

GLASS
HOUSE:
ART IN
A PLACE
THAT ALLOWS
STAYING

Luca Lisci



THE NEO DOMESTICITIES COLLECTIVE MANIFESTO:

APPLIED UTOPIA.

**CLEANING THE HOUSE IS AN ARTISTIC PRACTICE;
ART AND LIFE SUSTAINABILITY = DURATIONABILITY;
SUSTAINING OUR LIFE = SUSTAINING OUR ART.
ART SHOULD BE EXPERIENCED IN PLACE THAT ALLOWS STAYING.
THIS IS A (FLUX) COMMUNITY GENERATION;
NOT YOUR BOURGEOISIE DREAM;
OUR HOME IS NOT A FORTRESS.
WE VALUE OUR INDEPENDENCE-
NO PRIZES FOR LIFE = NO PRIZES FOR ART.
NEO DOMESTICITY IS A LABORATORY;
WE COLLECT EMPIRIC TRUTHS.
NO MEDIATORS.
NEO DOMESTICITIES IS (IN) MOVEMENT.
TEMPORARY-AUTONOMOUS-ZONE
PUBLIC SPACE/ PRIVATE FUNCTIONALITIES-
TIME BASED DYNAMIC INTERIORS.
WE AVOID ENCOUNTERS WITH REAL/ESTATE AUTHORITIES.
GENUINE HOSPITAL/ITY
HOSTING IS PART OF OUR ARTISTIC PRACTICE.**

HAVE SOME SOUP

**GLASSHOUSE / LITAL DOTAN & EYAL PERRY
PUBLIC SAFETY, 2012
PERFORMANCE INSTALLATION**

Courtesy of the artists, New York

On following spread pages:

**GLASSHOUSE / LITAL DOTAN & EYAL PERRY
COUCH POTATO, 2011-2012
17 ALLENBY, TEL-AVIV**

Courtesy of the artists, New York





Daily routine:

- 08:00 Cleansing the body
- 09:00 Practicing Yoga
- 11:00 Daily Transformation
- 12:00 Opening the door
- 14:00 Slowing in time
- 16:00 Hovering at Low Altitude
- 18:00 Dancing
- 20:00 Cl



GLASSHOUSE: ART IN A PLACE THAT ALLOWS STAYING

Luca Lisci

GLASSHOUSE IS AN ART-LIFE-LAB FOUNDED BY ARTISTS LITAL DOTAN & EYAL PERRY, DEDICATED TO HOSTING ARTISTIC PRACTICES BASED ON PERFORMANCE, PARTICIPATION AND TIME-BASED ART IN THE DOMESTIC SPHERE, UNDER THE MOTTO THAT "ART SHOULD BE EXPERIENCED IN A PLACE THAT ALLOWS STAYING".

A conversation *in* and *about* Glasshouse with Lital Dotan & Eyal Perry.

TAR *What is Glasshouse?*

EYAL That's a difficult question. But if I have to define it I would say it is a performance project that became a frame of our lives. It is not just where we live but how and with whom; it involves all aspects of life – socially, creatively, critically – as well as mundane and daily routine. And it involves people.

LITAL To put it very simply it's a durational ArtLifeLab. It's a condition of process, an intrinsic exploration of the relation between art and non-art, private and public, structure and anti-structure, host and guest. Glasshouse is both a proposition and an invitation; it's the potential of architecture or condition to form and reform, to generate, to perform; it's our response to structural, social, political conditions: a relationship. Every Glasshouse we live in responds to possibilities given by its interior and exterior landscape, and we don't impose anything on the initial concept.

TAR *What happens at your Glasshouse?*

LITAL The space we currently live in has a very labyrinth-like feeling to it: storefront window, gallery, stairs, underground space, utility rooms, doors, corridors, elevator, doors, room, back yard, stairs, room, kitchen, closet, bathroom, doors. Each sub-space is an installation of itself; people often get lost here, and surely disoriented. We feel this disorientation is the most accurate introduction to the Glasshouse experience, because things happen here, events happen, people come in and go out, and sometimes stay or come back, but a random visit will never provide the full picture.

EYAL Our calendar is very dynamic and it's based on ongoing proposals that we receive from artists across disciplines – visual art, music, theatre, dance – and then several projects we invite ourselves from curators, researchers and artists based on a changing yearly focus.

LITAL The first year focus was on duration of time and of an idea. We hosted monthly 24-hour performances on each second Friday and homage performances on the last Friday, performed by us and guest artists. Last year, we focused on the residency programme which we dedicated to performance curation and this coming year we are dedicating to one-on-one performances that would happen on third Fridays.

EYAL Each of these focuses comes from our own performance practice, and we feel that by extending this to others, it's our way to share not just our space but the fundamentals of our practice. Then there is the act of hosting itself which is our artistic practice.

TAR *Do you feel vulnerable at Glasshouse? Do your guests feel vulnerable?*

LITAL Well, it is definitely a situation of shared vulnerability, for both our guests and us, but we accept it, we believe it's the only way to truly experience art: to participate, to measure your steps, to not know; not be too confident, allow yourself to cross unannounced boundaries, and choose whether to stay or not. It's a mutual process of constant questioning and exploration. It's a fragile environment that should be handled with care.

GLASSHOUSE / LITAL DOTAN & EYAL PERRY
DAILY ROUTINE, 2010
575 SUTTER, SAN FRANCISCO

Courtesy of the artists, New York

EYAL It's not always a pleasant situation, and it doesn't come naturally to us too, yet, but we refuse to create codes that would make life or visiting easy. We feel it's important that people find themselves challenged when not knowing how to behave, and they might find themselves outside of their comfort zone, but this is all part of the laboratory.

TAR *You seem to be hungry exactly for those kind of experiences that most people try to avoid when they try to reach transcendence: people usually want to get away, reach tranquility, not compromise with the relative realm of physical objects, body constraints, and the heavy presence of a particular, mundane environment. Is this done on purpose, and if so, why?*

EYAL We have been following a spiritual path for many years now. The path we are following insists on meeting physical life. We seek spirituality and transcendence in our everyday life and daily routines.

LITAL During performances we experience time in a different way, but then when a crowded room empties, the space remains, and us. It's a continuous shift from occupancy to "vacancy", like breath. The house pulsates. Unlike galleries or theatres, we value the time of in-between, the gap between events. Glasshouse is never empty. The time when there are no events has an equal value. We feel that in our society the "uninteresting time" of non-events is the least appreciated. We find abundance of nurture in this gap between the inhale and the exhale of the space.

TAR *Is the Glasshouse experience something you want to teach others?*

LITAL I'm not sure the term teaching is accurate, we are learning ourselves all the time, and actually very aware of the potential of an exchange. We let ourselves constantly shift between our role as students and as teachers.

EYAL Yes in the sense that it is a duplicable model and can have value for others. But the only method of teaching we believe in is through direct experience.

TAR *You seem to be looking at the same time for two things that we normally think of as separated: the comfort of being at home, which is the centre of one's world, and the discomfort of exploring the unknown, which is a fundamental drive that takes us out of our homes*

LITAL I don't believe in this separation: for me life and curiosity are not separate notions. I also don't seek comfort. I need to be outside my comfort zone to evolve.

EYAL In a very preliminary stage of our project we thought we would challenge the concept of what "private" means. A home does not have to be a fortress. It can be more fluid. We actually think we can do without the notion of privacy. As artists, we want to create a challenging way of living for us, where there is no separation between art and life.

LITAL The notion of privacy is an illusion: nothing is private anymore. We are constantly "invaded" by the outside world, so we might as well give it up or see it as an opportunity for exchange.

GLASSHOUSE / LITAL DOTAN & EYAL PERRY
EMBRACE?, 2012
246 UNION, BROOKLYN, NY

Courtesy of the artists, New York





EYAL Once we accepted this blurring of art and life, we started developing the un-announced performances, realising the performative and transformative aspect of our daily routine.

TAR *Can Glasshouse exist outside of your home?*

LITAL That's a good question. Our upcoming project will be on route in South Africa. We are wondering whether it is possible to leave the space behind and carry the notion of Glasshouse without a space, keeping just the practice of it and the structure of time. We want to be able to host while travelling, even a single person. Maybe it doesn't have to be a person. It could be a zebra [laughing].

TAR *Eyal, why have you chosen a more detached role for yourself in the performances?*

EYAL We've been working together for 14 years and we have a very symbiotic relationship. We incubate everything together. Only at the very last stage of the process do we take different roles. And I take the role of the silent presence. I echo the experience of Lital's performance in the form of a visual interpretation.

LITAL Our performances cannot happen without Eyal. His presence is part of the performance. And in a way, he is also documented; his point of view is documented.

TAR *In one of your projects, Lital slept with complete strangers, with no*

clothing or covers, filmed by a ceiling camera for the whole night. What did you find in the recorded material?

LITAL It was about how two strangers share the territory of a bed with the intention merely of sleeping. One of the conditions is that there were no covers, no blankets, no clothing. I looked at it as a subconscious choreography. There was no intention for interaction; no chatting, no trying to know each other. It wasn't about the verbal relationship. It wasn't comfortable or cosy. The room always felt very cold although the temperature was above 30 degrees Celsius. We realised that when you sleep exposed like that the mind apparently sets itself into a physical state of vulnerability and it's translated into a sensation of being cold.

EYAL This project is about learning something from human experience. Not only was there no code, but the process of learning the code as time goes by is all recorded. The body needed to consider the presence of the other, make adjustments while in a state of sleep.

TAR *Was sexual intercourse explicitly ruled out?*

EYAL Lital never explicitly stated a code of what is allowed or not. We never predetermine codes and regulations, but the way she navigates the experience creates unspoken guidelines for the other person. By the way, both men and women participated in this project.

LITAL Well it was far from being pleasant or comfortable. It was a complete manifestation of vulnerability.

GLASS HOUSE: ART IN A PLACE THAT ALLOWS STAYING

GLASSHOUSE / LITAL DOTAN & EYAL PERRY
STRETCHED LIMITS, 2010
575 SUTTER, SAN FRANCISCO

Courtesy of the artists, New York

Luca Lisici



TAR *Have you ever thought about planning architectural or design projects?*

LITAL When we got here to our current space in New York the first thing we did was to create a chair out of two suitcases and two pillows. It was our little refuge in a situation we had absolutely nothing: an empty apartment with no softness. We often use objects, or their transformational ability as mechanisms for performance or sculptures, and it could be very interesting to translate some of them to commercial mechanisms. The notion of a hotel is something we think about a lot. Who knows.

EYAL But it's never about building a Glasshouse from scratch. If we built a house, it would be our last one. It would be the end of our nomadic condition. We do think about design but it is about designing emotional fields.

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LITAL The notion of sustainable performance practice is something I think about now. It is directly linked to questions of preservation in performance or maintaining an idea; we are in the process of translating my dressmaking practice- -which exists both in my daily routine and as a one-on-one performance- -into a fashion project and a business

model language. So it is in a way a leap into design.

TAR *What is your daily routine and why do you consider it an artistic practice?*

EYAL The daily routine is something Lital added when we created the Glasshouse in San Francisco, but ever since then it has become a core understanding of our practice in every Glasshouse. It allowed us to realise the transcendence potential in every simple action.

LITAL It allowed us to understand time better, how to construct time within a space, how time creates space. It allowed us to think about repetition. I don't see it as discipline or limits but rather as opportunities in time. An extended space if that makes sense.

EYAL There is also the transformation of our everyday objects - a kitchen pot that was transformed into a video installation containing its shredded soup plates, a trashcan that is sealed with a milky glass that's being licked from the inside, a glass that frames the kitchen sink and its dirty dishes as a sculpture of the everyday, and the fact that all the kitchen utilities have been replaced with books. Food for thought.

LITAL For us Glasshouse is not a jouissance endeavour. It is constantly formed out of discontent. We have to find a condition that we can live in.

GLASSHOUSE / LITAL DOTAN & EYAL PERRY
SHARE MY PLATE?, 2012
246 UNION, BROOKLYN, NY

Courtesy of the artists, New York

GLASSHOUSE, A FRAGILE TENDING

Erin Manning

To tend is to move with or without an object. It is to be disposed or inclined to action. *Time tends to pass.* It is to be led toward an idea, a way of thinking. It is also to lead. To tend is to move in a mode of tending, to activate a tendency. *The tendency of time is felt in asynchrony.* It is to be directed in a particular direction. *Time tends toward a memory of the future.*

To tend is also, in its original middle English *tenden*, to stretch. *In the tending, experience is stretched, unmoored, deformed.* To tend is to take care of. *Time tends wounds.* With an object, it suggests waiting on, caring for the time passing. *To tend a garden. To tend an artwork.* A variant of attend.

ERIN MANNING AND NATHANIEL STERN
WEATHER PATTERNS - THE SMELL OF RED (GLASSHOUSE), 2014
246 UNION, BROOKLYN, NY

Photographs by Leslie Plumb



To tend is to move, to be moved. It is to incline in a directionality not yet parsed. This is the work of Glasshouse, a lived environment hosted by Lital Dotan and Eyal Perry: to tend to the world in the moving, to attend to how art might become capable of activating a tendency toward tending. To create time in the tending.

In May-June 2014, I was invited by Glasshouse to present a work in collaboration with Nathaniel Stern entitled *Weather Patterns - The Smell of Red*. The work proposed itself as an environment of smell, wind and colour¹. This was not a stable work – it was a garden that proposed a durational engagement with its shifting ecology: Lital Dotan and Eyal Perry were invited to live with the smell in its slow transformation, to water the three standing tornadoes that were conceived to make apparent the movements of the air, and to sweep the garden into its shifting landscape.

For this is the call of Glasshouse: to invite us, as artists, to invent modes of tending in which we participate, collectively.

Lital and Eyal write: “Art should be experienced in a place that allows staying” (2010:4). To create an environment that allows staying is not to create a stable architecture. There is not first and foremost a spatial proposition. What they propose instead is that we share in the fragility of creating environments that themselves create the conditions for staying, that we together invent an ecology that brings into contact art, the everyday and lived experience.



GLASS HOUSE: A FRAGILE TENDING

Erin Manning

1. The work was curated by Jennifer Johung. Collaborators for the process, including how the work could be activated at Glasshouse, include Marcelino Barsi, Leslie Plumb, Mayra Morales, Ramona Benveniste, Brian Massumi. Michael Hornblow also created adjacent activations, folding the outdoor environment into Glasshouse through his Omegaville Project.



GLASSHOUSE / LITAL DOTAN & EYAL PERRY
THE LAST HUG - 2007
8 HASHOMER, TEL-AVIV

Courtesy of the artists, New York

**GLASS
HOUSE:
A FRAGILE
TENDING**
Erin Manning

Glasshouse, in its Brooklyn iteration, is a living/performing space, or better, a living labyrinth. Composed of a gallery space open onto the street, an underground exhibition/sleeping space, a corridor, a living room that doubles as an installation (or perhaps it would be better to say that every corner is an incipient installation, not an art object, but an environment poised toward transformation), an outdoor patio (which became part of our garden-like environment, activated by food gestures that played on the smell of red²), a kitchen area that doubles as a performance space, a bedroom/art installation that doubles as a transient residency space, and a stairwell that, for the most part, acts like a stairwell.

This labyrinthine structure is important. Nothing is linear here: to tend is as much to navigate new openings as they emerge as it is to keep older ones in motion. To tend is to attend to how time becomes a field of duration, how time, as Lital and Eyal write, becomes “non-linear time – loop, parallel time, leaps, gaps” (2010: 252). Cinematic time. Performance time. For time is really what is at stake here: the time of the daily tasks – 8:00, cleaning the body, 9:00, practicing yoga, 11:00 daily transformation, 12:00 opening the door, 14:00 slowing in time, 16:00 hovering at low altitude, 18:00 dancing, 20:00 cl... (2010: 204) – and the time of tasks interrupted, of dynamic form, the time of time folding on itself. The smell of red.

In the labyrinth, tending is continuously reinvented. It is stretched to its limit – the days of continual engagement with the public are long, and sometimes taxing, as is the field of performance itself, which seeks to reinvent the norms of engagement, the limits of expression – at the same time as it activates a caring, a collective sense of there being something at stake in which we all share.

This sharing begins with Lital and Eyal, whose collaboration is deep and quiet, performed in each gesture, some turned toward the world and others simply caring for the mundanity of tasks as they unfold. For this is performance: an activation of the mundane. Performance sometimes seems extraordinary, but really it is a performance of the ordinary in its time-slip. Performance: a tending to the now in its rhythmic transformations.

Glasshouse is fragile because the now of performance is vulnerable to every other kind of time with which it comes into contact. This is the force of tending, that it does not decide in advance how it takes time, and how it makes time. For Lital and Eyal, to tend the cinnamon garden of *The Smell of Red* was also to live with the infiltration of cinnamon in their dreams, with the strange mutations caused by wind and weather on their everyday activities, with the particles found in the folds of their garment's weaves, with the stickiness between their toes when having breakfast, with the memory of a smell in each bite they ate, for three weeks. It was also to become curious about how the cocoa and the paprika deepened, darkened, brightened the smell of red, how the colour of their mix transformed perception, how the dampness of the tornado funnel altered the garden landscape when swept into its daily shape, how the wind altered the shape of the funnel, how the ecology altered the shape of Glasshouse.



GLASSHOUSE / LITAL DOTAN & EYAL PERRY
SLEEPING SURROUND - 2010
3 HASHOMER, TEL-AVIV

Courtesy of the artists, New York



GLASSHOUSE / LITAL DOTAN & EYAL PERRY
SLEEPING - 2009
3 HASHOMER, TEL-AVIV

Courtesy of the artists, New York

2. Food gestures were activated during a week-long open event by Juliana España Keller, Melora Koepke and Elliott Rajnovic.

This opening toward a tending, like the smell of red, is collaboration beyond the human, beyond Lital and Eyal as guardians of the Glasshouse, beyond the artist as infiltrator, as host, as guest. This is not to say that Lital and Eyal don't have a major role to play. It is to say that what is at stake in creating the conditions for Glasshouse's fragility is a tending that goes beyond them, beyond the artwork, beyond the performance of human intervention. The fragility of Glasshouse, its tending of time in the making, is an ecology, a call for an environmentality that moves performance beyond the subject, beyond the object, toward a deep engagement with the field of living itself, a relational field alive in the interstices of the tending, in the more-than human cracks and gaps that performance often gestures toward but rarely actually tends. Glasshouse is a fragile labyrinth, a concept on the edge of existence as we live it.



GLASS HOUSE: A FRAGILE TENDING

Erin Manning

**GLASSHOUSE / LITAL DOTAN & EYAL PERRY
CCD: COLONY, COLLAPSE, DISORDER - 2012
PERFORMANCE INSTALLATION**

Courtesy of the artists, New York



MORT RANSON
MARGARET'S MUSEUM , 1995

Glasshouse reminds me of a house I wrote about in my first book, *Ephemeral Territories*, the house built by Margaret and Neil in the Canadian film *Margaret's Museum*³.

This house, built on the edge of a cliff in Nova Scotia atop active mines, built with materials discarded by the community, was a house that couldn't last: it was not built to last. It was an expression of existence's fragility, a house that would eventually house a museum no one would ever want to visit, the museum of all that had been lost to the mines: Margaret's husband's tongue, her brother's penis, her father's lungs. Even the tourists stayed away, screaming in horror at the expression of Margaret's love.

Margaret's house, her museum, has stayed in my memory, reminding me in my own wanderings through art and love and life that collaboration is about the kind of artistic laboratory Lital and Eyal are willing to build and to rebuild. A laboratory, a labyrinth, that includes and folds in the risks of the everyday, a labyrinth that some will leave screaming because it refuses to perform its stability, its security. Theirs is a home continuously transformed, a fragile ecology, a space that appears "wherever we take it," an environment "created over and over again" (2010: 9-10). It's easy to tend a space once, even to tend a garden for a summer. It's a different commitment to tend to an environment in continual recomposition where life and art coincide in the uneasiness of their stretch.

Like Lital's fabrics stretched between tree, body and earth, like Eyal's "silent presence" – a tending in attendance – what is at stake in the life project that is Glasshouse is making felt the fissures in attention, the cracks in experience, that create resonances in the everyday ecologies both human and more-than human. Their work is not to rebuild a home for a cracking world but to make felt the fragility of the architecture we call home, to make felt the home's dissolution as stable enclosure of human life. Theirs is a politics of cracking asunder the mortgaged architecting of security that too often comes to define home, to define art. This is Glasshouse: the patient crafting of the infinite collaboration of a tending toward the fissures, toward the openings and intervals of event time.

3. *Margaret's Museum* (Mort Ranson, 1995). For a more detailed account of the film, and of the concept of home, see Erin Manning, *Ephemeral Territories: Representing Nation, Home and Identity in Canada* (Minnesota UP, 2003).

GLASS HOUSE: A FRAGILE TENDING

Erin Manning



**GLASSHOUSE / LITAL DOTAN & EYAL PERRY
HOVERING AT LOW ALTITUDE, 2010
575 SUTTER, SAN FRANCISCO**

Courtesy of the artists, New York







**GLASSHOUSE / LITAL DOTAN & EYAL PERRY
HOVERING AT LOW ALTITUDE, 2010
NEGEV DESERT**

Courtesy of the artists, New York

**GLASS
HOUSE:
A FRAGILE
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