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MEDIA/CALENDAR ALERT

***VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP HOSTS OPENING FOR
SARAH FRIEDLAND'S SOCIAL GUIDANCE INSTALLATION
– Opening Event May 9, Exhibit Open to Public May 9 - 23 –***



Still from "Drills" by Sarah Friedland, courtesy of the artist

WHAT: Visual Studies Workshop hosts an opening event and gallery hours for Sarah Friedland's *Social Guidance* installation. VSW Project Space Resident [Sarah Friedland](#) (New York, NY) is a filmmaker and choreographer working at the intersection of moving images and moving bodies. This engaging installation on four screens (HD video projection and CRT video monitors) focuses on the movements found in social guidance films and how they stage choreographies that attempt to mold, train, and make-up the social body. The installation also includes a display of film canisters, library cards and instructional booklets found in the original 16mm cans found in the VSW Film archive. Videos excerpted in the

installation will be available to view on the VSW website during the run of the exhibition.

Sarah Friedland is in residence at VSW for the month of May; she will be present at the May 9 opening event.

WHEN: Opening Event Thursday, May 9, 7-9pm
Installation open to public May 9-23, Monday through Friday, 10am - 6pm
Streaming at [Video Data Bank](#) throughout the month of May.

WHERE: Visual Studies Workshop, 31 Prince Street, Rochester, NY

REGISTER: Pay-what-you-choose; suggested \$10 donation. Free for VSW Members. [LINK](#)

ASL interpreters will be made available upon request at least two weeks before the event. Email accommodations@vsw.org with access questions.

EVENT DETAILS: *Social Guidance* pairs Sarah Friedland's *Movement Exercises Trilogy* with social guidance films and videos from the VSW archives. *Movement Exercises* deconstructs and revises the choreographic vocabularies of exercises practiced across home, work, and school spaces. The trilogy consists of three short films: *Home Exercises* (2017), *Drills* (2020), and *Trust Exercises* (2022). In making this trilogy, Friedland looked to social guidance and instructional films — from the home exercise video to safety instructionals — as moving image forms which stage choreographies that attempt to mold, train, and make-up the social body.

Her trilogy both emulates their structures, while arranging mutations and revisions of the found choreographies presented within them. Through choreographic deconstruction and revision, her trilogy asks: how else might we move together? Finding resonances between the found movements in VSW's archive and the choreographies performed within her trilogy, *Social Guidance's* four-channel installation considers the choreo-political work of exercises, drills, and instructions for American moving bodies, both past and present. While the top projection presents *Movement Exercises* in a loop, the bottom triptych of monitors displays fragments and full works from the VSW archive as footnotes which annotate the relationship between choreography and the work of the social guidance film and video.

In this exhibition, the term "Social Guidance" refers to moving images used to instruct individuals and communities in social behaviors encouraged or expected by the institutions, workplaces, schools, and nation state to which they "belong." With titles such as *Duck and Cover*, *Alone at Home*, and *Speaking Effectively: To One or One Thousand*, these films are designed to instruct audiences in supposedly beneficial or productive social practices, indexing the embodied

conventions and imagined futures of their times. Social guidance films and videos could be checked out of the library for instructional use in workplace and educational training. VSW's archive contains thousands of these titles, which were previously held by the Rochester Public Library and local universities. The film canisters still hold the traces of library cards, often accompanied by pamphlets and texts providing written guides and discussion questions to enhance lessons. Examples of these pamphlets line the back wall of the installation space. Like the source materials used by Friedland for the found movements performed in her films, these in-canister texts appear almost as movement scores for their reader-viewers to perform and emulate as they become progressively better social subjects.

About Sarah Friedland: Sarah Friedland is a filmmaker and choreographer working at the intersection of moving images and moving bodies. Her work has been presented in festivals and art spaces including the New York Film Festival, New Directors/New Films, Mubi, MoMA and the Performa19 Biennial. Sarah graduated from Brown University's department of Modern Culture and Media and started her career assisting filmmakers including Steve McQueen, Mike S. Ryan, and Kelly Reichardt. From 2021-2022, she was both a Pina Bausch Fellow for Choreography and a NYSCA/NYFA Fellow in Film/Video, and was named to Filmmaker Magazine's 25 New Faces of Independent Film in 2023. Her short film trilogy, *Movement Exercises*, is distributed by Video Data Bank.

www.motionandpictures.com

About Visual Studies Workshop: Visual Studies Workshop nurtures experimental and expansive approaches to photography and media arts, and builds community among artists and the public through exhibitions, publications and residencies. VSW was founded in 1969 in Rochester, NY by artist and curator Nathan Lyons (1930–2016), and became one of the earliest independent, not-for-profit, artist-run spaces in the country. More than 50 years later, the organization's mission is reflected in its core programs: VSW Salon, Project Space Artist Residencies, and VSW Press. In support of VSW programs, the organization holds photography and moving image research collections and an art library for artists, critics and the general public to explore, research and reuse. vsw.org

About Video Data Bank: VDB, a special collection at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and leading resource for video by and about contemporary artists, is pleased to host Friedland's *Movement Exercises* trilogy on their VDB TV streaming platform during the month of May. Sourced from its historically significant archives, this project provides free, online streaming access to curated programs of video and media art. More information about Friedland's work and its distribution can be found at www.vdb.org

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