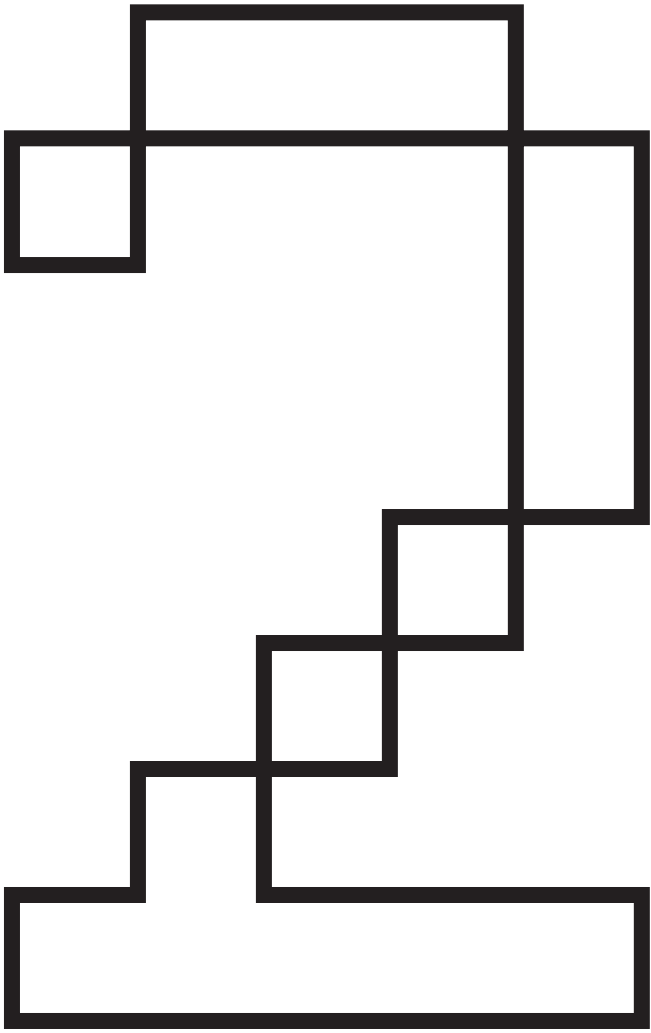




Art
Research
Envelope



“2” is the second issue of an open format documenting relevant developments in the field of art and research published by Zentrum Fokus Forschung.

This publication, “2”, reflects the last year including the experience we had in the Public Colloquium 1, part of the Artistic Research PhD Programme from the University of Applied Arts Vienna at the Zentrum Fokus Forschung, taking place May 8 to 9, 2018, at the Angewandte Innovation Laboratory. The aim of the Public Colloquium is, once a year, to provide an opportunity for the PhD candidates to present the current devel-

opment of their research projects. The presentations serve to illustrate the continuous artistic research practice whereby development is made comprehensible through the consideration of reflexive forms of documentation and the possibility to integrate existing elements of the work.

“2” is the second issue of an open format documenting relevant developments in the field of research. The core of “2” consists of eleven documenting elements provided by the PhD candidates following their individual presentations at the Public Colloquium. The visual and written traces portray the current state within their continuous research processes. Two short texts contextualize the core of the publication. The first one, by Alexander Damianisch, is about focus and freedom and the interaction and potentiality of these notions in relation to each other. The second one is by Margarethe Jahrmann, guest professor 2017/18. She reflects her own experiences and personal viewpoint regarding the interplay between research and teaching, scientific and artistic practice as well as how she resonates the experience of the public colloquium. She also provides some explanation how we managed to zoom in towards the individual methods, in other words, how to catch eleven individual reflections without caging them.

For further information and audio-visual documentation please visit: <http://zentrumfokusforschung.uni-ak.ac.at>

Artistic Research PhD Programme

Each year, the University of Applied Arts Vienna invites colleagues to apply for the Artistic Research PhD Programme (PhD in Art). The Artistic Research PhD Programme is a postgraduate study programme in the field of art. The focus is on artistic work, which is regarded as the basis of knowledge production. It is governed by topics and practices of artistic research. The sixsemester study programme in English starts each autumn and at the Zentrum Fokus Forschung.

Selection criteria are the topicality, innovation potential and social relevance of the artistic research issue described in the exposé, as well as knowledge of both its national and international research context. Doctoral candidates are tutored by professors from the Angewandte who are recommended by the committee in charge of candidate selection.

For further information and deadlines please visit: <http://zentrumfokusforschung.uni-ak.ac.at>

List of projects

- 2017
- Cordula Daus, Kay, or a Case for Intensity, Supervisor: Ferdinand Schmatz
 - Bogomir Doring, I Dance Alone, Supervisor: Paul Petritsch
 - Verena Faißt, Staging the white elephant that remains overlooked, Supervisor: Barbara Putz-Plecko
 - Martin Kusch, Virtual Together, Supervisor: Virgil Widrich
 - Charlotta Ruth, Choreographic Contingencies for on and offline, Supervisor: Margarete Jahrmann
 - Hinnerk Utermann, MAKE IT REAL, Supervisor: Jan Svenungsson

- 2016
- Michael Kargl, Performative Materiality, Supervisor: Brigitte Kowanz
 - Ralo Mayer, Space Un / Settlements, Supervisor: Ferdinand Schmatz
 - Marie-Claude Poulin, Mutations — bodily perception, analog and digital dispositives, Supervisor: Ruth Schnell
 - Katarina Šoškić, The Journey: tourist zones, seasons and fields in between, Supervisor: Jan Svenungsson
 - Anna Vasof, Non-Stop Stop-Motion, Supervisor: Judith Eisler

FREEDOM AND FOCUS: A relaxation exercise for conceptual bodies by Alexander Damianisch

Focusing freedom and freeing focus is exciting; it is exciting because it is a special and so necessary relationship once again. To promote it is of immense importance, indeed beyond all respectful pragmatics and practical constraints. Why is it special? Because everything else is the rule: freedom is demanded and framed, focus is sought and dictated; only in niches can you find spaces of possibility without (narrowing) contextual anticipations. It is necessary for the same reason, but also because the view ahead, in what is happening today in many places, makes one shudder. Through sharpening and radicalization, the open, respectful approach is slowly being turned around — and not just at the neck. What remains is only in the first affect a mature presentation, but then only an outraged mess, triggered by fear and its pressure, which are the same. So from a criticism of what is generally perceived at present, but also from very personal experiences, one can identify the need for an alternative: it is not the closed fist that makes things possible, but the open hand that is ready to receive and give — the open hand makes the possible.

Focusing freedom and freeing focus should and must be possible, not in separate areas, but in one place and at the same time. Originally ideal word connections such as Artistic Research, and also in the context of similar terms such as arts-based research, make the link. In a first spontaneous understanding, foreign fields meet: art and research. But it seems that freedom and focus become one. Art focuses its power and research uses its freedom surprisingly. The resulting process becomes exciting and the results have never been anticipated before. The outcome of such a connection might be a big promise, but also relaxed and, cautiously put, it might be a playful opportunity. But one has to be careful, because whenever something in the pattern of the known and familiar threatens to fit into this new relation — yes threatens — it is worth questioning why alternative means are needed in this place to these questions. One could immediately stay in the old traditional patterns, with no need to try to understand differently. You do not have to, but you can do it. We strive in support and focus research to help explore new possibilities and never become disciplinary and in principle constrained; it seems both are not categories of the future but categories of the established, which are also remarkable, but the still unknown is more exciting.

Focus freedom and free focus: for me, it is precisely in the oblique connection that the complementarily illuminating power shows itself. Thus it addresses what equates to an ideal, the ideal: we want to understand and change differently, and it is clear that free focusing creates a new understanding of what has previously been taken for granted and that, in turn, transforms what we assumed earlier, including our assumed freedom. Each of the projects in the doctoral program also turns the world upside down in this sense; research is always freed up and art is focused, but without losing special qualities. These qualities and competencies are required, however, neither the knowledge of how space was invented, abstract, nor the knowledge of how each other's expectations are undermined by the strange, nor the change in the view of the immediate surroundings like the Vienna Prater just outside the door, nor the view of the holiday experience and its influence on the architectural design of the Dalmatian coast, to name only two examples, are the sole topics of artistic work. The connection — the “and / also” — is what is interesting, thematically and methodically. The individual representations in this collection show in particular the interaction of freedom and focus. Everything is invited to better understand what happens, once again from a new perspective.

One question is still allowed, especially now that we are creating a new environment (the new location of the Zentrum Fokus Forschung) for the development of focus and freedom: How can criteria be found for the services that help to gauge whether the steps that have been taken succeed in making changes that will allow practitioners to better develop their ideas in the future? It is about the transformation of understanding and understanding transformation. The understanding transformations can now be approached differently than before — and understood differently. Understanding and transformation need both freedom and focus; it is about the open and courageous handling of everything. The degree of focus increases and freedom manifests itself in the degree of change.

Freedom is the criterion that transforms the power of a process. It shows itself in exploring alternative options, not contributing to the expected but to the unexpected; it expands the field of the unknown and it puts radically speculative things upside down. Thus one can describe what happens and what could happen together, if one demands and promotes each other, as well as in the community of the researcher circle in the projects at the focus research centre. As with artistic research, the concept of applied art is also concerned. The combination of two spontaneously conceived foreign concepts productively connect new opportunities for shaping the world — and thereby of us in it, which we constantly recompose as well.

This is a relaxation exercise of conceptual bodies, because I also believe that, in following a new friendly understanding, elasticity is needed; at the same time, it is characterized by resilience and orientation. A contribution to this is the Artistic Research PhD program at the University of Applied Arts Vienna, where we work with the researchers on our possibilities of development and implementation. I believe the methods of the arts are good paths, always focusing the open and freeing focus. We invite you to join in — it is and will remain exciting, please relax.

Artistic Research (AR) Dispatch 01:
INSIDE ILINX INSIGHT SEESAW
Margarete Jahrmann

The theory and practice of artistic research are concerned with specific ways to approach art, science and epistemic things. Their goals are sometimes written fictitiously, presented participatively and made public processually. The methods of artistic research comprise — in a structural coupling — contradictions, a joyful science and an associative memory theatre. Such seesaw movements can be found in every feedback given among peers and tutors, in every conference contribution delivered between free flow and academic compulsion and in every exhibition participated in, between artistic radical uniqueness and the claim of a universal validity of artistic research. But how can we view performative practices and installations as experimental systems that generate artistic artifacts as epistemic objects? What is the significance of the diverse research questions and topics in art research that oscillate between outer space and the inner world?

The swing as a frivolous play form of structural coupling of dispersed contents is a fundamental method of artistic research (AR) that provokes mental states comparable to physical ilinx. Ideally, the cognitive seesaw leads to an artistically creative FLOW state. In a second layer, the structural coupling of methods and disciplines offers a new form of discourse in the public space of art research. As in a memory theatre, it is equipped with fetish-like storage objects. We imagine them as discourse-activating objects. Art-observing “players” orient themselves towards objects distributed in space, which serve as triggers for arguments and theses. A theory of “objects that drive the game of cognition” as artistic representatives of research questions that drive insight can be developed for this purpose. In a Theatrum Anatomicum of objects, we enter a state of discourse in the ilinx flow. We can use these mental seesaw movements between the poles of discourse cultures to create epistemic things in artistic research.

A short unexpected seesaw movement: The difference between discourse objects and epistemic things is essential. The discourse-activating objects are not already epistemic things, but they become such things when they become part of an insight momentum, where the discursive element is not located after but before this transformation. Only when the entire assemblage of artistic objects, discourse objects, discourse, reflection and peer-reviewed settlement generates research data does the epistemic object arise in arts research. The difference with scientific research is the continuous up-and-down movement, the playful seesawing from idea to object to discourse to theory and, finally, to findings that allow insights — this is the magic circle of artistic research!

A successful public appearance in the field of artistic research was impressively confirmed by the graduate college with its unique permanent performance in the Arts Innovation Lab in spring 2018. Over 48 hours, partly with a continuous presence

in specially created habitats, a flow of discourse objects was juxtaposed with the demand for epistemic things. The concise discourse in respectful review and disposition processes lined up with the emergence of new epistemes in playful discourse — I would call that a ludic win, with equal sums for each participating side instead of the usual zero-sum game. In this sense, the new approach of a research position on balance in a social group of artistically researching peers was made public. A playful, newly interpreted flow model became political, as a potential for social action in art research, as a seesaw for art, life and dialogue. The goal is a state of creative flow on the alpha wave, not calming down but alarming the wave riders about actual imbalances in society.

In this past year of art research in the artistic doctoral program, a new approach was activated on the mental flow swing, which also includes the element of physical enjoyment of research (in performance situations in the presence of a protected, selected and persistent research group): the joyful interplay between very different and deeply individual positions as a source for the development of a common discourse culture. This was achieved with two mechanics:

1. [move1: a conceptual exchange made possible by a very strict rule of structured conversation play among peers.] The limitations of this included a clear form of expression, regardless of the artistic format in which an individual investigation was conducted, and a subsequent reflexive discourse in the group about this position. In fact, each participant was required to express a very sincere and serious mutual interest in theoretical positions, expertise and work, which is beyond the actual individual approach in art research. [move2: Form shifting and role-playing] were deliberately interchanged with the recording of reflections through practices that, in places, anonymize the discourse — as we did in preparation for this publication — to enter into a flow of transformative play with ideas and their manifestations in artifacts.
2. The artifact gained a role as a discourse trigger in various contexts of individual meditation on the form of expression and / or the opening of the cognitive process to the public in the form of a situated play exhibition, as the basis of all arts. The gradual difference between an exhibition object and an object of discourse became the focus when it was considered as a philosophical object, not necessarily associated with a name or an author, but with an idea or a research interest, question, goal or disposition. The seed of this experience design on slippery ground awaits further irrigation of ideas through the tide of a seesaw fountain. This seesaw could put the relevance of the artistic research methods into flow and demonstrate that they are viable for developing valid argumentations in research. Such artistic research, which introduces optional research rules, has the potential to score points in canonical discourse networks. But it will also be able to position itself in different discourse cultures, be accessible and accepted — which ultimately leads to valid research results. But artistic research must always remain in a creative and pleasurable (Jouissance) state of flow and maintain its potential as a form of critical activism in research itself.

Another swinging motion: not only is the position of the middle woman between peers and supervisors delicate and brutal, but so is the general state of contemporary art research in relation to its social task as a critical, participative and performative format: live on stage, at conferences, in museums and in exhibition spaces. The public intellectual, known as an activist figure in political theory, serves here as a model for the art-based researcher in an educational situation. Thus, the practical use of role-play structures is often found in contemporary artistic research. This practice provides the basis for cognition through art and theory as equivalent epistemological dimensions.

A further smart seesaw movement, developed by the participants in the course of the program, is the application of poetic play practices as a research method. Commentaries and dispatches on this artistic research practice of an emerging research group were expanded in discourse evenings, including a series of Ludic Method Soirées with invited guests and informal friends appearing on site, speaking about art research, science, and epistemic things. In this open format, topics were deepened and a sustainable local network was launched. The expansion of the field of play into the real world is the goal here, because a more naturalistic environment for research and experimentation is the key to any well-grounded research, also in the arts. In contrast to the establishment of the role of the artist as a researcher, the playful approach of ludic research in defining socially and hierarchically assigned roles explains the usefulness of such an individually differentiated art as a new role in the insight not for life sciences but for an art of life.

The aim of artistic research understood in this way is to develop new cultural techniques in order to continuously generate methods of art as research. Research strategies emerge from the arts, technologies and cultural cognitive techniques. Performative practice and installations as experimental systems are only steps that lead to the next level in artistic research: The insight ilinx seesaw, which generates artistic artefacts as epistemic objects that enable a sustainable flow of discourse.

Credits (Projects)

- 2017
- Cordula Daus: Page B: Design in collaboration with Vasilis Marmatakis
 - Bogomir Doring: Images: Stills from the project “I Dance Alone” by Bogomir Doring / Awakenings Festival, Amsterdam, 2016 / Rave-o-lution / Tbilisi, 2018 / Interview with Bogomir Doring by Joe Muggs
 - Verena Faißt: Text and image Verena Faißt, 2018
 - Martin Kusch: Future Room at exhibition “Aesthetics of Change”, Museum Angewandte Kunst Wien, Dec. 2017, Photo: Ethan Vincent
 - Charlotta Ruth: graphic design collaboration Laura Weiss
 - Hinnerk Utermann: MAKE IT REAL, Hinnerk Utermann 2016

- 2016
- Michael Kargl: © Michael Kargl, 2017 (Text + Image)
 - Ralo Mayer: Text and image: Ralo Mayer, 2018 (collage based on an original drawing by Hermann Potočník Noordung, 1929)
 - Marie-Claude Poulin: “Iterative outgrowths” / Performer: Audrey Rochette / Photographer: Tina Kult / © Marie-Claude Poulin
 - Katarina Šoškić: Design: Christian Schlager / studio VIE
 - Anna Vasof: Anna Vasof: Text, Photo, Design

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 - Team at the Angewandte Innovation Laboratory

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Cordula Daus

I do different things to be able to write. Lately I have been trying out how to get into character. I have been from two up to six characters. I have written about them. And I have done things as them. Currently, I am the intensity scientist Dee and the test woman Kay.

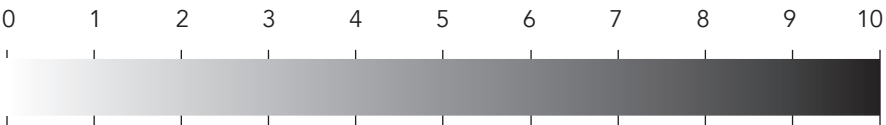
I invented this experiment for you, says Dee.

Prepositions, also called Verhältniswörter, are very important for me. As a class of words used to express and mark relations, each preposition has a specific impact on the word/subject that follows. In German we use postpositions such as: der Einfachheit halber (meaning ‘for the sake of convenience’). And then there are embracing prepositions, Zirkumpositionen, such as von diesem Zeitpunkt an (meaning ‘from now on’). From now on, it might be a bit awkward for both of us. I’d like to use the following text to test how it feels to speak as Kay to you:

Ich will der Zeit beweisen. This is your time. Ich will dem Spaß sagen. Spaß muss sein. I want to be alone. Ich will dem Alleinstellungsmerkmal sagen. Ich bin die Frau ohne Regel. The non-mother. Nicht die Sonne. I want the universe. Ich will dem Alter sagen. Alter, ich bin die Zeit.

How did this feel for you? Each of you might have felt something different. (If you don’t speak German you probably felt very little.) Let’s talk about the strength of your impression then. How intense was this on a scale from 1 to 10?

Intensity of [your feeling]



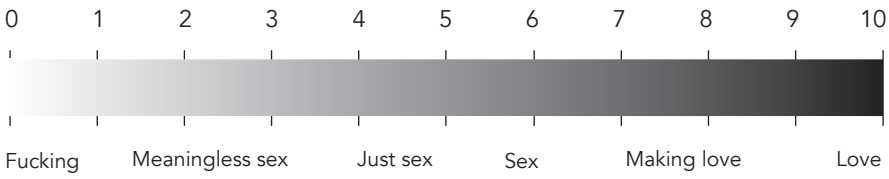
The noun ‘intensity’ was first introduced to the German language around 1730. It was originally coined to describe the escalating and decreasing processes of phenomena such as light and temperature. Derived from the Latin verb intendere — to tighten, to bring into a state of tension, to direct toward — the neologism evolved as a variable in mathematics and physics. Its theoretical basis lies in differential and integral calculus and is linked to a new theory of extremes. Soon the word disengaged from its origin in the natural or exact sciences and became a wide-spread metaphor. Authors like Goethe, Novalis, and Lessing deployed it to speak about the gradual movement of inner emotions, romantic passions, and states. The intense promised a new alliance between scientific precision and subjective perception, between the inside and the outside.

Intensity is a troublesome concept. Emotions are radically subjective and can hardly be measured nor represented in language. This is why a poetological approach is needed: The first episode of my novel tackles the concepts of sex and love. Kay and Ran, who did not know each other before, meet 10 times over 10 months to practice meaning- lesser sex. The experiment is led by Dee. They are asked to conform to the following instructions:

- 1) Have just sex, whatever that means
- 2) Maintain stranger
- 3) No real names
- 4) No co-sleeping
- 5) Stop any liking from escalating

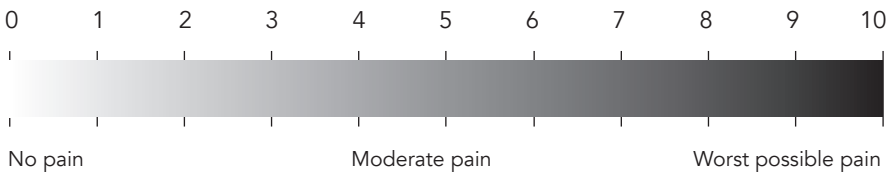
In the following you see a scale which depicts the meaning conventionally attributed to sex and love. At degree 10, we see love, thought to be most meaningful sentiment; at degree 0, we see fucking, supposedly the least meaningful act.

Conventional meaning



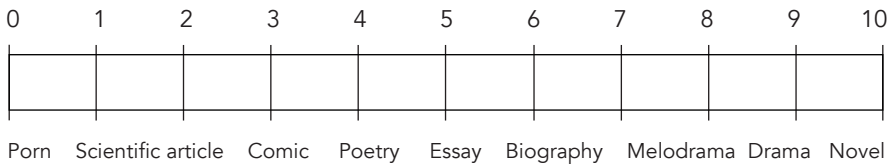
This usually corresponds to the following pain scale:

Pain



If we think about the literary genres that describe sex and love and how they are culturally valued, the scale looks like this:

Genre



Meaning, feeling and writing love share a history. The rise of the novel as literature and the introduction of romantic love occurred around the 18th century. By reading novels, people learned what love could look and feel like. And not only this: Novels are/were able to anticipate what could and should be felt. Subjective emotions started to compete against the ‘false’ politics of marriage imposed by class and society. Intensity became a currency for truth. Dee proposes an alternative emotional script:

Meaninglessness is our ideal, the Garden of Eden. But we may never reach it. It would mean, that we cannot desire any more or we might fall asleep. We have to stay at least 20% below the maximum. To underdose. Strong is fine. Very strong is dangerous. On the last meters we stop. We keep our mouth shut. How to feel right enough, not to feel anything at all or too much? The semantics of immoderation brings new forms of freedom into being that must be lent substance and redefined by the history of love – and no longer by society itself, Luhmann says. The question remains, how to narrate this history without fucking it up.

As my writing progresses, I fight with this history, with the given formats of (writing as a) women/woman. Kay is growing into something I don’t know yet. A kind of emotional science fiction, maybe. For now, I’d like to end with an episode from Kay and Ran’s first encounter:

Wie Kay daliegen, hellhörig. Einfach liegen, nicht wie. Es klingelt nicht. Er klingelt noch lange nicht. Ran klingelt. Die Vorstellung von Ran läuft die Treppe hoch. Nicht vorstellen. Ran drückt die Tür auf. Er steht im Raum. Sie stellen sich nicht vor. Sie stehen da. Ein Meter-x-cm-Kay plus Absätze an ein Meter-x-cm-Ran in Turnschuhen. Auf Schritthöhe stehen. Passgenau. Kay prüft Haltung und Konsistenz. Ran riecht nach Malerei. Den Durchmesser seiner Arme. Das unsichtbare Bindeglied in der Differenz zwischen zwei und mehreren Gliedern zwischen zwei und mehreren Beinen. Es geht nichts, absolut nichts über das erste aller Male, das dem Maximum auf der Achse entspricht, the intensity of not knowing, läuft von hier über ihren Rücken, ihre Hüfte, Flanken, über all die kommenden Male, unwiderruflich in Richtung knowing auf den Fußboden fort und hinab. Kay und Ran sind sich neu und köstlich. Noch. Sie schweigen und machen. Nur das. Genau das.



The **M o d i f i e d M e r c a l l i** I n t e n s i t y S c a l e
The **F a c e b o o k** I n t e n s i t y S c a l e
The **G r i e f** I n t e n s i t y S c a l e
The **D r e a m** I n t e n s i t y S c a l e
The **S u p p o r t s** I n t e n s i t y S c a l e
The **W a t e r E v e n t** I n t e n s i t y S c a l e
The **P a i n** I n t e n s i t y S c a l e
The **L a b o r** I n t e n s i t y S c a l e
The **S y m p t o m** I n t e n s i t y S c a l e
The **P u r e T a s t e** I n t e n s i t y S c a l e
The **D e p r e s s i o n** I n t e n s i t y S c a l e
The **N e w T s u n a m i** I n t e n s i t y S c a l e
K a y

Cordula Daus is a writer-artist working with and across theory, fiction and performance.

Kay is the protagonist of her new book and a medium for a field resarch into the intensities of fucking, grieving, loving.



Zentrum Fokus Forschung
University of Applied Arts Vienna



I Dance Alone



Zentrum Fokus Forschung
University of Applied Arts Vienna

Awakenings 2016, from the ongoing research "I Dance Alone" by Bogomir Doring

Rave-o-lution, gathering in front of Georgian Parliament in Tbilisi, May 2018

Bogomir Doringer in conversation with Joe Mugford.
An interview organized by We are Europe platform.

Given how much we often talk about the „energy“, the „dynamic“ or - even more nebulously - the „vibe“ of dance club culture, it’s strange how little these things have ever actually been quantified or examined by the arts, sciences or social sciences. Bogomir Doringer is changing that, though.

A lifelong clubber, Doringer is also the creator of I Dance Alone, an open-ended research/artistic research project built around films of dancefloors from above. „Can we understand clubbing,“ the project asks, „as a living system, regulating and stabilizing the state and function of the collective and the individual in regard to a changing society?“ Doringer brings in questions and ideas from multiple disciplines, but above all else, it presents the surge of the dancefloor as an aesthetic creation in its own right: always different, always the same, profoundly human and profoundly fascinating.

THIS PROJECT IS GREAT: IT'S GOOD THAT SOMEONE IS ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THE "ARTWORK" IN CLUB CULTURE IS THE DANCEFLOOR ITSELF, OR EVEN THE ENTIRETY OF THE SOCIAL OCCASION...

Yes. As a student of art I would always be looking at extreme artificiality as a way of producing experiences and works - yet every time I went into a club I'd see something that is so much more intense and unique. Even though you think everything is under control and directed, it actually has spontaneous and long term effects, and it embraces multiple social layers and alters or amplifies them, so really everything art in institutions is supposed to do, I have always found clubs do much better. Especially in the last ten years, where art institutions have got more exclusive and money focused, clubs are regaining an urgency again.

AS YOUR WORK IS BUILT ON OBSERVATION OF PEOPLE IN THIS SPECIAL SPACE, YOU EVER WORRY ABOUT BEING VOYEURISTIC?

I was kind of worried about this. In a way it is a kind of surveillance, you install the equipment and you passively observe the material. It's like catching a ghost of the dancefloor, it's catching the vibe - something that we know well, but we don't know exactly what it is. Sometimes it appears and sometimes it doesn't. I was worried it might deconstruct that by bringing attention to it. And who knows - maybe, as many see, the project has some potential for security? But in the end, it's always done as a top shot, so you only observe bodies as a dot with lines - a head and hands - and this showed me a lot about observing human phenomena in a very unusual and abstract way that we don't normally know ourselves. It certainly changed my perception of clubbing, because I'm now actually enjoying more to observe than to actually participate. Every time I go out I can't stop thinking about it.

I started my dancing in the nineties in Yugoslavia, I was just a teenager, 13, 14, but the age was not a problem to enter the clubs in that time. The most impressive moments were during and after bombings [NATO airstrikes on Belgrade], in 1999, where I really understood clubbing as some kind of protest, anger, rebellion. As soon as you heard sirens you'd go to this basement club in Belgrade called Industrija and just dance. There was this great feeling of togetherness and interaction, the bodies were spinning 360°, not just watching a DJ. The organisation of the dancefloor was very different. Then I moved to the Netherlands and I was in shock because I couldn't find anything similar. I felt like I was missing something really important from my life by moving into this totally different social-political environment. It was bothering me a lot... I realised that Yugoslavia had its development delayed, it was very much in a late eighties rave period, and I wondered if I'd ever see these dancefloors again, or if the only reason I'd been able to see these dancefloors at all was because I'd come from a fucked up society where things just weren't right. I realised we'd not been dancing from joy and fun but from frustration and fear. So I was watching and waiting for something like this to happen again, and from 2004 to 2010 in the Netherlands the situation was quite cheesy, it wasn't well curated cultural programming especially in nightlife - there was a lot of new money, yuppie culture, rude people pushing you around on the dancefloor, and a lot of people were escaping to Berlin. Then something different started happening, locals but also foreigners were starting to complain about the night-life: the regulations, the closing hours, the crowd. This was also around the time the refugee crisis became more

noticeable, and I noticed a difference in the individual and collective movements on the dancefloor, and I thought OK, actually I'm ready to start filming this. My frequent travels gave me good overview of different dance floors. Also the technology developed so it became easier, and 2015 is when it finally started.

WHAT WERE THE SPACES WHERE YOU DID START TO FIND THE RIGHT VIBE?

Places where there was an initiative of younger people to have an opposition to commercial clubs. You either had options of squats - which are about to be closed - or every club being pretty much commercial. The tickets weren't cheap, the festivals weren't cheap... but suddenly you started having pop-up places somewhere between squats and self-organised clubs like LightHouse, or Cruquiusweg and even RADION, then finally the club De School opened. In a sense that is a proper club with entrance fee and so on, but they created a new young scene that's really a lot about dancing and collectiveness and sharing and so on. There is an online Facebook group page called ON. It was initiated by Nicole Grootveld. She in a way curated the crowd and helped building of new club scene of Amsterdam. This concept has been recognised by De School and other clubs in the city. De School made a good curatorial decision to have a totally dark space, full of smoke, inspired a little bit by Berghain but at the same time more polite and nice and not as hierarchical about people. There's a lot going on right now where clubbing is seen as something that's a part of tourism - Amsterdam realises it's in its commercial interests to attract people and also prevent its own young people going elsewhere at the weekends. But I'm less interested in these financial interests than in finding where clubbing has an urgency. There's a place in Leipzig for example, Institut für Zukunft that had a special programme for refugees, or Bassiani in Georgia that has political activism as part of the agenda, or parties like Mamba Negra in São Paulo where you can even meet homeless people, and you don't have your fingerprints taken and pay an expensive door price to go. These are more what I'm planning to document - I'm speaking to Bassiani in Georgia about working with them, so I'm hoping this will be good.

THERE SEEMS TO BE AN INCREASING INTEREST IN THE EARLY HISTORY OF HOUSE AND DISCO, ITS ROOTS IN BLACK, LATINX AND LGBT CULTURE - WHICH OF COURSE GAVE IT THE KIND OF URGENCY YOU DESCRIBE. IS THAT SOMETHING YOU CONNECT TO IN YOUR WORK?

Well I'm aware of it of course, and similar things like the gay party in Bassiani which was inspired by ritualistic military dance - it started with only 20 or 30 people, then went to having thousands of people, and turned into different political bodies which are now protesting on the streets Georgia. White Noise is one of them, it stands for drug liberalization. If you think of EXIT music festival in Serbia. It started as student protest and then turn itself into a music festival that is now supported by the government. I find these things fascinating, and I learn about things as an interesting side result of my research. But this subject is something that needs words, it needs voiceover, interview etc - and these are not my methods. It's not my main aim: my main aim is this interest in collective choreographies and individual choreographies, and in watching and observing these choreographies without analysing and explaining them verbally.

I see what I'm doing as a sci-fi documentary electronic music project. I'm interested in fluidity and synchronicity in crowds, how things sometimes happen and sometimes don't happen. However, I do also want to see how this material that I gather can be used by others: for a choreographer, for a scientist, for an anthropologist.

CAN YOU SUM UP WHAT YOU PERSONALLY ENJOY ABOUT WATCHING THESE OVERHEAD FILMS?

It's all about the contrast and connection between the collective and the individual. I like it when you see an individual pop out, and they do that sometimes because they themselves move the crowd, but also sometimes because they actually disrupt the crowd. There was an example of one party in Paradiso where one man started a disturbance in the crowd - a fight in fact - but you could see that one guy right from the beginning of the party as someone who did not fit in the crowd and disrupted it. But what was interesting was not just that you could see him early on and perhaps predict he was disruptive, but also you could see the crowd's methods of adjusting around him. To me clubbing, comparison to daily life, seems often accelerated. In one of the talks with Bojana Gligorijevic she said:

“We are static most of our lives and on the dance floor we start moving around, continuously stimulated by music and friction with other bodies. Similarly to how immune cells move when stimulated by infection or injury, or how Cancer cells sneak through our tissues to escape into the blood and metastasis elsewhere.” It sounds fucked up, if you think about behaviour on the dancefloor it's all about maintaining your space, maintaining your position, standing your ground, and maybe there is something in this that connects to club culture as a method of survival...



Same room, so loud they leave you dumb, although you hardly understand. But their whisper tickles you down to your stomachs and makes you lift your pelvic floor. They take your breath, when you want to speak but shield they know the message. Some make the earth shake like a serious earthquake but leave no visible trace. Some are so big you find you find no space although they aren't even there. On some of them you can ride upon but your feet won't find the ground. Some carry you over slippery floors but their weight is the reason for the ice to break. They are the bridge they stand upon to prevent you from trespassing, the ground that you share while being the gap you're lost in. They make things turn round in seconds, make stable trains jump of their rail. Some of them inspire some really hurt, some push, some pull, some hypnotize some set in motion, some immobilize. I do not want to put them on stage. They are too big to be forced and too mighty to risk their rage. But I try to invite them to play. Some seem to find reflection in a person, but somehow this casting hardly ever fits. For some you can try names like ego, intention, system logic and logistics, resistance, obedience, conformance, attraction, sympathy or antipathy, room temperature and oxygen content, furniture arrangement, educational objective, class destiny curriculum, the very out of the window, perception side effect, social or cultural differences, personal and collective memory, school bell, food, unsaid conflicts, adolescence, psychological disorders, financial homes, political ambitions, artistic ambitions, career ambitions, said and unsaid rules, religious sensibilities, personal preferences, language barriers, coincidence, courage, lack of courage, social skills, media literacy, media illiteracy, fashion, the internet or as I learned the other day, a thunderstorm. But once you find a matching label, they'll make you feel like the tortoise in the tortoise and the hare. So never try to compete with them - rather accept if they ask you for a dance. One: The tortoise says: I will name your adolescence. Finally you've gotten to know the world. You've learned to walk, great with you, the clips, play, make friends. But then you realize this flicking constant change of the world and of yourself, maybe for the first time in your life. The hare says: Haha - adolescence. Do you really think this will ever stop? There is this huge elephant you're trying not to fall off. It is a shaking ground you walk on always in danger to slide down his sloping grey back. It makes you long for handles to hold on, for a stable saddle and stirrups. But you know that actually the fast is to move, to explode, to dare to jump to fly, to get rid of handles and saddles. To not only stand but walk on your own feet on grounds you don't even know. To run. Or even worse to go slow. Attentively. Perceive all the shaking and rumbling and roaring. And then explain the way. Show where you are without even knowing how you got there. Because, although you feel so left alone, there are so many others. Some of them seem to exactly know what they are doing. But they won't tell you and it's so hard to get just from watching. Because they don't stay in a stable position and you keep losing their track. Two: The tortoise says: It's about patterns. Media images, viewing-expectations, pressure to perform. The hare says: Don't you always blame the system? Now all around in this shaking blurry world are stable cages. They seemingly do not float and shake. You can sit inside, look up the door and get carried away by a big elephant who knows the way. The only thing you've got to do is to take care that you don't slip through the cages grid and fall out. But these cages are tricky. They make you shrink and once you're small enough, you either can't help to fall out because you can't reach the grid anymore or you melt into the grid itself. Three: The tortoise says: It's about communication as a creative process. Finding ways to articulate. To enter dialogues and polylogues. To negotiate a common position. The hare says: You know tortoise, perception itself is already a creative process. So there's nothing to hold on. But what can you do? How can you act within these unreliable constellations? How can you choose the right elephant to ride upon? You need to find ways to connect. To form threads that make you reach each other. Thick threads are quite alluring, but from thin threads you can weave better nets. And on those nets you can jump together like on a trampoline, each time a bit higher, so you get a slightly bigger glimpse of the horizon. Four: The tortoise says: It's about individual backgrounds. About contemporary history that reflects in the constellation of individual biographies. The hare says: But how can you compare a war refugee's destiny with the exam stress before some fest in a matter? While jumping together, there might come up huge - really huge elephants that darken the sun and mask the horizon. Elephants you don't know, but they are following somebody you're jumping with wherever he or she goes. These elephants can be intimidating, sad, frightening. They make you wanna close your eyes to make them disappear. But they become manifest on the inner side of your eyelids. They tell stories that have never been your story, but suddenly they take up all your space. They breathe up all your oxygen. They are impossible to pass. They smash the head of tiny elephants that had been following you faithfully. There's nothing visible anymore but their imperious, thick, wrinkled grey stem right in front of you, touching the tip of your nose. So what can you do? You look left and right and see the others' baffled faces. They are starting to fade, facing the alien elephant, lacking space for their own heads. What is to be done? You stretch out your hand and touch the grey wall. You're sensing the bits that are actually not alien but familiar to you. You get to know areas that you can hold on. You meet your own elephants within the wrinkles of the big one. And all together you start to climb up. You give each other a step up. Or pass through. Or turn around and walk away. Or scream loud enough, so the elephant will run. Five: The tortoise says: It's the ego. The hare says: So what? The thing is, there are elephants that you have actually taken to your heart. That you don't want to see dissolved or being chased away. You want others to see. To keep. To be aware. To acknowledge. To applaud. To respect. These elephants sometimes make you petrify. The moment you realize the others are taking over your big grey mountain, are surpassing the traits you so tediously pioneered. But the others forget that this should go to your account! That moment your own traits become impassable for you, although you became a petrified body part of your own invisible elephant. Six: The tortoise says: This is about participation. The hare says: Hey, this almost looks like art! (Haha) Sorry - just tickling the previous elephants. In general, preparing the elephants dance floor for others is quite a challenge. Creating moving seats and inspiring sets of instruments, anticipating all the dancers possible improvised step sequences. You in the end might realize you built up a set of invariable cages with dead elephants inside. The others will either sit in the cage, petting their dead elephants, or sit in the shady corners of the space, wondering how they could leave the party unnoticed. But if you fear any kind of limiting cage too much, it might happen to you that you create an open dance floor, that doesn't even fulfill it's very basic function of being a ground you can step on. So all the dancers just fall or float through the endless space. And as hardly anyone can stand this, they will bring their own cages and hardly come out again. Seven: The tortoise says: Ok - so this is about play for the unplayable. The hare says: Stop wasting my time. I'm off. So it really needs courage to dance with elephants you don't see and speak to them in languages you have never spoken before. But why anyhow bother and not just ignore those giant mimosas? If they are not visible anyway, this should be rather easy. Just hold on to things you can see, touch, rate, evaluate. But have you ever tried to ignore an elephant that wants you dearly to give him a piggy back? Then you should know why that is not an option. It's not easy to make them walk side by side with you or even carry you where you want to go. But if it works out you will get to places where you will encounter at least glimpses of the idea, what it means to connect your brain and heart with another. That without thought of power can be released and made prolific that way. I do hope the films that we produced give an idea of these powerful places we have reached together.

Some roar so loud, they leave you dumb
although you hardly understand.

But their whisper tickles you down at your stomach's ground
and makes you lift your pelvic floor.

They take your breath when you're meant to speak,
but still they know the message.

Some make the earth shake
like a serious earth-quake
but leave no visible trace.

Some are so big, you find no space,
although they aren't even there.

On some of them you can ride upon,
but your feet won't find the ground.

Some carry you over slippery floor,
but their weight is the reason for the ice
to break.

They are the bridge they stand upon to prevent you from trespassing.
The ground that you share while being the gap you're lost in.

They make things turn round in seconds,
make stable trains jump of their rail.

Some of them inspire
Some really hurt
Some push Some pull Some hypnotize
Some set in motion
Some immobilize.

I do not want to push them on stage.
They are too big to be forced and to mighty too risk their rage.

But I try to invite them to play (...)

I am a filmmaker and photographer.

I like encounters that shake the ground but come with the confidence to celebrate the shaking, swaying and dazzling. I want to get closer to what seems to be ungraspable, listen to silent sounds, read between the lines and experience insights that are floating, sometimes thickening and condensing, clewing up, then again dissolving.

Within the context of artistic research, I find the freedom to follow this interest and work on terminologies and translations for the insights that do not match the grids of classical sciences, of language, of generalizable approaches and methods.

Translating the quests and insights of artistic research into clear-cut words can only be approximation and never adequate. But it can be an essential clue, making enigmatic insights more accessible.

I have developed concepts of filmmaking that work without screenplay and are based on the very relation of people, space and time. Themes become manifest that urge for attention but could never be scripted. The collaborators enter a particular form of communication that educes a common artistic statement.

During 2018, I have realized a series of film projects in the described manner to have a body of work I can refer to.

I try to analyze these works and compare the different spaces, situations and encounters that have shaped them.

Mostly I am working with school classes – so my contributors are adolescents. Therewith, the issues of getting to know oneself and the world from the perspective of a more-or-less-adult under the current social and political circumstances, in particular within the highly authority- and performance-oriented school system, find expression: There are topics like violence, migration, insecurity and self-confidence; gender roles, the longing for what seems to be love and sex or in general: what does it mean to encounter somebody else?

The social dynamics, issues and constellations within school classes mirror the challenges of our society and school is probably the mightiest institution shaping our society. So, in my view, these films carry strong and telling messages that want to be received.

Therewith, I try to approximate questions like:

How does an individual creative process relate to a collective creative process?

How can I provide framings that provoke a state of sensual attentiveness and tools that offer individual possibilities of articulation?

When does the intended freedom within a collective process turn into counterproductive disorientation, stress and insurmountable thresholds?

How can collective artistic processes create inspiring and empowering spaces of communication – and exceed the working process itself?

Does collaboration need intention?

What kind of responsibilities does collaboration implement?

Can forced collaboration be voluntary? Can I collaborate and educate/be educated at the same time?

What is the border between coincidence and unconscious but creative shaping?

Is an unintended message still a message? When does something become a message and who decides?

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Since 2017, she has been a candidate for a PhD in art at Zentrum Fokus Forschung, tutored by Prof.Barbara Putz-Plecko.

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Virtual together

The fulldome medium as an artistic research field:

Virtual together aims to develop an artistic research framework with the goal of:

- advancing and documenting new immersive languages and grammars
- exploring new modes of expression for the full dome medium.

My project lies within the research and development area of new digital applications for 360° dome-shaped projections and aims to generate a diversity of artistic dramaturgies for this medium.

Research objectives:

My artistic research project aims to research the phenomenon of perception in an immersive 360° environment, exploring vision without being objected to one singular focal point of view, directed in generating multi-sensory and kinaesthetic feedback for the spectators. One of the specificities of this medium is to offer an environment in which the spectator's senses are engaged in manifold ways. *Virtual Together* is tailored around the process of creating immersive experimental artworks and experiences for a dome environment. These immersive mediated environments may involve real-time visualization and sonification software, ubiquitous computing, sensor networks, tracking technologies, photogrammetry, 3D-scanning, pre-rendered material, mobile and locative technologies.

With *Virtual together* I want to interrogate the language of the new creative environment of the fulldome medium, creating the possibility of a rich experience of audience participation: a world of multi-user interactions, navigating through trans-scalar, recursive imaginary territories, harnessing both physical and synthetic worlds. Articulated through the fulldome environment as an instrument to explore trans-disciplinary forms of artistic expression, I will generate experiments and artworks that will oscillate between performance, interactive installation and immersive event.

Virtual together wants to explore the protocols and artistic potential offered by an immersive situation, a kinaesthetic, poly-sensorial and emotional experience in which the spectators are plunged. My PhD project is expected to explore, via the creation of a series of immersive media artworks, new aesthetics and technological paradigms. From this perspective, *Virtual together* builds on the exploration of the narrative and dramaturgical possibilities and the aesthetic potential, to attempt to define certain rules and guidelines for creating such an audio-visual and multi-sensory fulldome artistic experience.

Basic assumptions:

The project takes as a premise that in the context of an immersive dome environment, the impact of immersion can be described as a physical, sensorial and emotional experience, through which the participants experience the very vivid illusion of playing an integral part in the image. Whether it might be in churches, cathedrals or castles, everyone has already experienced dome-shaped imaging, usually created by trompe-l'oeil (eye-deception) techniques. With digital tools, contemporary trompe-l'oeil has the ability of being more encompassing and blurring not only vision, but perception in general. This type of trompe-l'oeil becomes a trompe-sense (sense-deception) and incorporates other tools such as surround sound and visitors' interactive interventions (interventions comparable to those in video games). Thus the user experience becomes multi-sensory and interactive, in that spectators may have the ability to affect the way that the representation evolves by their actions.

Research threads:

The spatial nature of the fulldome environment encourages research on issues related to spatial perception, cognition, and overall behavior – including but not limited to factors such as navigation, way-finding, spatial memory, spatial ability, etc. My doctoral project is build on the findings of the E/M/D/L project, the European Mobile Dome Lab for Artistic Research, which I initiated and co-directed with Ruth Schnell. From 2013 until 2015, this project established a collaborative network that involved cultural organizations from Austria, United Kingdom, Germany, Greece and Canada. Within the frame of the E/M/D/L project three interactive and experimental productions have been produced, screened and performed at the Society for Arts and Technology [SAT] in May and June 2015. One of the projects explored the dome as an intermediary membrane between inside and outside, sheltering human performance, interactivity, image, sound and text layers; a second project fostered public interaction

with digital particle swarms and real-time manipulation of virtual/physical audio-visual objects; and a third project highlighted the place of the user as a living actor of a multi-perspective narrative, unfolding between physical and virtual spaces.

The E/M/D/L project managed to build the technological and aesthetic groundwork for new aesthetics and established the base for new technological paradigms. With my PhD research, I want to take these outcomes and interrogations to a new level, I propose to realize a series of interrelated works for fulldome environments and expect that these works will provide a ground to refine an in-depth reflection on the fulldome medium as an epistemic instrument for generating a shared virtual reality experience.

Each of the experimental creations will provide a significant amount of information to reflect upon.

The objective of my research is to sharpen the opening-up of this new field of artistic creation, for this I identified five areas of research threads:

Thread 1: Narrative: linear / non-linear / abstract and Multi Layer

Since the viewer is immersed in a 360 vision and the story can evolve everywhere in the space, narratives in the fulldome medium differ from the traditional forms of visually “framed” narratives. (Dan Neafus, 2014). I will explore the opportunity to tell a story without a frame, where the narration can be linear (as in the traditional cinema), non-linear (elements taken from the cinema but without a consequential logic), and/or abstract. Since it is difficult to anticipate the audience behavior, where they will position themselves and where they will look at, my research will therefore focus on the creation of narratives that will involve the concept of directing the physical movement of the spectators inside the dome. The circular projection space of the dome offers a unique opportunity to compose a story with multiple points of attention.

Thread 2: Real-Time Interaction: single and multi-user / props / wearable / generative / data-visualization

How can the public interact with the dome? As in all interactive artworks the viewer is not purely the contemplator, but becomes also the subject and the co-author of the story. How will interaction with image (and sound) be perceived when the responding media elements can be behind or above, the interactor? In this context the type of interaction within the dome environment is crucial. What and how do we generate content for such a situation? I want to explore single- and multi-user interaction, utilizing props embedded with mobile phones and wearable technology, and utilize the output of generative data-visualization.

For how to interact with the dome I divided the type and the objects of interaction into four categories: 1) Element / Object that “carries” interactivity, an object that forces the public to move and strengthen the experience that the artist wants to transmit (Props / I-pad / Hats / Gloves); 2) Bio-sensors that are connected to the body and that can produce information needed for a data visualization project; 3) Data deriving from tracked movement of a group of people or of a single person via camera tracking from the top; 4) Interaction in which the artwork goes into function only if it will be turned on by the spectators movement/presence (camera tracking).

Thread 3: Audience Engagement: active / passive / perceptions / attention / crowd behaviors

The fulldome can be seen as a microscope or a telescope of the real world. How does the brain react to this kind of visual system? Which are the physical / psychological effects? How big should a human be? How can multiple people navigate within the virtual environment at the same time? I want to research and investigate on the problem solving of multi-person but also multi-modal interaction. Audience Behavior: Different kinds of movement, sitting down / lying down / walking around..., all these different physical modes change the spectator's perception of the space. Sitting down can refer to a single zone of interaction, lying down refers to a more panoramic use/experience of the dome, walking around refers to an intimate exploratory character of the dome.

Thread 4: Experience of Space: perception of space and time / movement / physicality / virtuality / telematics

The experience of space/time (movement / physicality / virtuality / telematics) as a combination of sense of scale and sense of space and the difference between the dimension of the spectator's body and the projection space is a crucial aspect to be addressed in the dome. Since the fulldome is at the same time a physical space (defined through senses) and a virtual space, the virtual aspect of the fulldome creates a cognitive and a physical experience. The fulldome can be used as a surface projection for virtual elements, but is also a physical space

and it offers the possibility to add the layer of telematics in order to create a networking of experiences in two or more domes (the telematics experiments will utilize the two dome structures of the University of Applied Arts - the fulldome lab and the new 12m large inflatable dome structure of the University of Applied Arts, Vienna). The fulldome environment is also a social space, opposed to single user experiences in Virtual Reality environments experienced via a Head Mounted Display (HMD). The physical presence of the perceiver/audience and other objects in the room/space are opposed to virtual presence, and telematics, in the fulldome we can experience a combination of both, the real/physical and the virtual presence. In the fulldome environment I can explore the experience of these concepts simultaneously.

Thread 5: Factors of Immersion: layering of realities / affordances of the medium / mixed media

The full sensory immersion happens when the dome “disappears” and the audience can feel an emotional engagement. The tools for obtaining a complete immersion of the viewer in this “new reality”, is the screen surface, the projection and the audio environment. The emotional factor of immersion is either the storytelling in the film or in the case of interactive installations it is how intuitive the interaction is. For increasing the sense of immersion it is important to remove the points of reference in order to further the confusion of the sense of space. In the dome the public is immersed in a virtual reality scenario, without the use of an HMD (like for example the Oculus Rift or the HTC Vive). By using the virtual projection skin of the dome and using different audio feeds it will offer the possibility to the audience to feel different experiences of the same space.

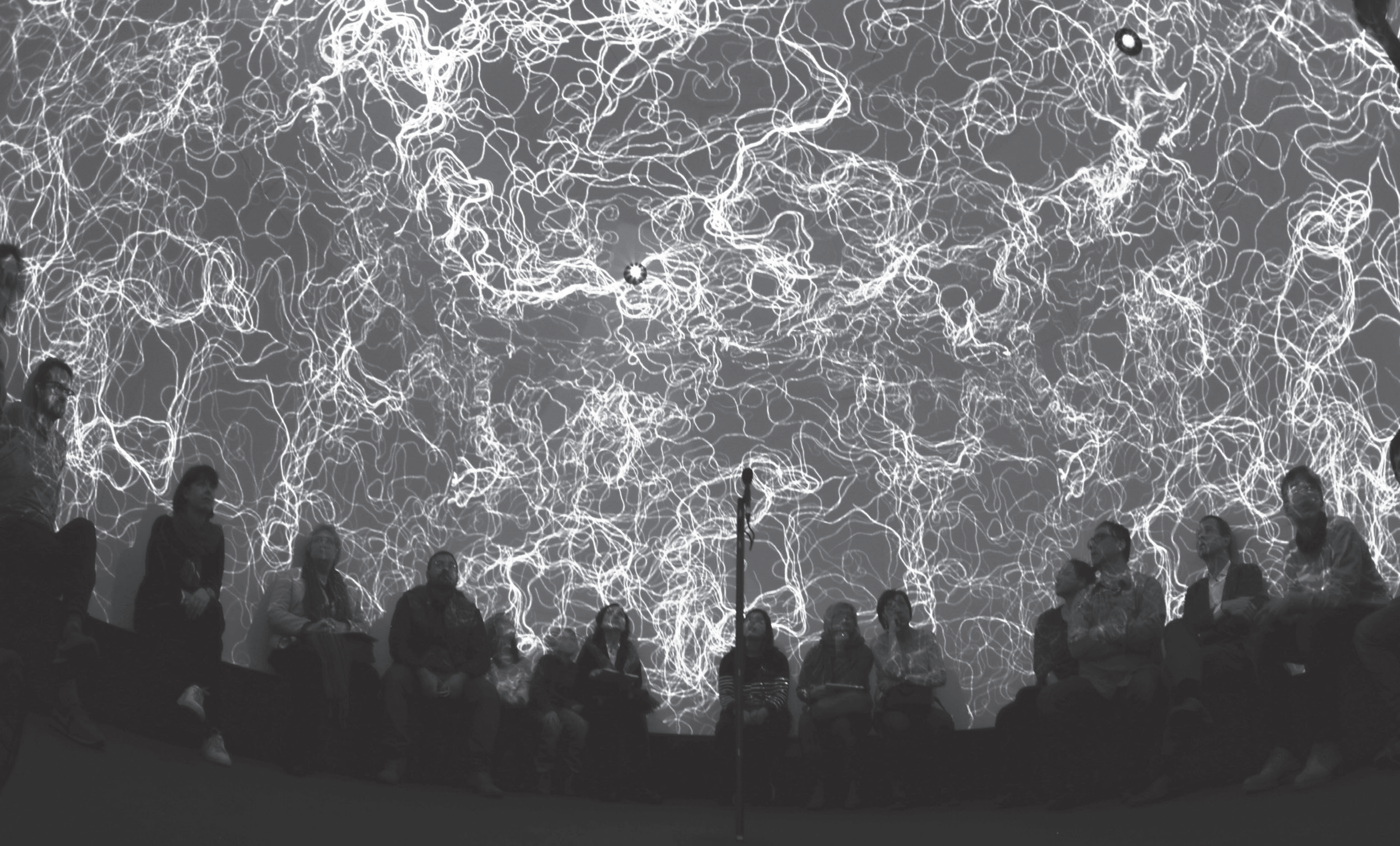
Mixed in between these five research threads I will also explore “Navigation in narrative” and “Navigation related to Physical and Virtual Models”. My overall research will benefit from the sharing and development of the latest tools for capturing, synthesizing, and re-visioning the world by the imaging and sonification methods of sampling, IR analysis, MRI, Atomic Force Microscopy, 3-D scanning, photogrammetry and point cloud visualization. I want to focus on artistic research, that capture the multiple, heterogeneous forms of presences generated by a digital culture but also critique the intrinsic homogeneity that emerges through processes of surveillance and control.

Virtual together is expected to contribute to the development of a research field with a specific focus on artistic expression for dome-based interactive media experiences. The development of such an artistic language and grammar with respect to interactive media artworks for a fulldome requires a deeper understanding of the communication process taking place when a spectator is immersed into the fulldome medium as well as of the impact of these interactive experiences on the cognitive and affective state of the spectator. Consequently, this knowledge is expected to feed back into my creative process and it may even prove invaluable for my artistic involvement in the creation of fulldome experiences, as it may make me aware of the communicational and psychophysical impact of my creative choices onto the spectators.

An implied objective of this project is to strengthen the connections between artistic creativity and scientific research relating to the creation of environmental experiences utilizing interactive 3D graphics in immersive, projection-based displays. The project aims to offer insights to improve the effectiveness of the process of creating artworks for the fulldome platform by ensuring that the communication between me (the artist and designer), and the spectators remain efficient and that I will be aware of the impact of my creative “gestures” and choices onto the spectators who experience the artworks.

***Martin Kusch** is particularly interested in the transformation processes of the electronic media inside performative contexts, and on how digital technologies influence our perception of the body and space. Using a wide range of cutting-edge tech tools, he has created ambulatory installations in which dancing bodies interact with real time media; telematic experiences for one spectator at a time; immersive performances including culinary tastings; and urban performances integrating GPS guides. Predominant themes in his works are the transformation and disembodiment of the mediatized body; the loneliness and voyeurism that stems from the phenomenon of reality TV; the paranoia brought on by the hyper-surveillance present in our societies; and sensory exacerbation engendered by technologies today. Since the last six years he has been deeply involved into the artistic research into the fulldome medium and Virtual Reality in HMD devices. He manages the FullDome-lab at the Digital Art Department, University of Applied Arts Vienna.*





Future Room at exhibition "Aesthetics of Change", Museum Angewandte Kunst Wien, Dec. 2017

BROADCAST
Since it's difficult to understand through a radio that the situation is being
[[constructed in the moment]] and will never be repeated
[[unless it's turned into a [[recording]]]].

CONSTRUCTED IN THE MOMENT
Traditionally [[liveness]] happens when people share the same space. It's the quality of immediate communication. The encoding and decoding between sender and receiver of information. Through technology, beginning with [[the radio]] we cannot think about liveness as a shared spatial quality. The possibility of what is considered live is [[renegotiated]].

RECORDING
The replay of a live-broadcast, two temporal spaces together. It sounds exactly the same, but the temporality is no longer [[constructed in the moment]].

SPACE
Change your position in space, bring the paper with you. When you've found an ok position [[continue]].

SOMETHING APPEARING TO BE LIVE
(though it's not)
Online media often mimic live events aesthetics due to the liveness effects that dramatically puts things at stake when [[is being [[constructed in the moment]]]].

BEING LIVE
Historically the word live has had this meaning since:
[[forever]]
[[late 19th century]]

RENEGOTIATE
[[memory]] or [[]]

BEING ALIVE
Aliveness will not be defined inside this structure, but you can keep a [[meta]] observation on the choices you make since what you are [[]] is [[constructed in the moment]] thanks to you being alive and interacting with the otherwise dead structure.

LIVENESS
is the quality of: [[being alive]], [[being live]]
[[[]] appearing to be live (though it's not)]

LATE 19th CENTURY
because of the:
technical [[recording]]
[[the radio]]

META
In the Greek language meaning "after", or "beyond". Meta is often used to mean about (its own category). Being inside and outside of a moment could be described as metacognition. An added Meta-level [[[]]].
[[liveness]].

HERE
Is this before or after you retraced memory? What that it's both? Make the before part of what is [[constructed in the moment]].

THE RADIO
The word live was needed to define the difference in perspective between transmitting: a live-[[broadcast]] or a [[recording]].

MEMORY
Retrace the actions of what you did before you took this paper into your hand. Put a timer on 5 minutes and go as far back in memory as you get. When it rings, return to the situation you are in now and continue [[here]].

*** META-LIVENESS**
The concept describes the sensation of experiencing the gap or glitch in between what takes place live, in friction with interfaced online experiences or what takes place live, IRL, in friction with recorded media and memory.

Define [[meta]]-[[liveness]] or [[renegotiate]] perception by playing.

CONTINUE
Imagine being both where you were [[]] in this other position at the same time. Picture seeing "the other you" being where you were before. Decide who of you continues. Can you allow the negotiation with yourself to be [[constructed in the moment]]?

FOREVER
That something can happen here and now has always existed, but the need to define this situation as live was invented around the time of the first technical recording and was for instance later used when [[broadcast]]ing radio.



CHOREOGRAPHIC CONTINGENCIES FOR ON- AND OFFLINE

What she, or I am researching can be described as reality-glitch art. Her, or my, PhD project circles around questioning, envisioning and exploring what liveness is and what it possibly can be in our post-internet era. Intrigued by the split attention that the parallel online space-time creates, Charlotta Ruth (CR) and I, spatially place the research in the gap between online and offline realities.

To work online contradicts and plays with the knowledge CR and I have about liveness from working with dance and live performance for 20 years. Inspired by the friction between what takes place in real life (IRL) and what takes place online, she and I are creating live situations where participants are both "acting" and observing.

Acting and observing is building on the hypothesis that, due to regularly watching images and videos of ourselves, we get used to having an in- and outside perspective of our experiences. This double perspective echoes processes formerly only belonging to human subconsciousness and memory. Seeing yourself in a live video stream could be the perfect illustration of the phenomenological concept of partial self: The "I" who has an experience and the "me" who is being observed by the "I".

CR and I developed a practice concept called analogue augmented reality (AAR). AAR plays with the consciousness we have from enhancing our lives with digital means, but renegotiates this awareness with analogue methods.

CR and I also want to propose thinking of the on- and offline environments as "partial space". Two of our previous performance works have transferred processes and dramaturgy from being online to live situations. Both works were also specifically reflecting the participatory aspects of being online. Displacing online habits to the offline live environment makes us observe what we are doing on a meta-level. The current research is building on that trajectory.

One of the practice-based methods CR and I use is based on instruction-based art. Instructions are performative. They make you do something. They even activate you when they are conceptual and not really meant to be carried out, or when you chose not to follow.

CR and I find it politically relevant to research how we relate to instructions since basically the whole digital world is built on how computers compute information according to set parameters. When Artificial Intelligence (AI) follows instructions, it will (only) do exactly what the instruction is saying.

Human Intelligence (HI) instead follows instructions through filling in gaps of information with creativity. When HI is given an instruction, you can be sure that

the instruction will never be carried out the exact same way twice.

Reversing the concept of the Uncanny Valley (the sensation created when you interact with machines that have human-like behaviours), CR and I find it fascinating to reduce everyday human actions, like making coffee, to instructions so precise that they could be carried out by a machine. Through this deconstruction of everyday actions, the complexity of the human mind is automatically at play.

Theatre is organised in the gap between fictive time on stage and the real-time of the audience. If this is not played with well we get what director Peter Brook in the 1960s called deadly theatre, boring theatre that, though it takes place in front of us, lacks the quality of liveness.

Nowadays, when reality is organised in the gap between online and offline time, one's own experiences also take place through the spectators' perspective. Experiences that, though they take place right now and IRL, displace the quality of liveness or aliveness to a meta, third person perspective.

To support the research and play with this (boring) theatrical approach to living, CR and I have developed the concept of Meta-Liveness*

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ABBREVIATIONS:

AI: Artificial Intelligence
CR: Charlotta Ruth (me)
HI: Human Intelligence (people)
IRL: In Real Life
AAR: Analogue Augmented Reality

MAKE IT REAL



Zentrum Fokus Forschung
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Hinnerk Utermann

Hinnerk Utermann is based in Berlin. He is a craftsman, architect and artist and works within and between the fields.

MAKE IT REAL

Hinnerk Utermann

“Make it Real” started from a fascination with a series of little cabins made by the artist Absalon. The work was on view at an exhibition in Berlin when I began working as an architect. I was a little shy about becoming an architect because of the impact a human-made environment has on its user. After studying architecture, I was left with the feeling that I didn’t know much about this relationship, while the practical work of an architect turned out to be a designing process and managing a technical procedure. In the artwork “Cellules” however, I was able to find specific insights into the correlation between an inhabitant and their environment. Analysing these relationships thus became the foundation of a spatial praxis, and this is what I want to establish as the main goal of my PhD Project.

CELLULES

Absalon designed the “Cellules” for himself to live in. Due to his early death in 1993 at the age of 28, the work remained unfinished, and only two of the six cells moved past the prototype stage. The minimized cabins were meant to be situated in 6 different cities around the globe and inhabited periodically. Each designed with the knowledge of Absalon’s needs, daily routines, functions, and bodily dimensions, they are like bespoke suits tailored to their creator. Made for a specific life, they are not just an expression of the artist, but also a tool to limit oneself. They force him to live, move and act in a specific, predefined way. In doing so, they are a rare example of spaces that are aware of what a dwelling is doing to the dweller. It is this interrelation between Absalon and the „Cellules“ that I find so interesting in his work.

PhD PROPOSAL

The PhD proposal was initially based on the idea of rebuilding Absalon’s “Cellules,” installing them at the intended sites, and inhabiting them. Apart from this research, I also wanted to start a spatial praxis which would relate to the outcome of that fieldwork.

After discussions with my colleagues in the PhD Program and my supervisor as well as some self-reflection, the focus of this PhD changed. Developing my own artistic practice of constructing spaces became the central focus. While the analysis of Absalon’s work remained, the re-enactment of living in Absalon’s cells fell by the wayside. This feels just right.

SPACE COMPARTMENT ONE

Due to this programmatic change, I started constructing the first cabin in my studio. With some preliminary fixings and a primitive sketch, the process began. Being related to Absalon’s cells in terms of material, form, and construction, I wanted to understand his artwork, but furthermore I needed a space to concentrate, a place to fill up with thoughts and materials which would serve as the basis of my knowledge and practice for the PhD. At the same time, I also wanted to get started with my own business of creating space. My operational

method was practical, direct, and immediate. Architects usually manage a planning procedure which is based on the division of labour and specialization. I wanted to do everything with my own hands to experience the flow of making - not just to supervise, but to know everything and make decisions from the bottom up. With a hand full of wooden lattices, hardboard plates, and screws, together with some tools, a Japanese hand saw and a cordless screwdriver, construction started in December 2017. Detail after detail was finished, and it took two months to finish the work.

Suddenly the Compartment was there, and it was used as an office for reading, drawing, thinking, and napping. Then I started to invite guests to talk with me about the space as well as their feelings and memories of space in general. Since Absalon largely made his spaces for himself as a tool for separation, I wanted to diverge from his model and make a space that was partly devoted to exchange. This aspect of getting together soon captured my attention. Human communication not only takes place under spatial conditions, but is itself a product of spatial conditions. By concentrating and focusing on an other, the senses create a sphere of attention - an inside - in opposition to a sphere of no attention - the outside. This duality of in and out is an elementary aspect of space.

SETTING

I made post cards as invitations and sent them to friends, architects, artists, and other people of interest. 43 guests came to visit separately, including two duets. I collected each guest from the basement and accompanied them up in the elevator. It was an old Berlin freight elevator without cabin doors. You had to stay away from the shaft walling as it slowly glides down while the cabin rises. Upon arriving on the 4th floor, a long dark corridor with no windows leads to the studio, which is in the centre of Berlin near Alexanderplatz. The studio - a room 8.50m long, 5.50m wide, and 3.60m high - is brightly illuminated by a window on the narrow side. The Compartment was placed behind the door in a corner of the room. Without a door and a window the construction gave no hint of the interior. Upon entering the studio, the guest was introduced to the cabin.

“Climb up the ladder, follow the narrow path to the rooftop door, enter the cabin downwards, watch your step, the ladder is a bookshelf too. Follow your body conditions, take your time to enter and be careful with yourself. Look around, feel your comfort, the space is very little, and you will share it with me. Do what you want, try what you want. When your explorations come to an end, take a seat and give me a call. I will wait outside until your call. If you feel panic or claustrophobia, come out.”

After the guest’s signal, which could take between 2 to 30 minutes,

I entered too and closed the rooftop door. An atmosphere of silence, a light wooden smell, a brownish color everywhere, and slight illumination by two lamps. No sunlight, no solar altitude. A small and reduced interior, but also the presence of “characters.”

An introduction to the work of Absalon and Space Compartment One was used to focus the talk on topics about space. Interesting discussions and talks ensued with each guest. A collection of anecdotes, stories, memories, perceptions of space, psychology, craftsmanship, and art arose. In doing so, each member left a footprint and added something to the space, a memory. Without planning it, most talks took around an hour and a half. The temperature rises and the air gets bad; concentration declines and most people start thinking about how much time they’ve spent.

Sharing a space of 1.83m x 1.70m face to face with another person is a highly intimate setting. The reduced interior combined with the proximity leads the attention from the static background to the body and its expressions. Every movement, gesture, facial expression, even every sideways glance draws attention. Every expression isn’t just noticed, but reflected on immediately. The limitation of space creates an encounter of dependency.

CURRENT

Space Compartment One has already been deconstructed and stored in my atelier. It is the first shelter I constructed, that is somewhere in between art, architecture, and craftsmanship. Moreover, it is a spatial practice which includes processes of planning, constructing, using, sharing, and getting together. This last aspect of duality, in opposition to the singularity that was so important for Absalon, will be deepened within my practice. The next idea is ready to be constructed.

“MAKE IT REAL”





performative materiality

researching the role of material in the artistic production process

from the marble of michelangelo to the grease of beuys, material has always played a central role in western art. nonetheless, it usually was understood as inferior substance, as a mere carrier for a form, and behind that form there stood a transcendent idea - the superior part of the artwork.

until the beginning of the 20th century, this concept, which basically goes back to aristotle, played a key role in the production of art in the western hemisphere. only modernism would give rise to a critical take on material in the visual arts as something that is equal to form and idea.

interestingly, at the turn of the millennium and with the rise of so-called "media art", this changed again. the new keyword back then was "immateriality". genres like video art, net art or - more generally - computer art were mostly understood as semiotic signs without any connection to their materiality - the machinery, tapes or networks they were made of.

this view was revoked in recent years: material and materiality had a kind of "comeback" in the arts, but not only as a carrier for an idea. what is currently discussed is the so-called "agency" of material, often subsumed under the term "new materialism". to quote jussi parikka, one of the leading thinkers in this field: "At its broadest [...] new materialism can be said to concern a set of questions and potentialities that revolve round the idea of active, agential and morphogenetic; self-differing and affective-affected matter."⁽¹⁾

reading this quote closely, it is evident that such a discussion pushes away from a view that sets the artist or the final artwork at the center of an artistic work. it is postulating an equality of materials, things, and humans which implies a fundamental shift away from an anthropocentric conception of the world.

the project performative materiality primarily focuses on this idea as summarized above with regard to the artistic process. it is less concerned with the analysis of material or its effects on the reception of artworks in their final state than on investigating the qualities that materials yield during the creation process and conversely their reciprocal influence on the creation process itself. this pendular movement and the interdependency of material, form, perception and context are understood as a generative, performative act to investigate.

in summary, this investigation postulates that a continuous transformational loop takes place during the artistic work process prior to finalization, which oscillates between material, form, perception and context and thereby brings these parameters of artistic production into a mutual dependency with one another.

michael kargl, mag. art. | born 1975 in austria (hall in tyrol), is an artist and researcher who lives and works in vienna. since 2016, he has been co-director of the project *originalcopy* and is doing a phd on materiality at the university of applied arts vienna.

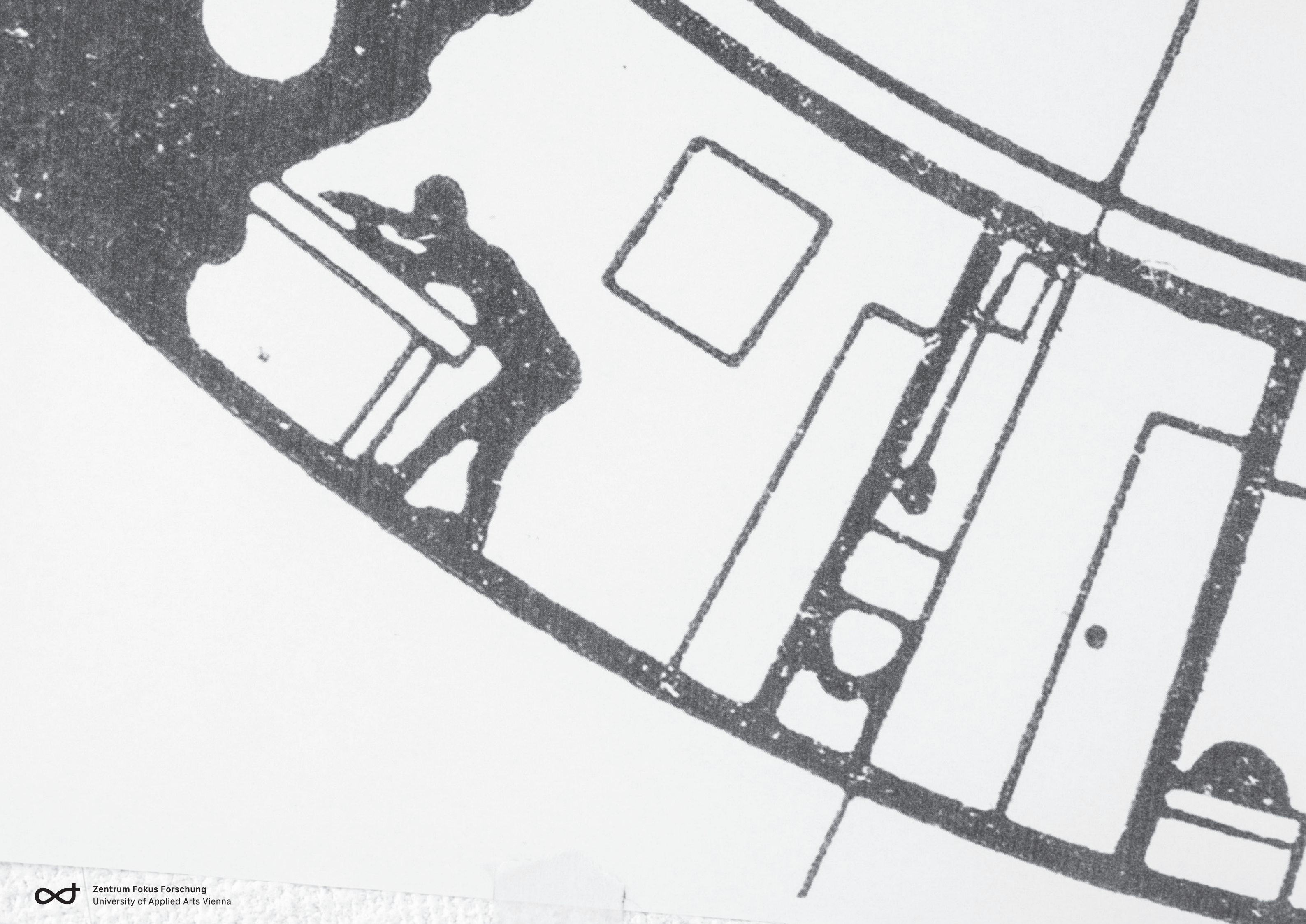
before that, he mentored students at the transarts department at the same university, was head of the interdisciplinary class at the vienna art school from 2006 to 2014 and lectured at the mozarteum university in salzburg at the department of fine arts, art and craft education from 2004 to 2006.

in 2004, he completed his studies in salzburg with a final thesis (mag. art.) on virtual architecture and cyberspace with a main focus on studies of sculpture.

the artistic practice of michael kargl includes net art, sculptural objects and installations as well as a transmedia area of activity, informed by minimalism and conceptual art. he has participated in exhibitions and events at various art institutions, including wiels, brussels (2018), the museo de arte contemporáneo, bogotá (2014), the moscow biennial (2011) and the national museum of contemporary art, athens (2010). he was a co-founder and member of the collective CONT3XT.NET (2006–2012).

(1) Jussi Parikka, "What is New Materialism," *Machinology*, <http://jussiparikka.net/2010/06/23/what-is-new-materialism-opening-words-from-the-event> [accessed May 13, 2016].





Ralo Mayer

The Problem of Space Travel in 1920s Vienna (Spinner)

when there's no weight spin it revolutions

Despite my increasing desire to explore the future of *Space Un-Settlements*, I have now ultimately landed in the past, once more. But is it remote? In terms of spatial distance, it's right here: I will talk about Vienna and its local history of space unsettlements. In terms of temporal distance, it might seem remote and long gone. I have landed in Vienna of the 1920s. Yet, some of you might agree that the 1920s are, for better or worse, surely unsettling, much closer to our own times than, let's say, the year 2000.

1. THREADS

Let me start with a thread. So far, the only way to get to outer space are rockets. Which are still expensive and dangerous. It would be so much cheaper, and easier, to lift goods and people to space if we had a tower. Or, even better, an elevator. A space elevator is basically a very long tether between a place on Earth and a position in geostationary orbit, with a platform climbing up and down. But it would be very long. 36,000 km. And at that length, even the thinnest thread will have gained a lot of weight. Unfortunately, a material that's both so lightweight and so strong doesn't exist yet. So, for now, until this thread can be built, we're stuck with rockets.

One of the first books to describe rockets and their use for fireworks and the military was written in the 16th century, in Transylvania, by Conrad Haas, who was born in Dornbach near Vienna. The manuscript was called *Kunstbuch*. It is also the first publication that mentions the word “rocket”:

Wie du solt machen gar schöne Rackette, die da von im selber oben hienauß in die hoch faren.

And the term *Rackette*? Conrad Haas derived it from the Italian *rocchetta* – bobbin, or spindle. Because the rocket looked like a spindle. A spindle that feeds fibres to a spinning wheel, to spin a thread.

On June 20, 1944, a rocket was the first human-made object that travelled into space. The Nazis tested the *Aggregat 4*, also known as the V2, the rocket that would soon be launched to attack London, Antwerp and Liège. Some 16 years later, former Nazi rocketeer Wernher von Braun lived and worked in the United States. In March 1952, he published a series of articles in the popular *Collier's* magazine. In this series, called *Man Will Conquer Space Soon!*, von Braun proposed a spinning wheel as the next logical step after reaching space with rockets. The wheel-shaped space station would rotate at three revolutions per minute to provide artificial gravity for its inhabitants, effectively one-third of Earth's gravity. And while this article popularized the idea of a spinning wheel space station, its design became famous in 1968, in one of the most influential science fiction films, Stanley Kubrick's *2001 – A Space Odyssey*.

Nevertheless, the first concept of a rotating space station predated Wernher von Braun's proposal by more than twenty years. The first wheel-shaped space station was designed in 1929 by engineer Herman Potočnik – here, in Vienna. Potočnik was born in 1892 to a Slovenian family in Pula, a naval base of the Austro-Hungarian empire. After graduating from the military academy in Mödling, he served as a first lieutenant in World War I, later being promoted to captain. After the war, he was pensioned off due to tuberculosis contracted during the war and studied engineering at the Technical University in Vienna. He lived in the city until his untimely death from tuberculosis in 1929. There are virtually no manuscripts or personal documents left by him. In late 1928, his only book was published under his pen name Hermann Noordung by the Berlin publisher Richard Carl Schmidt. The book's title is simple and straightforward, yet poetically corresponds with my PhD project's research interests: *Das Problem der Befahrung des Weltraums – The Problem of Space Travel*.

In the first half of its 190 pages, Noordung sums up existing ideas for rockets, launching and landing maneuvers, as laid out by other pioneers of his time, like Hermann Oberth or Konstantin Tsiolkovsky. In the second part of the book, Noordung describes

his own proposals for life in space. The grandest of his ideas, and the one he is best known for, is his design for a space station, the so-called *Raumwarte*. The three-part station is positioned 36,000km above the Earth's surface, which would provide a stable position in relation to the earth's rotation. Noordung compares the position to the top of a giant tower, thus the name *Raumwarte* – space observatory.

Its central, and most famous element is a wheel-shaped habitat, the so-called *Wohnrad*, or living wheel. With a diameter of 30 meter, it would revolve once every 8 seconds, or 7½ revolutions per minute, resulting in centrifugal forces equivalent to Earth's gravity. The station's crew would have their living quarters in this wheel. The second element of the station is the *Observatorium*, a laboratory with telescopes for watching objects both in space and on Earth, and a place for conducting experiments in micro-gravity. The third element is the *Maschinenhaus*, a solar power plant providing energy for the station through a steam turbine heated by solar radiation and concave mirrors.

Throughout the book, Noordung employs a wonderful language that oscillates between science and literature. His German effortlessly integrates objective engineering proposals and matter-of-fact poetic descriptions of everyday life in space. At the time, the early 20th century, no actual data about the vacuum of space, traveling in rockets or the effects of weightlessness, were available. All proposals about going to space, and possibly living there, were based on speculation, be it in fantastic literature or in scientific concepts and approaches. Noordung muses about the physiological and psychological effects of space on humans:

Das Fehlen der Schwere Ohne Luft Wärmelos Im leeren Weltraum herrscht ewiges Schweigen

He compares the weightlessness in space to an endless free fall. This could induce a never-ending sensation of terror in people. Yet, as Noordung suggests, humans could eventually adapt to this feeling – very much like pilots or ski-jumpers, who have likewise learned to adapt to scenarios of changing gravitational forces.

Das Problem der Befahrung des Weltraums was groundbreaking in at least three areas: - The first design for a rotating wheel-shaped space station - Promoting a geostationary orbit specifically for Earth observation and telecommunication. Popular opinion has it that science fiction author Arthur C. Clarke had first described the concept of geostationary orbits in the 1950s. Clarke, also Kubrick's co-author for *2001*, would deny this and acknowledged Noordung's earlier work. - Various solutions for everyday problems of life in weightlessness. He describes squeezable bottles for drinking, handles to move around, cushioned spaces or the necessity of airflow-control and obligatory storage of all objects to keep stuff from floating around. His love of detail can also be seen in the design of the *Wohnrad*. So far as I know, it includes the first depiction of a toilet in space.

At the time of its publication in late 1928, the book was well-received by the press, and it sold well enough to receive a second edition soon after. So far, I've found little evidence of feedback by Noordung's space pioneer peers, such as Hermann Oberth. His networking abilities seemed to be less developed than his engineering. Wernher von Braun, who had just joined the German *Verein für Raumschiffahrt*, cited the book in his dissertation in 1934. He did not do so when writing his article in 1952. Noordung's book was also translated into Russian and most probably read by early Soviet rocket scientists.

Perhaps most important for Noordung's underrated legacy, *Das Problem der Befahrung des Weltraums* was promptly taken up by American publisher Hugo Gernsback – one of the most influential figures in the early history of science fiction. Gernsback launched several science fiction magazines in the late 1920s, and in the second issue of the monthly *Science Wonder Stories*, July 1929, he began publishing an English translation of excerpts from the book. Gernsback continued to praise “Captain Noordung” and his revolutionary ideas throughout the following issues. He explicitly advises established and new writers to base their stories of life in space on Noordung's book and his engineering designs. The cover of the third issue

of *Science Wonder Stories*, August 1929, features the very first depiction of a rotating space station in an English language context. Young Arthur C. Clarke and other writers of his generation read Gernsback's pulp magazines and, most probably, followed his advice to study Noordung eagerly. But when the third and final part of the English excerpts was published in the September issue of *Science Wonder Stories*, Hermann Noordung was already dead. He had died from tuberculosis in a Viennese hospital on August 27, 1929, at the age of 36. His name was all but forgotten outside rocket science. After World War II, he had become a mere footnote of the dawning Space Age.

As Hermann Potočnik had studied at the Technical University in Vienna, I visited their archives. His records state he began studying mechanical engineering and electrical engineering in 1919 and graduated in 1925. He states his mother language as German. But this data doesn't answer my questions. Questions like: *What makes a veteran of World War I become interested in space, here in Vienna, in the 1920s?* *What was the relation of the social, political, cultural and economic context of 1920s Vienna to Noordung's work?* *Most importantly, given the political climate of the time, are there any hints to Noordung's possible political and social views?* *Was he a socialist and pacifist?* Or, *had he not died in 1929, would he have later joined the ranks of the Nazi rocketeers at Peenemünde?*

There are no personal records that connect Hermann Noordung to any contemporary figures and movements in Vienna, like scientists, philosophers or artists of the time. Just think of Sigmund Freud, Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky, the Wiener Kreis... He lived together with his brother in modest conditions, never married and suffered from tuberculosis through the last years of his life. We don't even know why he called himself Noordung. What's behind a pseudonym? For all I know he could have been a weird loner interested in outer space. Perhaps a lunatic? Or, in German: *ein Spinner*.

2. SINCERITY

Lacking additional primary sources, I can just rely on his only book and speculate how it was created. I also started reading about the 1920s in Vienna. I read biographies of contemporary figures of the time. I read books about Paul Kammerer, an experimental biologist of the time, his life as fascinating as tragic. I went to the ORF's film & TV archive and watched old propaganda movies from the 1920s. The social democrats had just successfully abolished the 12-hour work day and established basic child support. I watched footage of a half-finished Karl Marx Hof in 1928, trucks bringing in new material, construction workers smiling into the camera, building fortresses for the working class that would be overrun by fascists only 6 years later. Children in ragged clothes dancing in circles and laughing, spinning around. A friend tells me about an archive of a registry of residents. I get up at night, find the archive online and type POTOČNIK. I find a Hermann living with Adolph Potočnik, that was his brother's name, and now I have his address.

We walk out onto the street. To the right there is the Urania, there are few cars on the street, some horses. First it's a silent movie, black and white, but then some colour and sound pour in. The Donaukanal looks different, it's more open, no U-Bahn, but the Stadtbahn cars are busy carrying passengers. The embankment is sloping down more gently than today. Paddle steam boats on the water. We walk towards Morzinplatz. There's the Hotel Metropol, glamorous and splendid. Ten years later, this will be the headquarters of the Gestapo. We walk further west towards Rudolfsplatz. We're almost there. Some small shops in the street. It's called Neutorgasse. The address is Neutorgasse 1. From the early 1920s until his death in 1929, Hermann Potočnik lived here together with his brother Adolph, or Dolf. When you open your eyes, you realize the old building no longer exists. There is a newer 1960s building at the same spot, and now it's the address Concordiaplatz 2. Austrian artists certainly know this address; it's the building where the federal art funding resides.

Snap back to reality, oh there goes gravity

The term essay derives from the Latin *exagium* – the weighing, or the weight. Working with essayistic forms on the subject of *Space Un-Settlements* has put me in an

interesting situation, because how do you weigh things in the weightlessness of outer space?

The essay as form has often been described as a hybrid undertaking: not science, not literature; neither philosophy, nor poetry; not entirely based on facts, yet not complete fiction. The essay has been described as an emancipatory style that breaks down disciplinary borders and class borders, but it has also been accused of being a “style of the rightwing”. *Wer einen Essay schreibt, der hat nichts erforscht und nichts erdacht; der liebt die flinken Einfälle und hübschen Sprünge; und für eine geschmäckerliche Formulierung verrät er bedenkenlos die Sache.* With an essay one could refine an existing world, but you couldn't change it. And yet: *Der Argwohn dem Essay gegenüber trägt Züge eines klassenspezifischen Ressentiments.*

Working with essayistic forms and artistic storytelling approaches today, I cannot but reflect on the relation of fact and fiction in a greater political framework. What does it mean to create artistic narratives and speculative research, when the greater social context is increasingly defined by a discourse of “fake news”, “alternative facts” and half-baked conspiracy theories posing as legitimate political analysis? Is it a question of authenticity? I would strongly oppose this. I don't give a fuck about authenticity. And neither do the ones claiming to be authentic and to speak authentic language and to publish authentic images. But there is another concept, which might sound similar at first, but is fundamentally different. It's one of these old school words that one hardly uses anymore. Sincerity.

I got to know it through Canadian researcher and poet Jeff Derksen. Derksen understands sincerity not as a trait or affect that resides within an individual, but as a quality that is created between subjects. In Derksen's words, *“Sincerity, shorn of its attachments to authenticity, and unleashed from a singular subject, can be a political force between social subjects. That is, politic. “This turns away from sincerity as a projection of an individual quality, buried inside a subject and projected out into the public sphere or into mass politics. Instead we have a social sincerity understood as a shared social intensity and not an affect that emanates from a single authentic subject. Sincerity, instead, is a relationship to and in the social world.”*

Derksen's re-discovery of sincerity in relation to political aesthetics is based on a poetry movement from the 1930s and 40s: *“The Objectivist poets, as they named themselves, approached sincerity as a political and aesthetic challenge to portray a thing or a place or a condition concretely and complexly through attention to the social relations both in and around the thing.”* Objectivist poetry was based, for example, on archival material, juridical records, everyday situations. But what does that mean when there is so few source material, like in my case of Hermann Potočnik Noordung? How do you weigh things in microgravity?

when there's no weight spin it

3. ATTRACTION

In late 2016, I met Australian space archaeologist Alice Gorman in Vienna. We had coffee and discussed the ideas of Hermann Noordung. Alice stayed at a hotel close to the Prater. She talked about how much she loved the amusement park's attractions, and how she was fascinated by their playful environments and their regimes of changing gravity. I told her I had had the same feeling when I moved to an apartment next to the Prater some years ago, where I stood on the balcony and could watch people and hear them screaming while they were being shot into the air, hurled around, spinning in giant centrifugal machineries. We agreed that amusement parks, or *luna parks*, as they are often called, are quite close to astronaut training grounds. And like space exploration, they feature a multilayered integration of curiosity and flawless engineering. When you're up in some rollercoaster, there is no space for sloppy construction, as much as an astronaut's life depends on precise science and engineering. Spinning around on some giant carousel, your life is literally hanging by a thread.

We decided we should do some performative research of the Prater's gravity machines. And we asked ourselves if Hermann Noordung's ideas were also influ-

enced by the Wiener *Wurstelprater*. Later, when I found his address in that old registry, it seemed not only possible, but highly probable, that even a Spinner like Noordung might have visited the Prater luna park once in while.

Let's say we walk from Neutorgasse 1 to the Prater. We cross the Marienbrücke above the Donaukanal, or we cross at the Urania. While we walk on Praterstrasse towards Praterstern, we might hear people chanting or singing or screaming. In the late 1920s, we might find ourselves in a socialist rally, in a street fight between left and right-wing protesters, in a riot, or in some shuffle of small-time criminals. The Prater, and the Praterstern, have been a focal point of social issues long before the recent Alkoholverbot. In July 1928, we might even find ourselves in one of the greatest gatherings of the 1920s, the 10. Deutsches Sängerbundesfest. In celebration of Franz Schubert, thousands of nationalist Germans and German expatriates from all over the world came to Vienna to sing Deutsche Lieder together. In the Prater, what was then the largest hall was built, a wooden construction that could house over 70,000 people at once.

In the 1920s, the Prater was not only a focal point of social and cultural developments. Back then, it was also a showcase and testimony to modern technology. From constructions like giant halls for choirs or indoor skiing to theme park rides, the Prater exhibited the technological breakthroughs and promises of modernity. The very first attractions drawing people to the Prater area in the 1770s were the fireworks of Johann Georg Stuver. The Prater became Vienna's heterotopia. Starting around the turn of 20th century, several cinemas showed the latest silent movies. The biological experimental station at the Prater Hauptallee was the world's leading laboratory in its field. Before its scientists were killed by the Nazis and the building was destroyed, the institute did groundbreaking research on hormones, on evolutionary changes in controlled ecosystems and on gravitational influence on plants. For the latter, they used a device called *Klinostat*. It slowly turns plants around a central axis to facilitate studies of changing gravity conditions.

Ladies & Gentleman, please enjoy the Attraction of Gravity! – Die Attraktion der Schwerkraft!

So, is it sincere to guess that a resident of Vienna in the 1920s, who lived within walking distance, probably visited the Prater once in a while, even when he suffered from a chronic lung disease? Did Hermann Potočnik Noordung then ride on a carousel, spinning around in circles; did he watch silent science fiction movies at the Prater cinemas; did he experience the short moment of weightlessness while on top of a giant swing; did he take a ride on the new *Liliput-Bahn*; did he enjoy the colonial displays of the theme parks; did he join the German nationalists singing Schubert; did he come to see the world-famous biological experiments conducted by Jewish scientists; did he get drunk in the evening in one of the countless dive bars; did he encounter a hooker in the park; or pass the cruising area – and did he leave the Prater dreaming of a future in space while walking back home to continue work on his book?

Alice and me, and perhaps also Hermann, spent an entire afternoon and evening at the Prater. Next to the planetarium, we came across a giant globe, covered in graffiti, and spun it. In the background we watched the *Riesenrad*, Vienna's iconic Ferris wheel, slowly revolving. And though most probably we'll never find a document to prove our theory, we were enthralled by the sincerity of our common speculation – that this attraction had inspired Noordung's wheel.

This text follows the script of a lecture performance presented at the Public Colloquium in May 2018. The edits are based on feedback during the event and later specific questions by my PhD programme colleagues – thanks a lot!

Ralo Mayer's works delineate “ecologies of contemporary history” linking past futures and speculations of the present day. Based on extensive research, he interweaves objects from space exploration, ecology or the science fiction of everyday life into multilayered narratives across media like installation, film, text or performance. His work has been presented at international exhibitions, film festivals and conferences, and won several awards. For his artistic research PhD project, Space Un-Settlements, Mayer investigates the interrelations of ideas and experiments of life in space and earthly realities. <http://was-ist-multiplex.info>



Marie-Claude Poulin

**Mutations-
bodily perception, analog and digital dispositives**

2018

*Annotation
spillovers*



Iterative outgrowths - a methodology case study

The work I have been conducting in collaboration combines – in many ways and in an ever-changing array of degrees and layers – artistic practices that have their own backgrounds, techniques, and aesthetic paths. This work has explored and continues to explore various combinations of live, scripted, and spontaneous scenarios involving time, space, and the presence of a performer’s body in a relationship with an audience. A large proportion of this work is articulated through the choreographic writing of the movements and behaviours of the human body, as well as of analog and digital objects. Founded on movement analysis techniques, this writing is at the meeting point of movement notation, applied cognitive sciences, and Eastern somatic practices.

In the framework of my artistic research PhD initiated in 2016, *Iterative outgrowths* is the umbrella under which I conducted a series of experiments that included practical tests, variations, and try-outs, all the while turning an analytical eye on my research and my creation methodologies and procedures. These experiments resulted in three performative iterations that were presented at the Angewandte Innovation Lab in May 2017. Iterations I, II, and III were performed by a dancer and a horde of digital agents acting according to their own purposes. Integrated into a shape-recognition system, generative graphical particle elements were projected onto piles of white cushions and beanbags. Transformed into what one could interpret as hives of particles, worms, or bacteria, they affected the performer, who then altered the projection. A landscape haunted by the passage of time questioned the relationship between organic life and artificial intelligence. These experiments were aimed at informing the theme of a wider research: the impact of dispositives (apparatuses) on bodily perceptions, both in my artistic practice and in artistic creation involving body-based performance and the digital arts in general.



to access the demo video of the *Iterative outgrowths* experiments, point your smartphone at this code

Against the backdrop of this central question of my doctoral project, I will describe three key aspects that have emerged in my artistic research so far: Studio notes as valuable remains of the artistic process; Digital media elements and collaboration itself as a dispositive; and *Choreograms* and the *Sensorimotor score* as graphematic instructions to act.

Studio notes as valuable remains of the artistic process

Early in my research project, I was struck by the informative potential of the notes taken during practical work in the studio: the thoughts related to the research process leading to an art work, but which were not necessarily represented in its final form. The first year of practical PhD research was documented by handwritten and digital notes, along with video and audio recordings and photographs. Decrypted and analyzed, this data rendered significant information.

I realized that these remains, or vestiges “...become productive and open up to other interpretative spaces” (H. Rickli, 2012). Their analysis generates a unique perspective on the research process, emanating from and dictated by practice. The immediacy of note-taking makes it a valuable source for studying the deeper nature of the research-creation process and its issues. Taken in an almost unconscious manner, the notes are witnesses to doubts, ideas, methods, and breakthroughs during the decision-making process. In the framework of my PhD, this perspective has led to a thorough, documented understanding of my artistic research method and has facilitated the translation of practical knowledge into other forms of discourse potentially applicable to the larger field of research-creation.

The intermixing of artistic languages and the complexity of parameter levels are manifest in the studio notes, which serve to define each practice involved and its connection to the whole. Body-based performance, user interaction, programming rules, digital visualization strategies, and social architecture approaches appear non-hierarchically in the notes, testifying to the fact that links often have more to do with the way elements operate than with their forms (Kozel, 2007).

The significance given to notes in the research process fostered a reflection directly connected to the deployment of the practice. Used to script audio-visual documentation, they led to a better understanding of core aspects of the artistic research process. This emerged from the need to intertwine conceptual and practical elements, even in the formulation and transmission of what motivates and constitutes the work, thus keeping close to the research issues as they are structured in the work. Due to the unexpected richness of the notes’ potential, the interest in treating them as source material in their own right became obvious. These *thinking-and-making* traces were considered for their likelihood of constituting “a form of *surplus / spillover*, appearing to contain more but also other possibilities of action than those assigned to them” (Rheinberger, 1992).

The notes were now treated as micro-creation forms, side-products of the principal artistic process. The aim was to produce a research output in which they would guide the structure of the audio-visual material in the form of core “visual-clips” representing audiovisual artifacts that reflect the research-creation process. Three types of short core visual-clips were developed, each one defining the contours of specific exploration fields. Deeply rooted in practice, the *Media dispositive conversation* (15 min.), the *Choreograms* (1.30 min.), and the *Sensorimotor score* (4 min.) reveal many of its hidden aspects.

Digital media elements and collaboration itself as a dispositive

The ongoing digital revolution has produced currents of thought that defend the need to re-appropriate the physical body. In the post-human discourse, digital technologies only exist when incorporated into corpo-

real human practices (Hayles, 1999); the post-media discourse holds that the experience of new media brings about an inevitable redefinition of “old media” practices (Weibel 2005); and the paradigm of the postdigital age aims to describe the consequences of digitalization on society (Agamben, 2002). As all of these currents concern the coupling of the physical and the digital, this alone justifies the necessity of methodological research into the mechanisms of genuine and profound transdisciplinary collaborations.

In seeking a comprehensive disciplinary crossover approach, this artistic research requires specialized knowledge of several fields, each of which generates specific dispositives. Besides relying on my own specialization in choreography, performance, and movement analysis, I contribute my experience in teaming up with colleagues from the other knowledge areas that are integral to the project. The tactics of collaboration are crucial in this endeavour. Beyond transcending disciplinary jargon and barriers, the cooperation focus must be on the reciprocal transfer of procedures, processes, strategies, and knowledge-sharing.

Several attempts were made to find the “right” way to document the process. But in recording practical sessions and collaborative brainstorming, the mere presence of a witness blocked the flow of ideas. The *Media dispositive conversation* is the result of combining the analysis of the handwritten notes with some of the video documentation attempts. Its significance was only revealed in the aftermath, as a *spillover*. Reflecting the intangible nature of the process, the relationship between words and images is deliberately loose and occasionally ambiguous. The premise is to use this document as a canvas to expose the media dispositive, together with collaboration issues.



Media dispositive conversation-clip

Taken out of context, this first visual-clip might resemble a cross between a technical tutorial and an articulate dialogue between artists. My visual programmer colleague Johannes Hucek and I are sitting in front of two monitors, with a view of a mini-stage where performer Audrey Rochette is moving about. At the beginning of the clip, the basic elements involved in the *Iterative outgrowths* experiments are presented: a camera sensitive to infrared light filming and tracking the space, four infrared lamps lighting the space, a projector, a computer processing live graphics and another processing live sound; a relational space where a performer sits, hides, builds imaginative constructions, and traces contours; and revelations of material-like folds, skin, shadows, social architecture frameworks, human behaviour, relationships with real objects, and qualities of presence and movement.

This recorded conversation is the result of a long process. The technical goal was that the generative entities be governed by rules that would encourage them to lodge in the shadows created by the objects in space, i.e. the beanbags, and by the human presence. The path to accomplish this was unknown. The unspoken subtext of our dialogue is that the technical elements were built in many meetings as we defined the artistic work and learned to deal with technological limitations. During this process, the pixel-agents progressively acquired a certain intelligence defined by our rules. Those who managed to reach shadow areas – where their “food” was – stayed, while the others disappeared.

The parameters with which we composed had to be combined and recombined in various ways until the formulated concept began to emerge perceptually. Some examples reveal how abstract and infinite nature of the data: number of pixels = 100; thickness = 1 pixel; lifetime = eternity; speed = 1 pixel / frame (60 pixels/sec.); transparency; oscillation. Certain features of the program that modulated the parameters were: the amount of time in a spot; zones / fields → calculating the activity/amount of change in comparison with the size of the field → ↑ activity ↑ more change → small change → big impact; the possibility of experimenting with colours and with interactivity.

This technical tête-à-tête is a slightly rehearsed synthesis of the conversations and brainstorming sessions of the eight preceding months. The main idea of these complex, sometimes laborious exchanges was to invent, define, understand, and carve out a technological dispositive while simultaneously developing a performance structured by and depending on it, amid the constant awareness of the paradox that the epistemic elements of the research can turn into dispositives, and parts of the technical system can also acquire an epistemic status while turning into research objects (Rheinberger, 2010).

Besides explaining the elements of the technological dispositive of the *Iterative outgrowths* experiments, the *Media dispositive conversation* visual-clip suggests that the collaborative process requires a specific working attitude: a willingness to listen and to re-learn one’s repertory of actions, ways of communicating, rules, techniques, and institutional references – a set of skills that constitutes in itself a collaboration dispositive for artistic research and knowledge production.

Choreograms and the Sensorimotor score as graphematic instructions to act

To what extent are we conditioned by the dispositives within which we operate? What can these dispositives teach us about ourselves?

In the instigator-paradigm of the *Iterative outgrowths* experiments, the pixel/agents projected into the real space were *made capable of searching for dark shadow areas by themselves*. With the aim of defining the influence of dispositives on bodily perceptions, the writing method of the movements and behaviours of the performer’s body, in the context of sharing the dispositive with the pixel/agents, was modelled on this paradigm. Keeping to this principle, collaborator Alexandre St-Onge used audio recordings of the electrostatic movements of the *styrofoam* particles in the beanbags to generate a sound environment that operates within the same paradigm (this collaboration process will be further described in the future).

To a certain degree, body-based performance and choreography can be considered as homologs to movement notation systems. In *Iterative*

Annotation spillovers

outgrowths, the choreographic script was articulated as an open-ended score, a set of rules and principles that framed and guided spontaneous, minimalist, pedestrian actions (Leigh Foster, 1986). In addition to the technological dispositive, the performer had to deal directly with the physical dispositive of the installation: a lounge type of space, a metaphor for a living room, with beanbags as seating furniture. The spaces to inhabit could symbolically refer to everyday scenes in the sphere of the familiar (a kitchen, a bedroom, an entrance hall). As for the physical space itself, the performer could use it to climb, slide, hide, rest, etc. The fact of confining the performer in a single gestural frame was not arbitrary choice: it ensured that the work would remain rigorously faithful to the determined parameters and not fall into a choreographic interpretation that could go outside the situation.

While the pixels/agents colonized the performance area by aiming at the shadow zones – either in the manner of parasitical organisms seeking moisture to be able to grow (*Iteration I*), as swarms directing themselves to a specific target (*Iteration II*), or like bacteria invading a given environment (*Iteration III*) – the performer was exploring a behavioural vocabulary in direct correlation with the situation at hand. *She sat down casually. She looked under the cushions and released the agents, like flipping over a big stone in the forest to observe insects and slugs. She built imaginary shelters that were invaded and settled by the bacteria. She took the form of prey to escape a threatening swarm at the last moment. She watched the outline of her shadow being devoured by the agents, like worms devouring a corpse.*

The second and the third core visual-clips, respectively entitled *Sensorimotor score* and *Choreograms*, were conceived from the analysis of the studio notes accompanying the process of the choreographic and performative tryouts described above. In the summer of 2017, research focussed on the goal of developing a choreographic vocabulary informed by the totality of the notes: a language that emanates from their semantic surplus / spillover. This was designated the *Sensorimotor score*. The choreographic methodology favoured here supports the theory of the “linguistic turn,” in which dance is seen as text and choreography as an order of language (Klein, 2011), incorporating aspects and methodologies derived from somatic practices and movement analysis techniques such as Laban notation, Alexander Technique, and Body-Mind Centering.

Sensorimotor score-clip



Note: the video version of the score contains only a small portion of the tasks which are enlarged upon in the written version.

Evolving within the dispositive constituted by the beanbags and the agents/pixels in search of shadow-food, the performer executed a repertoire of specific actions. Just like the agents/pixels, she became an agent/human, busily carrying out a series of operations: lifting, hugging, and flipping the beanbags, hanging from them, or inserting herself between them. From these simple residual actions developed within an advanced process of transdisciplinarity, a composite choreographic vocabulary emerged. Rather than being the result of an intellectual project applied to the locomotive system, the score modelled itself upon the functioning of the nervous system (Hartley, 1995). It was articulated where visualization and action meet, where the impulses of thoughts are short-circuited by those of feelings, imagination, and body mechanics.

A collaboration between myself – the viewer-choreographer – and Audrey – the actor-performer –, the score deliberately alternates between a sequence of instructions in the infinitive mode and a subjective introspective discourse. The language is at times metaphoric, representing the set of parallel and sometimes contradictory tasks the performer must negotiate in order to incorporate the score within the here-and-now of the performance. The *Sensorimotor score* lies behind the action, constituting the text of the dance. Guided by the one-to-one reciprocal transfer of procedures between the digital and soma-choreographic artistic languages, it formulates the instructions and tasks required to complete the written movement phrases, forged by the experience with the dispositive. At the end of this process, an autonomous choreographic language shapes itself ontologically. In short, the *Sensorimotor score* is a spatio-kinaesthetic amplification of the basic action constituents – the graphematic gestures I have called *Choreograms* – derived from the performer’s interaction with the dispositive of the installation.

Choreograms-clip



This project holds within it the innovative potential and social relevance of an artistic research that does not take the ascendancy of dispositives in our lives for granted, but chooses instead to appropriate, misuse, and transform them to generate new perceptual and behavioural forms, thus intervening directly in a society where perceptions are in full mutation. The upcoming research phase will further investigate the concept of the annotation spillover, while looking into how graphematic elements operate as bridges of continuity that provide an essential relay in the transition from one artistic research endeavour to the other.

This article is complementary to the lecture presented at the PhD public Colloquium, in May 2018.

Marie-Claude Poulin trained in dance and kinanthropology at UQAM (Montreal) and earned an M.A. in Choreography at the Inter-University Centre for Dance (Berlin). From 1985 to 2000, she taught somatic education and performed dance works, notably for Benoît Lachambre and Meg Stuart. In 2000, with digital artist Martin Kusch, she co-founded kondition pluriel, a company with which she presents performance-installations worldwide. From 2013 onward, Marie-Claude has been teaching at the University of Applied Arts, Vienna. She collaborates in international research projects such as E/M/D/L and Digital Synesthesia that focus on body-based performance in relation to virtual environments, machine learning, robotics and artificial intelligence. Her works with kondition pluriel have been presented in the following contexts, amongst others: ISEA (Nagoya, Helsinki, Essen, Vancouver, Hong Kong), ZKM | Center for Art and Media (Karlsruhe), Transmediale (Berlin), CYNETart (Dresden), Experimental Performing Arts Centre – EMPAC (Troy), Society for Arts and Technology [SAT] (Montreal), Centre des arts d'Enghien les bains (Enghien), Mois Multi (Quebec City), Museumsquartier Wien (Vienna), MAK Museum Wien (Vienna), and Robot Love expo (Eindhoven). www.konditionpluriel.org



EXTRAORDINARY
VS
UNEXPECTED

TOURIST AGENCY

The Tourist: zones, seasons, and fields in between

KATARINA ŠOŠKIĆ

I walk for hours. I start from Levante beach, take a



right towards city hall. I ask the travel

agency



for an old



brochure with



all the

skyscrapers

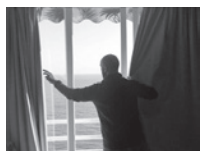
listed, that

I was previously told about. They



can not find

it, but after a short wait an



employee

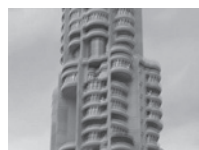
from the



same edition. It is impressive. 25 of the

highest buildings are presented with detailed illus-

trations. I am



excited. I continue my walk,

through Julio

built in the

Iglesias



park,

famous Spanish architect, whose buildings I like to visit

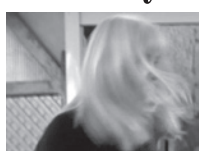
whenever they are around.



At its end there



is an



amphi-

to the

theater closed

I watch



a worker painting the floor white, at least

that is

what he appears to be doing,



may-

be he is not painting at all.

It is

noon, the sun is strong

and

feel how the reflection of the ground

his job even more exhausting.



are sweating because



is hot. It is silent, in

spite of his machine and my breathing.

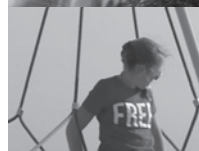
both aware of each other.

funny how what literally

middle of the words "tourist"



Isn't



We are

stands

it

and "agency"

them so brutally is

and what connects

the word - stage?



Excerpt from the
video: vimeo.com/293545199

"The Tourist: zones, seasons, and fields in between" serves as a sample for my investigation into the tools of research, namely photography and the written word, their codependency and potential necessity. After "Pool-sides and spring boards", "Tourist agency" comes as an expected 'jump' from formal theory into personal experience. It is an audio-video installation that reflects insights from the second stage of my research. Through the layering of narratives, I test the possibilities of subjectivity, curious to discover what this approach could bring to the general production of knowledge.

Katarina Šoškić (1983) is an artist-researcher from Belgrade. She is interested in the potency of an image – the way its narrative qualities could be employed to question social structures. She uses photography and words to research and analyze social phenomena, culture and subculture, the impacts of tradition and history, the constriction of social roles and underlying psychological mechanisms. What she finds most challenging in her work is the choice of taking certain positions, the possibilities of switching points of view and questioning the diversity of possible truths.

certain level of demystification that is rare but needed, especially in the art world. On the other hand, if I talk only about my particular research within this program, it would be one of my main goals – to make it accessible and useful for any artist or researcher interested in the issues I have touched on my way. A big and important part of artistic research performed within academia is exactly questioning and shaking existing structures, by searching and inventing new formats of dissemination of its insights.

A: Within our group, we've been given a chance to witness, follow and comment on the creative processes of others. I see this transparency as a great possibility to better our own practices. At the same time, our annual presentations of unfinished projects are open for a wider audience. We freeze the current states of our research and expose ourselves in our fragile positions. We are confronted with questions that we have no answers for, yet. And the audience is confronted with the undone, unfinished, unsure... This exchange brings a

main field of research from which I can observe and understand art as well as my relation to it. So while I am doing a research on traveling and tourism, I actually research what photography is, should or could be, and the meaning of the written word in relation to images that I cannot work without. It is my favorite aspect of artistic research; it becomes a tool for reflecting tools and methods that I would otherwise use only intuitively. Q: Do you think your research could help other artists or researchers? If yes, in what ways?

either un- concerned whether my research will become an artwork, or my artwork is the process itself. Either way, I am more curious why is this demand to distinguish between the two so strong? And could artistic research be performed by a non-artist? Q: Does artistic research make your art work better? A: You see, we take this differentiation for granted. I am forced to distinguish. So, yes. My artwork is better because artistic research opens a parallel layer next to the

might be understood as a research in which artistic tools and methods are developed to bring us closer to the answers and to new questions. It is a digressive and recursive journey, where one question opens myriads of paths to follow and their intersections become clues that bring us closer to that, was previously unknown. Parallel to that, the result or even a goal of artistic research might be an artwork. A: As I am more excited about this process that precedes the results, I am

Q: How do you distinguish your work made in artistic research from work as artist? A: I personally do not distinguish, as whatever I do is inseparable from research generally. If you have a tendency to analyze and to search for answers in order to understand whatever makes you curious, you end up doing research. Artistic research

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University of Applied Arts Vienna

Design: studioVIE

Non-Stop Stop-Motion 2018

Anna Vasof

Non-Stop Stop-Motion is an ongoing artistic research project at the crossroads of video, performance, fine arts and the overarching area of expanded cinema. It investigates where we can find the essence of cinematic illusion when we look into everyday life and what happens when we use everyday situations, objects, spaces and actions as cinematographic mechanisms. The object, space or action that forms the basis of the cinematic illusion and the illusion itself quite often appear simultaneously in the videos. The mechanisms and the illusions not only enter into a dialogue, but they also contradict one another. This activity makes Non-Stop Stop-Motion a self-referencing method of telling stories, which contain irony and metaphor about personal and social conflicts.

Short Bio

Anna Vasof is an architect and media artist. Born in 1985, she studied architecture at the University of Thessaly (2010) in Greece and Transmedia Art (2014) at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna. Since 2004, her videos and short movies have been presented at several festivals, some of them winning distinctions. She's currently writing a Ph.D. thesis about an animation technique that she is developing while at the same time working on designing and building innovative mechanisms for producing critical and narrative videos, actions and installations.

annavasof.net

Q & A questions (from the candidates)

Question 1:

If the horses don't obey, who then needs to obey to make the illusion work? (Or: Can illusion work under the condition of absolute disobedience?)

This question refers to the title of my presentation from last year, "Muybridge's Disobedient Horses." Often I wonder what our understanding about cinematic illusion would be like today if we could change a parameter in one of Muybridge's precinematic experiments.

Eadweard Muybridge (1830-1904) was a pioneer in photographic studies of motion and early motion-picture projection. He used multiple photo cameras and succeeded in becoming one of the first people to create photorealistic sequences of motion stills. Later on, he also succeeded in animating these sequences using self-invented pre-cinematic devices. His best known sequence is the sequence with sixteen horses. It is also the most commonly used example to describe how cinematic illusion sequences consist of still images.

What if, instead of using one horse and capturing sixteen stills of its motion, Muybridge had used sixteen different horses? If he then captured one photo of each horse while it's moving, could he also succeed in recomposing the images into an animated sequence? I don't know the answer because I didn't do this particular experiment, but I did several other similar ones in order to find out what creates the continuity in a sequence. Some of my experiments showed me some different ways to create sequences. Cinematic illusions could be made out of several elements, not only from stills that visualize phases of movement. I believe that different occasions require different sets of rules, existing or new ones. Rules exist in every society and in every ideology; the question is, who is setting them for what reasons and how critically are they applied?

Question 2:

What is the difference/resemblance between your mind combining single frames into a coherent movement and your mind connecting hits/tones into rhythm/music?

One of the goals of my project is to find out what creates the continuity in a sequence. I am afraid that this doesn't have one universal answer, as most of the classical cinematic theory books claim, referring to two biological functions. I believe that the way we interpret movement is individual. The common cinematic devices are projecting images that show stills of movement in fast speed in order for most of the people to make the trick work. But if we don't project stills from existing movements and we don't use the common projection speeds, could we also create the illusion of movements? The answer is yes. And at this time, I am decoding the different possibilities for doing this. One of them is to organize video sequences according to looping sound patterns that the brain associates with movements. Sound rhythms, together with moving references, are unexpectedly powerful for connecting elements and creating animated sequences.

Question 3:

How do you distinguish your artistic research from work as an artist/author?

If a researcher delivers knowledge without inspiring, or an artist creates feelings without saying something new, are both, for me, boring. In the PhD program, I work hard to decode my experiments and their outcomes in clear ways, hoping to deliver a useful theory based on them. But, honestly, I wouldn't like to distinguish my roles so much. Each role functions inseparably from the other in every occasion.

Question 4:

Does artistic research make your artwork better?

Everything that we experience influences what we do. Imagine now an artist being in a situation with the opportunity to get feedback and reflect on her work together with other researchers with similar interests.

Question 5:

Do you believe in academia?

Is academia a religion to believe in?

Question 6:

When does research become artificial?

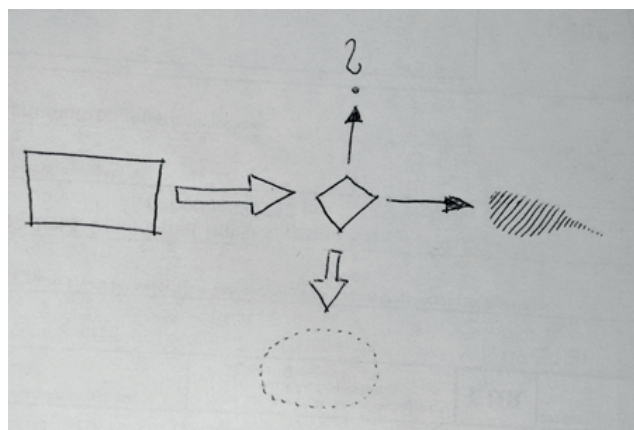
1. When it sounds important and no one understands it.
2. When it sounds important and every person understands what she or he would like to understand.
3. When it is a mixture of references in order to sound valid.
4. When it exists for funding, scholarships, academic positions, status, life-style etc., and it doesn't go beyond those reasons.
5. When it doesn't even inspire the person who is doing it.

Question 7:

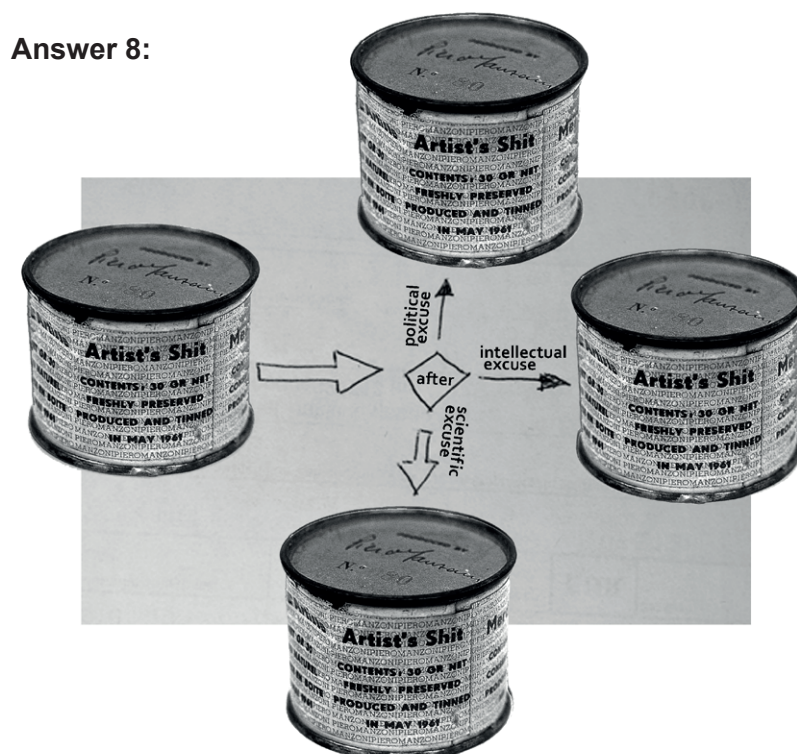
Is our PhD program what you hoped it would be?

I hoped it would be a space where we can discuss our projects and get honest feedback and this aspect is absolutely fulfilling my expectations. However, I was expecting that I would be able to find funding to be able to do this research, but I didn't fit any criteria for the existing scholarships. In order for someone to undertake research seriously, he or she needs to invest more than 60% of his or her working time. In cases like mine, there are also a lot of expenses, such as buying literature, materials for experiments and producing films. I don't know how this is going to continue, which is why it is important to talk about it openly, because doing research shouldn't be a luxury for already established academicians, shouldn't serve only topics that the market could have a potential interest in and shouldn't be made with big personal sacrifices. Doing research should be accessible.

Question 8:



Answer 8:





Still from the video "Vienna Hit", where I investigate how rhythm and moving references could create continuities.

Anna Vasof 2018



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