5. EMILY MAST

Investigating the nuances that provide context, Emily Mast’s performances produce queries related to the problems of communication, comprehension, and semiotics. Simultaneously exemplifying the similarities and differences between subsidiaries of a given action or concept, Mast orchestrates hybrid experiences that ultimately question how frames of references are constructed. In 2012’s “Birdbrain,” the artist produced a stylized performance centered on the complications of communication, bringing together an ASL interpreter, an auctioneer, and a stutterer (among others) to epitomize her message. Similarly, “Never It’s Now Or” (2012) dealt with the fine distinctions of memory through a theatrical monologue, avant garde performance art, and a stand-up comedy routine—bringing to focus Mast’s interest in the gradation of cognizance and deference. Through her portrayals, we are challenged by how delicate those dividing lines can be.