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*Nicoline Van Harskamp presents the U.S. Premiere of  
Expressive Power Series Part 1 - Max Bonner on the Phenomenology of Speech (2010)*  
At the New Museum of Contemporary Art  
June 18<sup>th</sup>, at 7pm

Dutch artist Nicoline van Harskamp will present the U.S. premiere of *Expressive Power Series Part 1 - Max Bonner on the Phenomenology of Speech (2010)*, a new performance that builds upon an expansive body of work focused on politics and language. This ambitious, hour-long theatrical piece centers on an Interpersonal Dynamics consultant, named Max Bonner, and members of his audience, including a human rights activist, an academic, and a dogmatic anarchist, who he attempts to convince of popular psychological models for social persuasion, used variously by the Pentagon, corporations and NGOs worldwide. The evolving discussion demonstrates in the artist's words "the impossibility of political consensus by way of verbal interaction"—a situation that is here framed productively, with generative meaning to be found in points of dissonance, paradox and negotiation.

2009 winner of the Prix de Rome, an award granted annually to one young artist in the Netherlands, van Harskamp "considers politics to be an activity; speech to be a political act, and political speech to be inherently theatrical." These views underlie her work, which encompasses video and most recently scripted performances. To make *To Live Outside the Law You Must be Honest (2007)*, which showed at the 2008 Taipei Biennial and Nikolai CCA in Copenhagen, van Harskamp spent time in Christiania - a large self-governing community in Denmark established in 1971—interviewing the residents about the history of the place, their ideas of freedom, and more. The resulting video features a fictional resident performing the contradictory statements the inhabitants made.

*Expressive Power Series # 1* follows a recent work entitled *Any Other Business (2010)*, which was produced in the framework of the Dutch Spinoza Festival, organised SKOR (Stichting Kunst Openbare Ruimte) and SMBA (Stedelijk Museum Buro Amsterdam). The film work will be premiered in the SMBA later this year. "Any Other Business" took the form of a large-scale scripted conference that was first performed in a conference centre in Amsterdam. Uniquely structured as an ordinary conference, every aspect of the program was scripted and staged. In three different rooms, 35 actors performed 10 meetings over the course of six hours. An intriguing narrative developed over the course of the presentation, as the speakers argued, and tried, with varying degrees of success, to come to conclusions and form action points. By turning a standard conference into a performance, "Any Other Business" turned political discussion into an artistic medium, raising questions like 'Why do political debates often seem to fail?' and 'Are we better at acting on our convictions than express them verbally?' and 'Does freedom of speech equal freedom?'

*Expressive Power Series Part 1* will be presented on one-night only as part of Rhizome's New Silent Series, a strand of programming at the New Museum, organized by Lauren Cornell.