up, it makes me think that it's something that's not only of interest to these people, but also to those that are in the shadows seeking information. Since there is so much interest in whether I was capable of putting a real bullet in a gun to play Russian roulette; Since so many people have recently spoken to me of death and suicide; Since all information that reaches the Security of State is distorted and since today I don't doubt when I think of the real consequences that can happen in Cuba when you expose a direct critique to power and demand change, I want to make a public declaration:

I don't have suicidal intentions. I have never played with death in any of my future scenarios in any stage of my life, I have always seen what has happened to me as a challenge and I have enjoyed the difficult moments because they have made me grow. I like to look back at the path I have taken to elaborate self-critique, which is different than being self-destructive.

Today I am playing with a Russian roulette daily, not with a gun or with bullets, but with the consequences of my work. Today I am not reading a text about art and politics related to the work *Self-Sabotage*, I am practicing. Today I am not at a conference saying that the political artist should assume all consequences that are postulated in their work, I am living it. Now, I also declare that I wouldn't trade anything for being able to stand and look straight into the eyes of the power that attempts to make me kneel, that is my Russian roulette today.

Tania Bruguera
March 4, 2015
Havana, Cuba