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**jevouspropose#7**  
**19 September – 9 November, 2019**

For jevouspropose#7 Francesca Gavin (curator, writer) proposes the artist Rebecca Kressley.

Choreomania is the name given to the outbreaks of compulsive and sometimes fatal dancing that gripped medieval Europe. Reports described people maniacally dancing for weeks - even months - until they in cases died. The earliest recorded instance from 1021, describes rebellious peasants defying the church and dancing until they were cursed by a priest to dance for a year. Other cases in the 14th century, have more of a plague-like reference where thousands of people hallucinated and compulsively danced until they destroyed and broke their bodies. These later incidents have been linked to ergot, a rye mould that induced LSD-like hallucinations.

Throughout history descriptions of these choreomaniacal epidemics portray victims as paganistic and primitive. However, the socio-economic and political contexts of these episodes has been often overlooked. Writers such as Kéline Gotman in her book *Choreomania: Dance and Disorder* and Silvia Federici in her radical, feminist rereading of witch hunts, have highlighted how the demonization of the peasant class and in particular women is intertwined with the rise of early modern capitalism and the desire to control, compartmentalise and resist rebellion. Dance mania is also connected to colonialist rhetoric and it is notable that the last recorded case of choreomania was in mid-19th century Madagascar.

Rebecca Kressley's exhibition of sculptures, drawings and sound pieces take inspiration from these historicised episodes to examine collective bodies, the legibility of movement, otherness and structures of oppression. She examines the legibility and illegibility of the body in movement. Her drawings, for example, are highly rendered versions of sculptural objects and materials, including the clay and latex she uses in her sculptures. However, there is also a lack of clarity here. In the artist's work, the reading or misreading of the body in movement is also a metaphor for the legibility of an art object or image. We do not clearly know how to read and interpret what we see. Here the obvious is problematised.

The sound piece is available on an iPhone which viewers can carry and listen to in the space. A limited edition zine exploring the ideas of the show has been created by Francesca Gavin for the exhibition launch. Gavin and Kressley will also be taking over the gallery Instagram over the run of the show.

Francesca Gavin

**Francesca Gavin**

Francesca Gavin has curated numerous shows in Paris, Oslo, Berlin, Stockholm, New York and London. She is the author of six books and is Art Editor of *Twin*, *Beauty Papers*, *Good Trouble* magazine and editor-at-large of *Kaleidoscope*. Alongside her monthly art radio show on NTS.live, she is currently working on major exhibition on Mushrooms opening in London this January. This is her first show in Zurich since co-curating *The Historical Exhibition of Manifesta11*. francescagavin.com

**Rebecca Kressley**

Rebecca Kressley received her BFA from the School of the Art Institute, Chicago, and her MFA from Slade, London. She has exhibited internationally, including at *Auto Italia* and *Tenderpixel* in London and *Experimental Sound Studio* in Chicago. She lives and works in Amsterdam. This is her first show after a seven year hiatus. rebeccakressley.com

**jevouspropose**

*jevouspropose* is a curatorial series by Sabina Kohler and accomplices.

Several times a year, *jevouspropose* invites a personality to propose an artist with a specific group of works. The works will be installed in the space of *jevouspropose*, celebrated with an opening and remain on view for a while. At the same time, the respective presentation is expanded and continued in virtual space: the proposer and the artist will have a chat, a visual ping-pong on the works and themes on display ([instagram.com/je\\_vous\\_propose](https://www.instagram.com/je_vous_propose))

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