

Presseinformation
WUK performing arts

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Anna Nowak **Oceans of Notions (swimming)**

Uraufführung

Premiere: Fr 18. September 2020, 19:30 Uhr

Weitere Vorstellungen: Sa 19. September 2020, 19:30 Uhr



Drei Frauen unterhalten sich. Sie reden über Propaganda, Schlaflieder, die sie für ihre Kinder singen. Sie sprechen über Freiheit und Zukunft, über Ethik, Tod, Theater, Nationalismus und Umzüge. Und Frauenfeindlichkeit. Die Frauen bewegen sich. Sie bewegen sich anmutig, stressig, wütend, komisch und weltlich. Mal wie ein Baum, mal eher wie eine Planierdrape. Zu dem Geräusch knackender Wände und sich paarender Wale.

Was ist Zeit? Was ist Mutterschaft? Was ist Rassismus, Freiheit, Neid? Oceans of Notions (swimming) ist ein künstlerischer Versuch, gemeinsam über große, abstrakte Themen nachzudenken. Die Performerinnen tauchen in ein Meer persönlicher Reflexionen ein, bewegen sich entlang und entfernen sich mäandrierend von den Gedankengängen über komplexe persönliche, soziale und politische Phänomene.

Anna Maria Nowak erarbeitet zusammen mit Anna Mendelssohn, Karin Pauer und Stephan Sperlich ein Protokoll des verkörperten Nachdenkens, der Gedankenpflege. Die Metapher ist als Denkweise und nicht als poetisches Werkzeug von entscheidender Bedeutung. In Oceans of Notions (swimming) untersuchen die Künstler_innen die Art und Weise, wie Frames aufgebaut werden, Erzählungen, um bestimmte Themen emotional aufzuladen oder zu entladen.

Was passiert, wenn wir über Ethik als eine Bewegung oder eine Karte nachdenken? Was für ein Ort ist Solidarität? Was passiert, wenn Menschen als Zahlen und Zahlen als Menschen dargestellt werden?

Manchmal ist es einfacher, ein Problem zu umwandern.

Produktionsbeteiligte

Konzept, künstlerische Leitung

Anna Maria Nowak

Entwicklung und Performance

Anna Mendelssohn, Karin Pauer, Anna Maria Nowak

Musik

Stephan Sperlich

Licht

Peter Thalhammer

Produktion

Alexander Gottfarb, Sophie Schmeiser, SMartAT

Interview mit Anna Nowak

In Oceans of Notions (swimming) you focus on metaphors and abstract ideas, like motherhood, death or freedom. Why have you chosen this focus?

Anna Nowak: The idea of *Oceans of Notions* was born in 2014, around that time the word “post truth” or “fake news” were fresh and electrifying topics. In 2015 the right wing party, Law and Justice, (PIS) took power in Poland, their language is full propaganda and hidden narratives that serve a certain political purpose. I experienced a lot of sensational, emotionally charged language in the media: “floods of immigrants flooding our lands”, “Poland as a bleeding, dying person”, dehumanising opposition or minorities of all kinds. That was provoking and made me very conscious of how we use and misuse (abuse) words, how we set up frames and narratives, and as a result, how we actually shape our realities.

This led me to the idea for an embodied reflection over abstract topics. I was interested in HOW we think with language, how our sensations and experiences of the world connect to thinking and language, how our thoughts are formed by those “lived” experiences of the world.

The politics is too complex and too abstract to be directly experienced, I think. That is why I chose to work with the concept of metaphor.

I have been busy with the topic of metaphor since a long time. As a child, when I was supposed to speak of abstract things, like e.g. emotions, I would “think in images”. Our language and the way we think are metaphorical in their nature, specially abstract ideas, like freedom or love, are most of the times described in terms of other phenomena, which we know from the world we live in.

You work together with Anna Mendelssohn and Karin Pauer. How can we imagine this collaboration? How do you work together?

Anna Nowak: Word collaboration is very on the point here. Anna and Karin are two outstanding performers and creators. The concept and the methods came initially from me, however, we develop all the materials together, the texts and the choreographies, we reflect and question the methods and together look for solutions. It is up to me to come up with a plan for the day, to guide and give the work a final directions, however we are all in the same boat, rowing, rowing, rowing, down and up the stream, exchanging our competences and roles on daily basis. Anna and Karin both carry a lot of artistic luggage (toolboxes), that they very generously share in the process.

Sound and music are a crucial parts of your performance. How do you and Stephan Sperlich develop the music for your piece?

Anna Nowak: I have known Stephan since 10 years now. We found ourselves in very versatile artistic contexts. We always understood each other well, I think we share a lot of taste and intuition when it comes to music and sound. At the beginning I had a very clear idea of using concrete sounds that evoke very specific associations, like a construction site sound or orchestra tuning. We departed from there. The work was a lot about transforming these sounds, gliding across what we can name and identify and what becomes very abstract, emotional music or simply becomes something else. Stephan is present, with us, in the studio a lot. He watches. He has a great intuition when it comes to choreography. One might say, he thinks very choreographically in his music making. It is often about intuition and playing, until the music “feels right”.

In the announcement you state that the performers move „gracefully, stressfully, angrily, weirdly and worldly“. How do you translate emotions and affections into a dance piece?

Anna Nowak: At the beginning we always started to move from a “complicated place”, metaphorically and literally speaking. I asked Anna and Karin to imagine concrete situations for them to move in, e.g. places like buildings, rooms, landscapes. Sometimes they were very concrete, like a tunnel, sometimes very surreal, imaginative. They were also asked to work with sensations connected to substances or objects, a rope or a tree, quite naively and intuitively in a way.

We started from imagining the spaces or objects, in stillness, with closed eyes, in detail, eventually translating the sensations into movements qualities or states.

These qualities were often very beautiful and specific, sometimes almost like pantomime. Sometimes too literal or hard to read or relate to, we kept some of this materials anyways.

Eventually the work became very much about performing the texts. Almost all texts came up during movement explorations, they were “born” out of movement. They became a kind of a “thought choreography” and they needed staging, sometimes they needed simplicity or stillness. There came in simpler tasks, like moving with grace, or grasping with your hands, or “being dust”...or just “dancing the emotion of freedom”.

Die Beteiligten

Anna Maria Nowak is a freelance artist living and working in Vienna. She was born in Poland, where she studied Scandinavian Studies at the University of Gdańsk. She received her dance education at the Anton Bruckner Privatuniversität in Linz, Austria and at x.IDA postgraduate dance company. In 2005 she moved to Vienna, where she began her collaboration with Elio Gervasi and Liquid Loft. She is a co-founder of Kunstverein Archipelago, The Loose Collective and Arbeitsplatz Wien. In her own work and collaborations Anna Maria Nowak is investigating the interplay between thought, sensation and movement and exploring notions such as displacement, synaesthesia and metaphor.

Anna Mendelssohn (born 1976 in Vienna) studied acting in Great Britain. Since 2004 she is ensemble member of the company toxic dreams and has performed in over 30 of their productions. She has performed with a number of other choreographers and directors (such as Superamas, André Turnheim, Oleg Soulimenko, David Mayaan,...), acted in films (of Miriam Bajtala, Michaela Schwentner, Thomas Marschall) and works as a voice-over actress. In her own performance pieces (Cry Me A River, Here and Now, What?, Feminism and the Bauchgefühl, Amazon – River Deep, Free Speech? !,...) her special interest lies in a conscious, emotional, analytical exploration of language and a close listening to the forces and mechanisms of its employment in social and political contexts.

Karin Pauer is a Vienna based performer and choreographer. In 2008 she received her BA in Choreography at the ArtEZ – Insitute of Arts in Arnhem/ The Netherlands. She has since collaborated in various international settings with choreographers, theatre directors, filmmakers and visual artists such as Liquid Loft/ Chris Haring, Davis Freeman/ Random Scream, Yun Jung Kim, Mike O'Connor, Maureen Kaegi, Aldo Giannotti, Nicola von Leffern and Veronika Franz. Since 2015 she has continuously worked with the Austria based dance company Liquid Loft. She was a recipient of the danceWEB scholarship in 2009 and the TURBO Residency in 2012, both at ImPulsTanz, Vienna. In 2018 she was granted the BKA START Scholarship. After touring throughout Europe with the company Liquid Loft she has recently turned to developing her own works. Her performance-serie 'ten hundred thousand years of movement' was presented at ImPulsTanz, Vienna, Tanzquartier Wien and Tanztage Salzburg. Her latest work, a collaboration with visual artist Aldo Giannotti was presented at Donaufestival/ Krems 2019.

Stephan Sperlich studierte Computermusik und elektronische Medien an der ELAK sowie Musikwissenschaften an der Musikuniversität Wien. Er arbeitet als Komponist, Live-Elektroniker, Produzent und Cellist in Wien. Macht Theatermusik (Aktionstheater Ensemble, Theater in der Josefstadt), Stumm- und Filmvertonungen. Zusammen mit Tini Trampler und Alice Schneider organisiert er das cross-border Festival „ParisVienne“. Projekte (Auswahl): 78plus, Playbackdolls, Tini Trampler & das dreieckige Orchestra, MANN ÜBER BORD!, Elektro Farmer, Roland Neuwirth & Extremschrammeln. Veröffentlichungen: 78plus: Im Denkturm (pararecordings 2005), Wandelwelt (pumpkin records 2008), Elektro Farmer: Ultratural (Delphy Entertainment records 2009), Playbackdolls: Out of the Blue (monkey.music 2011), Delightful Songs (monkey.music 2014), Solo Vinyl Single Gnorf (Early Morning Melody 2011). Weblinks: playbackdolls.at, 78plus.net, dasdreckigeorchestra.at

Peter Thalhamer studierte Grafik an der HTBLA für Grafik und Kunstgewerbe. Ausbildung als Tänzer bei Erika Gangl, sowie an der HKA Amsterdam (Moderner Tanz) und am Laban Centre in London. 2 Jahre Schauspielklasse am Konservatorium Linz und 4 Semester Experimentelle Gestaltung an der Kunstuniversität Linz. Gründungsmitglied der Gruppe Fuckhead. Seit 1992 Auseinandersetzung mit der Materie Licht als Gestaltungsmittel im Performancebereich. 1997 Gründung von Gap_Works für Licht, Bühne und Conceptual Arts und Gap_Motion für Choreographie und Performance. Seither internationale Tätigkeit als Lichtdesigner für Bühne, Architektur und im öffentlichen Raum.