FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Casting THE PERILS OF OBEDIENCE: A Performance
ITZIAR BARRIO
March 29, 30 | 8pm
Tickets $10 available at www.abronsartscenter.org

ABRONS ARTS CENTER
466 Grand Street
New York, NY 10002

(New York, NY) The Abrons Arts Center is proud to present Casting THE PERILS OF OBEDIENCE: A Performance, the second stage of visual artist Itziar Barrio’s exploration in power dynamics and constructed situations. Using the methods of casting, the performance will unfold the wills and desires of the actors to succeed and be recognized. By placing them within fictional and non-fictional parameters, whether movie scripts or their own lives, Barrio reveals the production of power through seduction.

Following an open call, actors will audition for four full days with theater director Niegel Smith and will undergo a selection process. Open to the public only during the two final days of callbacks the entire process will be recorded and included in a resulting video piece. Exploring simultaneously the limits and in betweens of theater, film and performance art, the live recording emphasizes the experience that is being created by actors and audience.

The four selected actors will eventually be part of the next phase of THE PERILS OF OBEDIENCE, consisting of building a scene in real time. The first stage of the project was carried out in Spain during BAD, Bilbao Theater and Contemporary Dance Festival in 2010.

The fine line between the persona and the character finds its mirror in the audience, who executes its silent power by being present. Their presence implies a voyeuristic disposition and it functions to unveil the group dynamics and the negotiation of social roles and rules.

Pushing the actors to reveal their limits on stage, underlining the narratives present in any situation the performance frames an experience where conventions are decoded, contemporary fears of domination are confronted, and exhibitionism and social acceptability are critically examined.

THE PERILS OF OBEDIENCE is inspired by Stanley Milgram’s psychological experiments which began in 1961, a few months after the trial of the Nazi Adolf Eichmann. Milgram wished to test how much pain a person would inflict on another simply because this was asked of them for the purposes of a scientific experiment. As Hannah Arendt reminds us that "under conditions of tyranny it is far easier to act than to think". Barrio analyzes how obedience to a higher authority, even in democracy, can lead to extreme consequences and can involve large numbers of the population.
“...Itziar Barrio is interested in realities and in showing their limitations and ambiguities as truth, through analysis of their forms of representation. So, art, film, television, the performing arts and the Internet take the floor as work tools and objects for experimentation and analysis. Her interest not only lies in the story that upholds the realities but in its recreations, its techniques for showing them or fictionalizing them.”

From the text of the Catalogue LOS PELIGROS DE LA OBEDIENCIA (-1) by Maria Mur Dean, Director of the Art Producer Organization Consonni (Bilbao)

Itziar Barrio was born in Bilbao and lives and works in New York City. Her work has been presented, among other venues, at: ENPAP (European Network for Public Art Producers), ARTIUM Museum (Vitoria), Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art (New York), New Museum Festival of Ideas for the New City (New York), Havana Biennial (Cuba), White Box (New York), Cervantes Institute (New York), International Festival Postelectronic Art (Italy), Pist Space (Istanbul), Art for Art’s Sake (Bologna), Gdansk Academy of Arts (Poland), Loop (Barcelona), Sala Rekalde (Bilbao) and Thomas Henry Ross Galerie (Montreal). Barrio has been awarded among others with the First Prize Ertibil (Basque Government), and by Brooklyn Art Council, Spanish Ministry of Culture, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, and the New York Foundation for the Arts. She has attended a number of residencies including Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture and The International Studio and Curatorial Program (ISCP).

*Casting THE PERILS OF OBEDIENCE: A Performance* is a recipient of NYFA’s Emergency Relief Fund Grant and sponsored by Etxepare Basque Institute.