



# Concept of artistic intervention

Concept of the artistic intervention in the Creative Europe project  
future.repair.machine

**UNIT**

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## 1. What do we plan?

First, there will be 2 workshops dealing with the question of what is damaging language at the moment and how and whether it can be repaired.

### 1<sup>st</sup> serie of Workshops

In the first workshop eight people discussed and developed the basic structure of the paper. Together it was decided to prepare for a second workshop with the help of reading. To be read are: **The essay by Walter Benjamin "Karl Kraus" and by Karl Kraus "Dritte Walburgisnacht"**.

In addition, some of the participants will study the book **Lakoff/Johnson: "Living in Metaphors. Construction and Use of Language Images"** and also suggested this as a reading. A basic concept for the upcoming artistic work on the future.repair.machine was discussed and decided on with everyone.

*About the literature, we will read:*

a) *Karl Kraus "Third Walburgis Night"*.

With the insight that "violence is not an object of polemics, insanity not an object of satire", Karl Kraus justified his silence at the sight of the horror that entered everyone's life with Hitler's 'seizure of power'. The attempt to give an account of this 'failure' was to have appeared in the autumn of 1933 on four hundred pages of the 'Fackel'; but because the writing had unexpectedly turned into a reckoning with the Nazi regime, the publication of which could have endangered human lives, it remained unpublished. In it, Karl Kraus documented the first months of National Socialist rule in Germany from his desk in Vienna and analysed how fascism is made - in reality and in the media. He montaged and annotated quotes and images from international newspapers, radio and film broadcasts, weaving in references to Shakespeare, Goethe and other poets throughout. He described the first concentration camps, public humiliation and torture, the chumming reactions of journalists and intellectuals - such as Martin Heidegger and Gottfried Benn -, Goebbels' mentality, the lies of propaganda, Nazi terror in Austria and much more.

At the beginning of May - 87 years ago - shortly after his 59th birthday, he began writing his essay, which is certainly one of the most unusual political texts in German-language literature and which grandly refutes the prejudice that "you couldn't know anything back then". His work remained a fragment and was not published in this form during Kraus' lifetime. Only after the Second World War was it possible to publish

this polemic-satirical text, which was posthumously given the title "Third Walpurgis Night". Today it is considered one of the most clear-sighted analyses of the language and reality of National Socialism. 2. It can also be regarded as cogent proof of the possibility that the world war and the Holocaust could already be read from the events that are cited and broken down in this writing from the first months of the regime.

b) *Walter Benjamin "Karl Kraus"*

For Walter Benjamin, philosophy was only conceivable as interpretation, as critique: as the separation of the true from the false. This emphatic claim is also followed by his examination of the work of Karl Kraus, which found expression in a total of five texts. In these works, all of Benjamin's thought motifs - from the early metaphysics of language to the late materialist-theological philosophy of history - are brought together as if in a prism and readjusted against the object of Karl Kraus's authority. At the same time, the texts also promote a discussion the work of Karl Kraus.

c) *LAKOFF and JOHNSON "Living in Metaphors. Construction and Use of Language Images"*

They understand as metaphor not rhetorically conspicuous language images, but everyday ones whose metaphorical content is usually not perceived. They suggest that our thinking, acting and speaking in everyday life as well as in science functions according to metaphorical patterns. The approach is exciting because it offers qualitative research a new perspective on language, culture and individual and social action. Despite the publication efforts of a handful of authors, the fascinating approach has hardly arrived in the social sciences yet: Where are the blocks to understanding between the enthusiasts and the rest of the field? The obvious interpretation would be that after reading it, not one word is left on the other, especially not the language of science. LAKOFF and JOHNSON not only unsettle the scientific establishment, but also one's own linguistic confidence. One has to admit to having followed too many unquestioned metaphorical patterns oneself. But perhaps obstacles to reception can be justified in other ways and are already inherent in the original: When reading the translation, these sceptical thoughts should also be presented.

## 2nd Workshop

Based on the results of the first workshop, the second workshop will now take place. It will last 4 days and 20 authors will take part. The thesis is that at the moment, similar to what Kraus reflects, language is very often used as propaganda language and real speaking does not take place at all. We want to examine this basic question supported by the reading. So we will create a common base in thinking with all the participants of the workshop.

### Creating texts

After the workshop, at least five of the participating authors will be commissioned to write a text dealing with our topic. "Damage to language through its misuse as propaganda language". „How to use language to deal with the reality?“ „What is the strength of poetic speaking? What can we learn from it?"

### Public reading

There will then be a public reading of the texts and discussions with the audience and a talk with experts. We call it Kritikfabrik a Format which we developed. What is the Kritikfabrik? We think: Artistic work needs intellectual discourse among artists, but also with the audience. Renowned artists and experts, read together, exchange ideas about the artistic work and open their conversation to the audience: the work of thinking is shared by all?"

### **Exhibition**

As a final part, installations will be developed with visual artists - if necessary on the basis of the texts - which can be shown as a joint exhibition and are intended to encourage people to think about private and public speech.

Since our work is very process-oriented, the results cannot yet be described more precisely.

## **2. Why do we plan it that way and how is it linked to the whole project future.repair.machine**

The work of uniT has two main focuses. One - which is essential for this project - is the DRAMA FORUM. The DRAMA FORUM supports the production of contemporary texts for the theatre. It makes them audible, visible, tangible and thus continues the Styrian tradition of authorship. Dealing with language is an essential moment in our work with authors. That is also the reason for working with a language artist and translator like Peter Waterhouse. Reflecting on language is one of the important elements of our work. uniT also organises the Internationale Dramatiker:innenfestival Graz together with the Schauspielhaus Graz. Over the past seven years, the Dramatiker:innenfestival Graz has developed into an important platform for authors.

We are building on this and working with the authors in this project.

We believe that in the current political situation - not only in Austria - public speech mostly follows the logic of propaganda and that this damages democracy in the long term. In our project, we want people to become aware of this and learn to recognise propaganda language as such. It is not easy to use language differently at this time. Media consumption and political speech have accustomed us too much to propaganda language. So, in addition to recognising the propaganda language, we also need an idea of how to speak differently, how to make words come alive again, how language relates to reality in a completely different way. This also has a political meaning, because democracy is always connected to language. The populism that is currently prevalent also bends language. Only a change in the way everyone speaks can guarantee the survival of democracy.

Repairing the language also means repairing democracy. When it comes to such issues, authors are the professional group, the artists, who have the competence to do this.

It is clear that we are thus thinking about the repair of language and repairing is the basic idea of the project future.repair.machine. The concept of repair is applied to the most diverse areas, in our case on the field of language. The aim is to improve the quality of our lives.

### 3. What is the timeline for our artistic intervention

Jänner 2023	1 <sup>st</sup> workshop und planning
März 2023	2nd workshop and selection of writers to produce a text
Juni 2023	Public Readings; Talks
September 23	Exhibition

### 4. Partners, Experts, communities, experts and participants included

#### *Experts:*

- The Austrian award winning author Peter Waterhouse. Edith Draxl as a dramaturg, visual artists and directors.
- Theater am Lend for the first presentation
- The Austrian Cultural Forum in Prague
- 20 authors
- 5 authors commissioned to write a text  
Citizens

### 5. Expected Outcomes

5 texts published in the internet and printed.

5 installations