

## Recess Presents

### Laura Vitale: *White Sands*

July 11 – September 15, 2012

Middling Reception: July 19

Closing Reception: September 13

On July 11, 2012 Laura Vitale will begin work on *White Sands*, as part of Recess's signature program, Session. Session invites artists to use Recess's public space as studio, exhibition venue and grounds for experimentation. For *White Sands*, Vitale will create a research laboratory for testing the audio-visual properties and material behaviors of gypsum plaster. Vitale will also work with collaborators and interested visitors to undertake these investigations through various methods of performance and recording.

The artist will develop parallel inquiries that intersect—conceptually and spatially—sometimes to the point of being indistinguishable. The first is an art historical and scientific investigation of gypsum; the second is a chaotic material exploration of Plaster of Paris. Her “findings” will navigate the tensions between systematic and subjective knowledge, between play and display.

In anticipation of her time at Recess, Vitale traveled to New Mexico's White Sands National Monument, which sits on the world's largest table of gypsum crystals. Within Recess, she will map her experience there by creating miniature replicas of the geology around White Sands National Monument. Photo, video, audio and other ephemera collected at White Sands will become source material for new experiments and conclusions.

When plaster is submerged in water, it creates resonant tones and rhythms that Vitale will amplify and modify with the use of an



underwater microphone. The artist will install a storefront recording booth to capture a confluence of human and plaster voices. Around the amassed White Sands material, the artist will arrange large tanks of water for use as a testing ground and a film shoot location. Vitale will employ tools and materials normally associated with research science, such as carbon dioxide, sound lenses, pipettes, hydrophones, and contact microphones. In an effort to locate this material and find its voice, the artist will enter a larger, less empirical field of sound and communication. In her own words, “Language is a technology for abstracting reality. Voice is not abstract.”

#### **About the Artist:**

Laura Vitale's work orients around sound, also utilizing video, drawing, photography, sculpture, and performance. She graduated with an MFA from Virginia Commonwealth University in May 2012, and holds a BA in Visual Art from Brown University, 2007. She has made commissioned installations and performances for WNYC and Issue Project Room, been a Van Lier Fellow at Harvestworks Digital Media Arts Center, and received a New York State Council on the Arts Individual Artist Grant. In fall of 2012, she will perform a New Programming Commission for Triple Canopy. In 2009, Vitale co-founded We Are Your Friends, a community choral group that celebrates the untrained voice.

For image requests or more information contact [info@recessactivities.org](mailto:info@recessactivities.org).

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