

REGIEBUCH 4 (Concluding chapters)

Reinventing *Regietheater*

The Actor-Director Relation in Rehearsals

Documented Artistic Research Project (D.A.R.P.) / Dissertation

at Stockholm University of the Arts

PhD candidate: Johannes Maria Schmit

Defended on 12th of December 2025

Principal Supervisor: Jon Refsdal Moe

Supervisors: Josefine Wikström, Juliette Mapp

Proofreader: Matthias Müller (www.muellertranslations.com)

Graphic design for cover and Pre-studies: Miriam Hempel (<https://www.daretoknow.co.uk>)

Image on cover:

Projekt Totaltheater für Erwin Piscator, Berlin,

Grundrisse der Bühnenvarianten [floorplan of the stage variations] (1926)

© Walter Gropius / Bildupphovsrätt 2025

Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin

Note: This is the author's version of the work. The definitive version will be published as "Towards a Theater of *Regie* – Asymmetry and Consent in the Actor-Director Relation" in 2026 by transcript Verlag, Germany. The text is posted here by permission of transcript Verlag for personal use only, not for redistribution.

ISBN 978-91-88407-61-0

ISSN 2002-603X

X Position nr. 38

STOCKHOLM | STOCKHOLMS
UNIVERSITY | KONSTNÄRLIGA
OF THE ARTS | HÖGSKOLA

Abstract

This thesis investigates the crisis of *Regie* (i.e. of the agency of directing) in a post-#MeToo landscape. It argues that the outset of this crisis lies in an expansionist gesture – rooted in the avant-gardist ambition to merge art and life – by which directors have conflated artistic mandate with managerial control; a gesture culminating in the toxic institutional cultures painfully exposed during the last decade. Starting from this point of no return, the thesis examines the question of how to acknowledge the fact of directorial power abuse *without* cutting our practices off from the potential – or even the necessity – of directorial agency as such. Its title “Reinventing *Regietheater*” thus carries the tension between a historical form of theater (generally known as “directors’ theater”) and a yet-to-be-found future expression.

Conceived as artistic research, the discrete focus of the thesis is the rehearsal space and its confines. Within the micro-scale of the latter, the crisis of *Regie* reverberates first and foremost in the non-foreseeable instances of the actor-director interaction; namely in the increasing scrutiny applied to the tool of *improvisation*. In contrast to the prevailing strategy of eroding the rehearsal space’s symbolic boundaries (in the interest of directorial accountability), the thesis conceptualizes – practically as well as theoretically – a “Space of Rehearsals” as a heteronomous zone of safe but ecstatic play. This “Space of Rehearsals” is constructed through a rehearsal method informed by the psychoanalytic concept of transference as well as the interaction framework “Wheel of Consent”.

To answer its main questions, the thesis presents a “written part” as well as a set of “online resources” containing the documentation and “re-stagings” of the practical experiments. Four “books of *Regie*” present methodological reflections, a critical genealogy of a *theater of directing* (based on the author’s symptomatic practice) as well as the central concepts. Three so-called “Pre-studies”, devised through practical work with professional actors/collaborators form the empirical basis of the thesis, sketching out different possibilities for the actor-director relation in a re-invented *Regietheater*.

In the proposition resulting from the above, directorial agency does not necessarily sit with the director. Nevertheless, the disciplinary divide between actor and director is upheld; as well as the radical asymmetry in the distribution of authorial power, albeit in temporally limited and co-curated iterations. The main argument of the thesis is thus that the artistic potential of the historical form of *Regietheater* can be salvaged without taking a revanchist or revisionist stance: the idiosyncratic directorial agency known as *Regie* has its place in consent-based rehearsal settings.

Table of Contents / “Written Part of the Thesis”

REGIEBUCH 1 (Introductory Material)	7
<i>A THE PLURAL OF CRISIS IS CRISES. Preface</i>	8
<i>B THE SPACE OF REHEARSALS. Constructing our problematic</i>	13
Directorial expansionism	20
The dismantled rehearsal space	24
The Space of Rehearsals opening between actor and director (the disciplinary divide)	29
<i>C ARTISTIC RESEARCH NOW AND AVANT LA LETTRE. A methodological statement</i>	40
Forms of knowing	41
Aesthetic points of no return: Brecht as artistic researcher <i>avant la lettre</i>	48
Considering the present moment: artistic research as institutional practice	52
The formats of <i>phronesis</i> : Stanislavski as artistic researcher <i>avant la lettre</i>	62
From story to theory: the place of the anecdotal in artistic research	69
REGIEBUCH 2 (Situating the Director)	73
<i>TERRACING THE TERRITORY I. – The Mountain Range of Regietheater</i>	80
What is <i>Regietheater</i> ?	80
Caring for “The Accursed Share” – the ethical project of <i>Regietheater</i>	89
The Bataillean sun and the Club of Rome: leap into the present tense	94
<i>TERRACING THE TERRITORY II. – The Foothills of Regietheater</i>	99
Productive (un-)specifications: two necessary particularizations	99
A semblance of continuity	109
The “facile and ritualistic subversion”(postdramatic flexibilization)	119
“Le Froid et le Cruel”: the two lonelines of the director	128
Two geniuses mixing in the Foothills: leap into the present tense	139
<i>TERRACING THE TERRITORY III. – The Great Plains</i>	142

Rehearsals as participatory art pieces	144
Cybernetic promises – the director as <i>machine à gouverner</i>	150
State of the arts / Neoliberal immanence: leap into the present tense	164
REGIEBUCH 3 (Three Pre-studies and two related essays)	169
Set-up of the Pre-studies (context/concept)	173
4 <i>PRE-STUDY #1: Sarah’s Director</i>	183
5 <i>AMBIVALENT ACCOUNTABILITY – the Actor-Director Relation as Rapport</i>	184
I. Transference love: staying with the mess	196
II. Countertransference: introducing the director’s body	199
III. Lacan: the director as subject supposed to desire	203
6 <i>PRE-STUDY #2: Claire’s Director</i>	210
7 <i>PROPOSITION FOR A CONSENT-BASED REHEARSAL METHOD</i>	211
IC as an exemplary case and what is required instead	214
The Wheel of Consent’s container as a Space of Rehearsals	224
Reflections on the Wheel of Consent as a practical method of rehearsing	231
8 <i>PRE-STUDY #3: Anders’ Director</i>	242
REGIEBUCH 4 (Concluding chapters).....	243
X <i>PRELUDE – “What the hell were you doing in this house?”</i>	244
Y <i>TWO WAYS TO CONCLUDE</i>	248
Conclusion 1: Eleven deductions	248
Conclusion 2: Anecdotal inductions	261
Z <i>POSTLUDE – The “Final Pre-study”</i>	278
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	284
<i>References / Source list</i>	289
<i>List of illustrations</i>	306

Table of Contents / “Online Resources”

Please note that in the case of the most common references to the online resources I use the abbreviations indicated below.

Sarah’s Director (Pre-study #1); <i>pdf, 11 pages</i>	PS#1
Video Diary; <i>video, 6h13min</i>	VD
The prompted interview: Sarah’s, the actress’, edit; <i>video, 51 min</i>	
The prompted interview: Johannes’, the director’s, edit; <i>video, 1h</i>	
“A/synchronicities at Play”; <i>split screen video, 2 min</i>	
“The Sweat of Fiction - the actor-director relation in centimeters”; <i>split screen video, 11 min</i>	
Claire’s Director (Pre-study #2); <i>pdf, 15 pages</i>	PS#2
Director in the SERVE quadrant (excerpt of an improvisation); <i>video, 7 min</i>	
“A Study in Transference”; <i>split screen video essay, 32 min</i>	
Letter to Johannes; <i>pdf, 3 pages</i>	LTJ
Letter to Claire; <i>pdf, 12 pages</i>	
“The practical knowledge of the Wheel applied to rehearsals”; <i>pdf, 11 pages</i>	
Anders’ Director (Pre-study #3); <i>pdf, 32 pages</i>	PS#3
Work Demonstration: “Rehabilitating Asymmetry in the Actor-Director Relation”; <i>split screen video, 59 min</i>	WD

Accessible via Research Catalogue:

<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/2649533/2649531/1895>



REGIEBUCH 4 (Concluding chapters)

X PRELUDE – “What the hell were you doing in this house?”

In 1998 Lars von Trier publishes a “diary”, that he recorded during the production of his film *The Idiots*; the second movie made in compliance with the obstructions agreed upon by the “Dogma 95” signatories.¹⁹⁷ The book – also containing the original screenplay – presents a transcript of “daily diary entries”, originally recorded by the director with a dictaphone. Von Trier’s oral journaling spanned over a period of roughly 5 months (21.5.-15.10.1997) covering the rehearsals, the actual shoot and the beginning of the editing process. “In keeping with the spirit of Dogma”, von Trier states in a short prefatory note to the print edition, “I have neither read nor corrected the text.” (von Trier 1998, 159, my translation¹⁹⁸)

*

When I started my artistic research in 2019, I was intrigued by this relentless method of documenting a directorial process. Back then, I had just heard some audio excerpts of the actual dictaphone recordings, as they figure in the *making of* devoted to *The Idiots* – a

¹⁹⁷ The signatories of the so-called “chastity vow” were Lars von Trier and Thomas Vinterberg (the director of Dogma #1, *The Celebration*). They signed on behalf of the “Dogma collective” which further consisted of the directors of Dogma #3 (*Mifune’s last song* by Søren Kragh-Jacobsen) and Dogma #4 (*The King is Alive* by Kristian Levring). For the actual text of the “chastity vow” and the “manifest” as well as a contemporary perspective (all in English) cf. the 10th issue of the Danish film magazine p.o.v. dedicated to *Aspects of Dogma* (Raskin 2000).

¹⁹⁸ For lack of English versions, all translations of publications in Danish in *Regiebuch 4* are my own. The longer passages of von Trier’s diary (that I mostly work with below) can also be found in their original form in the endnotes.

documentary by Jesper Jargil with another Dostoevskian sounding title: *De ydmygede* [The Humiliated] (1998).

Taking inspiration in Lars von Trier's "sound" of oral journaling, the "diary format" was little later going to structure the fictitious rehearsal process within my first Pre-study (*Sarah's Director*). In my later narrativization of it, however, the reference to the "confession booth" in Sami Saif's *Dogville* documentary has always prevailed (cf. Chapter 4 and PS#1, online resources). And in fact – after years of futile attempts to dig up *The Humiliated* in the folds of the Internet again – I had almost forgotten about the dictaphone diary. In other words, by the end of it, I had forgotten the beginning of my PhD project. And only through a recently published essay collection (Albinus 2024) – authored by the most prominent actor of the ensemble of *The Idiots* – was I reminded of this exquisite documentation's existence. Remembering a forgetting that somewhat informed my first artistic research "invention" (cf. Kirkkopelto 2015, 51) – and that shall now serve as an entrance into these concluding chapters.

*

In his "Essays on Theater, Delusions and Failures" from 2024 the Danish actor Albinus recounts the inner trajectory the international breakthrough of *The Idiots* has sent him on. During his reflections, Albinus keeps on circling back to the field of German theater in particular that – given the agalmic radiation of what he critically terms "fænomenet Lars von Trier" (129) [the phenomenon Lars von Trier] – kept on hiring him as an actor throughout the three decades to come. In the essay where he specifically reflects the haunting success of the movie ('Du store idiot' ['You great idiot']), he ventilates his discontent of continuously being reduced to his performance as STOFFER dating back to the summer of 1997. ("Stoffer" is the

character name of the group leader of the pretense “idiots”; a nick name derived from “Kristoffer”, but also the Danish slang expression for “drugs”.¹⁹⁹)

It is also in this context that he recalls “the most honest conversation I have ever had with anyone about the movie” (Albinus 2024, 126). The scene in which this conversation is set, plays out right after the world premiere of *The Idiots* in Cannes, where von Trier’s film is *ex ante* attributed the cult-status it will, in fact, come to have. Due to a concussion Albinus suffered some weeks earlier, he had to cancel his following film and theater jobs, leaving him disoriented under the flashlights on the Côte d’Azur. According to his own account, he lands in Copenhagen both “*broke and mentally broken*” (Albinus, 127). Meanwhile, the book version of Lars von Trier’s dictaphone diary has appeared in Denmark’s most renowned publishing house; with the tabloid press immediately extracting the “juiciest” passages from it. In particular the director’s ambivalent infatuation with one of the actresses proves to make good material for scandalizing headlines. On the way back from France, von Trier is himself stuck in traffic jams on the German highways and therefor asks Albinus to urgently pass by his wife, who is currently trying to make sense of the “revelations” in the press and the “reality” of the process. Commissioned by “his” director to provide the missing link (and possibly take the biggest blow), “Stoffer” arrives in a home filled with empty bottles and overflowing ashtrays.

¹⁹⁹ I will admit that I myself have been high on STOFFER, too, reducing the actor to this *one role*. The words and way by which Albinus initiates the “orgy scene” – a scene that lifts *The Idiots* uncannily far above the comedy genre – have stuck with me and many of my *Regietheater*-socialized colleagues as a kind of cult phrase. Not knowing what he was exactly saying in Danish – “gruppeknald!” [group fuck!] - we *did* get the defiant intonation right: excessively repeating his words on all occasions we were ourselves – up until the early 2010s, at least – deluded by “fænomenet Jens Albinus”. As a close witness of the “social turn” in theater, Albinus proposes his own poignant analysis of its origins and effects. To compare his experiential account of the 1999 production of Strindberg’s “Father” at the *Volksbühne* – his first commission at a German theater – with the one of the 2023 staging at “Nibelungenfestspiele Worms” is highly informative of the transition I have myself attempted to describe in *Terracing the territory III*.

Bente Trier's distress is not alleviated by the fact that the warm memory of her pregnancy runs as a side story through her husband's diary; with the birth of the couple's twins making for an aside amid the "love story" between actress and director. ("Oh yes, by the way, we had two children the day before yesterday." (von Trier, 281)) Taking further into account that – as a professional pedagogue – she is an outsider to the film industry and possibly estranged by its sketchy work environments from the outset, Albinus has quite a task in mediation before him. He manages well, however, allowing for von Trier's wife to "flip the lid" (Albinus, 128): "What the hell...?", she bursts out while hitting the table, "what the hell were you doing in this house?"

*

Arguably, this justified indignation of Bente Trier in 1998 has turned into a general sensibility in the course of the last 30 years. After the social turn – of which I have discussed the specific effects regarding the rehearsal space in *Terracing the Territory III*. – we all find ourselves sitting in the sofa spot of Jens Albinus back then; awkwardly sinking into the gap between a "questionable process" and a "great artwork". Here, however, when taking the emotional charge out of Bente's question (the melodrama of empty bottles dancing on a sofa table hit by a fist) we might find the exact inquiry I have pursued in this PhD project: What is the heterotopic logic of a work environment of which the aim is play? What are the specifics of the professional relation between actor and director within? Which ethical lens is attuned to that relation/space, which one is not? And, finally, on the methodological plane, but still concerned with the questions above: what are the appropriate formats for documenting and analyzing the relational settings of theater making as such?

Living up to the emphatic interrogation – “*what the hell* were you doing in your research?” – I will try to sum-up the findings of this thesis in what is to follow. First, I do so with reference to my own practical explorations, i.e. within the simulations of the Pre-studies (Conclusion 1); and in a second step I sustain my argument with the “anecdotal theory” that can be inductively harvested from Lars von Trier’s dictaphone diary (Conclusion 2).

Y TWO WAYS TO CONCLUDE

Conclusion 1: Eleven deductions

I started out with diagnosing the crisis of *Regie* first and foremost as a crisis of the professional relation between actor and director. In my reading, this crisis is brought about by an *expansionist take* on the rehearsal space historically rooted in the avant-gardes, i.e. in an eccentric motion breaking down its walls from inside to approximate art and life. In this expansionist move directorial competences end up conflating artistic mandate with managerial power over actors, which has led to what we in recent years have called “toxic” institutional cultures. In the micro-scale of the rehearsal space this crisis reverberates in particular in the non-foreseeable moments of the actor-director interactions; in that regard, the *improvisation*, an essential tool of rehearsing, has come under scrutiny for being the privileged site of unwanted transgressions.

As a reaction to this crisis, I have described the tendency to no longer make a difference between the logics of the *inside* and *outside* of the rehearsal space; but to evaluate its interactions by applying the same moral standards to both spheres. I have elaborated on the phantasmatic vanishing point of this motion as a rehearsal space liberated of affect, psychodynamics and transferential energy; and put the nuancing question in response: how do we avoid *mystification* of the actor-director relation while simultaneously acknowledging the

fact of an unconscious at work in our collaborative processes? By what means – other than bivalent logics – can we *account* for the agency of the unconscious?

In response to what I describe as the *dismantling* of the walls of the rehearsal space – this time in a concentric motion, outside-in – I have thus worked on proposing something that I call the “Space of Rehearsals”. The Space of Rehearsals is the sphere of safe and ecstatic play, of desire and freedom that opens consensually between actor and director. The Space of Rehearsals as I conceptualize it – by help of practical experimentation as well as theoretical reflection – is supposed to safeguard highly intuitive operations by which, amongst other things, the exposure to the *non-foreseeable*, the *im-provisus* is possible again.

In the following I recount how I arrived at the Space of Rehearsals proposed in this thesis, with a special focus on the findings of the three Pre-studies. Below you will find 11 deductions that result from my research endeavor and that I will sustain in the course of this conclusion.

1. Affect is the material pre-condition for the work of acting. It is also a necessary “instrument” in the actor–director relation.
2. Affect in the rehearsal space is the effect of the transference between actor and director.
3. The transference between actor and director is an effect of intimacy and asymmetry in the setting of the rehearsal space.
4. The transference is unconscious but can be re-staged.
5. The actualization of the *rapport* between actor and director during rehearsals provokes the re-staging of the transference.
6. This re-staging cannot be managed unilaterally by the director but must be curated in a joint effort with the actor.
7. The intermediate layer to help the curation of the transference is provided by the container of the Wheel of Consent.

8. The Wheel of Consent's container safeguards the agency of the situation-specific knowledge form of *phronesis* in the Space of Rehearsals.
9. With the help of the Wheel of Consent's container the affect (that is the effect of the transference) is "objectified".
10. In the Space of Rehearsal these "objectified affects" can play out without real life consequences and be used for the work of acting.
11. The Space of Rehearsals is thereby established as "salle de répétitions" [hall of repetitions] in both a Brechtian and psychoanalytic sense

The necessity of affective dynamics in the actor-director relation

From Pre-study #1 I am able to conclude that the affective dynamics intrinsic to the actor-director relation are a necessary pre-condition for the work of acting. In Sarah's conception it is primarily the director's task to provide her with what she productively understands as "irritation". In the following quote she goes as far as to evoke the metaphor of "care work" when it comes to providing an atmosphere in the rehearsal space where affect is welcomed.

Somebody has to produce irritation, I believe, in a rehearsal space. It can be the intern, if you like, or whoever – but there wasn't anyone *who took care of that*. Generally speaking, I'm happy if the director does that. But my [director] ... you didn't do it. It was simply a very beautiful atmosphere in which everyone was really comfortable and in which, from my perspective, nothing happened to rehearse *A Streetcar Named Desire* or to find anything out about it.
(*The prompted interview*, Johannes' Edit; 13:50; my emphasis)

The material point of this argument is striking: the emotions the actor works with have to come from somewhere. The character's fictional circumstance can be an inspiration, a channel or – to paraphrase Sarah – define the stakes of the overall artistic ambition (Sarah's Edit: 18:36). But without a "hook in reality", an atmospheric counterpart in the rehearsal space,

they are too abstract to enable an authentic performance. Walking the fine line between a technique promoting the complete surrender to the present affect on the one hand (cf. exemplarily Strasberg 1987) and its postdramatic circumvention on the other (cf. “the performer” of chapter B), Sarah differentiates further:

If I’m angry for real my acting is bad. When I’m acting that I’m angry my acting is good. The anger is. But I have to get into a situation in which I could really be angry. And then I find myself another exit, shortly before. And that is the acting. I don’t go to the anger. I stand right in front of the anger and then I take the other exit. But it still is good if I am in a situation in which I am right in front of it. Or right in front of sadness, right in front of joy.

(*The prompted interview*, Sarah’s Edit; 9:55)

As our rehearsal-simulation demonstrated, these affects productive in acting are foremost derived from the concrete transference between the actress and the director; as well as between the actress and her colleagues. The fictional characters are thus not the starting points, but function as intermediate layers or catalyzers that anticipate and shape the possibilities of these concrete relations. To some extent they provide the scenery for the re-staging of both transferences. In the case of Pre-study #1 that scenery would for instance be the relation of the characters Stanley Kowalski and Blanche Du Bois. The active avoidance of *Sarah’s Director* to mirror the dynamics of male perpetrator and female victim in the fiction play out in the “reality” of the rehearsal.²⁰⁰

²⁰⁰ Cf. Chapter C for the discussion of the enhancing effects of the “rehearsal simulation” when it comes to the intelligibility of the transference. A “synopsis” of the transference dynamics in regard to the fiction of Pre-study #1 could read like this: Sarah, Johannes and the ensemble are rehearsing *A Streetcar Named Desire*, the American classic by Tennessee Williams, charged with volatile content such as domestic and sexual violence. Sarah is assigned the part of Blanche DuBois, the “glamorous outsider”, dependent on the “kindness of strangers”. In the course of rehearsals, the conflict between the main cast and the director becomes more and more acute due to opposed concepts of good collaboration: while Sarah upholds that rehearsals have to harbor temporal asymmetry for the sake of an idiosyncratic result, Johannes – given the content of the piece – attempts for an ethically sustainable, transparent collaboration with the whole ensemble. The drama culminates when the director is presented with the option of firing the actor playing Stanley Kowalski who is obviously not living up to the standard of excellency set by Blanche, the character, as well as Sarah, the actress.

Similar to the fictional characters, also the authors themselves have the potential to punch out the structure of the transference between actor and director. That is especially if they have been canonized as *auteurs* over time and radiate the socratic agalma of “supposed knowledge”; as can for instance be seen quite clearly in our various transferences onto Chantal Akerman in Pre-study #2.

The transference and the productivity of asymmetry

Meanwhile, the psychoanalytic notion of transference (unpacked in Chapter 5) provides us with a language for the productivity of these affective dynamics anchored in the reality of the Space of Rehearsals. By reading the actor-director relation as a *rapport*, I therefore installed a resonance between the various psychoanalytic traditions and the logics of the rehearsal space. In that regard, it is in particular the *technical* aspects of analytic praxis that were important; as well as the discussion of the analyst’s phronetic competence in “knowing when”. (For instance, *when* to offer the interpretation of the transference to the analysand.) Implicitly, psychoanalysis also provides us with different suggestions of *curating* the transference in a shared effort, so we do not have to be afraid of creating the conditions for it.

In an admittedly quite eclectic manner, I nowadays apply pre-Lacanian, more pragmatic notions such as “positive” and “negative transference” (cf. Winnicott) as well as the “counter-transference” (cf. Heimann) alongside core concepts of Lacan’s structural take (where the affect is a mere indicator of the fact of transference, but not the transference itself).

In the interest of a Space of Rehearsals welcoming the agency of the unconscious, I relied strongly on the way Lacan conceptualizes the “mechanism” of transference; and thereby also hints to the *techne* of establishing it. His emphasis on the productivity of asymmetry within the *rapport* (in relation to knowledge, that is) allows me to highlight different actor-director

configurations; of which three concrete ones have emerged and are represented in the respective Pre-Studies.

#1: On the continuum of symmetric or asymmetric configurations in relation to “supposed knowledge”, *Sarah’s Director* is asked to lay full claim to the *subject supposed to know*. Whether his/her authoritative position is assigned by the institution or by the ensemble, whether it is based on actual competence or the “chance gesture of the analyst” described in Chapter 5,III; the importance lies in *embodying it*. All this, in the interest of establishing the transference and thereby generating the artistically productive asymmetry of which the friction (“irritation”) is the result.

#2: This Pre-study suggests a very different position for the *subject supposed to know*. It can in fact no longer be found unilaterally in the director anymore, insofar as the *performauthor* is operating from both the actor’s and the director’s seat, “knowing and not knowing, being seen and seeing, (...) moving while creating an image” (cf. LTJ, online resources). Rather than as an instructor installed on the vantage point of “supposed knowledge”, *Claire’s Director* is invited into the rehearsal space as a *subject supposed to desire*. The desire of the director, in turn, is welcomed as idiosyncratic and radical as in the classical *Regietheater*, but it does not organize the entire scenery of rehearsals anymore, let alone the *mise-en-scène*. The directorial desire can therefore also be subject to the interpretation of the *performauthor*; and as we have demonstrated (cf. the last exercise in “A study in transference”, online resources), s/he can even generate performative material from explicitly unpacking it.

Nevertheless, also in this actor-director configuration the transference is sought after as an artistic driving force. With inspiration in the fields of dance and performance art, a score was established to organize the asymmetry it involves. This is the Wheel of Consent's container, which I have conceptualized as a rehearsal method in chapter 7.

#3: With the Wheel of Consent as an intermediate score to establish and curate asymmetry, it was possible to reintroduce the disciplinary divide between actor and director (demanded in Pre-study #1 and questioned by the *performauthor* of #2), albeit in a defamiliarized manner. One of the most important findings of Pre-study #3 is that – with the help of the Wheel’s dynamics – the position of “supposed knowledge” can alternate between actor and director *without* them suspending their respective disciplines. This is due to the fact that within the Wheel the *subject supposed to know* always resides in the receiving half. Very concretely (and at the same time more structurally) speaking: the “supposed knowledge” – Agamben’s Roman “genius”, as it were – always sits with the *person leaning*; a position that is available to both actors and directors during rehearsals and with which they can take turns.

With the help of the Wheel’s container the directorial mandate is thus established *ad hoc* and specific to the site. *Anders’ Director* thereby gets to work from the position of an authority transparently defined from within the rehearsal space. An authority independent of the (good or bad) culture of an institution but nevertheless absolute in its temporally and spatially limited iteration. As shown in the work demonstration “Rehabilitating Asymmetry in the Actor-Director Relation” (cf. WD, online resources), *Anders’ Director* is invited to both desire enigmatically *and* temporarily monopolize the available agency (mostly from within the TAKE and ALLOW dynamic). However, there is no secret intention or hidden agenda at play; no master plan or longer-term transactional scheme between actor and director outside the confines of the rehearsal space.

*

To sum up: within the restored confines of the rehearsal space, the *subject supposed to know* of the classical directors’ theater re-appears in a *defamiliarized* shape; proposing radically

and enigmatically, but entangled in the two questions (“May I?” and “Will you?”) that invite for the maieutics of desire on the ensemble’s end. Actor and director thus jointly create the performative conditions for the Space of Rehearsals as a safe environment; “safe” in the radical sense that a subconscious agency can play out in it without real life consequences.

Curating the transference in the Space of Rehearsals

As pointed out in Chapter 5, I the English translation of Freud’s wording proposes “*managing* the transference” to describe the analyst’s work with it. Etymologically the translation strikes close to the original German “*handhaben*”; a verb that could also be rendered as “*handling* the transference”, which implies the same root metaphor as “manipulating” with its original neutral meaning of “handling something skillfully by *hand*”. (Both “management” and “manipulation” are derived from the Latin noun for hand: “*manus*”.) “Management” and “*Handhabung*” thus appropriately reflect the notion of mastery, that implies the sovereignty of the analyst in regard to the unpredictable unconscious of the analysand.

Contrary to what the Freudian *techné* of psychoanalytic mastery suggests, a “Re–invented *Regietheater*” proposes the *curation* of the transference to be a joint endeavor of both actor and director. Perhaps surprisingly at first glance – and unlike the unilateral “care work” suggested to *Sarah’s Director* – the maintenance of the asymmetry in their *rapprochement* contains a symmetrically distributed responsibility.

By using the term “curation” I propose an *artistic* responsibility that both actor and director can take towards the transference happening between them. This proposition necessitated from the “problem” posed by the *performauthor* in relation to the director as *subject supposed to know* and was theoretically sustained by Luce Irigaray’s suggestions for undercutting the passive/active divide in the analytic relation.

In Pre-study #2 and #3 I have thus worked with ways of capturing the transference as a theatrical object, a “scene” so to speak, in the Space of Rehearsals. Given its unconscious nature, the possibilities of tracking it in real time proved to be limited though. The attempts to capture its *Gestalt* while entangled in directing and acting usually eclipsed the main focus that these activities require. The curatorial effort in question will therefore mostly consist of “*re-stagings*” of the transference.

As proposed in the Pre-studies, this can be done by creating an artistic interpretation of the *rapport* exterior to the immediate material (cf. Chapter B, “the third thing”); with some of the tried-and-tested formats in this thesis being the “prompted interview”, the “simultaneous letter” or “the modelbook”.

These formats have of course emerged from a genuine artistic research context, where time and resources are allocated in accordance with the defined research endeavor and its methodological quest; i.e. to find appropriate formats of documenting and analyzing the actor-director relation. In the interest of practical theater work which does not have this affordance I also started to apply a more meticulous scale to the “*re-staging of the transference*”; as a way to describe its workings *within* the Space of Rehearsals. It is also in that perspective that I have suggested it to be a theatrical object that can be traced and curated with the help of the Wheel of Consent.

The actualization of the rapport: acting vs. acting out

As I have argued in Chapter 7, the Wheel of Consent safeguards the agency of the situation-specific knowledge form of *phronesis* in the Space of Rehearsals. Not only does its container invite the “knowing when” (a competence inaccessible to the AI-mimicking “cybernetic director” portrayed in *Terracing the Territory III.*) but it also distributes the responsibility for the curation of the transference more symmetrically.

In the vein of the above-mentioned notion of unilateral mastery handed down by Freud, I have already discussed the various reflections on the technical aspects of psychoanalytic praxis in regard to *when* the analyst is supposed to “interpret the transference” for the analysand (cf. Chapter 5,I). The careful attention paid to this precarious, if not explosive moment is not surprising given that the unconscious of the analytic situation is supposed to suddenly *actualize* in it. In this moment of actualization, the analysts offer their verbal interpretation of the very transference happening within the present *rapport* by unpacking *it* as a *repetition* of a former relation in the analysand’s life.

The “knowing when” of the “master analyst” in regard to this moment (i.e. the precarity of its timing) has its equivalent in the hierarchical rehearsal set-up. As a slightly more mundane occurrence in rehearsals, the actualization of the *rapport* usually comes in a twofold form: 1. as the necessity of describing something to the actor that the director believes to be an unconscious expression (undercutting the intended *mise-en-scène*) 2. as the necessity to push through to something that is *meant to be* less controlled, “more unconscious” (for the benefit of the intended *mise-en-scène*). The explosiveness of these moments in rehearsals – where the director offers his/her “verbal interpretation” of the actor’s unconscious – can usually be channeled back into the very performance. The actor then re-stages the affect of the transference onto the director in the constellation with the colleagues. This affective actualization is then in turn fixated in the repeatable emotional score of a theater show or the indexical singularity of a film take.

As I have shown in the Pre-studies, the asymmetrically positioned actor and director of a *reinvented Regietheater* can share the responsibility towards those two forms in which the *rapport* actualizes. Given the immediacy of the affective reaction (to having been “read” by the director) this requires, however, some extra attention to the *quality* of the “re-staging”. Naturally the first response in acting will often come as an “acting out” (the Freudian

“ausagieren”); which is, in Lacanian terms, the analysand’s reaction to a failing or insufficient interpretation by the analyst, i.e. the unconscious response to a sense of not having been properly listened to (cf. Evans 2006, 3) Since by convention the actors answer to the actualization of the *rapport* by means of acting (instead of a verbal re-staging conventional to the psychoanalytic clinic), their response in the form of “acting out” is at risk of remaining a mere symptom of the director’s failing interpretation.

Countless are thus the examples of actors’ unconscious transferences onto the director extracted from them as “acting” (read: acting out) for the sake of the *result*. As I will demonstrate below (with *The Idiots* as a case), film is especially prone to capitalizing on this moment insofar as its indexicality can capture the affect of the transference *in actu*.²⁰¹ But also in the expansionist vein of theater directing, the mise-en-scène is frequently designed to re-actualize the directorial interpretations of the actor’s unconscious during rehearsals. Thereby provoking yet another “acting out”, albeit redirected onto the audience this time.

While the aesthetic efficiency of this strategy can hardly be doubted (when it comes to authenticity) the prioritization of “acting out” over “acting” is, on the long run, a dangerous directorial method. (As Sarah puts it in the continuation of the quote above: “I stand right in front of the anger and then I take the other exit. (...) And that is also the control I need. The control I want to have. This exit that I’m choosing. The acting.” (*The prompted interview*, Sarah’s Edit; 10:38) Continuously depriving the actors of the conscious re-staging of their

²⁰¹ Given film’s specific mechanistic mediality producing a surface without texture, the distinctions between “acting” and “acting out” are easily conflated here; oftentimes also actively blurred by the means of the edit. As we will see in *Conclusion 2* the transference onto the (film) director plays out in its most radical form when he or she is also operating the camera (from what is actually the acting colleague’s point of view). But even in the regular setting (of the director seeing the image in the film monitor) the structural dynamic conducive of “acting out” is at work. (Cf. my experience/conception of the monitor as Descartes’ “bull’s eye/black box” and the sensory asymmetry that comes with it in Pre-study #2).

affect makes it impossible for them to take responsibility for the transferences at play; it leaves their *management* unilaterally to the director – an impossible task in itself – and is therefore bound to backfire sooner or later.

The Wheel as an intermediate layer to organize the affective dynamics

In this regard I have proposed the “Wheel of Consent” as a necessary intermediate layer that both actor and director can organize around; as a practice that invites the transference and its “symptomization” in the affect while simultaneously systematizing the directionality of the exchange. As I have elaborated in Chapter 7, responding to the questions of “Who is it for?” and “Who is doing?” allows actors and directors to gain clarity over their “instance of touch” (as the embodied practice would call it). It decelerates the Space of Rehearsals to a level of attunement in which the “re-staging of the transference” can be experienced as the “gift given and received” that it in fact is. Even in the immediacy of the settings described above.

As we have shown – in Pre-study #2 and especially in the work demonstration of #3 – a Space of Rehearsals attuned by the Wheel can contain all sorts of affects. With the necessary level of care, also “perversions” – such as for instance “sadistic directorial *Gelüste*” – can be contained in the temporal agreement made; which means the directors do not have to end up *outside* of the Wheel’s container to get what they desire (which would be the shadow sides “stealing” or “entitlement”). In the best-case scenario, the affects mediated by the Wheel thus converge on the “objective counter-transferences” of which Winnicott advocated the temporal actualization in the special context of working with psychotics.

In this Space of Rehearsals rehabilitated as a sphere of play (the ultimate goal of the Wheel of Consent practice), these affects therefore meet the high stakes of a fiction such as *A Streetcar Named Desire* – or, for what it’s worth, of Lars von Trier’s *The Idiots*.

The Space of Rehearsals as a “salle de répétition”

For “acting out” to be sublated into “acting”, both director and actor need to be aware of the workings of the transference and the factors that provoke it. According to the psychoanalytic premises, these are asymmetry (of the *rappport*) and intimacy (of the setting); a claim to truth that I found easy to sustain when practically experimenting with the analogy of a rehearsal space inviting the maieutics of desire into the actor-director relation.

In watching the affects manifest – and thereby observing the fact of transference unfold – the analysand, too, is invited to “adopt the *analytic attitude*”. (Freud 1915, 167; my emphasis). This is mostly done by cultivating an awareness around the transference *as enacting itself in form of a repetition*. The “exit” (not into “acting out”, but into “acting”) that Sarah describes in Pre-study #1 springs from exactly this premise: the actor instrumentalizes the affect provided by the transference onto the director while circumventing its actualization as a misunderstood original presence.

Admittedly, this is an ambitious demand made on people involved in the work of acting. But luckily – and maybe surprisingly – the (psycho-)“analytic attitude” Freud advocates here, aligns with the Brechtian critique of originality (or rather: his plea for repetition) that I have discussed in the context of the *Diderot Society* as well as the *modelbooks* (cf. Chapter C and 8 as well as PS#3, online resources). Therefore Freud’s *techne* also contains the premise of the Brechtian acting method that both director and actor can adopt as a basic *Haltung*

[attitude/posture²⁰²] during rehearsals: to critically observe the transference re-stage itself while involved in its affect.

Ultimately, with these premises brought into alignment, the Space of Rehearsals proposed in this thesis can also be conceived of as a “salle de répétitions”; which in the pragmatic sense of the French word simply means “rehearsal space” or “studio”; but in a very literal translation “hall of repetitions”.

Conclusion 2: Anecdotal inductions

In this following concluding chapter, some of the “concrete stories” of Lars von Trier’s production diary are presented and commented upon as annotations to my findings. If you will, they are “meat on the bone” of the structural points just made. As an anecdotal theory that “subject[s] theory to incident” (Gallop 2002, 15), these concrete stories synthesize and sustain the 11 deductions presented at the outset without reducing themselves to mere “evidence”. With their anecdotal “juiciness” and the “uncanny detail of lived experience” (remember the etymological root of “*anekdoton*” being “unpublished”) the dictaphone diaries are supposed to open this thesis to future, inductive entrances. As a consequence, this coming part roughens up the material one last time: while the classical conclusion has a *gestus* of wrapping up, this one runs the risk of “making a mess in the beauty”.

*

²⁰² In German the word *Haltung* – describing someone’s physical *posture* – metaphorically also indicates a person’s *attitude*. In Brecht’s terminology – adapted to both the stagecraft of the playwright as well as the actor – *Haltung* encompasses both meanings in one. (Cf. also Barnett 2025; “Haltung”.)

Before I get into the details, I would briefly like to argue for the specific choice of material in this endeavor. The Danish director Lars von Trier is a controversial figure. Bringing his situated knowledge into the mix of a research invested into “asymmetry and consent in the actor director–relation” can hardly be done without accounting for the popular associations that follow in the trail of his persona. In many regards, von Trier nowadays represents the “old white man”, i.e. the polemic caricature metonymically indexing racist patriarchy within the ongoing culture wars. As a “boomer” (von Trier was born 1956) he has moreover had “plenty of resources” at his disposal, that he – in that same vein – used “unwisely”, leaving “us” with the mess of it all. Obviously his (speaking) “time is up” today; it had in fact already exceeded the carrying capacity of the planet by the early 2010s. In that regard his ambivalent play with the “I am a Nazi” phrase at a press conference in Cannes was an untimely dad joke; but even more than his own repeated attempts to publicly self-sabotage, Björk’s accusations of sexual harassment in 2017 might have put the last nail in his coffin.²⁰³

In the public image of the last years, von Trier in fact appears as a *libertine* punished already in his lifetime; part-time burning in hell, part-time vegetating in the nursery home of his birth town. Struck by Parkinson or the symptoms of abstinence – popular opinions differ as to where his massive shaking comes from – he has to sit on his hands during interviews to keep reasonably still. A recent attempt to place an “old-fashioned personal ad” [en gammeldags kontaktannonce] on social media – in search of a “girlfriend/muse” – hardly lived up to the Kierkegaardian “elasticity of irony”²⁰⁴ characteristic of his previous PR stunts. Instead, the

²⁰³ The Icelandic singer played the main part in von Trier’s *Dancer in the Dark* (2000).

image of a sick old man who is “rightly” denied intimacy is perceived with malicious glee. (In the brutal (patriarchal) order of a buffalo herd, “Lars” would thus be the last one to drink. When we see him drag himself to the well, long after the rest of the pack is out of sight, we can easily backtrack his status as the former lead buffalo.)

The LVTOTI (Lars von Trier of The Idiots)

While it has become questionably fashionable to “culturally divorce” from Lars von Trier, I have no ambition to counter this trend in the following. I truly consider it a lost cause to nuance or differentiate any of his public utterances, to jump to the defense of either the person or his directorial methods.²⁰⁵ The reason to use his diary as material is that the dilemmas of the actor-director relation presented here – at their *boiling point*, i.e. in the middle of production – persist in all severity today. So while from the vantage point of the Great Plains von Trier’s methods may appear as alternatively “psychopathic” or “pubescent”, the sleepless nights of the director are still topical. In other words: despite the well-intended attempts of recent years to rid the actor-director relation of its antagonism – what kept the director awake in the 1990s still does so today. Especially within the configuration advocated by this thesis, where the disciplinary divide between actor and director is maintained, the diary thus provides

²⁰⁴ The “elasticity of irony” is a formula Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard uses in his essay ‘Repetition: A Venture in Experimenting Psychology’ (Kierkegaard [1843] 2013). In the perspective of the argument at hand, it promotes the distance gained by treating the experiences made in the moment *as repetitions*. In the autobiographically charged fiction Kierkegaard tests this agency provided by the “elasticity of irony” against the affect of love.

²⁰⁵ Especially when writing about the diary material presented below in a language other than von Trier’s mother tongue. Against the backdrop of his home country, the notorious “genius” (*Geniet* is the title of a commendable biography by Thorsen (2011)) often appears as a rather average Dane; with his sarcasm being a sophisticated form of a culturally ubiquitous irony. To re-contextualize such a statement as “Ok, I am a Nazi” for instance (cf. The Telegraph 2011), one would therefore have to start by writing in the mother tongue of the *Sjælland*-based families that go by the names of *Trier/Høst/Hartmann*.

a quite unique articulation from an inside/artistic – rather than an organizational-managerial/outside – point of view.

To properly link this articulation to my own findings, I will thus refrain (to my best capacity) from either morally defending or condemning von Trier. But rather present him as an emblematic figure operating somewhere between the Mountain Range and the Foothills of *Regietheater*, where he symptomizes dilemmas that the Great Plains have not resolved. In all discretion I will therefore focus on the “Lars von Trier of *The Idiots*” – from here on abbreviated as: LVTOTI – and bracket the public *persona* formed over the last four decades.

LVTOTI in the Regietheater tradition

Given the massive inspiration a great deal of his German contemporaries took in the Danish director, LVTOTI can arguably be presented as a prominent figure emerging in the Foothills of the *Regietheater* tradition. This is mostly due to the international success of Dogma 95 – and especially of *The Idiots* in German theater circles – which obscured the fact that the 42-year-old director had been successfully making films for about two decades already. With Christoph Maria Schlingensief, whom I have portrayed as the “emblematic figure of the Foothills” (cf. *Terracing the Territory II.*), LVTOTI thus shares the strive for an emancipation from the deadlock of *auteur* cinema his generation finds itself in.²⁰⁶ Like Schlingensief, he uses

²⁰⁶ One of the most telling documents regarding von Trier’s engagement with the *auteur*-lineage is probably the deeply respectful letter he writes to Ingmar Bergman in 1998 inviting the Swedish *grand seigneur* of cinema to make a Dogma film (cf. Schepelern 2017, 240). The generational baggage is also evident in his 1988 adaptation of the screenplay for “Medea” (1962) left behind by the Danish silent movie legend Theodor Dreyer (1889-1969). A rather monumental movie that would, in a spectacular turn, be picked up by Swiss theater group 400Asa and spun into a “Dogma film for stage” entitled “Medeää - 214 Bildbeschreibungen” [Medeää – 214 image descriptions] in the year 2000.

the quest for unfiltered authenticity emerging in the arts – and specifically in the media of the 1990s – as a lever in this regard.

For Frank Castorf *The Idiots* are certainly a decisive inspiration for the further development of the use of video so central to his stagecraft (cf. Korte 2019, 223–24). In fact, LVTOTI's ecstatic rave in the production diary about the rawness and velocity of Dogma, where "[t]he creation process and the filming happen simultaneously" (von Trier 1998, 237) reads like the very formula Castorf developed to mastery. Finally, the invitation LVTOTI received in 2001 to stage Richard Wagner's "Der Ring des Nibelungen" [The Ring of the Nibelung] on the "green hill" of Bayreuth can be counted as the most definitive consecration within the canon of German-speaking theater.²⁰⁷ For the sake of the following argument, I thus hope to claim – in an admittedly appropriating and hyperbolic gesture – *The Idiots* as one of the most significant pieces of *Regietheater*.

The Regie of LVTOTI

My hyperbolic statement here is of course aimed at the legitimacy, worthy of criticism, of applying the case of a movie production to the conceptual framework of *theater* rehearsals examined in this thesis. But given the massive restrictions of the Dogma rules regarding postproduction (2, 4 and 5 in particular²⁰⁸), I am prone to argue that *The Idiots* is in fact not a movie but rather a documentation of various instances of live stagings in the medium of film.

²⁰⁷ Cf. Hänzli's chapter "Bayreuth: Männermachende Mythenfabrik" [Bayreuth: men-making factory of myth] (Hänzli 2014, 301–7) After 2 years of preparation von Trier eventually steps down from the commission. (cf. Parly 2018; Schepeleern 2017, 248–51)

²⁰⁸ "2. The sound must never be produced apart from the images or vice versa (Music must not be used unless it occurs where the scene is being shot).(...) 4. The film must be in color. Special lighting is not acceptable (If there is too little light for exposure the scene must be cut or a single lamp be attached to the camera) 5. Optical work and filters are forbidden." (Cf. Raskin 2000, 7)

If one brackets the final intervention of the edit (and I concede that this is hard to do²⁰⁹) the process of production reminds us primarily of theater. Because in essence, it is the work of an ensemble that, after some weeks of rehearsing the manuscript of a contemporary author, attempts to perform it in chronological order within the given settings. During these “shows” – the takes could last around 50 minutes (Raskin 2000, 16) – the sound operator is creating the sound design of the future scene live on location; occasionally extending his microphone – away from the actors – and into the tip of the trees. Consequently, the musician is on set, too, playing the soundtrack from behind the camera whenever needed. (“The Swan” by Saint-Saëns, playing from the wings, as it were.)

This shift of production mode has a significant impact on the actor-director relation. While the *auteur* film may have provided the controlled setting in which the *libertine* installs his/her authoritative vision, the Dogma rules actively incapacitate the director of the De Sadian genius. Neither are the technical possibilities available of adding an auratic shimmer to the actor by means of light settings or color grading, nor the retroactively added soundtrack, as one of the most powerful artifices to “*post-produce*” an “inner world” in a character. Last not least, as the “shooting must be done on location” (Dogma rule 1), the retreat into the film studio/fortress is never an option.

²⁰⁹ The fact of a *post*-production (mainly the edit) is of course affecting the actor-director relation during the production phase of a film already. As opposed to the theater rehearsals where the ensemble is involved with the directorial choices up until the premiere, film processes – by convention – install a moment of letting go on the actor’s end; thereby making way for the director to enter a new artistic collaboration with the editor. Given this industrially fragmented mode of producing film, it is rare that there is a collective dissatisfaction on set specifically aimed at the final artistic product. In contrast to a theater ensemble, the actors usually do not feel sufficiently informed about the outcome of the work and therefore limit their opinion and agency to their individual parts. The fact that during the making of *The Idiots* there are long discussions between the actors and the director – which sometimes reach a level of hostility closing in on “mutiny” – is yet another indicator of the theater logics at work here. The chronological shooting method in fact allows the ensemble to get a sense of the story they are telling; and critically scrutinize it. Furthermore, LVTOTI – for authenticity’s sake – seems interested in an acting style where editing is as unnecessary as possible.

With Dogma's dismantling of the De Sadian institution of film on the aesthetical plane, the actor and his/her work become ever more important. Arguably, by means of the movement's so-called "chastity vow" Grotowski's vision of a "poor", actor-based theater suddenly comes within arm's reach for the movie industry. But unlike the Polish director who strives for maximum expressionist plasticity of his ensemble on stage, LVTOTI sticks with the paradigm of psychological realism inscribed in the genetic code of his medium.²¹⁰ In the world of Dogma, however, there are almost no cinematic means left to strengthen the actor's believability once the shoot/show is over. As a result, the structural dilemma of the actor-director relation blossoms painfully during the production of *The Idiots*. More than ever, "authentic" emotions have to be performed under the pressure of the take; emotions depending, in turn, on psycho-physical procedures that can hardly be forced and therefor lie beyond the control of the director.

In alignment with the methodological problem of this thesis – the search for appropriate formats of documenting and analyzing relational settings intrinsic to theater making – the making of *The Idiots* therefore possibly presents the most appropriate way to document actorial improvisations. To *index the im-provisus*, as it were. But unlike with Castorf's or Schlingensief's stagings, the *Regie* of LVTOTI can easily be accessed today and is even revisitable without losing the "live aspect" of the performance. Cross read with the production diary that was published "in the spirit of Dogma" (von Trier, 159) – unread and unedited – his directorial agency at work during the shoot of *The Idiots* is discussable in a more international context (and specifically on the transferential axis between Scandinavia and *Tyskland* that I have described in *Terracing the Territory II*.) In complementarity with the making-of (*The*

²¹⁰ In that regard, my reading of the acting in *The Idiots* through the lens of the non-psychological *Volksbühne* style in the late 1990s was a total misunderstanding. Only by seeing Jargil's making-of many years later did I comprehend that the heated discussions in the plenum of the ensemble always circle around "the characters"; fully invested into identification with them and their relation to the group. The surprising discovery might also be an explanation why Castorf's own attempt to shoot a movie in the style of *The Idiots* – *Dämonen* [*Demons*] in 2000 – can be considered an artistic failure.

Humiliated) as well as the actual final edit of *The Idiots*, LVTOTI's diary thus forms a package rich in different perspectives, paratext and context. Yet another artistic research *avant la lettre*.

Deductions 1,2,3: The fact of transference on the set of The Idiots

Judging from the recordings, it is obvious that there are strong transference energies at play during the production of *The Idiots*; between the director and the ensemble (as an entity) as well as in particular between him and the actress casted for the part of SUSANNE (Anne Louise Hassing). These active transferences and their respective affects (as Winnicott has suggested: of fear, love and hate) make for both the director's sleepless nights – desperate moments during which he records his journal or attempts for bodily exhaustion by means of masturbation – as well as for the most intense happiness during the shoot (cf. for example the entry on 25.6.1998 starting out with the exclamation: “Ecstatic film joy!” [Ekstatisk filmlykke!] (von Trier 1998, 179)²¹¹).

The transferences at play are thus manifesting by their characteristic ambivalence and mercurial nature. Often, they align with a pre-Lacanian conception of “positive” and “negative transference”: on some days LVTOTI feels fully embedded in the ensemble – describing it as “a bunch of buddies [that] compensate for childish or youthful failures in relation to one's surroundings” (236) – on others, his subjective experience of alienation from it is excruciating.

Initially he had wanted to live with the ensemble during the entire shoot in the villa that makes for the main location. When this preferred set-up is pragmatically reduced by the production company to a one time 24h session (including sleep-over) which ultimately does not lead to any artistically satisfying results, he is crushed. While the increasingly drunken ensemble continues to improvise during the night – together with the cameraman and, again, to no avail – the director disappears. Returning to the irritated group after two hours of sleep, he sees no other option than to lay bare his feelings: “I got a strange sensation of loneliness, which... well, you may laugh, but that was something deep from childhood, from parties that

²¹¹ For the rest of this *Conclusion 2* I am almost exclusively quoting from LVTOTI's diary. Unless otherwise indicated, the page numbers therefore refer to the bibliographical entry for *von Trier 1998*.

I attended but didn't participate in and where I had no contact with anyone and just sat sulking in a corner. *I experienced this again*, (...) I felt increasingly marginalized, and my jealousy toward everything, the girls – and perhaps especially Anne Louise, (...) – but overall toward the group was immense.” (206; my emphasis)^{viii}

When it comes to the fiction as a blueprint for the actor-director relation at hand, it is thus the main character STOFFER's relation to the group of “idiots” (of which he is the initiator) that punches out the possibilities for LVTOTI's relation to the ensemble. A month into the shooting period the director notes that “[t]he comparison between me and Stoffer in the movie becomes more and more screamingly grotesque” (254). And in the group improvisation during the 24h shoot just mentioned, where LVTOTI experiences the ensemble as “hostile” and “almost sabotaging the whole project” (206), STOFFER is not granted “the authority he was supposed to have” (205) according to the script.

Deduction 4: The dictaphone diary as a unilateral re-staging (with a double voice)

LVTOTI's dictaphone diary in print is, of course, not a “re-staging of *both* transferences” as I have myself attempted for, but unilaterally one of the director's. The actors' simultaneous account is missing. Jens Albinus' only retrospectively – with almost 30 years distance – pinpoints the transference energy invested into “fænomenet Lars von Trier” [the phenomenon Lars von Trier] at work during the production. “All of this Lars von Trier stuff” (Albinus, 128), as he puts it, which blinds both him and the ensemble, von Trier's wife at the

time as well as an entire industry. Regarding LVTOTI's most intense actor relation during the shoot, especially the re-staging of Anne Louise Hassing's transference is missing.²¹²

Nevertheless, as someone who spent a lot of time in the position of the analysand, LVTOTI is aware of his own entanglement as the "analyst" of the actor-director relations at play. His diary therefore often reflects the possibility of a countertransference and its effects on both his account as well as his artistic judgement (read: phronetic competence) in the situation of directing. On one of the last days of the shoot where the whole ensemble is being filmed by him in a long sequence, everybody appears to be happy to contribute – "except for Anne Louise who sat and sulked (...) or was it me that sulked, sorry, that is impossible to say." (265) Arguably, the "solitary voice" of the diary is therefore often double. Resonating with the speech of the director of the De Sadian genius described in *Terracing the Territory II*. (who displays institutional violence with the articulation of the victim) LVTOTI's sarcasm, his often degrading vocabulary (applied to things that obviously matter to him) as well as the abrupt transitions from sensitive topics to banalities could in fact be read as *demonstrative* of his own association with authority. In this perspective, the re-staging of his transference in his diary would then be, similar to De Sade's articulations, a "demonstration related essentially to the solitude and omnipotence of its author" (Deleuze 2006, 19).

Deduction 5,6: The actualization of the rapport with SUSANNE/Anne Louise

The dictaphone diary documents many of the two-folded instances where the *rapport* is being actualized and the transference re-staged in an immediate reaction; with the most intense of these instances showing up within the actor-director relation of LVTOTI and Anne Louise Hassing. I first use a situation from the third week of the shoot, to give an example of the director offering his "verbal interpretation" to push through to something "more unconscious" for the benefit of the *mise-en-scène*.

²¹² There is an interview with both Albinus and Hassing in the Danish Journal of Film Studies *p.o.v.* (Raskin 2000, 11–34), where they reflect on the process and the acting required. Even though it contains interesting information about the shoot and gives an idea about how Hassing positioned herself in the immediate aftermath of *The Idiots*' distribution phase, it cannot be considered a self-authored *re-mise-en-scène*.

In the interest of her performance living up to his “concept of authenticity” (203), LVTOTI has worked on establishing a transferential axis (a *rapport*) between Hassing and himself. To do so, he regularly cuts along “the edge of the therapeutic” (203), searching for different ways to align the SUSANNE character with the actress’ biography; often staging small psychodramas that build up to the take.

During the rehearsals for a remarkably short scene (that is shot and re-tried over several days to no avail) he finally fully assumes the “chair” of the analyst. A microphone is put up, so he can film alone with the two actresses figuring in the scene:

And then she [Anne Louise Hassing] had a long talk about her childhood and all sorts of things, and then the little therapist in me kicked in, because all the conversations we have are always on the edge of the therapeutic, and in my many years of experience with therapy (...) I have also picked up a few things. (203)^{ix}

In the case of this example, he has “picked up” on the “chance gesture” observed by the *Gestalt* therapist, in other words, on psychoanalysis’ investment in the “punctum”:

And just as she had said this [an observation regarding her upbringing] she had a little tic, which was very small, but I attached myself to it. I thought it’s clear that this is what therapists do – before you become aware of what you’re doing, they observe, they hear and put things together, and then they see (...) what is being said without being said and is in fact unconscious. (204)^x

His repeated insistence on the detail in Hassing’s account ultimately leads to an affect that she then re-directs into her performance, acting it out with her colleague during the scene. This happens to the full satisfaction of the director who concludes in his journal: “To skip the sentimental part, it certainly made the scene come alive (...) [It] came home, and afterwards I did a long relaxation exercise, which was almost like a tiny little Band-Aid on the wound.” (204-205)

Given the unilateral account of the director, we cannot know, but it is at least possible that the facilitated psychological breakdown led to an artistically satisfactory result for the actress, too. The further development of the actor-director relation, however, suggests the

opposite²¹³. While the episode described above plays out at a moment where it is still possible to provide a kind of after-care in form of a “relaxation exercise” the final week of shooting is characterized by a “state of war between me and Anne Louise [that] broke out in broad daylight” (259). To make matters worse, the particular ambition to shoot *The Idiots* chronologically results in the most important scene of the film being produced in this very last week.

Unlike psychoanalysis, a film-shoot or a rehearsal period is not a limitlessly open-ended process. A fact which complicates the directorial “knowing when”, especially in regard to the other possibility of actualizing the *rapport*, i.e. the necessity of describing something to the actor that the director believes to be an unconscious expression (undercutting the intended *mise-en-scène*). Here is LVTOTI’s account of the final shooting day to start with:

[We shot] a couple more times with all the actors, we sent them home, and then I just wanted to pick up on Karen and Susanne’s meeting by the picture of the dead child. There wasn’t much energy left, so I didn’t have much faith that we could fish out some emotion and compassion from Anne Louise again. But she tried to go in on her own and fish it out herself, and suddenly she succeeded beyond all measure. I think she was bawling for half an hour, and it was amazing. (258)^{xi}

The success in terms of acting that lives up to LVTOTI’s “concept of authenticity” is provoked by the precarious verbal interpretation of the actress’ unconscious expression.

Earlier I pointed out that I could very, very easily read when she was present and when she wasn’t by the fact that in her natural state – and in the scenes where she is functioning and present – she never has a closed mouth. She has a half-open mouth, listening and participating completely naturally, but in the scenes where she is blocked, she just has a closed mouth and some almost porcelain-like cheeks and eyelashes that are one hundred percent Bambi. It may

²¹³ This impression is further corroborated by Hassing’s reflections in the interview two years after the shoot, where she is asked about the “type of acting” in the film: “Sometimes I had some discussions with Lars about what was character and what was *me* and it is quite clear that he wanted the two to mesh. (...) Bodil and I had some very long improvisations where he looked for something very specific. There’s that windowsill scene that is short, but it is very important for the relationship between Susanne and Karen. There I think he used some methods that almost resembled therapy. I had prepared something about Susanne – what could her background be? Then Lars said: “Oh, just try and forget that and tell me about yourself.” You can say that it works, I guess. I mean, the result is good, but I wouldn’t like to work like that forever.” (Raskin 2000, 17)

be imprudent of me to say it [Det er måske *uklogt* af mig at sige det] but it's a fact (258)^{xii}

It may be “imprudent” or “practically unwise” of LVTOTI to articulate what has dawned to him in yesterday's sleepless night (261), yet... Here, the director even invokes the very word used for *phronesis* – “klokhet” – in the the Swedish translations of Aristotle (cf. Bornemark 2020); thereby inviting for yet another reflection on the explosiveness of *the moment* where the transference is interpreted. (As well as of the directorial “knowing when” getting corrupted by the pressure of the final shooting day.)

As to be expected the verbal interpretation provokes the affect derived from the sense of being mis-read on the actress' end – “[o]f course, she got angry when I told her that, pointing out that a closed mouth could be as natural a part of her as anything else” (262) – and the *acting out* in the confines of the fiction hereafter²¹⁴:

But suddenly she could deliver and gave a magnificent performance at the end of the day. (...) It was touching to watch and of great value to the movie, so we ended in great satisfaction. Afterwards, we sat and had a small glass of wine and were very happy that it was all over and said goodbye in style. We almost became good friends again and agreed that this week's enmity was unnecessary and had just been a torment for everyone in the group and completely foolish and to the great detriment of Susanne's character at that time. (258-59)^{xiii}

²¹⁴ Here, LVTOTI not only assumes the “analyst's chair” like in the scene described above, but also operates the camera from the point of view of Anne Louise Hassing's colleague. Thereby allowing for the transference onto him to play out in its most radical way. (A “technique” von Trier has further developed in the movies to follow *The Idiots* – namely in *Dancer in the Dark* and *Dogville*; with the handheld camera operated by himself bringing him, in his own words, “as close as possible to the actors” (von Trier quoted in Schepelern 2017, 247; my translation).) Insofar as a basic principle of psychoanalytic treatment is, according to Freud, to “force as much as possible into the channel of memory [by means of verbalization] and to allow as little as possible to emerge as repetition” (1920, 19) LVTOTI's “failure” in verbal interpretation can even be a conscious directorial strategy; managing the ratio between the *channel of memory* and the “preferable” *acting out*.

Deductions 10 and 11: Transference Love in LVTOTI's "salle de répétition"

As a psychoanalytically informed director (in the sense of someone having undergone extensive analysis himself), LVTOTI reflects on the fact that the transference is a “repetition of infantile prototype relations” (Gallop 1982, 73), “inappropriate to context” (Gallop, 143). The acknowledgements of his own immaturity in relation to the ensemble are therefore legion in the diary. Revisiting his sensation of jealousy experienced during the sleepover shoot for instance, he describes himself as “twelve years old again, sitting there sulking” (234); and even though he experiences the projection of STOFFER onto himself as grotesque, he anyways admits that his own level of childishness is more extreme than that of the character (254).

Naturally, the awareness of the transferences in the Space of Rehearsals being “repetitions” is put to maximum strain when it comes to the affect of love. In psychoanalytic orthodoxy the principle of reticence (discussed in chapter 5, I) makes it possible to conceive even of this affect – that is, on a subjective plane, usually experienced as most genuine/original – *as a repetition*; and to continue the intimate work within the *rapport* by neither gratifying nor suppressing the desires that emerge from it. While this third way (that I have called a *poetic* model insofar as it has no equivalent in real life) is totally viable in the Space of Rehearsals suggested here, its borders are often blurred at the boiling points of the conventional relation of actor and director. And it is exactly in these edgy zones where the sensibility of the social turn finds its point of attack, when scrutinizing “psychoanalytically informed” methods of directing. What to make of the principle of reticence for example in the case of the following statement from yet another of LVTOTI's sleepless nights?

[B]ut to claim that not almost all actresses have appeared in my sexual fantasies would be a lie. Perhaps Anne Louise in particular has appeared there on a regular basis. And it's probably been like that in... well, all the movies I've made, I guess, when I think back. And I've talked about that before, it's part of it all. (239)^{xiv}

If my assertion in the prelude is correct – that the social turn extrapolated the justified indignation of von Trier’s then-wife to a general sensibility – then the plea for the productivity of establishing transferences in the actor-director relation will have to test itself against what appears to us as the most scandalous scenario. Fortunately, however, LVTOTI’s diary offers such a relentless account of “transference love on set” – providing a case so exemplary, albeit not of “best practice” – that it should be possible to make the necessary distinctions.

*

Clearly, when recording himself in the middle of a sleepless night, the director of the *The Idiots* is attempting to think “in precisely those situations which tend to disable thought” (Gallop 2002, 15). He tries to maintain an “analytic attitude” towards the affect overwhelming him; in terms of the vocabulary proposed in this thesis, he is trying to critically observe the re-staging of his transference onto the actress manifesting as infatuation; all the while maintaining that affective dynamics are a necessary instrument, a “working tool” (262) in the actor-director relation.

Interestingly – and maybe unsurprisingly – the first mention of the growing infatuation occurs in the same diary entry as the one where he describes the “breakthrough” of him fully assuming the analyst’s chair (where “the little therapist in me kicked in” (203)); a potentially explosive situation where maximum intimacy and maximum asymmetry are eventually resolved by both actress and director through staging an aesthetically satisfying scene. The “discovery” of the affect – “I want to say a few words about my relationship with Anne Louise in this movie ... it’s something ... well, somewhere I think she’s ... well, gorgeous, and it’s kind of grown along the way, because she is” (209) – is immediately followed by a longer

reflection attempting to prove it being a *repetition*. If not of “infantile prototype relations” then of other “automatisms” within the intimate and asymmetric set-up of a film shoot.

And as I was just talking to Bente about, at the beginning of my career I had a very difficult relationship with actresses. I was always almost at war with them (...) That relationship changed a bit already on *The Kingdom* and especially on *Breaking the Waves* and of course I fell into exactly the same ... trap I wouldn't call it, but in the same automatism as most other directors: that you enter some kind of “directorial infatuation” with some of the characters/actors [personerne]²¹⁵. It's important for me to use the word infatuation, because that comes closest to it, and I have to say that I ... on *Breaking the Waves* it's been Katrin, who played Dodo, who I kind of have ... had ... I was insanely jealous of almost everything she did, other than being in the movie, and I guess that was also an infatuation. It has been, and now the same with Anne Louise. (209)^{xv}

In the spirit of *episteme*, LVTOTI then makes a first attempt at universalization:

I can see that in reality it's exactly the same thing that goes on in any directorial situation, and what I've concluded – and this may be a post-rationalization to make things look nicer – it's that in reality it's a much, much healthier relationship than being at war – and maybe it's two sides of the same coin. (...) I'm just trying to defend the feelings I can have towards the cast. I don't know if it can be defended, probably not. Yes, any feeling one has is worth something, I keep telling myself. Anyways, maybe it's natural that it happens in the relation director/actress. (233)^{xvi}

This generalized approval of the affect of love as informative instrument within the actor-director relation – its naturalization in the heteromatrix of director and actress in the specific case of LVTOTI – is however not upheld. Only four days later, the sleepless night sounds like this:

I don't know... the whole thing is going through my head, and after the weekend I had calmed down a lot about Anne Louise, but now... now it's going through my fucking head and I don't want to be... now it's uncomfortable. I don't want her to be nice to me or stupid to me or anything. I just want this movie to be over with, so I don't have to see her. And it's completely stupid,

²¹⁵ The word in the Danish original is marked by an ambivalence; it can either mean the fictional “characters”, but it can also mean the “persons”, which in this context would be equivalent to “the actors”.

because she just walks around and is completely ... well, she's not doing anything. (240-41)^{xvii}

The sense of repetition is still there and has even increased. But the “side of the coin” seems to have flipped. The affect may still be love, but the transference turned from positive to negative.

Some stupid movie infatuation, it's too childish. I'm not even in love! It's not even a reality, it's just a fucking fantasy in my head. (...) You could say that sensitivity is a working tool, but it's not a tool that's particularly pleasant or easy to deal with. (...) Now the newspaper comes, it's three o'clock, and I can't sleep, and I have to consider jerking off for the fifth time to fall asleep... My poor, poor, poor dick. Oh, for fuck's sake...! (241-42)^{xviii}

As already described the following last period of the shoot is characterized by a “state of war” between actress and director. Obviously, the unilaterally managed transference has meanwhile exploded into LVTOTI's face. Ultimately, the final goal of the director (to make “a great movie”) does not align with the final goal of the analyst (which may differ depending on the various schools but always centers around the analysand as an end in him/herself.) As relentlessly honest as LVTOTI may be as an artist (or as the “character” figuring in his diary), his search for honesty/truth of expression in the cast of *The Idiots* – the authenticity of Hassing's performance, as it were – is always already in a pact with the extractivist logics of the film medium.

It is hard to speculate what happened on Hassing's end in this last week. The development however indicates that the actress was in fact not put in control of the affective dynamics at play throughout the shoot. That there was no intermediate layer that would allow her to take the “exit” into acting or to possibly work with the double “inside and outside” perspective of the *performauthor*. However, instead of offering more interpretations of this relational “U-turn” with the vocabulary of this thesis I shall let LVTOTI conclude for now:

I've been a better director when admiring instead of hating – significantly better. So apart from the emotions being a side effect of the job, you could say that the emotions – however unpleasant and unintended they may be – also become a working tool in the sense that things get better, much much better. (262)^{xix}

This reflection is from two days after the last shooting session. One day later he notes:

Yesterday I met Anne-Grethe and today Anne Louise and I realized that estrangement sets in immediately after a job of this type. It was almost like meeting a couple of old aunts you hadn't seen for a long time and had no particular desire to meet. It emphasizes the insanely professional nature of this wildly hysterical industry. It's especially interesting when you consider how relatively close we have come in the crazy process described above. Thought-provoking and quite scary. (269)^{xx}

Z POSTLUDE – The “Final Pre-study”

Fierce play gets you everywhere.

Scout Niblett
in the Foothills
(2001)

While I was able to relate most of my deductions to the concrete stories in the production diary of *The Idiots*, there was no evident match for the ones concerning the Wheel of Consent (deductions 7, 8, 9). Naturally”, one could argue; because while the dynamics of giving and receiving were of course in play at the time the film was made, they were not yet systematized in the model I am working with in this thesis (cf. Chapter 7, *The genealogy of the Wheel*). Despite the slight anachronism, it could however be fun to retrospectively describe the “three-minute games” LVTOTI and the ensemble were engaging in. An attempt for this type of analysis – in the style of the transcribed dialogues you find in the online resources to Pre-study #2 – would certainly show which quadrants Anne Louise Hassing, the ensemble and LVTOTI

are inhabiting *when*; or yet, are assuming to inhabit. Shadow sides would become visible as well as agreements made that stay within the confines of the circle of consent.

*

The fact that the deductions regarding the Wheel of Consent are not included in the analysis of LVTOTI's anecdotal material could, however, suggest a short-cut conclusion of the following kind: if only the method that this thesis promotes had been available to him and his ensemble, the actor-director relations at stake would have been "clean", (and the sleepless nights superfluous). They would stand the test of the ethically charged perspective by which we evaluate rehearsal processes in the era that we call, for lack of a better word, post-#MeToo.

I do, however, not mean to suggest this.

A method is only as good as the dialectical stance it can accommodate. The Wheel is useful for our ambition of a *reinvented Regietheater* only if we engage it in a relation to the "ethical project" of its tradition (i.e. in relation to the "sacrificial squander" or the "care for the Accursed Share" that *The Idiots* can exemplarily stand for.) In the context of this thesis, the Wheel's application therefore implies a critique of the premise of scarcity and the politics of austerity applied to the rehearsal space. For the method to radiate into the realm of aesthetics – as a proposition that avoids its own subsumption into the expert business of relational optimization within the art institutions – it needs this broader analysis that situates the director in our day.

LVTOTI's "unclean" process is therefore an important dialectical pole in this discussion. First and foremost, because it does not shy away from the workings of the transference – by, for

instance, proposing yet another collective soup kitchen piece in the lineage of Tiranvanija – but tries to distill its affective dynamics into the realm of aesthetics. Having put this as drastically: would I have wished for the ensemble and the director to have an “intermediate layer” at hands, a “container” by which they could have shared the responsibility of “objectifying” the workings of the transferences at play? Certainly yes.

*

For me, the elaborations on the “Wheel of Consent as a rehearsal method” have only begun. I consider the experiments of this thesis a first proposition that I sincerely hope will be picked up where I left off, challenged and transformed. There are a lot of open questions to be researched, transcending the discrete focus of the present inquiry. For instance: how does the *maieutics of desire* – and the situation-specific *genio* – relate to the actor’s paradox of having to reproduce certain actions at specific moments in time? What to make of the option of “change your mind anytime” that Martin stresses to be of importance for a successful consensual play? In other words: how does the Wheel relate to the *mise-en-scène* (as an agreement over time)? Can the “Wheel as rehearsal method” account for situations that are not based on improvisation but belong to the register of “repetition” (in the pragmatic, not the psychoanalytic sense)? Other questions: what happens when we move out of the one-to-one set-up and into the dynamics of the ensemble? The Wheel as a therapeutic practice certainly allows for a mirroring of the specifics of the actor-director relation, but how about the actor-actor as well as the director-ensemble relation? Practically speaking: how many rounds of clarifications/negotiations can we possibly go through – with how many constellations? – before we start rehearsing “the piece” we are commissioned to stage? Last but not least: what

is our hypothesis for the workings of the audience-ensemble relation within the logics of the Wheel?

*

In my experience, the “Wheel as a rehearsal method” is not a “quick fix” or a “tool” to resolve conflicts in an artistic constellation that is about to disintegrate. Rather, I see it as a *premise* that committed communities of practice – be it city theater ensembles, independent groups, but also acting and directing education programs – can adopt as a premise. A shared language for asymmetry, a mode of creation that allows us to collectively go a step further.

When I introduce acting and directing students to this premise, they usually start to dream big. While they might initially have opted for my “consent in rehearsals” course with a vague idea of learning some kind of “martial art” that would one day allow them to fend off the “groping older colleague”, they suddenly start to see the possibility of a completely different institutional paradigm. They see a city theater ensemble, a rehearsal culture, possibly even their own educational set-up cohesively working with the organizing questions of the Wheel.

And while I can myself join in that *rêverie* of an institutionally transformed theater, I also know how hard it is to establish and/or maintain the *continuous work* of a community of practice that organizes around an ethical/aesthetic premise. With the processes of flexibilization still raging at the time of writing, an institution that would host such a community of practice (providing the reliable (financial) infrastructure to engage the technical apparatus of classical *Regietheater* as well as to maintain the disciplinary divide between actor and director while *simultaneously*

safeguarding the freedom to work beyond the canon of dramatic literature) seems almost out of reach.

*

The premise of the “Wheel as rehearsal method”, however, sediments over time. And while it is certainly preferable to be in dialogue about it (with a group and context committed to it), I have already experienced its continuous integration into my own directorial practice. The embodied fact of *leaning* and *not leaning* is accessible to me in every rehearsal setting, and so are the questions of “May I?” and “Will you?”. To gain clarity on “Who is it for?” and “Who is doing?” (the directionality of “action” and “gift”, as it were) in regard to a specific rehearsal (tomorrow morning!) is always a productive analysis. It is also a conversation that can be conducted with the ensemble in a paraphrase, i.e. without the technical vocabulary of the Wheel.

*

With the help of the analyses and methods suggested here, I thus hope to have contributed to the possibility of a *reinvented Regietheater* – a form of the performing arts where directorial agency and the singular voice that comes with it have their *legitimated* place. Put very simply, that means reigniting the ambition to create art pieces as radical as *The Idiots*, trusting that they do not have to come at the price of a questionable process. To play a fierce play with each other, safe and ecstatic.

Acknowledgments

(in form of a Thank-you speech)

First and foremost, my gratitude extends to Jon Refsdal Moe, my principal supervisor, who has accompanied this project from the start to its end. What a graceful and rocksteady support you gave!

Secondly, I want to thank both my external supervisors, Juliette Mapp and Josefine Wikström. Juliette, who expanded her mentoring schedule to weekly when the pandemic destabilized the project and Josefine, who gave me the confidence that I could *write* in the first place. Thank you for that.

In the same vein of steady support, I want to thank the artist Inga Gerner Nielsen, my partner, who could inspire full sections of this text by means of a nonchalant comment dropped in the kitchen. (Thank you for that and for so much more, my love.)

Furthermore, I would like to thank my collaborators of the Pre-studies – Sarah Sandeh, Claire Vivianne Sobottke and Anders Carlsson – for their immense contribution to this research. I am so happy we could be part of each other's life by means of the present work; and that we maintain our friendships beyond.

A special thank you in that concern also to you, Anders (as in: the-artistic-researcher). You have been a warm mirror – right there on the other side of *Kattegat* – and a massively inspiring conversation partner throughout the last years.

As another collaborator, I also thank Mary Szydłowska (Uncle Uncle), who has opened the gates to Brussels to me and accompanied the project back to the North.

Thank you, Stockholm University of the Arts (SKH), for giving me this unprecedented opportunity of a project stretching over seven years. What an amazing chance you provided there to reconfigure my categories at a point where I was in deep doubt about the mandate of

the director! I thank the staff and teachers of the whole institution for the support offered; and throw a special bouquet in the direction of the Research Center under the leadership of Cecilia “Cilla” Roos (2016-24).

I shall never forget the welcome extended to our cohort at our arrival in 2019; with the four so-called profile professors – Johanna Garpe, Juliette Mapp, Ellen Røed and Rebecca Hilton (Becky a.k.a. “the atmosphere”) – descending from Mount Olympus to watch over our ways.

Thank you, also to my PhD colleagues at SKH! It has been greatly inspiring to study and explore with you. To find out together what this artistic research field may be all about. (Good luck also to the 2025 as well as the coming cohort(s)! May the infrastructure of artistic research consolidate and many more of us get to take this ride!)

In that vein I also thank all opponents/conversation partners who take our projects in profoundly and contribute to building a field from scratch. Specifically, I thank Victoria Meirik, Agnieszka Piotrowska, Christine Korte and Peter Boenisch – who have mirrored my project back to me with wisdom and discernment and warmth. In anticipation, I thank the committee and the opponent of my Public Defense – David Barnett, Kristina Hågström-Ståhl, Chrysa Parkinson, Egill Pálsson – for the transferential energy I could draw from the thought of writing “for you”.

The same gratitude goes out to the many first readers/recipients or close conversation partners to this research. To the PhD colleagues I entered a content-based exchange with: first and foremost Savaş Boyraz, Mia Engberg, Tove Dahlberg Linn-Hilda Lamberg, Marcia Nemer, Ellen Nyman and Hendrik Quast. And to my friends: Christoph Steinhof, Christoph Wirth, Elisa Liepsch, Erik Valentin Berg, Espen Hjorth, Finn Tödte, George Chiper-Lillemark, Iggy Malmberg, Johanna Malm, Karla-Anemone Philippa Aschenbrenner, Kristian Eckstein, Lucie

Tuma, Mårten Björk, Matthias Nebel, Olof Olsson, Sebastian Kirsch, Smina Bluth and Susanne Heinrich.

Thank you also, Alexandria Nova Network, for providing the chance for so many inspiring directing pedagogues to exchange. Thank you to my former teacher Robert Schuster, whom I met anew at the occasion of the Stockholm meeting; as well as to Anja Suša, the current professor of directing at SKH, who has been an intellectual anchor in the institution of performing arts. Thank you also to the B.A. directing cohort 2021 – Elin Blomström, Farzin Fatih, Jennifer Löfgren, Bernhard Øye – for the close dialogue!

Thank you to the different heads of department I was able to work with: Gunilla Pettersson, Johanna Garpe, Christina Molander (†2020).

I also want to acknowledge the intellectual influence of people that turned into *persona non grata* in my circle of German friends and colleagues when the pandemic was at its boiling point. In particular Bernd Stegemann's *Kritik des Theaters* still represents a turning point for me (in terms of my understanding of the performative turn).

Drawing to a close I would like to thank the people I mostly know through their work, but that have nevertheless somewhat “personally” inspired the current endeavor: Thank you to Laurent Chétouane (my long-term S.s.S). Thank you to Ida Müller, Trond Reinholdtsen, Vegard Vinge and all the inspiring directors and actors at Frank Castorf's *Volksbühne*. Thank you, Tove Soiland for the perspective on Irigaray. And thank you, Betty Martin for the Wheel – as well as your encouragement on this final stretch!

A special thanks in this regard also goes to Clementine Morrigan and Jay Soleil, the hosts of the “Fucking cancelled” podcast. “My roomies from Montréal” as my partner would call them, given their ever present (loud) voices in our kitchen; two rigid and most generous intellectuals who provided me with a moral compass in the muddy terrain of the last years.

Other institutions and platforms I owe inspiration and resources that have gone into this dissertation: the Performing Arts Department at *ZHdK* (Zürich), *A.pass* and *German Staatstheater* (Micha Goldberg and Rosie Sommers) in Brussels, *Konträr* in Stockholm, as well as the mobile *IPPT* (International Platform for Performer Training). In many ways, the students at the acting and directing programs of *ZHdK* have refined my approach to the “Wheel as a rehearsal method”. Thank you all, for the trust and thought invested!

Thank you to my graphic designer, Miriam Hempel, and to my proofreader, Matthias Müller, for all their patience with a *debutant* in book making. I am confident that your experience and expertise will get this first publication of mine over the finishing line.

Thank you also, Olof Halldin from the SKH Library, for getting me through the final stretch of bibliographical madness by means of Zotero dark magic and your overall craftsmanship.

I also thank my parents, Marlene Peter-Schmit and Franz-Josef Schmit, as well as my Danish family for providing space for this research when it was necessary. For taking care of our daughter when Inga and I could not take turns – as well as providing food and other *lavpraktisk*, but essential stuff on the final stretch.

Last but not least – and first and foremost because the Swedish state will try to preserve this thesis “for eternity and beyond that, too” – I take the opportunity to address some few words to my future self:

If I should find you at some point looking back at this period in your life when you made an “artistic research dissertation” ... possibly in your 50s by now, freshly divorced and definitely bald... if I then find you talking to a group of younger colleagues, tuning in to the chant of “*I had everything... A beautiful wife, a wonderful kid, a steady job, A CAT, A HOUSE AND A CAR, but I just wasn't happy...* We would be dancing in the kitchen while making pancakes in the morning, we would drive on the beach and hop into the ocean naked, we would burst into laughter to the A.I. songs our friend Kubo had sent and and ... *but I just wasn't ...*”

Then let me stop you right here and say: “Shut the fuck up, my friend! These were some good seven years! (Possibly some of the best.)”

Johannes Maria Schmit, Stockholm and Tversted, November 2025

References / Source list

- “About Me.” Accessed January 1, 2025. <https://bettymartin.org/about-me/>.
- Agamben, Giorgio. 2007. *Profanations*. Translated by Jeff Fort. Zone Books.
- Albinus, Jens. 2024. *Den kærlighed du har til mig: essays om teater, forblændelser og forbiere*. Forlaget 28B.
- “Alexandria Nova.” Accessed November 3, 2025. <https://alexandrianova.eu/>.
- Angel, Katherine. 2021. *Tomorrow Sex Will Be Good Again: Women and Desire in the Age of Consent*. Verso.
- Aristotle. 1925. “Nicomachean Ethics: Book VI.” Translated by W.D. Ross. <https://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.6.vi.html>.
- Arlander, Annette. 2009. “Artistic Research — from Apartness to the Umbrella Concept at the Theatre Academy, Finland.” In *Mapping Landscapes for Performance as Research: Scholarly Acts and Creative Cartographies*, edited by Shannon Rose Riley and Lynette Hunter. Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230244481_9.
- Artaud, Antonin. 1958. *The Theater and its Double*. Translated by Caroline Richards. Grove Weidenfeld.
- Austin, John Langshaw. 2009. *How to Do Things with Words: The William James Lectures Delivered at Harvard University in 1955*. Edited by James O. Urmson and Marina Sbisa. Harvard Univ. Press.
- Balevičiūtė, Ramunė, Saana Lavaste, Anja Susa, and Torleifsdóttir Una, eds. 2022. *Looking for Direction: Rethinking Theatre Directing Practices and Pedagogies in the 21st Century*. Uniarts Helsinki, Theatre Academy.
- Barks, Coleman. 2004. *The Essential Rumi - Reissue: New Expanded Edition*. HarperCollins Publishers.
- Barnett, David “Brecht in Practice.” Accessed November 4, 2025. www.brechtinpractice.net.
- Barnett, David. 2006. “Political Theatre in a Shrinking World: René Pollesch’s Postdramatic Practices on Paper and on Stage.” *Contemporary Theatre Review* 16 (1): 31–40. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10486800500450957>.
- Bataille, Georges. 1986. *Erotism: Death and Sensuality*. City Lights Books.
- Bataille, Georges. 2007. *The Accursed Share. 1: Consumption*. Zone Books.

- Bateman, Anthony, and Peter Fonagy. 2008. "8-Year Follow-Up of Patients Treated for Borderline Personality Disorder: Mentalization-Based Treatment Versus Treatment as Usual." *American Journal of Psychiatry* 165 (5): 631–38.
<https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ajp.2007.07040636>.
- Bayreuther Festspiele, dir. 2014. *Video-Podcast 2014: Frank Castorf: „Ein Künstler Braucht Ein Feindbild“*. 04:36. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZSkzelX6d6Y>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Beer, Stafford. 1995. *The Heart of Enterprise*. The Managerial Cybernetics of Organization / Stafford Beer. Reprinted. Wiley.
- Behrendt, Eva. 2002. "Frauen in Scheiß-Kostümen [Women in Shitty Costumes]." *Theater Heute*. 43 (1): 5-10.
- bell hooks - *Cultural Criticism & Transformation*. 1997. Documentary. With bell hooks, Mary Patierno, Sut Jhally, and Harriet Hirshorn. Media education foundation.
- Benjamin, Walter. 2012. *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*. Edited by Hannah Arendt. Translated by Harry Zohn. With Leon Wieseltier. Schocken Books.
- Berliner Zeitung*. 2000. "Bernhard Schütz ist einer der wenigen Westdeutschen an der Berliner Volksbühne." Politik. January 4. <https://www.berliner-zeitung.de/bernhard-schuetz-ist-einer-der-wenigen-westdeutschen-an-der-berliner-volksbuehne-von-heute-an-spielt-er-caligula-der-existenzialist-li.9275>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Bishop, Claire. 2004. "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics." *October*, no. 110 (October): 51–79. <https://doi.org/10.1162/0162287042379810>.
- Bishop, Claire. 2012. *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*. Verso Books.
- Board of Directors | Cuddle Party INC. Accessed November 4, 2025.
<https://cuddlepary.com/board-of-directors/>.
- Bochow, Jörg. 1997. *Das Theater Meyerholds und die Biomechanik*. With Mime Centrum. Alexander Verlag.
- Body Electric School. Our History - Body Electric School." Our History. Accessed November 3, 2025. <https://bodyelectric.org/about-us/our-history/>.
- Boenisch, Peter M. 2017. *Directing Scenes and Senses: The thinking of Regie*. Manchester University Press.
- Boltanski, Luc, and Eve Chiapello. 2017. *The New Spirit of Capitalism*. Verso.

- Bornemark, Jonna. 2020. *Horisonten finns alltid Kvar : om det bortglömda omdömet*. Volante.
- Bourriaud, Nicolas. 1999. *Relational Aesthetics*. Translated by Simon Pleasance and Fronza Woods. Documents sur l'art. Les presses du réel.
- Bourriaud, Nicolas. 1998. *Esthétique relationnelle*. Documents sur l'art. Les presses du réel.
- Bowring, Finn. 2011. "Repressive Desublimation and Consumer Culture: Re-Evaluating Herbert Marcuse." *New Formations* 2011 (75).
- Bradby, David, and David Williams. 2020. *Directors' Theatre*. Edited by Peter M. Boenisch. Red Globe Press.
- Bradshaw, Lisa. 2021. "Jan Fabre Charged with Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Power Following Investigation." *The Bulletin*, June 29. <https://www.thebulletin.be/jan-fabre-charged-sexual-harassment-and-abuse-power-following-investigation>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Brauneck, Manfred. 1988. *Klassiker der Schauspielregie: Positionen und Kommentare zum Theater im 20. Jahrhundert*. Orig.-Ausg. Rowohlt's Enzyklopädie 477. Rowohlt-Taschenbuch-Verl.
- "Breakthrough Energy." Accessed November 3, 2025. <https://www.breakthroughenergy.org/>.
- Brecht, Bertolt. 1964. *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic*. Edited and translated by John Willett. A Dramabook. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Brecht, Bertolt. 1997. "Die Diderot-Gesellschaft." In *Ausgewählte Werke in sechs Bänden: Sechster Band: Schriften*, vol. 6. Bertolt Brechts Werke. Suhrkamp Verlag.
- Brecht, Bertolt. 2015. *Brecht on Theatre*. Third edition. Edited by Marc Silberman, Steve Giles, and Tom Kuhn. Translated by Jack Davis, Romy Fursland, Victoria Hill, Kristopher Imbrigotta, and John Willett. Drama and Performance Studies. Bloomsbury.
- Brecht, Bertolt. 2019. *Brecht on Performance: Messingkauf and Modelbooks*. Edited by Tom Kuhn, Steve Giles, and Marc Silberman. Translated by Charlotte Ryland, Romy Fursland, John Willett, Tom Kuhn, and Steve Giles. Bloomsbury.
- Brecht, Stefan. 1986. *The Original Theatre of the City of New York. 2: Queer Theatre*. Methuen.
- Butler, Judith. 1997. *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative*. Routledge.
- Campbell, Bradley, and Jason Manning. 2018. *The Rise of Victimhood Culture: Microaggressions, Safe Spaces, and the New Culture Wars*. Palgrave Macmillan.

- Carlsson, Anders. 2026 (forthcoming). "Acting Otherwise: Phronesis, Eroticism, and the Ethics of Institutional Navigation (Working Title)." Gothenburg University.
- Chukhrov, Ketii. 2021. "The Postdramatic Theater's Misadventures in the Age of Contemporary Art." Translated by Thomas H. Campbell. *E-Flux*, no. 120. <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/120/415768/the-postdramatic-theater-s-misadventures-in-the-age-of-contemporary-art>.
- Connell, Raewyn. 2013. "The Neoliberal Cascade and Education: An Essay on the Market Agenda and Its Consequences." *Critical Studies in Education* 54 (2): 99–112. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17508487.2013.776990>.
- Creuzberger, Stefan. 2022. *Das deutsch-russische Jahrhundert: Geschichte einer besonderen Beziehung [The German-Russian Century]*. Rowohlt.
- Cullinane, Craig, and Gabriela Love. 2022. *Betty Martin*. Episode 13. Erotic Liberation Podcast. December 27. <https://bodyelectric.org/episode-13-betty-martin/>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Curtis, Adam, dir. 2011. *All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace*. Episode 1. *Culture Change Hub*. Accessed November 4, 2025. <https://culture-change-hub.de/weiterbildung-intimacy-coordinator/>.
- Dahlberg, Tove. 2023. "Släpp sångarna loss! genus, gestaltungsnormer och konstnärligt handlingsutrymme i opera." Stockholms konstnärliga högskola. <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/2003216/2003249>.
- Dahlstedt, Sten, Peter Englund, Claes-Peter Hellwig, et al. 2006. *Berättelse Och Kunskap*. Södertörns högskola.
- Dany, Hans-Christian. 2014. *Morgen werde ich Idiot: Kybernetik und Kontrollgesellschaft*. Nautilus Flugschrift. Ed. Nautilus.
- "Das Theater Am Schiffbauerdamm | Berliner-Ensemble." Accessed November 4, 2025. <https://www.berliner-ensemble.de/das-theater-am-schiffbauerdamm>.
- Davies, Cecil. 2013. *The Volksbühne Movement: A History*. Taylor and Francis.
- Deleuze, Gilles. 1995. *Negotiations: 1972 - 1990*. Translated by Martin Joughin. European Perspectives. Columbia Univ. Press.
- Deleuze, Gilles. 2006. *Masochism*. Venus in Furs. Zone Books.
- Deliberate Movement Theatre. 2015. *Excerpts from Meyerhold's Government Inspector*. Video, 01:35. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mi5FrLIG6Mk>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)

- Derrida, Jacques. 2012. *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*. Taylor and Francis.
- Descartes, René. 2001. *Discourse on Method, Optics, Geometry, and Meteorology*. Translated by Paul J. Olscamp. Revised edition. Hackett Publishing Company.
- Dews, Peter. 2002. "Uncategorical Imperatives: Adorno, Badiou and the Ethical Turn." *Radical Philosophy*, no. 111: 33–37.
- Diederichsen, Diedrich. 2017. "Weder Wohnung noch Währung." *Texte zur Kunst*, no. 105: 146–64.
- Diederichsen, Diedrich, and Oier Etxeberria. 2021. *Cybernetics of the Poor*. Sternberg press.
- Diesen, Trygve Allister. 2011. "Being the Director - Maintaining Your Artistic Vision While Swimming with Sharks." Den Norske Filmskolen.
- Ehrenreich, Barbara, and John Ehrenreich. 1977a. "The Professional-Managerial Class." *Radical America* 11 (2): 7–31.
- Ehrenreich, Barbara, and John Ehrenreich. 1977b. "The New Left and the Professional-Managerial Class." *Radical America* 11 (3): 7–22.
- Ehrenreich, Barbara, and John Ehrenreich. 2013a. "Death of a Yuppie-Dream." Rosalux.De, February. <https://www.rosalux.de/en/publication/id/6796/death-of-a-yuppie-dream>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Ehrenreich, Barbara, and John Ehrenreich. 2013b. "Background Notes for Death of a Yuppie Dream." RLS-NYC, January 31. <https://rosalux.nyc/backgroundnotes1/>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Eisenstein, Sergei. 2014. *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory*. Translated by Jay Leyda. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Trade & Reference Publishers.
- Eisenstein, Sergei. 2009. "The Dramaturgy of Film Form (The Dialectical Approach to Film)." In *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, 7th ed, edited by Marshall Cohen and Leo Braudy. Oxford University Press.
- Eisenstein, Sergei. 2016. *Notes for a General History of Cinema*. Edited by Naum Klejman and Antonio Somaini. Film Theory in Media History. Amsterdam university press.
- Engberg, Mia. 2023. *Darkness as Material*. Stockholms konstnärliga högskola.
- Engler, Wolfgang, and Frank M. Raddatz. 2016. "Entfremdung verboten!" *Lettre international*, no. 114: 62–68.
- Eribon, Didier. 2011. *Michel Foucault*. Champs. Flammarion.
- Evans, Dylan. 2006. *An Introductory Dictionary of Lacanian Psychoanalysis*. Routledge : Taylor & Francis.

- Faddis, H.A. 2000. *Power, Surrender, & Intimacy*. Edited by Body Electric School. Oakland, California.
- Fagerlund, Jonas, David Mellström, and Alexander Yng. 2023. "The Art of Balancing Directions : A Qualitative Study on How Dramaten Balances Its Goals." Stockholm University, Stockholm Business School. <https://su.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1733993/FULLTEXT01.pdf>.
- Fairfield, Joy Brooke. 2019. "Introduction: Consent-Based Staging in the Wreckage of History." *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism* 34 (1): 67–75. <https://doi.org/10.1353/dtc.2019.0023>.
- Federici, Silvia. 2004. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. Autonomedia.
- Fellmann, Christoph. 2016. "Bühne frei für Mick Levčik – René Pollesch macht am Schauspielhaus Zürich die Bühne frei für Sophokles und Bertolt Brecht." April 2. <https://nachtkritik.de/nachtkritiken/schweiz/zuerich-region/zuerich/schauspielhaus-zuerich/buehne-frei-fuer-mick-levcik-rene-pollesch-macht-in-zuerich-die-buehne-frei-fuer-sophokles-und-bertolt-brecht>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Fiennes, Sophie, dir. 2006. *The Pervert's Guide to Cinema*. P Guide Ltd.
- Fischer-Lichte, Erika. 2008. *The Transformative Power of Performance: A New Aesthetics*. Translated by Saskya Iris Jain. Routledge.
- Fisher, Mark. 2013. "Exiting the Vampire Castle." *openDemocracy*. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/opendemocracyuk/exiting-vampire-castle/>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Fisher, Tony, and Kéline Gotman. 2019. *Foucault's Theatres*. Manchester University Press.
- Flitsos, Anne L., and Wendy Vierow, eds. 2013. *International Women Stage Directors*. University of Illinois Press.
- Foucault, Michel. 1994. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of Human Sciences*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.
- Freire, Paulo 1998. *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civic Courage*. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Freud, Sigmund. 1958. "Observations on Transference-Love (Further Recommendations on the Technique of Psycho-Analysis III)." In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 12. Hogarth Press.
- Freud, Sigmund. 1955. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Edited by James Strachey. Vol. 18. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud.

- Freud, Sigmund. 1956. *Fragments of an Analysis of Hysteria*. Edited by James Strachey. Vol. 7. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud. Hogarth Press.
- Freud, Sigmund. 1953 *Project for a Scientific Psychology*. Edited by James Strachey. Vol. 1. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud. Hogarth Press.
- Frisk, Henrik, Karin Johansson, and Åsa Lindberg-Sand. 2015. *Acts of Creation : Thoughts on Artistic Research Supervision*. Brutus Östlings bokförlag Symposion.
- Fukuyama, Francis. 1989. "The End of History?" *The National Interest*, no. 16: 3–18.
- Fukuyama, Francis. 2006. *The End of History and the Last Man: With a New Afterword*. 1. Free Press trade paperback ed. Free Press.
- Funk, Jannis, and Jakob Schmidt. 2020. *Projekt Cybersyn – Chiles Kybernetischer Traum von Gerechtigkeit*. <https://www.hoerspielundfeature.de/chiles-kybernetischer-traum-von-gerechtigkeit-projekt-104.html>.
- Gallop, Jane. 1982. *The Daughter's Seduction: Feminism and Psychoanalysis*. Cornell Univ. Press.
- Gallop, Jane. 1998. *Feminist Accused of Sexual Harassment*. Public Planet Books. Duke Univ. Press.
- Gallop, Jane. 2002. *Anecdotal Theory*. Duke Univ. Press.
- Gallop, Jane, and Dick Blau. 2003. *Living with His Camera*. Duke University Press.
- Gates, Bill. 2022. *How to Avoid a Climate Disaster: The Solutions We Have and the Breakthroughs We Need*. Penguin Books.
- Gerge, Tova. 2024. *En praktisk och en opraktisk text om samtycke | bastard*. October 4. <https://bastard.blog/en-praktisk-och-en-opraktisk-text-om-samtycke-gerge/>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Gerge, Tova. 2025. "Two Essays on Consent in Contemporary Dance." *Maska*, Peripheries II, XV (225–226): 47–53.
- Gerner Nielsen, Inga. 2021. "Interview as Convergent Point: Between Qualitative Research and Performance Art." *Peripeti* 18 (33): 55–76. <https://doi.org/10.7146/peri.v18i33.124663>.
- Gerner Nielsen, Inga, and Ar Utke Acs, eds. 2023. *In the Mirror of Care Work*. 1. ed. With Norheim, Marit Benthe. TABLOID Press.
- Gessen, Masha. 2018. "An N.Y.U Sexual-Harassment Case Has Spurred a Necessary Conversation about #metoo." *The New Yorker*, August 25.

- <https://www.newyorker.com/news/our-columnists/an-nyu-sexual-harassment-case-has-spurred-a-necessary-conversation-about-metoo>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Gilbert & George. 2007. *Gilbert and George: The Ten Commandments*. Tate Modern, November 1.
- Glen, Zoë. 2025. "Neuronormativity, Naturalism and the Neurotypical Gaze: The Equating of Neurotypicality and Quality in Actor Training." *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training* 16 (1): 119–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19443927.2024.2428615>.
- Goffman, Erving. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Anchor Books.
- Goldmann, A. J. 2023. "Review: 'Drama' Contains Many Things. But Drama Isn't One." Theater. *The New York Times*, January 20. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/20/theater/drama-review-volksbuehne.html>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Gorelik, Mordecai, and Bertolt Brecht. (1938) 1961. "Bertolt Brecht's 'Prospectus of the Diderot Society.'" *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 47 (2): 113–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00335636109382464>.
- Grotowski, Jerzy. 2002. *Towards a Poor Theatre*. Edited by Eugenio Barba. Routledge.
- Groys, Boris. 1992. *Über das Neue: Versuch einer Kulturökonomie*. Edition Akzente. Hanser.
- Groys, Boris. 2012. *Under Suspicion: A Phenomenology of the Media*. Translated by Carsten Strathausen. Columbia University Press.
- Gundolf, Friedrich. 1914. *Shakespeare und der deutsche Geist*. Georg Bondi.
- Haacke, Paul. 2012. "The Brechtian Exception: From Weimar to the Cold War." *Diacritics* 40 (3): 56–83.
- Halley, Janet. 2016. "The Move to Affirmative Consent." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 42 (1): 257–79. <https://doi.org/10.1086/686904>.
- Handke, Peter. (1966) 1971. *Offending the Audience*. Translated by Michael Roloff. Methuen.
- Hänzi, Denis. 2014. *Die Ordnung des Theaters: Eine Soziologie der Regie*. Theater. Transcript.
- Haraway, Donna. 1988. "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." *Feminist Studies* 14 (3): 575–99.
- Harris, Gareth. 2022. "Artist Jan Fabre given 18-Month Suspended Sentence for Bullying and Violence against Five Women—and Will Pay €1 Symbolic Compensation." *The Art Newspaper - International Art News and Events*, April 29. <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2022/04/29/artist-jan-fabre-given-18-month-sentence-by-a-belgian-court>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)

- Harry Faddis *Conversation*. 2015. With Betty Martin. 01:09:14.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6UdbSg-7bFw>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Hegemann, Carl. 2005. *Plädoyer für die unglückliche Liebe: Texte über Paradoxien des Theaters 1980 - 2005*. Edited by Sandra Umathum. Recherchen 28. Theater der Zeit.
- Heimann, Paula. 1950. "On Counter-Transference." *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 31: 81–84.
- Heisenberg, Werner. 2015. *Quantentheorie und Philosophie: Vorlesungen und Aufsätze*. Nachdr. Edited by Jürgen Busche. Reclams Universal-Bibliothek, Nr. 9948. Reclam.
- Hjort, Espen. 2025. "The Director's Body: Directing from inside the World." M.A. Thesis, Stockholms konstnärliga högskola. <https://uniarts.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1981671/FULLTEXT01.pdf>.
- Hoffmeier, Dieter, and Klaus Völker, eds. 1995. *Werkraum Meyerhold: zur künstlerischen Anwendung seiner Biomechanik ; Aufsätze und Materialien*. Ed. Hentrich.
- Holling, Eva. 2016. *Übertragung im Theater: Theorie und Praxis theatraler Wirkung*. Neofelis.
- hooks, bell 1994. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. Routledge.
- Huber, Matthew T. 2022. *Climate Change as Class War: Building Socialism on a Warming Planet*. Verso.
- "International Brecht Society - IBS History." Accessed November 4, 2025.
https://ibs.wildapricot.org/ibs_history.
- Irigaray, Luce. 1974. *Speculum de l'autre Femme*. Éditions de Minuit.
- Irigaray, Luce. 1977. *Ce sexe qui n'en est pas un*. Éditions de Minuit.
- Irigaray, Luce. 1991. "The Limits of the Transference." In *The Irigaray Reader*, edited by Margaret Whitford. Blackwell.
- Izenour, George C., Howard Bay, and Clive Barker. 2024. "The Evolution of Modern Theatrical Production." In *Encyclopedia Britannica*. April 7.
<https://www.britannica.com/art/theater-building>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Jackson, Shannon. 2011. *Social Works: Performing Art, Supporting Publics*. Routledge.
- Jackson, Shannon. 2022. "Relative Autonomy in the Age of Climate Politics." In *Involvierte Autonomie*, edited by Birgit Eusterschulte and Christian Krüger, vol. 176. Transcript.
<https://doi.org/10.14361/9783839452233-005>.
- Jargil, Jesper, dir. 1998. *De Ydmygede*. Produced by Vinca Wiedemann. Jesper Jargil Film.
- Josefson, Ingela. 2006. "Vetenskap och beprövad erfarenhet." In *Berättelse och kunskap*, edited by Sten Dahlstedt. Södertörns högskola.

- Josefson, Ingela. 2015. "Varför en akademisk utbildning i praktisk kunskap?" In *Bildning och paradox: en idéskrift*, edited by Bo Göranson and Lars Mouwitz. Dialoger.
- Kant, Immanuel. 2020. *Werkausgabe. Band VII: Kritik der praktischen Vernunft. Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*. Suhrkamp-Taschenbuch Wissenschaft, edited by Wilhelm Weischedel, vol. 56. Suhrkamp.
- Kierkegaard, Søren. 2013. *Kierkegaard's Writings, VI, Volume 6: Fear and Trembling/Repetition*. Translated by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong. Princeton University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt24hrjx>.
- King, Michelle, Robert King, and Phil Alden Robinson, dirs. 2021. *The Good Fight*. Season 5 Episode 2. Series.
- Kirby, Michael. 1987. *A Formalist Theatre*. University of Pennsylvania press.
- Kirkkopelto, Esa. 2008. "New Start: Artistic Research at the Finnish Theatre Academy." *Nordic Theatre Studies* 20 (The Artist as Researcher): 17–27.
- Kirkkopelto, Esa. 2015. "Artistic Research as Institutional Practice." In *From Arts College to University: Subject Overview, Articles, Reviews, and Project Reports*, edited by Swedish Research Council.
- Korte, Christine. 2019. "Refusing the End of History: The Politics and Aesthetics of Castorf's Volksbühne." York University. <https://yorkspace.library.yorku.ca/server/api/core/bitstreams/c077475f-3750-42a1-b256-68fd13eeafce/content>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Kott, Jan 1984. *Theater of Essence*. With Martin Esslin. Northwestern University Press.
- Kramer, Joseph. 2002. "A Social History of the First Ten Years of Taoist Erotic Massage." Doctoral thesis, monograph, Institute for Advanced Study of Human Sexuality. <https://www.eroticmassage.com/history- taoist-erotic-massage-kramer/>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Kraus, Karl. 1922. *Die Letzten Tage Der Menschheit*. Verlag Hugo Heller.
- Krump, Annika. 2015. *Tagebuch einer Hospitantin: Berlin, Volksbühne 1992/93*. With Carl Hegemann. Alexander-Verlag
- Kuhn, Roger. 2024. *Dr. Betty Martin: On the Wheel of Consent*. CIIS Public Programs Podcast. October 30. <https://www.ciis.edu/podcast/dr-betty-martin-wheel-consent>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Kunst, Bojana. 2015. *Artist at Work, Proximity of Art and Capitalism*. Zero Books.
- Kurzenberger, Hajo, Stephan Müller, and Anton Rey, eds. 2011. *Wirkungsmaschine Schauspieler*. SubTexte 6, Buch. Alexander-Verlag.

- Lacan, Jacques. 1998. *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*. Edited by Jacques-Alain Miller. Translated by Alan Sheridan. The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XI. W.W. Norton & Company.
- Lacan, Jacques. 2001. *Le séminaire Livre VIII, Le transfert*. Edited by Jacques-Alain Miller. Éditions du Seuil.
- Lacan, Jacques. 2006. *Ecrits: The First Complete Edition in English*. Translated by Bruce Fink. Norton.
- Lehmann, Hans-Thies. 2006. *Postdramatic Theatre*. Translated by Karen Jürs-Munby. Routledge.
- Leonardz, Jenny. 2011. "Tillbaka från Berlins kaféliv." Kultur. *Svenska Dagbladet*, October 24. <https://www.svd.se/a/aa3fea7b-8a66-34ea-a96c-726a215db5f6/tillbaka-fran-berlins-kafeliv>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Leszczyłowski, Michael, dir. 1988. *Directed by Andrei Tarkovsky*. Documentary. Cinematheque of Sweden.
- Liu, Catherine. 2021. *Virtue Hoarders: The Case against the Professional Managerial Class*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Lochte, Julia, and Wilfried Schulz, eds. 1998. *Schlingensief! Notruf für Deutschland: Über die Mission, das Theater und die Welt des Christoph Schlingensief*. Rotbuch-Verlag
- Loick, Daniel. 2017. *Juridismus: Konturen einer kritischen Theorie des Rechts*. suhrkamp taschenbuch wissenschaft 2212. Suhrkamp.
- Loick, Daniel. 2020. "'... as if it were a thing.' A Feminist Critique of Consent." *Constellations* 27 (3): 412–22. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8675.12421>.
- Luhmann, Niklas. 1996. *Social Systems*. Translated by John Bednarz. Writing Science. Stanford Univ. Press.
- Malm, Andreas. 2016. *Fossil Capital: The Rise of Steam Power and the Roots of Global Warming*. Verso.
- Marranca, Bonnie, ed. 1996. *The Theatre of Images*. Paperback ed. PAJ Books. The John Hopkins Univ. Pr.
- Martin, Betty. 2025 "Free Resources." Wheel of Consent. <https://www.wheelofconsent.org/free-resources>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Martin, Betty, and Robyn Dalzen. 2021. *The Art of Receiving and Giving: The Wheel of Consent*. Luminare Press.
- Matzke, Annemarie. 2014. *Arbeit am Theater: Eine Diskursgeschichte der Probe*. Theater, v. 48. Transcript.

- Mauss, Marcel. 2021. *Essai sur le don*. Champs. Flammarion.
- Meadows, Donella H., Club of Rome, and Potomac Associates, eds. 1972. *The Limits to Growth: A Report for the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind*. A Potomac Associates Book. Universe books.
- Miller, Nancy K. 1991. *Getting Personal: Feminist Occasions and Other Autobiographical Acts*. Routledge.
- Mime Centrum. 2018. Accessed November 4, 2025. "Die Theatrale Biomechanik." <https://archiv.mimecentrum.de/topics/1>.
- Minnicino, Michael. 1992. "The New Dark Age." *Fidelio* 1 (1). https://www.schillerinstitute.org/fid_91-96/921_frankfurt.html. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Morozov, Evgeny. 2014. "The Planning Machine." *The New Yorker*. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/10/13/planning-machine>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Müller, Heiner. 2013. *Der Auftrag und andere Revolutionsstücke*. Edited by Uwe Wittstock. Reclams Universal-Bibliothek, Nr. 8470. Reclam.
- Müller, Heiner. 1988. "Shakespeare a difference." Translated by Dennis Redmond. <https://theater.augent.be/file/14>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Nagle, Angela. 2018. *Kill All Normies: Online Culture Wars from 4chan and Tumblr to Trump and the Alt-Right*. John Hunt Pub.
- Nelson, Maggie. 2012. *The Art of Cruelty*. W. W. Norton & Company, Incorporated.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1913. *The Genealogy of Morals: A Polemic*. Edited by Dr. Oscar Levy. Translated by Horace B. Samuel. Vol. 8. T.N. Foulis.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1924. *Human, All Too Human*. Translated by Helen Zimmern. George Allen & Unwin Ltd.
- Oltermann, Philip. 2016. "Revolt at the Volksbühne: Behind the Scenes at Berlin's Troubled Theatre." Stage. *The Guardian*, December 1. <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2016/dec/01/revolt-at-the-volksbuhne-berlin-theatre-chris-dercon>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Ómarsdóttir, Erna, Geneviève Lagravière, Louise Peterhoff, and Maryam Hedayat. 2018. "Open Letter: #metoo and Troubleyn/Jan Fabre." *Rekto: Verso*, September 12. <https://www.rektoverso.be/artikel/open-letter-metoo-and-troubleynjan-fabre>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)

- Oxford English Dictionary. 2025. *Control*, n.
https://www.oed.com/dictionary/control_n?tab=etymology#8252087. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Pálsson, Egill. 2022. "Two Methods, Same Origins, Different Outcomes." In *Looking for Direction: Rethinking Theatre Directing Practices and Pedagogies in the 21st Century*, edited by Ramunė Balevičiūtė, Saana Lavaste, Anja Susa, and Torleifsdóttir Una. Uniarts Helsinki, Theatre Academy.
- Parly, Nila. 2018. "Lars von Trier's Lost Ring." *Cambridge Opera Journal* 30 (1): 1–28.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954586718000071>.
- Parkinson, Chrysa. 2018. "Documenting Experimental Authorship." In *VIS - Nordic Journal for Artistic Research*, vol. 0. VIS - Nordic journal for artistic research.
- Pias, Claus, ed. 2016. *Cybernetics: The Macy Conferences 1946-1953. The Complete Transactions*. Diaphanes.
- Pierre, José, ed. 1990. *Recherches sur la sexualité: janvier 1928-août 1932*. Archives du surréalisme 4. Gallimard.
- Piotrowska, Agnieszka. 2018. "What's Love Got to Do with It? Beyond Desire and Consent." *Times Higher Education*. <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/features/whats-love-got-to-do-it-beyond-desire-and-consent>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Piotrowska, Agnieszka. 2014. *Psychoanalysis and Ethics in Documentary Film*. Routledge.
- Plant, Sadie. 1998. *Zeros + Ones: Digital Women + the New Technoculture*. Fourth Estate.
- Plato. 1881. *Theaetetus*. Translated by Benjamin Jowett. Cambridge University Press.
- Presidium, board and members of Deutscher Bühnenverein. 2021. "Deutscher Bühnenverein: Value-based Code of Conduct." German Theatre and Orchestra Association, October 28. https://frauen-in-kultur-und-medien.de/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/wertebasierter_verhaltenskodex_des_deutschen_buehnenverein_2021_2.pdf. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Pollesch, René. 2012. "Der Schnittchenkauf": 2011-2012; [anlässlich der Ausstellung René Pollesch "Der Dialog ist ein unverständlicher Klassiker". Galerie Buchholz, Berlin]. With Galerie Daniel Buchholz. Galerie Buchholz.
- Primavesi, Patrick, Hans-Thies Lehmann, and Olaf A. Schmitt, eds. 2004. *AufBrüche: Theaterarbeit zwischen Text und Situation ; Hans-Thies Lehmann zum 60. Geburtstag*. 1. Aufl. Theater der Zeit Recherchen 20. Theater der Zeit.

- Raddatz, Frank M., ed. 2016. "Es ist kein Zufall, dass jetzt alles in Berlin Englisch aussehen soll." In *Republik Castorf: die Berliner Volksbühne am Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz seit 1992. Gespräche*, with Frank Castorf. Alexander Verlag.
- Raddatz, Frank M., ed. 2016. *Republik Castorf: die Berliner Volksbühne am Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz seit 1992 Gespräche*. With Frank Castorf. Alexander Verlag.
- Raskin, Richard, ed. 2000. "Aspects of Dogma." *p.o.v. A Danish Journal of Film Studies*, no. 10. <https://pov.imv.au.dk/pdf/pov10.pdf>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Ravini, Sinziana. 2017. "The Ethics of Unethical Art." In *Research Ethics and Artistic Freedom in Artistic Research*. Swedish Research Council.
- Renoir, Jean. 1974. *My Life and My Films*. Translated by Norman Denny. Atheneum.
- Roselt, Jens. 2009. "Vom Diener Zum Despoten. Zur Vorgeschichte Der Modernen Theaterregie Im 19. Jahrhundert." In *Regie. Lektionen 2*, edited by Nicole Gronemeyer and Bernd Stegemann. Berlin.
- Rülicke-Weiler, Käthe. 1976. *Die Dramaturgie Brechts: Theater als Mittel d. Veränderung*. Verl. Das europäische Buch.
- Saatsi, Riko. 2022. "Notes on the Director's Body." In *Looking for Direction: Rethinking Theatre Directing Practices and Pedagogies in the 21st Century*, edited by Ramunė Balevičiūtė, Saana Lavaste, Anja Susa, and Torleifsdottir Una. Uniarts Helsinki, Theatre Academy.
- Sacher-Masoch, Leopold von. 2013. *Venus im Pelz*. With Gilles Deleuze. Insel-Taschenbuch 469. Insel-Verlag.
- Sade, Donatien Alphonse François 1970. *La Philosophie Dans Le Boudoir. Oeuvres Complètes, Vol. XXV*. Éditions Pauvert.
- Sandemose, Aksel. 1962. *En flyktning krysser sit spor*. Aschehoug.
- Schauspielhaus Hamburg, dir. 2018. *Konzeptionsgespräch mit Frank Castorf zu "Der haarige Affe"*. 55:04. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0LjV4Mxp_kY.
- Schepelern, Peter, ed. 2017. *Lars von Trier - det gode med det onde*. Brandts, Museum for Kunst & Visuel Kultur.
- Schiller, Friedrich. 1967. *On the Aesthetic Education of Man: In a Series of Letters*. Translated by Elizabeth M. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby. Oxford University Press.
- Schlingensief. 1997. "Talk 2000." <https://www.schlingensief.com/projekt.php?id=tv003>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Schmidt, Thomas, Angela Richter, Sabrina Zwach, Laura Sundermann, and Mehmet Ateşçi. 2021. "Erwiderung an Dr. Bernd Stegemann." Open Letter. April 12.

https://nachtkritik.de/images/stories/pdf/2021/ErwiderungSchmidt_et_al_BerndStege_mann_FAZ.pdf. (Accessed November 4, 2025)

- Schmit, Johannes Maria. 2022. "Cybernetic Promises: The Director as Machine á Gouverner." In *Looking for Direction: Rethinking Theatre Directing Practices and Pedagogies in the 21st Century*, edited by Ramunė Balevičiūtė, Saana Lavaste, Anja Susa, and Torleifsdottir Una. Uniarts Helsinki, Theatre Academy.
- Schmit, Johannes Maria, Rosie Sommers, and Micha Goldberg. 2023. "GERMAN STAATSTHEATER." <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/shared/09f79aa21c2341710a2961e6cd711309>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Schmit, Johannes Maria. 2026 (forthcoming). "'The Fish Got Bigger on the FlixBus Back.' - Tall Tales from *Volksbühne*'s Mythology in Scandinavia" (Working Title). *Flashpoint Volksbühne*, Documenta, vol. 44 (1). Edited by Lily Climenhaga and Christine Korte.
- Schramm, Helmar. 1996. "Karneval des Denkens: Theatralität im Spiegel philosophischer Texte des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts." *LiteraturForschung*. Akademie Verlag.
- Schütt, Hans-Dieter. 1996. *Die Erotik des Verrats: Gespräche mit Frank Castorf*. With Frank Castorf. Dietz.
- Seidler, Ulrich. 2010. "Der hysterische Heimatkundler Frank Castorf inszeniert Walter Mehrings Der Kaufmann von Berlin Zirkus Zitatissimo." *Berliner Zeitung*, November 22.
- Sjölund, Karl. 2022. "STUMT TVÅNG." B.A. Thesis, Stockholms konstnärliga högskola. <https://uniarts.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1661410/FULLTEXT01.pdf>.
- Slevogt, Esther. 2021. "Rassismusvorwürfe am Düsseldorfer Schauspielhaus - eine Rekonstruktion." *nachtkritik*, April 21. <https://nachtkritik.de/recherche-debatte/debatte-zu-rassismusvorwurfen-am-duesseldorfer-schauspielhaus>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)
- Sontag, Susan. 1964. "Notes on 'Camp.'" *Partisan Review*.
- Soiland, Tove. 2010. *Luce Irigarays Denken der sexuellen Differenz: eine dritte Position im Streit zwischen Lacan und den Historisten*. Turia + Kant.
- Sprinkle, Annie, dir. 1992. *The Sluts and Goddesses Video Workshop: How to Be a Sex Goddess in 101 Easy Steps*. Annie Sprinkle Productions.
- Stanislavski, Konstantin Sergeevič. 2013. *An Actor Prepares*. Bloomsbury Revelations Ser. Bloomsbury Publishing.

- Stanislavski, Konstantin Sergeevič. 2014. *Creating a Role*. Bloomsbury Revelations Ser. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Stanislavski, Konstantin Sergeevič. 2021. *Building a Character*. Translated by Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood. Bloomsbury Revelations Ser. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Stanislawski, Konstantin Sergejewitsch. 2002. *Die Arbeit an sich selbst im schöpferischen Prozess des Verkörperns*. 6. Aufl. Berlin.
- Stegemann, Bernd, ed. 2007. *Stanislawski-Reader: die Arbeit des Schauspielers an sich selbst und an der Rolle*. With Konstantin Sergeevič Stanislavski. Henschel.
- Stegemann, Bernd. 2014. *Kritik des Theaters*. Theater der Zeit.
- Stockholm University of the Arts. 2021.
<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/portal/announcement?announcement=1475927>.
- Strasberg, Lee. 1987. *A Dream of Passion. The Development of the Method*. Little, Brown.
- Svensk Scenkonst, Fackförbundet Scen & Film, and Akademikerförbunden. 2025. "Riksavtal avseende anställda vid offentligt finansierade teaterinstitutioner." April 1.
- Swedish Research Council. 2015. *From arts college to university: subject overview, articles, reviews and project reports*. Swedish Research Council.
- Szondi, Peter. (1956) 2013. *Theorie des modernen Dramas: 1880 - 1950*. Edition Suhrkamp 27. Suhrkamp.
- Szyber, Bogdan. 2019. *Fauxthentication: Art, Academia & Authorship (or the Site-Specifics of the Academic Artist)*. Stockholms university of the arts.
- Talbot, Margaret. 1994. "A Most Dangerous Method." *Lingua Franca*.
<http://linguafranca.mirror.theinfo.org/Archive/method.html>. (Accessed January 1, 2025)
- Garpe, Johanna et al. 2024. "Sustainability in Performing Arts Production." *Stockholm University of the Arts (SKH)*. <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/profile/show-exposition?exposition=2295407>.
- Thanem, Torkild, and Louise Wallenberg. 2010. "Buggering Freud and Deleuze: Toward a Queer Theory of Masochism." *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture* 2 (1): 4642.
<https://doi.org/10.3402/jac.v2i0.4642>.
- The Economist*. 2013. Accessed November 4, 2025. "The next Supermodel." February 2.
<https://www.economist.com/leaders/2013/02/02/the-next-supermodel>.
- "The Institute for Advanced Study of Human Sexuality." 2011. Accessed November 4, 2025. August 7.
<https://web.archive.org/web/20110806110309/http://www.iashs.edu/academic.html>.

The School of Consent. "Our Courses." Accessed November 4, 2025.

<https://www.schoolofconsent.org>.

The Telegraph, 2011. *Lars Von Trier's "Nazi" Gaffe at Cannes Film Festival as he jokes about Adolf Hitler*. 02:16. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LayW8aq4GLw>.

(Accessed November 4, 2025)

Theatre Green Book. Accessed November 4, 2025. <https://theatregreenbook.com/>.

Tholen, Georg Christoph, Gerhard Schmitz, and Manfred Riepe. 2001. *Übertragung, Übersetzung, Überlieferung: Episteme und Sprache in der Psychoanalyse Lacans*. Transcript.

Thorpe, Jess, and Tashi Gore. 2019. *A Beginner's Guide to Devising Theatre*. First edition. Zed Books. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350025974>.

Thorsen, Nils. 2011. *Geniet: Lars von Triers liv, film og fobier*. With Lars von Trier. Politiken.

Tiqqun. 2011. *Kybernetik und Revolte*. TransPositionen. Diaphanes.

Tiranvanja, Rirkrit. 1996. *Untitled, 1996 (One Revolution per Minute)*. Le Consortium.

Trier, Lars von. 1998. *Dogme 2: Idioterne. Manuskript og dagbog*. Gyldendal.

"Tyskland | Gorki." 2018. Accessed November 4, 2025. <https://www.gorki.de/en/tyskland>.

Villarreal, Amanda Rose. 2022. "The Evolution of Consent-Based Performance: A Literature Review." *Journal of Consent-Based Performance* 1 (1): 5–23.

<https://doi.org/10.46787/jcbp.v1i1.2811>.

Völker, Klaus. 1999. *Bertolt Brecht: eine Biographie*. Lizenzausg. des Hanser Verlages München. Zweitausendeins.

Völker, Klaus. 2005. *Hochschule Für Schauspielkunst "Ernst Busch" Berlin: Zur Geschichte Und Ausbildungspraxis*. Hentrich & Hentrich.

VRT Vlaamse Radio- en Televisieomroeporganisatie, dir. 2018. "Jan Fabre: 'Bij ons in de compagnie, veertig jaar lang, is er nooit een probleem mee geweest. Jamais.'" *vrtnws.be*. June 27. <https://www.vrt.be/vrtnws/nl/2018/06/27/jan-fabre-bij-ons-in-de-company-veertig-jaar-lang-is-er-noo/>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)

Wagenknecht, Sahra. 2021. *Die Selbstgerechten: mein Gegenprogramm - für Gemeinnutz und Zusammenhalt*. New York Campus Verlag.

Weber, Carl. 1967. "Brecht as Director." *TDR (1967-1968)* 12 (1): 101–7. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1125296>.

Weir, Peter, dir. 1989. *Dead Poets Society*.

What Is a Cuddle Party? | *Cuddle Party INC.* Accessed November 4, 2025.

<https://cuddlepary.com/what-is-a-cuddle-party/>.

Wiener, Norbert. 2013. *Cybernetics or Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine*. Martino Publishing.

Wiener, Norbert. 2018. *Norbert Wiener - a Life in Cybernetics*. With Ronald R. Kline. MIT Press.

Wikipedia Contributors. 2025. Accessed November 4, 2025. "Klemmbinder."

<https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Klemmbinder>.

Winnicott, Donald William. 1994. "Hate in the Counter-Transference." *The Journal of Psychotherapy Practice and Research* 3 (4): 348–56.

Wøldiche, Trine. 2024. "Sex på scenen med hjælp fra intimcoach." *Iscene*, April 4.

<https://iscene.dk/2024/04/04/sex-paa-scenen-med-hjaelp-fra-intimcoach/>. (Accessed November 4, 2025)

Wolff, Françoise, dir. 1982. *Lacan Parle*. RTBF (Radio Télévision Belge Francophone).

Zaccarini, John-Paul. 2013. "Circoanalysis: Circus, Therapy and Psychoanalysis." Dans och Cirkushögskolan DOCH.

Žižek, Slavoj. 2009. *First as Tragedy, Then as Farce*. Verso.

List of illustrations

Figure 1: Terracing of the territory: Stufenbühne [step-stage] by set-designer Emil Pirchan for *Richard III.*, Berliner Staatstheater, 1920. (Courtesy of Theaterwissenschaftliche Sammlung der Universität Köln, Schloss Wahn) 74

Figure 2: In the *Pied Piper of Hamelin*, a famous German legend, a rat-catcher takes revenge on a town that failed to financially reward him for his services. Playing the same flute that lured the rats into the local river he seduces the children of the town to follow him into a cave from where they never return. (Illustration by Kate Greenaway to the Robert Browning version of the tale; 1888. Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons)

102

Figure 3: 24.7.2017: end of the Foothills era / removal of the CHEESE sign. (Photo: Jörg Carstensen/dpa) 127

Figure 4: *In Furs* by Katharina Schmitt (2009, Centraltheater & Skala, Leipzig): Anna Blomeier (Severin) and Melanie Schmidli (Wanda). (Photo: Nils Bröer) 138

Figure 5: The director awaiting her ensemble on the cover of Bourriaud's *Esthétique relationnelle* (© Les presses du reel/Le Consortium, Dijon) 143

Figure 6: The first published account of the homeostat appeared under the title of “Design for a Brain” in the December 1948 issue of the journal *Electronic Engineering* (London). 156

Figure 7: A depiction of the so-called operations room of project *CyberSyn*, where the Chilean officials were being fed economic data in real time. Note the circular arrangement of the feedback round – together with the ashtrays that Stafford Beer insisted on. A Gentlemen's club of digital planned economy. (Design and copyright: Gui Bonsiepe) 161

Figure 8: The nouvelle vague (in the body of French director Francois Truffaut) running around on set instead of leaning into the Hollywood studio chair. (Screenshots of *La Nuit américaine*, 1973; © Warner Bros.) 227

Figure 9: The graph of the Wheel of Consent in its entirety. (Copyright and usage on the bottom) 232

Figure 10: The Wheel of Consent with the highlighted consent circle. (Courtesy of Betty Martin) 235

Figure 11: The Wheel of Consent with the gift given and received (inside the circle) as well as the shadow sides of the quadrants (marked in purple). (Courtesy of Betty Martin) 236

Please note that unless otherwise indicated below, all figures in the Pre-studies (Regiebuch 3) originated within the research project and are protected by copyright.

Page iii: Screenshot of “Dogville Confessions” (2003) by Sami Saif: (Courtesy of Zentropa)

Page xiii: Screenshot of an interview with Christoph Schlingensief (Courtesy of dctp / Alexander Kluge)

Page xxiv: Detail from the Table of Contents in René Descartes’ “Discourse on Method, Optics, Geometry, and Meteorology” (1637) (Public Domain)

Page xxvi: Illustration “La Dioptrique” in Descartes (1637) (Public Domain)

Page xxvii: Montage of a photo from the set of *Neubau* (2019) with screenshot of online search “Rainer Maria Rilke in Russia” (Photo: Hans-Peter Zimmer)

Page xxx: Montage of “A Clinical Lesson at the Salpêtrière” (1887) by André Brouillet. (Public Domain)

Page xxxiii: Montage of Brouillet (1887) (Public Domain) with a photo taken by Claire Vivianne Sobottke

Page xxxiv: Montage Ferris wheel and Wheel of Consent (Courtesy of Dr. Betty Martin)

Pages xxxix–li: All film stills by courtesy of “Collections CINEMATEK - © Fondation Chantal Akerman”

Page lii: “Work Demonstration” at SKH (Stockholm) on 3.12.2023 (Photo: Hendrik Quast)

Page lvii: Page 9 of Bertolt Brecht’s modelbook for “Herr Puntila und sein Knecht Matti” (Modellbücher 87/09). 5.1.1952 at Berliner Ensemble; with Curt Bois as Puntila. (Courtesy of Akademie der Künste, Berlin, Bertolt-Brecht-Archiv. Photo: unknown)

Page lxii: Stills from doctoral project of Trygve Allister Diesen: *Being the director – maintaining your vision while swimming with sharks* (2011). (Courtesy of Trygve Allister Diesen)

ⁱ Jane Gallop, *Feminist Accused of Sexual Harassment* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1997), 56

ⁱⁱ Jane Gallop, *The Daughter's Seduction – Feminism and Psychoanalysis*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982), 73

ⁱⁱⁱ D.W. Winnicott, "Hate in the Counter-Transference." *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* Vol. 30 (1949): 69-74. Quoted in *The Journal of Psychotherapy Practice and Research*. 3(4) (Fall 1994), 352

^{iv} Gallop, *The Daughter's Seduction*, 142

^v Luce Irigaray, "The Limits of the Transference" in *The Irigaray Reader*, edited by Margaret Whitford (Cambridge, MA and Oxford: Blackwell), 114

^{vi} Gallop, *The Daughter's Seduction*, 143

^{vii} Ibid.

^{viii} JEG FIK EN MÆRKELIG FORNEMMELSE AF ENSOMHED, som ... ja, man kan jo grine af det, men som var noget dybt fra barndommen med fester, som jeg har været med til, hvor jeg ikke deltog og ingen kontakt havde til nogen og sad og surmulede i et hjørne. Det oplevede jeg igen, (...) Jeg følte mig mere og mere skubbet ud på et sidespor, og min jalousi i forhold til alt, pigerne – og måske specielt Anne Louise, (...) – men i det hele taget i forhold til gruppen var helt enormt stor.

^{ix} [o]g så havde hun en lang snak om sin barndom og alle mulige ting, og så gik der den lille terapeut i mig, for alle de snakke, vi har, bevæger sig hele tiden på kanten af det terapeutiske, og jeg har da også i min mangeårige erfaring med terapien (...) picket et eller andet op.

^x Og lige da hun havde sagt [det] fik hun en lille tic, som var meget lille, men som jeg hæftede mig ved. Jeg tænkte, at det er klart, at det er sådan, terapeuterne gør – før man selv bliver bevidst om, hvad man gør, observerer de, de hører og ligger tingene sammen, og så ser de (...) hvad der bliver sagt uden at blive sagt og i virkeligheden er ubevidste.

^{xi} [vi kørte] et par gang mere med alle skuespillerne, sendte dem hjem, og så ville jeg lige pick-up på Karen og Susannes møde inde ved billedet af det døde barn. Der var ikke meget energi tilbage, så jeg havde ikke stor tiltro til, at vi igen kunne fiske noget rørelse og medlevelse op fra Anne Louises side. Men hun forsøgte at gå i enrum og fiske det frem selv, og pludselig lykkedes det over al måde. Jeg tror hun tudede i en halv time, og det var fantastisk.

^{xii} Før påpegede jeg, at jeg meget meget let kunne aflæse, hvornår hun var til stede, og hvornår hun ikke var, på det faktum, at hun i sin naturlige tilstand – og i de scener hvor hun fungerer og er til stede – aldrig har lukket munden. Hun har en halvåben mund, lyttende og medlevende fuldstændig naturligt, men i de scener, hvor hun er blokeret, har hun bare en lukket mund og nogle nærmest porcelænsagtige kinder og øjenvipper, der er hundrede procent Bambi. Det er måske uklogt af mig at sige det, men det er et faktum (...)

^{xiii} Men pludselig kunne hun og gav en storslået præstation her sidst på dagen. (...) Det var gribende at se og til stor værdi for filmen, så vi sluttede af i stor tilfredshed. Bagefter sad vi og drak et lille glas vin og glædede os meget over at det hele var overstået, og sagde farvel med maner. Det var lige før, vi blev gode venner igen og blev enige om at denne uges fjendskaber var unødvendige og bare havde været en pinsel for alle i gruppen og fuldstændig tåbelige og til store skade for Susannes karakter i den tid.

^{xiv} men at påstå, at ikke stort set samtlige kvindelige skuespillere har optrådt i mine seksuelle fantasier, ville være at lyve. Måske har specielt Anne Louise optrådt der med jævne mellemrum. Og sådan har det nok været på... ja, alle de film, jeg har lavet, vil jeg tro, når jeg tænker tilbage. Og det har jeg snakket om før, det er en del af det hele.

^{xv} og som jeg netop snakkede med Bente om, så har jeg i begyndelsen af min karriere haft et meget meget besværet forhold til skuespillerinder. Jeg har altid været nærmest på krigsfod med dem (...) Det forhold ændrede sig lidt allerede på 'Riget' og i særdeleshed på 'Breaking the Waves', og jeg er naturligvis faldet i præcis den samme ... fælde vil jeg ikke kalde det, men i den samme automatik som de fleste andre instruktører, netop at man opnår en eller anden form for instruktør-forelskelse i nogle af personerne. Det er vigtigt for mig at bruge ordet forelskelse, for det er så det, det kommer tættest på, og jeg må sige at jeg... på 'Breaking the Waves' har det været Karin, som spillede Dodo, som jeg ligesom har ... havde ... jeg var vanvittig jaloux på næsten stort set alt, hvad

hun foretog sig, andet end være med i filmen, og det var vel også en forelskelse. Det har det været, og nu det samme med Anne Louise.

^{xvi} Men jeg kan se, at det i virkeligheden er præcis det samme, der foregår i en hvilken som helst instruktionssituation, og det, som jeg har konkluderet mig frem til – og det er måske en efterrationalisering for at få tingene til at se pænere ud – men det er, at det i virkelighed er et meget meget sundere forhold at have til skuespillerinderne end det fjendske – og måske er det to sider af samme sag. (...) jeg prøver bare at forsvare de følelser, jeg kan få over for medvirkende. Jeg ved ikke, om det kan forsvares, det kan det muligvis ikke. Ja, en hvilken som helst følelse, man har, er jo god nok, det bliver jeg ved med at sige til mig selv. Måske er det i hvert fald naturligt, at det sker i forholdet instruktør/skuespillerinde.

^{xvii} Jeg ved ikke... hele lortet kører oppe i hovedet på mig, og jeg gider ikke være ... nu er det ubehageligt. Jeg vil hverken have, at hun skal være sød ved mig eller dum ved mig eller noget som helst. Jeg vil bare have, at det skal være overstået med denne her film, så jeg kan slippe for at se hende. Og det er helt åndssvagt, for hun går jo bare rundt og er fuldstændig... ja, hun gør ja ingenting.

^{xviii} En eller anden dum filmforelskelse, det er for barnligt. Jeg er jo ikke engang forelsket! Det er ikke engang en realitet, men for fanden bare noget jeg bilder mig ind oppe i min knold. (...) Man kan sige, at følsomheden er et værktøj, men det er eddermame ikke et værktøj, som det er særlig behageligt eller let at have med at gøre. (...) Nu kommer avisen, klokken er tre, og jeg kan ikke sove, og jeg må overveje at spille den af for femte gang for at falde i søvn... Min stakkels, stakkels, stakkels pik. For helvede...!

^{xix} Jeg har været en bedre instruktør som beundrende end som afskyende, betydeligt bedre. Så bortset fra, at følelserne er en bivirkning ved jobbet, kan man sige, at følelserne - hvor ubehagelige og utilsigtede de end kan være - også bliver et arbejdsredskab på den måde, at tingene bliver bedre, mege meget bedre.

^{xx} Mødte i går Anne-Grethe og i dag Anne Louise og konstaterede, at fremmedgørelsen indtræder omgående efter et arbejde af den type. Det var stort set som at møde et par gamle tanter, man ikke havde set længe og ikke havde noget specielt ønske om at møde. Det understreger det vanvittigt professionelle i denne her vildt hysteriske branche. Det er specielt interessant, når man tænker på, hvor relativt tæt vi er kommet i den ovenfor beskrevne sindssyge proces. Tankevækkende og ganske uhyggeligt.