This ubiquitous and seemingly banal action. As Bataille indicates, the cause and effect of laughter is more elusive than one might initially think. What is laughter itself, as an action and a reaction?

II

In the 1982 Dutch feminist cult film A Question of Silence (De stilte rond Christine M.), the protagonist is Christine M., a housewife on trial along with two other women for killing a male shopkeeper. She does not utter a word throughout the entire film; under the weight of a patriarchal society, she has been immobilized. When, in the film’s final courtroom scene, the prosecutor asks, in seriousness, “What if three men had killed a female shopkeeper?” Christine’s silence breaks. She erupts in uncontrollable laughter. Her laughter spreads, until all women present in the courtroom are laughing. In this cinematic climax, laughter disrupts the order of patriarchy and the rationality of the law.

In the history of women as laughers, two figures come to the fore: the involuntary actions of the silent, contorted hysteric or the unruliness of the laughing hag. Critical theorist Anca Parvulescu cites two important feminists on women’s laughter: [Irigaray]: “If you keep laughing that way, we’ll never be able to talk to each other. We’ll remain absorbed in their words, violated by them. So let’s try to take back some part of our mouth to speak with.” Cixous, on the other hand, insists that we linger as we laugh, and not turn to speaking too quickly. Most importantly, once we do speak, we can do so with a mouth that does not distinguish between its laughing and speaking parts.

III

Laughter is an undisciplined and disruptive language with a deep history as a mechanism for the subversion of social order. In the medieval-era carnival, for example, laughter and humor were employed by those with less power for temporary gain. From the Russian writer Mikhail Bakhtin:
The paradox of a laughter that cannot be “put to work” is the inability to theorize it as such, to grasp it, and to parse it. The title of this exhibition refers to the manner in which laughter is represented in a tran- sition between laughter, tears, and varying grimaces between the two, such that the distinction between them collapses. The film’s title pages read: “la vie c’est la, la vie c’est triste” (1974), Christian Boltanski appears as a stand-up comic who forgoes his comedic act and instead switches repeatedly be- tween laughter, tears, and varying grimmaces between the two, pos- ing it; it is communication itself and no text, scientific study, or social function of ridicule and mockery. Reading from the many texts on laughter highlights the discrepancy between reading texts on laughter and of laughter, of the object of laughter. In order to laugh, for example, it is necessary that one not risk losing one’s dominant situation.5

There is power in laughter, but its potential use as a tool is approximnately 10 x 15 ft, white film with sound, 32:02 min, on loop, in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico produce dif- ficulties in the late 19th century. The photos produced by unseen laughers and later emanating from a television set. In 2003, Slavoj Zizek wrote a short text on

The afternoon offers an opportunity to consider how laughter is the artist’s reaction to the ambiguous release of laughter, are experienced differently in the nude. Rinfret has hosted many naturist tours and emotion-based work- shops and here creates a space in which laughter is gener- ated in a situation of heightened vulnerability and trust.

VI

Jacqueline Hoang Nguyen heard the above-mentioned story of the Tanganyika laughter epidemic on an episode of NPR’s Radiolab, where it became the conceptual starting point for a research-based project culminating in a 25-channel sound instal- lation, featuring underpaid factory workers on the

In Anca Parvulescu’s seminal anatomy book for artists, Anatomie Artistique, in 1989. As chief of the laboratory at the Salpêtrière physi- cal. They allow us to consider the impossibility or futility of representing laughter and of fully understanding its logic. Philosophers, scientists, and writers have been musing on laughter since Aristotelian times, analyzing facial expressions, varieties of emotion, and the social function of ridicule and mockery. Reading from the many texts on laughter highlights the discrepancy between reading texts on laughter and of laughter, of the object of laughter. In order to laugh, for example, it is necessary that one not risk losing one’s dominant situation.5

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The afternoon offers an opportunity to consider how laughter is the artist’s reaction to the ambiguous release of emotion that comes with the bittersweet life. Laughter is the artist’s reaction to the ambiguous release of emotion that comes with the bittersweet life. Laughter is the artist’s reaction to the ambiguous release of emotion that comes with the bittersweet life. Laughter is the artist’s reaction to the ambiguous release of emotion that comes with the bittersweet life. Laughter is the artist’s reaction to the ambiguous release of emotion that comes with the bittersweet life.