

# Jennifer Elster

## 2018

Writer, director, performer, artist, activist and founder of *The Development*, the underground, multi-disciplined studio based in New York City. Elster's work offers a deep and direct awareness of the human condition and our current world crisis. She compulsively penetrates depth while both antagonizing and playing with the boundaries in film and mixed media, and has collaborated with such artists as the late David Bowie and Yoko Ono.

Most recently, Elster wrote a campaign in support of net neutrality with Gloria Steinem, and has been doing raw music and performance art at New York City locations, such as the New Museum (group show including performance art by Jonas Mekas), Catinca Tabacaru, Salon Stux West, and West Park. Her video art was exhibited in such galleries as Central Booking (group show including work by such artists as Carolee Schneemann and the late Kate Millett) and the New Museum in a show about death. Elster performs and hosts art happenings in her studio and private underground gallery, The Development Underground.



*UNKNOWN*, short film, New Museum (2017)

Elster's focus is primarily on justice in regard to racism and sexism, and the topics of security, net neutrality and the pending nuclear crisis are an ongoing focus in her life.

Using words, paper, canvases, photographs, audio, video and performance art, Elster explored the severity of reality in her public art show, *The Retrospective of an Extroverted Recluse* in May 2016. Culled from a large body of work amassed over Elster's life, the show revealed the arc in Elster's thinking, and artwork throughout and up until WARFARE, which spoke directly to and called out, in advance, the overwhelming nuclear threat that has come to exist.



*WARFARE*, photograph series, *The Retrospective of an Extroverted Recluse* show (2016)

“Like most of us, I am worried about the future of this country and the world. In these divided times, we need to come together even more so. Each one of us has the power to create a better world. Person by person. Individually and collectively. We can have an impact. We shouldn't allow anger and hate to dominate this beautiful planet. It can get so much worse if we convince ourselves that our own footprint will not make a difference.”

- Jennifer Elster, 2016



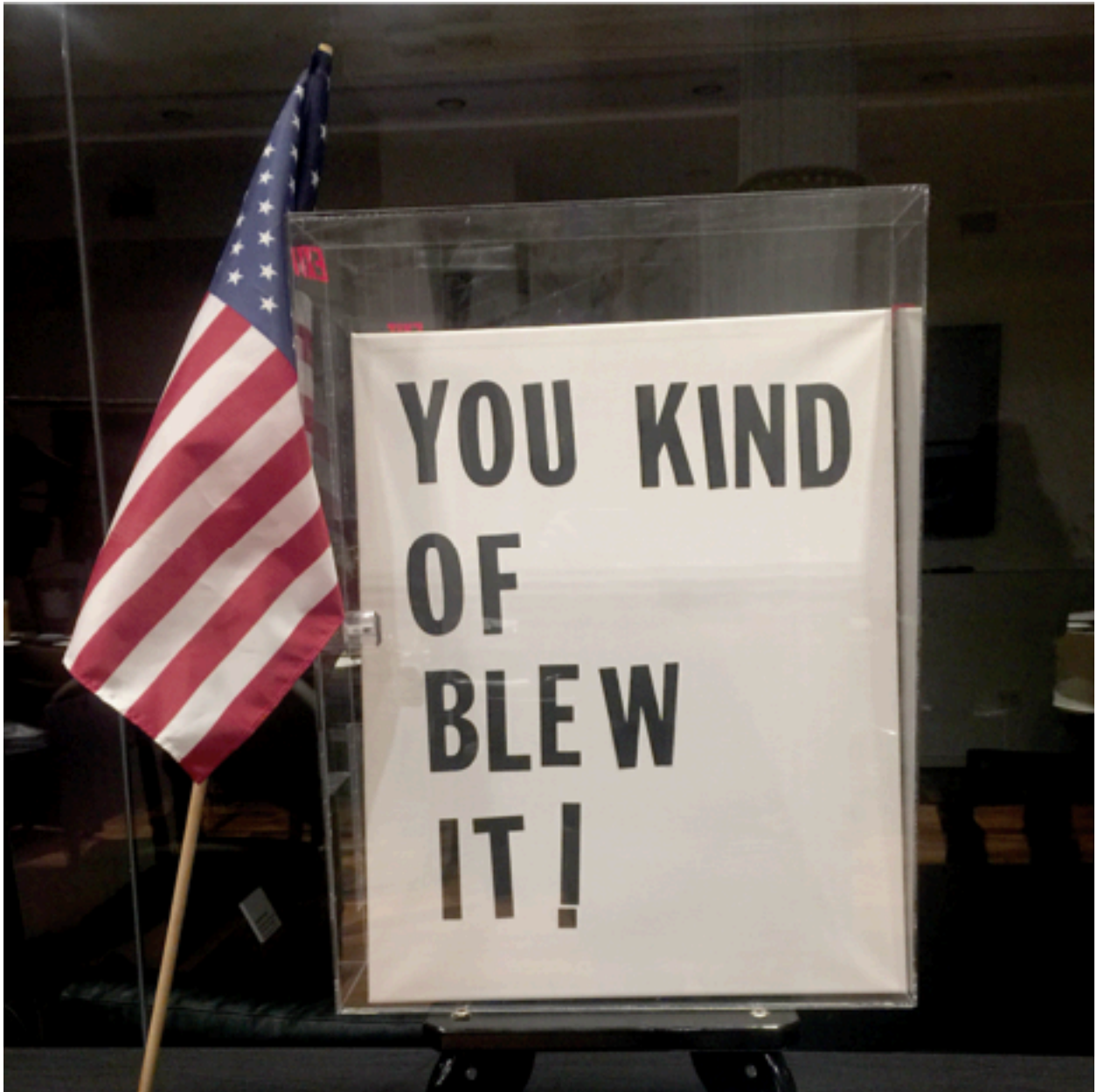
*CEMETERY*, performed live at the New Museum (2017)

One of Elster's current projects is finishing her upcoming film series entitled *...IN THE WOODS*, which she wrote, directed and filmed over the course of ten years. Elster spent years of deep, and, at times, bizarre excavation into the recesses of her mind and the minds of her subjects, analyzing the depths of human nature. The series includes such subjects as Terrence Howard, Temple Grandin, the late Glenn O'Brien, Alan Cumming, Will Shortz, Rufus Wainwright, Aimee Mullins, Questlove and many others. Elster wrote lyrics to a songscape for the film series, which Yoko Ono performed.

Elster's early beginnings included writing and directing narrative and experimental films that premiered at such festivals as Tribeca and Woodstock, and opened at the Village East. Her first art show was at The Shooting Gallery in NYC. In her early beginnings, she styled and conceptualized characters with and for the late David Bowie and many others.

Elster is a native New Yorker who grew up in a very dangerous part of the city and in the NYC underground art scene. She has written and made art obsessively her entire life, and often without stopping to share. Elster went public in May of 2016 as both a guttural and maternal reaction to the utter chaos in the world.

Elster's solo exhibition, *The Wake the F\*ck Up Show*, was on view at the Sign and Symbols gallery from October 26th to November 15th, 2018. She is also organizing a forward-thinking and peaceful protest under the banner, "Nonpartisan Peace".



...And Then Some, conceptual art, *The Retrospective of an Extroverted Recluse* (2016)

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November 19, 2018