eleven

September – October 2021

performing arts | **WUK**

Translations for this brochure.

Stadt
Wien   Bundeskanzleramt

Bingewatching WUK performing arts

Esther Holland–Merten and Ulli Koch

The past many months have been a challenge. The pandemic has changed the world. In that solitary confinement in which we found ourselves, over and over, it was only digital space which could guarantee any kind of social interaction. We were able to meet there, to converse there, to keep up with each other, and not to be lost to each other. The production of art, too, lived on in that space, made itself available to people. And all of a sudden artistic enterprises became visible, which under other circumstances might have drawn scant attention.

What became extremely clear was how, more than any other, the independent arts sector was able to react with agility to the situation... because it wanted to, and because it could. The question coming at us from all sides now – when will we be able to do "normal" art again? – is not one that WUK performing arts, as an institution dedicated to contemporary and experimental art, is asking itself. Because the question suggests that we have changed something in the past months, and that that change should now be reversed. But we have changed nothing. We never had a single theme to our programme. The artists who work with us have never had a single aesthetic. Their tools were never one-dimensional.

The artistic formats which became visible as a result of the absence of events with an audience that was physically present are

not new formats. They are the continuation of a development which has been relentlessly propelled to the fore in the independent performing arts over the past ten years. These are formats which from the start were conceived of and staged not only as taking place in the physical presence of an audience, but also as hybrids, or as formats that could be realised in the pure digital/virtual/locationless world. At the same time, and despite all the limitations, the pandemic has also opened doors to new approaches in the field of performance art – doors through which we at WUK performing arts have stepped more swiftly than we could ever have imagined.

#Onlinedates

From a chronological perspective, the first door we opened at WUK performing arts was that which lead to performance art in the form of custom-produced video. This includes the cutting together of pre-existing productions or of their filmed documentation, subsequent review, or the commissioned work of artists. Hence early in 2020, tagged as #Onlinedates, WUK performing arts was able, for example, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Vienna-based dance company Saskia Hölbling | DANS.KIAS with an assembly of its productions; or indeed was able to ask the artists Moritz Majce and Sandra Man for a short film about their project "CHORA," which had actually managed to have an opening night in Berlin. On social media channels meanwhile WUK performing arts was able to show videos as "watch parties" in our weekly programme – for instance that of the artist Otmar Wagner, who recorded, film essay style, his thoughts on international Labour Day, May 1; or of the artist Susanne Schuda, who translated to the digital world her Late Night Group Therapy format, a systemic approach to the larger questions of our age, featuring a range of guests. Then came a high point: the first Live-Stream WUK performing arts was able to stage. Here the artist Barbis Ruder recreated her "How to go viral" show and truly opened the live-streaming door, which at the time we though we might only have to pass through once. But things turned out differently.

Digital? Let's give it a shot!

Following the announcement of a new lockdown beginning from November 2020, which included a ban on events with live audiences, WUK performing arts began closely collaborative discussions with our artists about possible ways to bring our planned projects to life. The artistic collective "saft" decided in cooperation with Okto TV to stage a live-stream in our main auditorium of their "burning tissues" production, in which the audience was asked to donate text which was then woven live into the performance. Also staged as a live-stream was Arne Mannott's "circus" production, a performative and installationary deconstruction of the circus skill of juggling. With the help of PC-CC*, the Politically Correct Comedy Club, WUK performing arts was able to pass through a further door, undertaking a comedy evening entirely on Zoom.

That performance art works on Zoom was also demonstrated by the Berlin-based artists collective "Interrobang" with their production "Familiodrom," in the course of whose performance spectators are jointly invited via Zoom, by means of a digital voting tool, to bring up and educate a child, and which featured three separate audiences from the three collaborating partner venues, the sophiensæle Berlin, Puppet Theatre Festival Erlangen, and WUK performing arts Vienna. A further door was opened by Late Night Group Therapy, recorded in the Project Room in the presence of a professional audience, and later broadcast by Okto TV, and then broadcast again by Okto TV on repeat at various times of the day for a further four weeks, as a result of the lively debate the show sparked in the Austrian press.

The artist Thomas Jelinek performed his Test.Tube.Laboratory 03 "Intelligence" show, a performative media-orientated discourse which incorporated not only pre-recorded contributions, but live hook-ups on the night and an actively attended livechat session in the same show. Then there was the excitement of the experimental musical theatre production "Geiseloper" (The Hostage Opera), staged on the Spatial Chat platform, a tool which allowed

the audience to visit the performance as avatars, to shape the opera participatively, singing along, as it were, to visit a virtual exhibition, and to converse with the performers. The collective OutOfTheBox then showed us how you set about building virtual worlds, organising a series of events under the title "Breakdown", in which they initiated, in live tutorials, the exchange and transfer of information to help create new digital communities. And the artist collective The Loose Collective rounded off the WUK performing arts season in dazzling style, performing their production "On Earth Part III" live in the auditorium, simultaneously streaming it live on the internet, and at the same time transmitting it via screens in the courtyard of the WUK for audiences to experience there.

Season 20??

Whether hybrid events will now be the future is difficult to judge at the present time. But it is a fact that these digital offerings have raised the visibility of our programme. They brought increased international recognition for local and national artists and their productions. They were able to bring us to the attention of a new audience. And they brought us the gift of new international partners.

These doors, relentlessly opened one after the other over the course of the past many months by WUK performing arts, have become part of the tried and tested core practice of many progressive institutions in recent years. This practice did not require some sort of breakthrough – merely a reallocation of resources and a commitment to the digital present. It is only to be regretted that what has become clear is that, now as in the past, these little progressive institutions with their digital formats – evolved over many years already – have achieved all too little visibility. The Lichthof Theater in Hamburg has opened its foyer premises on a virtual basis 24 hours a day since the start of the pandemic in an effort to enable, at any time, an exchange between spectators, or some other kind of social get-together. The Schaubude in Berlin has been bringing

together artists from the performing, visual and digital domains for years, to give them a chance to work together in onsite residencies. We only hope they gain greater recognition in the future for their pioneering spirit.

For us, art in digital or virtual spaces is not some emergency programme for times of crisis. Rather, such art explodes analog space and invites us on a journey which can take us far beyond the here and now. It makes available new, as-yet-unimagined spaces, it seduces us to dissolve the preconceptions people have of each other. It opens new vistas, it springs surprises. In so doing, digital artistic expression is researching its own artistic, social and regional limits and attempts to break through them in its own special way. We shall continue this journey. Forever. Digital and analog together.

Content

SOFTWARE IS ART.

OutOfTheBox

The independent media and performance group OutOfTheBox consists of the dramaturg Susanne Schuster and the media artist Ricardo Gehn. Since 2017 we have been exploring the tension between performance, media art and digital culture. With the help of our own software and hardware, we design speculative spaces of experience in which participants can test out scenarios of a digitized society. In our artistic exploration of digital technologies and performative art, modes of experience such as collaboration, interaction, and audience co-creation are a core element. In addition to our artistic work, we are committed to digital participation in art and socio-culture through consulting, jury activities and workshops in the field of digitality and theater.

BREAKDOWN, 2021: Corona drives us on the Internet, turns theater professionals into streamers and artists into content creators. With our program series "BREAKDOWN" we enable exchange and knowledge transfer in live tutorials in order to form new communities of the digital: Communities that are not defined by visiting representative buildings, but by shared knowledge. Communities that include creators, artists and digital natives. People who, instead of applauding, prefer to like and share, follow a "Twitch" stream together, exchange code or just chat. We invite guests from media art, game design and performative art to open the black box of their work. Based on a specific example,

digital tools, methods for workflow and design goals are revealed, challenges and inspirations are shared. At the interface of tutorial, showcase and Q&A, "BREAKDOWN" enables low-threshold access to digital art and initiates new synergies between networks from culture and technology.

LAGERKOLLER, 2020: Inventory! The performance collective Frl. Wunder AG stands in the material warehouse, between stage sets and props from 16 years of joint work. Which objects tell the story of the collective? As part of a commissioned work, we take an artistic outside look at the Frl. Wunder AG warehouse, at the collective, its legacy and its future. The result is a walk-through virtual tour in which viewers become players who move through the collective memory space - the warehouse - of Frl. Wunder AG. They dig up anecdotes and memories and ultimately decide for themselves what should remain part of the history of this performance collective. Playable auf: https://outofthebox.itch.io/lagerkoller.

UNIBAS, 2020: When dealing with topics of digitization, it is always noticeable that in the media representation, it is primarily men who are named as creators of the digital future: Steve Jobs, Alan Turing, Bill Gates, Elon Musk - names that everyone knows because they made history with their inventions. At the same time, they shape our current image of technology and computer science in such a way that female actors in the tech world are rarely discussed. The project „Unbias" addresses the (in)visibility of contemporary women in technology and science. Based on conversations with 10 women, we designed a mini-game in which players collect personal narratives, biographies and visions for digital futures of women in STEM professions within abstract landscapes. In a browser game, players move through abstract landscapes, can change shape and collect interviews. Playable on https://outofthebox.itch.io/unbias

BINARY VILLAGE, 2019: The project „Binary Village - The Digital Village" addresses the realities of life in rural areas since the time of reunification and the historical division of East and West Germany. For this purpose, we collected voices from citizens of the former border region in the Harz Mountains: The result is a dynamic archive of personal stories, experiences and visions of the future that unites the perspectives from East and West Germany and brings them together in an interactive exhibition. With the help of proprietary software, the many-voiced discourse was bundled and made audible in an interactive installation. Participants have direct access to the content and its montage within the exhibition, so that they can create their own „digital village" existing for that moment.

MaxEmpathy++, 2019: Anyone who can generate empathy can position themselves in public life, spread ideas, and market products. Especially on digital platforms, so-called "influencers" are celebrating worldwide success by accumulating followers. With the steadily growing automation and robotization of all areas of life, the much-imagined utopia of the abolition of work is coming within reach: The discussions about artificial intelligences and Industry 4.0 already show that many occupational fields and economic contexts are undergoing a profound transformation. In the performative scenario "MaxEmpathy++" we speculate about alternative occupational fields: by means of a self-developed software we simulate a clickworking experience for the participants and test a novel model of work.

OutOfTheBox designs speculative software and performative spaces of experience and invites the audience to speculate with them about digital futures. With the first two parts of their "Breakdown" program series, they were guests in the WUK performing arts program in spring 2021. The last part of their series, "Breakdown # 3", will take place online again in September 2021 via Zoom.

La forza della medusa. Or: The rotten Catharsis

Christina Rauchbauer

Just got back from the beach. Since then a commotion has taken root deep in the fat folds of my spaghetti-bump belly, quaking:

Television sets, the shapes of bodies, stooping spines; bodies swaying clumsily from side to side across the sand, as a youthful life guard stands ready to ponderous overweight holidaymakers.

Collective moaning about the weather drowns out the drone of the air conditioner and the rushing sea. A frosty atmosphere at forty degrees Celsius. Medusas, jellyfish, are being grabbed by their heads and thrown onto the shore, caught in nets, kept in buckets meant for sand castles. One after the other. Suffocating side by side.

Kids wait for their dinner, smartphone in hand, while the television fills their ears with noise. Their little bodies rebel: they jerk, they stamp, they jump, they complain, they demonstrate there is still some life remaining. They surface through the dullness, they get excited, they transmit loud distress signals of energy-intensive effort.

Italians prefer to watch the European football by themselves, on the little TV sets in bungalow heaven, rather than together in the square – something has gone rotten in the cathartic state of togetherness!

Meanwhile the water keeps on getting warmer, including the water in plastic bottles, and swarms of jellyfish form in solidarity in the sea. They are fighting back. 70-year-old ladies finally get divorced and throw themselves into life. The voices of old people quake collectively, full of anger – they want to be seen. Adolescent girls celebrate themselves noisily, sniffing their own panties, which still smell of whipped cream fights after the fifth wash. Football-playing calves are burned, sweating together, kicking in fury against the fence of the soccer cage.

I enjoy the prickle and the itch of the jellyfish on my body in the water. They remind me to fight back, to make room for each other, and to scratch each other's backs.

This is the first time a production by artist **Christina Rauchbauer** has appeared as part of the programme of WUK performing arts. A cooperation with WUK Kinderkultur (WUK Childrens' Culture), her work "Olé olé olé. An Ode to the Cage" will be shown in various football cages in Vienna. In her work, the artists looks for collective adventure areas that inspire the self-empowerment of artistic practice and thinking, and which sketch social questions in a playful way.

Politisch korrekte Comedy – kann das wirklich komisch sein?

Denice Bourbon

Sie machen also politisch korrekte Comedy; kann das wirklich komisch sein?
Nein, kann es nicht. Es ist ganz und gar nicht komisch. Wir machen eine 140 Minuten lange Show, und keiner im Publikum lacht ein einziges Mal. Uns ist es wichtiger, moralische Reden zu schwingen. Bei diesem Comedy Club geht es nicht um Unterhaltung, um das Vereint-Sein durch Lachen, um Humor für alle. Es geht um gender-besessene, Feminazi- und Gutmensch-Propaganda. Außerdem weiß ja jeder, dass es wissenschaftlich erwiesen ist, dass man nur WIRKLICH komisch sein kann, wenn man gegen Leute tritt, die auf der Priviliegienleiter unter einem stehen. Das nennt man „provokativ sein".

Handelt es sich nicht um Zensur, wenn man einen sogenannte_n "Sensitivity Reader" einsetzt, die_der die Skripte vorher durchgeht, um auf möglicherweise anstößige Inhalte hinzuweisen?
Ja, absolut! Es ist das verdammte Recht jeder_s Künstler_in, ihre_seine Bühnenzeit und Stimme zu nutzen, um unterdrückte Gruppen zu diskriminieren und auf ihre Kosten billige Witze zu machen. Jeder hat das Recht, Arschloch zu sein und Hass und Vorurteile im Namen der Unterhaltung zu verbreiten! Man hält der Gesellschaft ja so bloß den Spiegel vor. Wenn man (als weiße Person) beispielsweise rassistische Beleidigungen verwendet, dann ist das ein exzellenter Weg, um zu ver-

deutlichen, wie rassistisch die Gesellschaft ist, wissen Sie. Die (weißen) Leute im Publikum, die lachen, wenn das N-Wort verwendet wird, gehen nach Hause und denken über ihr Verhalten nach. Man will diese (weißen) Stimmen mundtot machen und das sollte verboten werden! Cancel Culture!

Viele Ihrer Performer_innen machen sich lustig über heterosexuelle Cis-Männer; ist das nicht umgekehrter Sexismus und Heterophobie?
Absolut! Seit PCCC* 2017 gestartet ist, ließ sich eine Zunahme der Gewalt gegen Männer verzeichnen. Sowohl körperlich als auch finanziell. Der umgekehrte Rassismus, den man in unseren Shows erleben kann, hat zu schrecklichen Tragödien geführt, zum Beispiel sehen wir eine Arbeitslosen-Rate von 95% bei den männlichen Comedians, deren Spezialität homophobe und transphobe Witze sind. Außerdem hat die Hetererosexualität abgenommen, seit ich damals erklärt habe, dass ich mich nicht extra bemühen werde, einem Hetero-Publikum queere Codes zu erklären. Es stellte sich heraus, dass

danach eine Menge Leute ihre Sexualität und Leidenschaften verändert haben, um sich nicht ausgeschlossen zu fühlen.

Jetzt wo Sie, Denice Bourbon, nicht mehr mit einem männlichen Co-Moderator zusammenarbeiten und beschlossen haben, die Show ganz mutterseelenalleine zu machen, sind Sie nicht beunruhigt, dass Sie das schwule männliche Publikum verlieren könnten? Mit wem sollen die sich jetzt identifizieren?
Ja, das beunruhigt mich. Stimmt. Ich würde mir so sehr wünschen, es gäbe eine sich als weiblich identifizierende Comedian-Göttin, mit der die Schwulen sich identifizieren könnten, die sie lieben und von der sie sich inspirieren lassen könnten. Jemand wie Bette Midler, Maragret Cho, Absolutely Fabulous, Tiffany Haddish, die Golden Girls … Bis dahin werde ich wohl einfach durchhalten und die Witze reduzieren müssen, die mir meine Genitalien und/oder der Gender-Artikulation eingeben.

Denice Bourbon
Denice Bourbon ist Mitbegründerin, Organisatorin und Moderatorin von PCCC*, dem politisch korrekten Comedy Club. PCCC* wird von Queers für Queers gemacht, aber jede*r mit einem gutem Sinn für Humor ist absolut und von mehr als ganzem Herzen eingeladen, mit uns zu lachen, wenn wir nach oben austeilen, aber nie nach unten treten. Sie hat den Verdacht, dass eine Menge Leute nicht richtig verstehen, was politisch korrekt eigentlich bedeutet. Hier etwas Hilfe dahingehend auf Englisch und auf Deutsch. Bitteschön:

"Political correctness: the avoidance of forms of expression or action that are perceived to exclude, marginalize or insult groups of people who are socially disadvantaged or discriminated against".

„Political Correctness: Einstellung, die alle Ausdrucksweisen und Handlungen ablehnt, durch die jemand aufgrund seiner ethnischen Herkunft, seines Geschlechts, seiner Zugehörigkeit zu einer bestimmten sozialen Schicht, seiner körperlichen oder geistigen Behinderung oder sexuellen Neigung diskriminiert wird."

Like Nose, like Art!

Super Nase & Co

Trademark, zone of expressiveness, projection surface, barometer of lies... the Nose has long been misunderstood. Given its prominent position on people's heads, it should in reality be revered as an "organ of thought." The Nose is the joy of Being; it gets all fired up for any old shit. It is happy about every new synapse.. inhale, exhale, inhale, exhale... The Nose is far more than an organ, it is our embodiment in the world, the intense representation of our intents. Wherever we go, the Nose is always a nose ahead. It bleeds, it is straight, it is crooked, it is fragile, it is broken. The Nose is the unappreciated emblem of lust.

Before humankind was aware of Art, it was aware of its Nose. Awareness of the Nose was the first art. Recognition by means of the Nose implies the creation of something that goes beyond the status quo. The Nose attempts to react to the situation in which we find ourselves by making use of a new, critical vocabulary. A new situation of this kind automatically demands other forms of description and of interaction with it. And when we blow our Noses, the suspicion arises that we stand then at the pinnacle of madness in the Age of Reason.

But who is this Nose of whom we speak in the present instance? We are dealing here with an artistic Doppelganger – individual and singular, yet simultaneously collective.

One, two, three.. seven, eight.. and so on, all of them fantastic... their relationship to Art is to be understood as a political statement, and their efforts not simply to be thought of as an exercise in criticism. Or then again not.

Super Nase & Co are not a reflection of any reality, for they are the reality of this reflection. The Doublegangers of the Arts bring forth the ambiguous and the irrational, for where there is no forgery, there can be no original either. They know neither impediment nor boundaries, for nothing is permanent in this world. Joy itself begins after only a minute to fade. And after two minutes it is weaker still – until in the end it is swallowed up by our prosaic day-to-day frame of mind, like the gradual coalescence of a pebble's splash into the unruffled surface of the water.
Thank God's they exist.

Super Nase & Co, the former support act of the collective God's Entertainment, has finally stepped out of the shadow of its mentors. With SUPERNOSEUM, Super Nase & Co have built a new and self-created translation of the museum format and its design, a space in which in co-production with WUK performing arts, existing and specially developed works will be shown over the course of 10 days in September.

Bears in the Park.

Eine neue künstlerische Initiative im Wiener 10. Bezirk

Unser Hauptanliegen ist es, die künstlerische Nachwuchs-Szene in Wien zu fördern, zu bereichern, zu unterstützen, zu schützen und zu pflegen.

Durch unterschiedliche Programme und Kollaborationen mit Wiener Institutionen wie brut Wien, WUK performing arts und ImpulsTanz geben wir der Entwicklung junger Künstler:innen Raum. Das heißt, wir bieten mehrwöchige Residenzen in unseren Studios, Beratung in künstlerischen und administrativen / produktionstechnischen Belangen, technische Workshops und bringen Premieren von etwa vier Produktionen im Jahr heraus. Das ist das Huggy Bears Mentoring- / Residenz- / Wissenstransferprogramm.

Wir präsentieren außerdem eine Reihe von Arbeiten unter dem Titel "Quality Street" in den Fenstern unserer Studios im Kempelenpark; eine großartige Gelegenheit für die lokale, in Wien ansässige Szene, Performances in und vor unseren Studios zu erleben. Die Diversität der künstlerischen Arbeiten bringt unterschiedliche Expertise und Sensitivität zusammen - und vor allem auch ein diverses Publikum.

Zu guter Letzt laden wir die Künstler:innen zwei Tage dazu ein, ihre Kunstpraxis zu vertiefen, indem sie unsere Räume komplett

übernehmen. "Focus" soll eine privilegierte Zeitspanne sein, in der neue Experimente gemacht, potentielle Kollaborations-Partner:innen besser kennengelernt, Sachen ausprobiert und Akademiker:innen zu aktuell relevanten Themen eingeladen werden können.

Und natürlich hosten wir in allen unseren Studios unterschiedliche Projekte aus der Performance-Szene (Tanz, Theater, Musik, Fotografie, Performance...) und bieten regelmässiges Training an.

Die Initiative wurde entwickelt von **Caro Madl** und **Philippe Riéra**.

Die Huggy Bears Künstler:innen 2021 sind **maria mercedes, PUC Collective, Frida Robles und Laura Stoll.**

maria mercedes: Notizen zwischen Mai 2020 und August 2021

2 Bücher, die den Entstehungsprozess begleitet haben:
"The Cultural Politics of Emotions" ("Emotion als kulturelle Praxis") von Sara Ahmed und "The Crying Book" ("Weinen") von Heather Christle.

Sara Ahmed ist eine britisch-australische Wissenschaftlerin / Autorin, die im Bereich der feministischen und queeren Theorie forscht. Sie beschäftigt sich mit dem Verhältnis von Emotionen und Körpern und mit der Frage, wie Emotionen das Innere und auch das Äußere von Körpern formen. Und wie sind wiederum Körper und ihre Umwelt miteinander verknüpft? (Zum Beispiel durch Communities, soziale Beziehungen, die Nation.) Sie argumentiert, dass Emotionen als kulturelle Praxis etwas sein können, dass Körper sowohl inkludiert als auch exkludiert.

Heather Christle schreibt Lyrik. "Weinen" ist ihr erstes Sachbuch. Es ist eine Erforschung der Tränen. Warum wir weinen und wie.

Sie verwebt persönliche Geschichten über Geburt und Trauer und andere Fakten über Tränen mit einer eher wissenschaftlichen Herangehensweise.

Justin Timberlake: cry me a river
dem Song wohnt ein sehnsuchtsvoller Tanz inne
Haare Haare Haare
als Maske
versteckt
Sehnsucht übersetzt als Sich-Erreichen und Niedersinken Kann langsam sein / gedehnt / mit Akzent Wähle 10 Lieblingsposen
Geh in eine Pose und gib dem Ganzen eine persönliche Note
Dann geh in die nächste Pose
In manchen Posen kannst du länger verweilen
Alles zusammenfügen

SCORE 2
Verbinde einige der 20 Posen in anderer Reihenfolge.
Bilde 1 kurze Phrase
disassemble the poses, piece them together, im Raum

STIMMAUFNAHME

pose
put on a pose, try it on
one or more
pause
rhythm relating to the voice recording

Sich vorwärts bewegen etc.

Emotionale Arbeit, braid hair Interweave
Wait, weight
helmet?

Tragen und Sorge tragen für SCORE
Körper werden durch den Raum transportiert

Hindernisse schaffen (obstacles) SCORE
Diesen Traum re-enacten

Warum tue ich, was ich tue?....
Vortrag von Alice Chauchat Tanzen mit scores, um Material zu entwickeln
Togethering: relationale / Tanz- / Praxis
Sich dazu verpflichten, nichts zu wissen, zuzuhören, achtsam zu sein
Den / die Tänzer:in vom Tanz trennen

Der / die Tänzer:in ist nicht der Tanz Tänze versammeln, Szenen herausbilden

Beziehung:
Die Bedingung, dass da 2 menschliche Körper sind Schafft einen Raum des Unterschieds.
Verschiedenheit (alterity)
Uns selbst im Nicht-Wissen positionieren

Analytical approach? Expose yourself to situations Onion – tears Schönheitsmaske

Catharsis: Letting out emotions shaking them off

Score:
-sehr nah aneinander rangehen
-Augenkontakt suchen und wegdrehen
-zusammenstoßen sich dann eindrehen
-sich gegen den anderen Körper pressen
-intensiviertes Empfinden deines eigenen Körpers durch die Oberfläche...fokussieren- die Position einnehmen, die das Gegenüber vorher im Raum eingenommen hat

monologue, dialogue

stanza, paragraphs
verse, lines
metre, rhyme as emphasis pattern, interlock everything at the end

hybrid texts
Lyrik, Epik, dramatische folk ballad, art ballad Be mysterious without being mystic

PUC Collective: Das Jahr des Marinierens

Man sagt, dass die Gegenwart zwischen den Frequenzen der Vergangenheit und der Zukunft angesiedelt ist. Unsere Arbeit befindet sich genau in diesem Spannungsfeld – wir reflektieren das Jahr der künstlerischen Residenz, das hinter uns liegt, und prognostizieren unsere Erwartungen für das, was morgen kommen wird.

Während ich diesen Text schreibe, 43 Tage vor unserer Premiere, verspüre ich eine Mischung aus freudiger Erregung und Verunsicherung. Das Jahr bei den Huggy Bears kam mir vor wie ein langer Mariniervorgang, bei dem jeder Tag, jede Probe, jedes Feedback, jeder gelesene Text und jedes Gespräch dem Gericht, das wir zubereiten, eine Gewürznote hinzugefügt hat.

Konfrontiert mit der Aufgabe, unsere Arbeit mithilfe dieses Textes zugänglich zu machen, habe ich mich entschieden, ästhetische und theoretische Strategien für die Kurator:innen aufzusparen und mit dem breiteren Publikum stattdessen die subjektiven und persönlichen Erfahrungen zu teilen, die wir beim Entstehen unserer Arbeit gemacht haben.

Etwas Zucker: Unser Kollektiv existiert seit 2017, und obwohl wir relativ erfolgreich waren mit unseren Kreationen, hatten wir nie das Gefühl, in der Wiener Szene akzeptiert zu sein und dort hinzugehören, bis zum Mai 2020, als uns die Huggy Bears-Jury ihr Vertrauen schenkte und unser Team für das diesjährige Residenz-Programm auswählte.

Etwas Bitteres: Als wir diesen "Wind unter unseren Segeln" verspürten, entschlossen wir uns, bei der Stadt Wien einen Förder-

antrag zu stellen. Die Vorbereitung der dazu nötigen Unterlagen dauerte etwa einen Monat, das Warten – etwa vier Monate, dann endlich kam die Antwort: das große Fiasko, es nicht mal in die 2. Runde geschafft zu haben. Irgendwann werden wir mal eine Liste aller Institutionen zusammenstellen, die uns abgelehnt haben. Das wäre wohl eine etwas realistischere Illustration unseres Weges.

Die richtige Zeit im Kühlschrank: Genau als unsere Residenz begann, begann auch der Lockdown. Das und eine Kombination anderer Faktoren führte dazu, dass wir viele Stunden alleine im Studio verbrachten und mit einer großen Bandbreite an Dinge experimentierten, die es nicht in die Arbeit schaffen werden. Dennoch hat das extrem dabei geholfen, Entscheidungen über Ästhetik und Fokus unserer Arbeit zu fällen.

Auf geht's: Die Arbeit beschäftigt sich mit der Stellung der Frau in einer zeitgenössischen, kapitalistischen Gesellschaft und verhandelt die Spannungen zwischen dem Internen und dem Externen. In unserer Arbeit wird ein Subjekt nicht in Körper und Seele geteilt, sondern wir verschreiben uns der Beschäftigung mit einem feministischen, non-binären Subjekt.

Viel Salz: Blut, Schweiß und Tränen sind in diese Arbeit geflossen. Kleiner Scherz. Aber im Ernst, wir haben viel geschwitzt bei der physischen Beschäftigung mit unserer Recherche, wir haben ein bisschen geweint, wegen der Anspannung, dem Druck und der Verunsicherung, die einhergehen mit der Entstehung einer Arbeit. Und etwas Blut wurde dann bei der Herstellung unserer Kostüme und des Bühnenbilds auch noch vergossen (aber das war echt ein Unfall).

Und jetzt, liebes Tagebuch, liebes Publikum, liebe Menschen, die diesen Text lesen, freuen wir uns auf unsere baldigen Begegnungen. Wir hoffen, dass wir euch zu einer Erfahrung verhelfen können, vielleicht zu einer schmerzhaften, vielleicht zu einer unterhaltsamen. Wir hoffen, damit alle Schichten eures verkörperlichten Subjekts zu erreichen.

Hochachtungsvoll,
Euer PUC Collective

Frida Robles: November 7, 2020

Frida: Mir kam die Idee mit dem dunklen Raum als ich (bei der Recherche zu etwas anderem) einen Text über Dunkelheit las. Also, jenseits einer ästhetischen Spielerei mit der visuellen Wahrnehmung, sondern eher um durch die Dunkelheit etwas aufzumachen, einen Raum der Möglichkeiten zu schaffen, der in dieser Zeit der Einschränkungen so extrem nötig ist. Wahlmöglichkeiten. Ja. Das ist ein Zitat von diesem Philosophen (André Lepecki, Anm.d. Red.), der sich mit Performance Art beschäftigt, er hat ein ganzes Essay über Dunkelheit geschrieben. Hinterfragt die Idee der Aufklärung, bei der Erkenntnis immer aus Licht geschaffen wird, aus einer ganz rationalen Perspektive. Ein eher wissenschaftshistorischer Kontext. Ich denke aber, es ist auch interessant, das mit Psychologie und Psychoanalyse zu verbinden. Besonders, wenn es um diese Verbindung von "Licht" und "Aufklärung" geht. "Singularities" ("Singularitäten"). So heißt das Buch.

Markus: Dunkelheit, wir kennen die Dunkelheit gar nicht mehr. Wir kennen sie nicht mehr richtig, weil wir die elektrischen Lichter der Stadt haben und alles die ganze Zeit beleuchtet ist. Wer in der Stadt lebt, weiß gar nicht, wie die Sterne aussehen. Würde man in der Wüste leben, wäre das etwas anderes.
Oder.
Wo wir gerade bei dunklen Nächten ohne Elektrizität und Sterne sind. Wenn es bewölkt ist, ist die Nacht auch richtig dunkel. Aber aus dem echten Leben kennt man das nicht.

Frida: Warst du je an so einem Ort?

Markus: Wahrscheinlich. Ich bin nicht sicher. In einer Höhle. Ja. Vielleicht. Das könnte es vielleicht sein. Irgendwelche Erfahrungen mit Dunkelheit gab es da schon.

Frida: Ich erinnere mich, wie ich mal in Peru im Dschungel war, in einem Kanu, es war bewölkt. Ich konnte meine Hand nicht sehen. Direkt vor meinen Augen. Da war einfach nichts. Es war irgendwie ein schöner Moment. Definitiv.

Markus: Ja. Aber es ist alles auch ein bisschen unheimlich, oder? Beängstigend sogar, wenn man nichts sieht.

Frida: Gut, ich war nicht alleine. Da war so ein Typ dabei, der war völlig an die Dunkelheit gewöhnt. Wir paddelten nachts den Fluss entlang. Und dann, ab einem gewissen Punkt, sahen wir gar nichts mehr. Okay? Und er sagte, da ist ein Alligator. "Ich kann die Augen sehen", sagte er, okay? Wir konnten nichts erkennen. Und dann leuchtete er das Tier mit seiner Taschenlampe an. Ja. Ich hatte keine Angst.

Markus: Im Dunkeln, ja? Ist der Text von einem Künstler geschrieben worden? Ist er Performer?

Frida: Er ist ein großer Philosoph. Und ich wollte das gerne irgendwie teilen. Wie man der Stimme mehr Bedeutung geben kann. Und ich weiß, ein anderer Teil von mir hat Angst davor, auf einer Bühne zu stehen. Nein, ich verrate da zu viel (von mir?), und ich habe keine Bühnenerfahrung.

Markus: Nein?

Frida: Wenn ich Performances gemacht habe, dann im öffentlichen Raum. Ich fühle mich da viel geschützter.
Vielleicht etwas Neues. Ein Solo-Ding oder so. Wenn es nicht so ist wie so ein Solo-Performance-Ding. Aber ja...

Markus: Und du willst auf der Couch liegen? Das ist ein Widerspruch. Bist du Teil des Spiels?

Frida: Es ist ein Widerspruch. Ich versuche, an einem Ort zu sein, und gleichzeitig habe ich Angst davor, dort zu sein.

Markus: Ja, wahrscheinlich. Aber du weißt, warum du es machen willst?

Frida: Ich glaube, ich mag einfach interessante Übungen. Ich meine, nur des Denkens halber. Recherchieren, nur der Recherche halber. Beides, aber natürlich nicht nur. Klar, da ist auch der Wunsch, etwas auf die Bühne zu stellen, es zu gestalten.

Markus: Das verstehe ich nicht ganz. Was bedeutet das, "der Recherche halber"?

Frida: Also, ich glaube, ich mag es einfach, mich an Orte zu begeben, die eine Herausforderung für mich darstellen, also, dass etwas eine Herausforderung für mich darstellt, das finde ich interessant. Das ist der Grund.

Markus: Ich verstehe, dass es ein großer Schritt ist. Wenn du vorher nie auf einer Bühne gestanden hast, und das ist deine erste Bühnenerfahrung, das ist. Na ja...

Laura Stoll: Frage und Antwort

Meine Recherche zu medizinischen und psychologischen Fragebögen geht auf das Jahr 2018 zurück, als ich mich für die performative Qualität der Interaktion zwischen Ärzt:innen und Patient:innen bzw. Wissenschaftler:innen und ihren Zielpersonen zu interessieren begann. Die daraus entstandenen Performances experimentierten mit der Methode selbst: Wie konzeptualisieren und analysieren wir uns, welche Mittel wenden wir werden an, um unterschiedliche Aspekte einer Person zu sezieren und zu kategorisieren?

Das ist zunächst mal eine wissenschaftstheoretische Frage, eine Beschäftigung damit, was wir über jemand wissen können und wie wir an diese Informationen kommen. In den Fragebögen soll ein Gleichgewicht zwischen quantitativen und qualitativen Un-

tersuchungen hergestellt werden; es ist Teil der Forschungsmethode, am Ende eine Validierung und Standardisierung zu erreichen. Letztlich bestimmen die Fragen, die wir stellen, die Antworten, die wir bekommen. Es bleibt ein ungeklärtes Problem, wie ein subjektiver Wert in etwas Ubiquitäres verwandelt werden kann.

Die darunterliegende Struktur wiederum ist die Konsequenz ontologischer Annahmen. Wenn wir nach den Eigenschaften oder Besonderheiten einer Person fragen, nehmen wir bereits implizit an, dass eine Person oder ein Individuum die Grundeinheit ist: Die Welt besteht aus Dingen, eines davon bin ich, eines davon bist du, und so weiter. Diese Denkstruktur wohnt auch allen westlichen Sprachen inne, die Konjugationen kennen. Um mit Wittgenstein zu sprechen, Sprache formt die Art, wie wir denken, und das wiederum formt die Art, wie wir die Welt wahrnehmen. Von Aristoteles und seiner Art der Kategorisierung zu St. Augustin und der christlichen Vorstellung von der Seele zur Cartesianischen Methode und der Idee des Bewusstseins – die westliche Ideengeschichte dreht sich bis zu einem gewissen Grad immer um das einzelne Individuum oder basiert auf dieser Grundvorstellung. Von diesen Konzepten ausgehend wurde seit dem 18. Jahrhundert eine Verbindung zwischen dem Gehirn und der Seele und dem Wesen einer individuellen Person etabliert; oder wie der Philosoph und Physiker Michael Hagner es im Titel seines Buches nennt: Homo cerebralis. Heutzutage suchen wir nach dem Wesen einer Person in psychologischen Fragebögen und funktionellen Bildern des Gehirns.

Was bei dieser Denkweise ausgelassen oder erst sehr viel später berücksichtigt wird, ist die Tatsache, dass wir Beziehungswesen sind – niemand existiert als Singularität. In welcher Beziehung wir zu anderen stehen, ist wesentlich für das, was wir sind oder vielleicht eines Tages sein werden. In Zeiten, in denen die Fälle von Depressionen, Stress, Angst und Einsamkeit zunehmen, halte ich diese Fragen für entscheidend: In welcher Beziehung stehen wir zueinander, wie stellen wir emotionale Verbindungen zu anderen her? Und können wir die Idee eines singulären Indivi-

duums umwandeln in eine, die das Individuum über Beziehungen und Prozesse definiert?

Diese Vorstellung ist die Ausgangsbasis für meine Performance im WUK und gleichzeitig eine Kontradiktion: Fragebögen werden eingesetzt, um eine singuläre Person zu kategorisieren, aber es gibt auch welche, in denen bemessen werden soll, wie diese Person Bindungen zu anderen aufbaut. Gleichzeitig beinhaltet die Kommunikationsstruktur der Frage automatisch eine gewisse Form der Beteiligung. Worauf ich abziele, ist das Spannungsfeld zwischen objektiver Quantifizierung und intersubjektivem Austausch: Wer sind wir als Individuen? Und inwieweit erschaffen wir uns oder erschaffen uns neu in jedem Moment, in dem wir mit anderen interagieren?

Huggy Bears are guests of the programme of WUK performing arts for the 4th time already. Like in 2016, 2018 and 2020 they are going to present works developed by young performance artists in the course of the last year.

Where I come from.

Masha Qrella

I was born in East Berlin. I was 14 when the Wall came down. By the age of 14 we were revolutionaries, and by the time we were 16 we had already fallen silent.

Sure, we squatted in flats in the Mitte district of Berlin but not out of political conviction, but because they were standing empty and property meant nothing to us; we were from the GDR after all. We played in bands with no political vision – our own having just been reduced ad absurdum.

Our music got away with no words, and it was our ticket to the West.

We had no use for feminist events or discussions. We didn't understand the problem. In our bands there were both boys and girls: it was all the same to us. We had other problems for which we lacked words. We had no identity but a future in a country where we didn't know the rules of the game, rules which we had to first learn. We avoided all the words which might out us as "Ossi"s.

We tried to make out the codes of pop, and then very tentatively – with very few witnesses – we started to question them. But our respect for the things we didn't know was greater than our doubts. We were cocooned in an aura of authenticity and naivety. Whose origins were of no interest to anyone.

The years went by. The codes have been deciphered. My reverence for West German pop culture has vanished, my doubts about the system have grown larger...

We long for utopias, for spaces of freedom and in-betweenness. But the answers that come back are monetisation and sales strategies. Pop culture which began as an "experimental field for democracy" is faring as badly as the system of which, without consultation, we became a part.

In the meantime I now understand discussions about gender and feminist debates. I know and recognize references and connections to the history of pop music, as written by the West. Our knowledge gaps are like a faint accent that betrays our origin. But we are all familiar with the problems that West Germans of our age have with their own past: the horror at the petit bourgeois narrow-mindedness of their parents, the reek of the West German small town, the longing for differentiation, the inner fight between safety and risk, the fear of failure or of loneliness. But these aren't the questions which preoccupy us. We are suffocating in the absence of utopias from our generation...

I first stumbled on Thomas Brasch in Marion Brasch's novel "Ab jetzt ist Ruhe" ("From now on there will be silence"). The personal perspective of the author seemed so familiar to me: A family saga set among GDR nomenklatura, told from the perspective of the younger sister. I felt as if I was waking up from amnesia. That was my story, too, my perspective and the past which I had blocked out for years. I had even my name changed, to avoid being reduced to my Eastern identity and my family history.

I started to read texts by Thomas Brasch. My gateway to poetry has always been music and song. Mostly texts written in English which later also coloured my own song-writing. But here were texts written in German which took hold of me and wouldn't let go, and I began – without any clear compositional goal – to sing the lines which I couldn't get out of my head...

Thomas Brasch has found a way, especially in his poems, to predict the essence of what our society is suffering from today: the loss and collapse of our own personalities. His texts touch on what we believe we have lost and at the same time offer an answer about a possible response. He was an utopian, a visionary, an artist, and a human being. Thomas Brasch is dead. We are short of people like him. Just as we are short of utopias. But his texts prevail. I want them to go on living and to inspire us.

After three attempts, the artist/musician **Masha Qrella** will finally be part of the program of WUK performing arts in October 2021, a co-production with HAU Berlin. In a musical dialogue with her fellow musicians, and with the help of poems by Thomas Brasch, Masha Qrella embarks on a search for lost utopias and for a possible response to the contradictions of our times.

„*Whatever THAT means*".

Susanne Schuda

Schudini The Sensitive has been on holiday and feels no better for it. In the course thereof she was somewhat distracted. Distracted by the sporting programme, by events in her own body – sore muscles, breathing techniques and so forth. Distracted by other people, a large number of "body" people: were Schudini to walk through the dining room and thereby listen in briefly to assorted conversations, what was being discussed was either nutrition, or "the sporting body," muscles, stress, performance, endurance, the skeleton, fascia, all that stuff. And as for nutrition, well, do your own buzz words, there's a whole lot of them, it's a whole separate branch of science. Somewhere along the line, Schudini says: "I want to eat less meat because of the climate, not because of me. Don't imagine I pay any attention to this body." OK, the last bit was maybe a little bit of a flirty exaggeration. Schudini likes to exaggerate, and some smiled, some were mildly confused, everything's a bit different after all, in this kind of a context. And the question isn't only what I say, but also where I say it, and to whom. You could make that into a nice game, too. A board game, a context-drama, something of that sort...

So, what is it exactly, this " body"? Some feel at home in their own bodies, in the sense of a soul that comes and goes, and in this respect the body is also a temple. I think, many simply are bodies, they understand their body as a fact and their psyche as a non-fact

or something like that. Difficult subject... Others don't like their bodies very much, hate them even; there are multiple options, but in most case it seems to have to do with your own body shape not necessarily being appreciated by society, i.e. an internalized perception of the external. Then comes: you have to love yourself for others to love you too. Schudini is sceptical in the matter of self-love. Self-care, OK; self-acceptance, definitely. For everything else, read: Whatever love means.

When Schudini joined the hiking expedition, it went past a waterfall in which not much water was falling. The guide explained that there used to be more water. Schudini murmured a semi-qualified: Climate crisis. Semi-qualified, because the exact difference between weather and climate remains for us to learn. Anyhow, there is less ice on the mountains, less snow, less water, and all around them there is nothing but soil-sealing – and that's not a semi-qualified observation, but very much to the point. The guide explained how she hoped people and nature would both be able to adapt well to the change: something that Schudini would tend to rule out as regards the people part, although islands of survival remain a possibility. Whatever they look like. In which context Schudini sees the body question as being in fact something related to survival. It is important to be able to run away. Mind you, if the really big wave is on its way, nothing much will help, but even so...

On the way back to the concreted-over city, Schudini was allowed to sit in the back and listen to the conversation between two sports people for several hours. Her takeaways: there is significantly more internet research into Corona than into climate crisis. And there is some question as to why fit people who look after their bodies are obliged to pay as much for their health insurance (N.B. it's "health insurance" now, not "sickness insurance") as people who stuff their faces, smoke, booze, and conduct all of the above while sitting down. In this instance the self-loving person can be seen as the victim of an undisciplined collective.

For Schudini the question arises: what's the story these days with the individual and the collective, with freedom and obligation? And

what does any of that have to do with Capitalist culture? Who feels simultaneously safe and independent? And if so, is that a misjudgement? Are well-off people ("well" in a literal sense) independent?

Back in Vienna, Schudini ran a few errands of the larger sort in the company of a friendly acquaintance and his car. He explained to her that the test swab sticks are poisonous, and his child got sick from one, and that now he and many others were taking their kids out of school and setting up learning groups instead. Schudini had rather mixed thoughts and feelings on this. As regards the test swabs, she had done some "research": they are sterilized, and the substance used for this purpose is indeed poisonous, but subsequently evaporates. On the school business, Schudini was of the opinion that we must be careful not to plunge ever deeper into our own world view but to continue an exchange of thought with others. Her friendly acquaintance was in agreement. Whatever either of them thought it meant.

After that, Schudini organized – along with Nehle Dick – a little "Late Night Group Therapy" retreat. Five experts from the subject areas of work, political science, asylum law, ecological economy, and digitalisation talked about their subject areas/research fields/work.

In the search for a common question to which every field could react from their specific perspective, they came up with the following approaches:
Institutions, and crisis.
We find ourselves in multiple crises – how can change be shaped?
How should we convey knowledge/content?
What are the places where people from different contexts, with different backgrounds can exchange thoughts? Exchange and encounter as democratic means.

At the end of the day, they settled on "The individual, collective responsibility, and participation."

With hindsight Schudini is wondering why The Individual is so much to the fore, because personally she is rather bored and / or

stressed by The Individual (just personally). Individuality itself is rather '90s, but since the advent of Social Media the Individual has become a product with highly stylised aspirations to authenticity.

Schudini suspects that The Individual is also in crisis.
For quite some time, we have had the individual, neoliberal crisis of the individual: self-discovery, self-love, self-responsibility, our responsibility as consumers in the free market, performance, will, working hard on yourself etc.
The new crisis of the individual might be the question: how do I join a collective process. How do we shape collective processes. Whatever that means.

Yours, Schudini The Sensitive (don't ask about the third-person form)

Artist **Susanne Schuda** has appeared several times already in the programme of WUK performing arts with her format "Late Night Group Therapy. The Show for Society, Politics, and the Subconscious with Schudini the Sensitive." Together with her ever-changing guests, she addresses — with the help of systemic positioning — the big topics and question of our times. Next up: two shows in October 2021.

Boundaries of humanity – Hyper-reality – Revolution and Avatars.

Thomas Jelinek

What we need right now, more urgently than ever before, is creativity!

Technocratic attempts to use existing strategies tame a system that is revolutionising itself are doomed to fail.

Our conceptual spaces must be enlarged, created anew, and – despite all the seriousness and currently understandable exhaustion – enjoyed, and above all frequented by large numbers of people.

Putting post-humanism on stage is not enough: staging must set changing processes against ideas and concepts. Of course, to achieve that the passive state of consumerism must be dropped and we must walk away from our comfort zones (as people are fond of calling them these days). If only a few steps.

In the wealthy countries of Europe we have not yet reached the point where anyone needs to give up their lives, spooning up protein mush from rusty tins like in "The Matrix", in order that they might daily put their endangered lives on the line.

Analysis, discourse and simulation in art right now are the precursors to action. We have already evolved into hybrid beings which live between simulation and and physical engagement. The horizon of our communications and actions has enlarged exponentially, just as all social interaction is increasingly mutating into theatrical space, into performance. Artistic simulation is constantly edging closer to everyday reality. At the same time, power

relationships are being polarised, and control mechanisms are reaching ever deeper into our private arenas, our individual existence. Where exactly our boundaries lie cannot exactly be defined. This should not be seen simply as a criticism, however; these boundaries reflect our enlarged understanding of physical and biological processes.

As it would appear, we, humankind, have reached a place where we have never been before. It is not a new thought: that we find ourselves in the midst of the most fundamental breakdown of human history as we know it, one which could also result in the end of our physical existence at least, in a relatively short space of time. All areas of human life are in a precarious state. The complex linkage to radically threatening developments in the biosphere, such as climate change from global warming and other human-related effects, demonstrate the emergent contextual processes of our lives and lend an existential urgency to our choices. At the same time we need to understand ourselves, along with our social and political structures, as an emergent system, something which makes it difficult both to make predictions and to orientate ourselves individually.
Or to put it another way: we are confronted with a revolution in all that is human, one that has condensed from the interplay of a host of processes which have hitherto out of ignorance been perceived as separate.
Even the definition of who we are, what it is to be human, what the world is, is on many levels up for debate, seen globally. Alongside our perpetual conflicts over resources and our geopolitical wars, we once again face gigantic wars over the power of belief and definition. From a statistical perspective, a worse state of dissolution can hardly be imagined.

Faced with this apparently hopeless future, it is understandable that people should display escape behaviours. In contrast to the postcolonial exploitation zones of the planet we have created in Africa, and in certain parts of the so-called Middle East, Asia and South America, this escape behaviour relates more to the future that may await us rather than the genuinely unbearable conditions of present-day life.

ESCAPE and COMPULSION

The relationships between escape behaviour and compulsive behaviour have up to the present been researched in-depth in the context of drug abuse, alcoholism, gambling addiction, and more recently in compulsive behaviour in the context of our use of digital communication, an area which may link a number of the components being addressed. In essence they confirm visions of dystopian future scenarios that have been sketched out since the middle of the twentieth century. Many of the dystopias developed in cyberpunk science fiction, at least, have today largely become reality. Perhaps the the most famous of early works containing descriptions of a hybridised world is William Gibson's "Neuromancer" trilogy from 1984.
Or from later, Neal Stephenson's "Snow Crash", in which the characters are escaping from an anarcho-capitalist dystopia through whose metaverse – a high-quality direct connection of the internet with mass multiplayer online games – they progress by means of avatars, something that has already become reality today. Allegedly the current meaning of the expressions "avatar" and "metaverse" originate with Stephenson and "Snow Crash." That he has at times acted as adviser to the company Blue Origin and to Jeff Bezos, and is the co-founder of the software company Subutai Corporation etc, demonstrates meanwhile how closely linked science fiction and technological development already are today.

HYPER-REALITY and HYPERACTIVITY

Nor is a reality accelerated and manipulated by media a new phenomenon of the 21st century. As long ago as 1976, Jean Baudrillard was writing that we live in the age of simulation, in a perceptual world in which signs and values are random, work is no longer done to serve production, and death is being suppressed from life. Forty-five years back he was describing a shift in self-perception and the perception of context in a stable representation of a world in which appearance and reality could be distinguished – a shift

to the context of today in which the "Real" has dissolved in the hyper-reality created by media.

"Today's whole system is tipping into the indeterminate, all forms of reality are being absorbed by the hyper-reality of code and simulation." Jean Baudrillard, 1976

This is in the first instance of course a description of those zones of our planet that at least have some measure of social security. The argument that all perception is, and fundamentally always was, a form of virtual simulation has been put forward by many since the time of Plato, and has been confirmed by a number of contemporary neurological studies.
This conception, made reality by digitally networked communication, contains the paradox of the present, in which we simultaneously have knowledge as never before of the complex system processes involved in physical, biological, etc mechanisms, but at the same time have that knowledge continually manipulated by interest groups such that it threatens to collapse into fundamental doubt.
In some ways this evokes parallels with the development phase of puberty, which might mean our inability to act in the fact of life-threatening crises would be only transitory. That would be a hopeful interpretation – as a transitional phase – of what is currently happening.

In our discussions of possible futures it does not appear to strike many people that we are actually already in those futures, discussing them as hybrid beings.

More people have a smartphone than have access to drinking water. Virtually everyone in the northern hemisphere has an avatar – and many also have digital companions in the form of so-called voice assistants. In 2020 in Germany fully 45% of people were using Google Assistant, Alexa, or Siri, with that figure rising to as much as 59% among so-called "digital natives" (18–39-year-olds in the study), a rapidly accelerating trend (Postbank digital study, 2020).

A growing number of people are connecting themselves ever more intimately to cybernetic, increasingly intelligent communication networks, working in online clusters and entrusting their data to the Cloud. But it goes beyond that. As Yuval Harari wrote in an article for the Financial Times: "In medieval Europe, priests and parents had the authority to choose your mate for you. In a Dataist society I will ask Google to choose."

Our representatives in the digital parallel universe are avatars. With an avatar the human individual equates themselves to "the machine", since it is also the case that a cybernetic "intelligence", an algorithmic "brain" equally manifests itself in the form of avatars in its communication with people. It is already in many situations increasingly difficult in conversation to tell bots – artificial characters – apart from actual biological people. In daily life we communicate ever more frequently with cybernetic avatars on help lines or support hotlines when ordering things, or setting them up. But we also communicate increasingly with each other via such avatars, for instance in the way people "produce" themselves as particular characters on social media, characters which are generally a sort of idealised version of themselves, iconographically represented. On the other hand might avatars be a useful expansion of our horizons of action? What role do our avatars play for us, what is our relationship to them?

Have you ever asked yourself what a friend might do faced with the decisions you face? Or wondered where a member of your family would take you if they could chose a holiday destination? In many cases you can only guess what someone in your position might do. Except that now you can "borrow" their identity, and ask a question to which you can be certain to get a relevant and meaningful answer.

This project uses a distributed machine intelligence network to enable its users to control their ever-growing digital footprint, to transform it into a digital representation of themselves, and to share the result as part of a social network. The project delivers a continuously developing ontological mapping of a person on the basis of their digital interactions and enables them to express their aggregated knowledge in the

form of a software agent. This agent can then be realised as a chatbot or voice assistant. The project aims to deliver a series of "identity-rendering kits", permitting users to easily share what they know across a trusted network.
(Promotional material from the HUMAN DYNAMICS business)

Alongside our voluntarily self-created avatars, of course, we also have, via our data trail and search engines that are simultaneously data-mining instruments, clusters of data that create ever more accurate representations of us, delivering a data image that sells the individual a near-identical avatar of themselves, and represents them in databased form. Whose avatar is Alexa, for instance, or Siri? Are we already in the process of ourselves becoming the avatars of algorithmic control networks? Even if this is only a focused snapshot of the development processes at work, it nevertheless demonstrates right there the politically explosive nature of the whole.

In a number of quarters the thought has openly been voiced as to whether democratic processes, such as elections, might not be better as automations using data profiling. The concept of democracy finds itself in its present-day form in one of its worst crises because of increasingly manipulated media processes and the desynchronisation of information and decision-making processes. So it is a seductive idea to replace these relatively cumbersome and easily hacked processes, by which decisions are made, with smart algorithmically-driven profiling analyses. Yet politics and decision-making are not just about conforming to communication habits, taste, and feedback-free "yes/no" responses.

The historian Yuval Harari has written on this subject that liberalism will break down when we reach the day where the system knows me better than I do, and "liberal habits such as elections will become obsolete, because Google will even be in a position to represent my convictions better than I can."

Such a world would no longer be inhabited by people as we still know them.

Nor would a different one, by the way.
We will not in any case be who we now are.
Who is it that we are on the way to becoming?

The artist **Thomas Jelinek** is a director and concept artist who works across disciplines, a dramaturg and a curator. He works in his projects on the creation of laboratory-like spaces for discourse and on room installations. Early in 2021 he was hosted by the WUK performing arts programme with his Test.Lab format, a livestream with experts and the online public which developed a haptic discourse of the present using playfully performative miniatures. He will be staging a further episode of Test.Lab, in a hybrid variant, in October 2021.

12 years of Vienna DanceDay.

A project by Gisela Elisa Heredia & tanz.coop – verein for arts

Inspired by International DanceDay, tanz.coop – verein for arts will for what is already the twelfth time be organising Vienna DanceDay on October 9th, 2021.The framework involves presentations to the public by young dancers and choreographers of their own short modern/contemporary dance piece. In this way DanceDay.21 aims to create a renewed space for contemporary dance and all its facets and so to open up space for the exchange of new ideas, support and networking.

DanceDay – The worldwide idea of DanceDay

International DanceDay came into being in 1982, the brainchild of the International Dance Committee of the ITI (International Theatre Institute). It is celebrated around the world every year on April 29, a date chosen for the birthday of the French dancer and choreographer Jean-George Noverre (1727-1810) whose work definitively reformed ballet in the course of the 18th century. Noverre fought for naturalism and humanism in dance, for passion and for believably presented narratives, for correspondence to reality, and for the multi-disciplinary education of his dancers in poetry, history, painting, geometry, music and anatomy as the precondition for the perfection of the dance art form.

The goal of DanceDay is to unify the world of dance, to

celebrate dance, and to underscore its universality. Since dance transcends all political, cultural and ethnic boundaries, its common language unifies everyone in the world in peace and friendship.

The DanceDay project represents an enormous opportunity for us and many artists in Austria and numerous other countries to showcase artistic developments and to promote the interconnectedness of a vibrant dance scene.

Our goal is to celebrate International DanceDay in Vienna, to provide a platform for this unique day, and to underline its importance. DanceDay has established an enduring presence as an international festival and needs to retain its solid grounding in Vienna. That is our wish, and that of many artists.

"...Five years ago Gisela E. Heredia assembled a team of dancers and choreographers with the aim of creating a worthy celebration of DanceDay in Vienna . Every year the best of multiple submissions and ideas from the worlds of contemporary dance, dance theatre and performance art are

selected... The goal of the initiator and her team is to provide a platform for innovative ideas for pieces, and to highlight new trends in contemporary dance.." (Ditta Rudle, Tanz.at, 2014)

Many opportunities already exist to come together, to dance and to exchange ideas; nonetheless, we find the idea of introducing a special Day of Dance highly desirable, alongside all the many implementations of the idea in so many countries and cities around the world. A day for large numbers of different and yet likeminded lovers of Dance to work together in one place, work things out together, and present together.

With DanceDay our goal is above all (and then some) to again provide a platform for young dancers, choreographers and artists from the world of contemporary dance on which to display their work. We want to facilitate networking, exchange of ideas and artistic cooperation.

DanceDay has already been staged several times at WUK Werkstätten- und Kulturhaus. It is now going to take place in cooperation with WUK performing arts for the first time — scheduled originally for June 2020, it had to be called off because of Covid-19 containment measures, and will now be reinstated in October 2021.