

BEYOND THE SPECTACLE

14. 06. –
06. 07. 2023

Curated by
Natasha Jozi

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A culmination of
research dialogue,
online talks
and an exhibition

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**We do not
either just
perform, or
experience**

**We live
on the line
between
experience
and
performance**

ABOUT THE PROJECT

“Beyond the Spectacle” is an art and research project that aims to engage artists, thinkers and curators in dissecting performative art practices. The project consists of three components: an exhibition, research dialogue, and talks, all focused on exploring the boundaries between spectacle, art, and life.

This project will centre the body as the focal point for dialogue examining established and potential relationships between the artist and the audience. Furthermore, it aims to be a space for institutional critique and reflection on the current limits which shape the experience and work of performance artists. Lastly, this project aims to reimagine the possibilities of experiencing and creating performative work in a way that challenges capitalistic pressures and expectations.

Beyond the Spectacle

Natasha Jozi

Around 1950s artists from around the world responded to the atrocities and horrors of the war, revolting against control and physically using their bodies as matter and medium in art. May it be Gutai in Japan and Europe, or ‘Happenings’ in North America, the human body was consumed in performance art as a site for happening, recording somatic experience, displaying resistance and expressing trauma. Artists such as Allan Kaprow, Marina Abramovic, Vito Acconci, and Chris Burden extensively embodied and researched; how performance art influenced the personal mental, somatic, cultural, political, gendered experience of the modern world. Günter Brus, Kazuo Shiraga and Akira Kanayama employed body as a tool to question the larger conventional meaning making in art. South East Asian artists such as Lee Wen, Khvay Samnang and Melati Suryodarma further employed the body as a tool to explore the migratory body, identity and social constructs around trauma, censorship and political inflections. In tandem, artists explored the mental and physical limits of the body by experimenting with endurance, bondage, fetishism and commodification of the body, exploring the gendered-body and how it shows up in the world.

“Beyond the Spectacle” critically examines the spectrum of performance art, the politics of the spectacle and how that influences the meaning and memory of a performative work. The performative body has historically assumed the position at the center of the art experience, while also being transformed into a consumable good in the process. While the performative body is extremely powerful in its own right to animate, influence, and instigate its surroundings, it is nevertheless limited by its predetermined role - by audience and artist - as a ‘spectacle’. This relationship of spectacle and spectator, observer and observed, has dominated the medium of performance art, and can limit the direction and analysis of works in the field to solipsistic, repetitive, and reductive discourse. The centrality, absurdity, and viscosity of using the body in performance is rightfully explored in fascinating detail, yet the need for the physical presence, image, and impression of the body in performance at all has not been thoroughly questioned or subverted. “Beyond the Spectacle” is intended to question the prevalence and dominance of body-centered, self-focused, public-facing, attention-oriented approaches to performance art in the current day.

This mode of creation and display is not only limited to art, but also informed by popular culture and broad social and technical developments. The human body is a central figure in the political and cultural discourse - be it regarding human rights, conversations around gender and race, public health, sexuality, climate change and even pop culture. Walter Benjamin’s concept of the content

of art being shaped by its reproducibility through technological advances in the printing press, rings all the more relevant with the hyper reproducibility of digital, shareable, and competing images and videos in the current day. While the body, the self, and the spectacle are deeply entrenched in even our most banal modes of social and political engagement, we rarely examine the basis of their centrality, and whether there is more to explore outside of their limits, as we know them today. The pervasiveness of the human body as a visual center of public attention be it for entertainment, politics, commercial, or artistic purposes, pushes alternative forms of creation and discourse to the side. "Beyond the Spectacle" aims to explore and create those alternative spaces by not taking the self, body, performer, or art object for granted as the center of art making or art engagement.

Moreover, art (performance art in particular) is not only shaped by the need for social recognition at the time of its creation, but also by the need to leave a lasting impact on a presumed audience. Given the near universal emphasis on visual culture since the advent of the camera and its subsequent ubiquitous use as a record keeping, creative, and communication device, art now competes not only with an immediate audience, but also with an extended one, which engages from a distance in both space and time. All current creative and expressive work; paintings, poetry, performance, film, music, aim to make an impact through reproducibility in the minds of those who were not present at the event they are engaging with. Recordings of concerts, videos of protests, images of politicians and celebrities, all extend the life of the object and event into the memory of observers. This complicates a universal, human creative need to expand the scope of one's impact on their surroundings. By making paintings, leaving wills, writing books, being photographed, making graffiti or naming lands and people, human beings continuously attempt to infiltrate the memory of those, who either do not or may (one day) not know or think of them. This project aims to expand on this need for recognition of the self, and interrogate the importance of impression and memory in the creative process.

This exhibition aims to take a critical view and explore the politics of a spectacle on the body today. It questions, what is a spectacle? How are artists exploring the phenomena of spectacle? How does the social inclination towards spectacle influence art? Is it necessary? How has art discourse influenced the social inclination towards spectacle? How does spectatorship influence identity? Must attention always flow in one direction (towards the art)? How does observation shape the relationship between creator and creation? Can performance art exist beyond the body? What comes beyond the corporeal, the physical, and the spectacle?

Performance mit/in alternativen Infrastrukturen Sabeth Buchmann

Trotz ihres Eventcharakters gilt die Performance in der bildenden Kunst als Antagonistin des Spektakels – dies vor allem, weil sie der Dominanz des Bildes und damit der visuellen Ware den scheinbar flüchtigen Moment der Aufführung von Körper und Sprache, mithin von Gesten und Handlungen, von Stimme und Sound entgegensetzt. Performance-Theoretiker:innen wie Philipp Ausländer, Barbara Clausen, Peggy Phelan u.v.a. haben hingegen auf die dem Performance-Genre inhärente medialen Reproduzierbarkeit hingewiesen, die uns fragen lässt, ob und wie weit sie mit jener „Konstruktion von Situationen“ in Einklang zu bringen ist, welche Guy Debord (1931-1994), der prominenteste Stichwortgeber der Spektakelkritik, in dessen berühmter Schrift „Die Gesellschaft des Spektakels“ (im französischen Original *La société du spectacle*) beschwor. 1967 und damit am Vorabend des Mai '68 erschienen, stellte das Buch eine Kampfansage gegen jene Verdinglichung der Kunst dar – ein Anspruch, den die Performance teilte. Das Bildwerden der Ware mit der ideologischen Repräsentation kapitalistischer Klassengesellschaft in den durch Film und Fernsehen expandierenden Massenmedien gleichsetzend konstatierte Debord: „Das Spektakel vereint das Getrennte, aber nur als Getrenntes“. Mit seiner Diagnose von der „einseitigen Kommunikation“ der Massenmedien beschrieb er somit gesellschaftliche Trennung als Wesen der Moderne und ökonomische Abstraktion als konkrete Seinsweise des Spektakels. Der französische Autor und Künstler suchte somit das Verhältnis von technischer Form und medialem Inhalt innerhalb einer von fortschreitender Individualisierung geprägten Industriegesellschaft zu bestimmen. Der Kern des Form-Inhalt-Verhältnisses von Massenkommunikation besteht demnach darin, dass der primäre Inhalt der Medien hinter den sekundären Inhalt, ihrem technischen Funktionieren, zurücktritt: „Die Gesellschaft des Spektakels ist die Form (...), die ihren eigenen technischen Inhalt wählt.“

Auch wenn diese Diagnose an Marshall McLuhans „Die magischen Kanäle/ Understanding Media“ (1964) denken lässt, unterschied sie sich doch in einem wesentlichen Punkt: Denn im Unterschied zu dem kanadischen Philosophen (1911-1980) betrachtete Debord das Form/Inhalt-Verhältnis der Massenkommunikation nicht als technischen Automatismus: Seiner Auffassung zufolge wird nicht die technische Struktur zum Inhalt der Medien und lässt somit auch nicht deren Inhalte beliebig werden. Vielmehr beruht Debords Spektakelbegriff auf der Annahme, dass die sich transformierenden

Verhältnisse von technischer Form und medialem Inhalt die Folge von Transformationen gesellschaftlicher Herrschaft auf einem abstrakten, überformenden Niveau sind. Demzufolge ist die Form des Spektakels an die Form der Herrschaft gebunden und kein hiervon unabhängiges technomediales Phänomen.

Die gesellschaftskritische Dimension von Debords Spektakelbegriff ist m.E. entscheidend für eine Einordnung jener Performancetradition, die sich gegen die vorherrschende Logik der Bild- und Eventkultur in Stellung bringt. Selbstredend ließ sich diesbezüglich eine Vielzahl von Genealogien anführen, die bis in die historischen Avantgarden zurückreichen und alles andere als nur im Situationismus und ihrem Vorgänger, dem Lettrismus, gründen: Zu denken wäre hier auch an die Fluxus- und Happeningbewegung, den Minimalismus und Konzeptualismus, den New Dance und das postdramatische Theater, das expanded cinema und feministisch-queere body art. Was deren Ansätze bei aller (identitätspolitischen) Unterschiedlichkeit mit Debords Konzept der ‚Konstruktion von Situationen‘ vergleichbar macht, ist der Horizont einer von normativen Körpern, Subjektivitäten und Ästhetiken abweichenden und inkommensurablen Erfahrung. Zugleich zeigt ein Blick auf die Hauptlinien der Performance, dass sie die Verfahren des „Detournements“, also der Enteignung und Neucodierung normativer Bilder und Konsumptionsformen gerade nicht in der als elitär verschrienen High Art, sondern in den Massenmedien fand. Das heißt, dass sich die Performance immer schon genau in jene Sphäre der sog. Simulation begab, in der Debord den Kern des Übels, d.h. der gesellschaftlichen Trennung erblickte.

Ein entscheidender Aspekt von Beyond the Spectacle liegt somit in einem Typus von Performance, der sich der Neuverbindung gesellschaftlicher Subjekte als einer Möglichkeit verschreibt, die vom Spektakel kontaminierten Wahrnehmungs- und Verhaltenskonventionen durch das (Neu-) Erlernen und (Neu-)Erproben körperlicher Interaktionsformen zu konterkarieren. Dies trifft beispielsweise auf Maria Noujaims Arbeit insofern zu, als sie an die Rolle der Spektakelkritik für die lateinamerikanischen Widerstandsbewegungen gegen die in den 1960er und 70er Jahren an die Macht geputschten Militärdiktaturen erinnert. Hierbei ging es um eine Anerkennung und Stärkung fragiler und marginalisierter Subjektpositionen, wie sie den von politischen Repressionen, von Rassismus, Patriarchalismus und Klassenherrschaft respektive den Auswirkungen des Kolonialismus geprägten Alltag vor allem von indigenen Gruppen sowie von Nachfahr:innen afrikanischer

Sklav:innen bestimmte. Doch im Unterschied zu Debords radikal negativem und Spektakelbegriff setzten gesellschaftskritische lateinamerikanische Künstler:innen auf eine positive und zum Teil therapeutische Verbindung von aktivistischer und künstlerischer Praxis im Rahmen kollektiver Events. So rekurrierte von der imperialen Warenkultur abweichende ‚gelebte‘ Erfahrung in der brasilianischen Kultur auf populärkulturelle Ereignisse und Konzepte des Karnevals, des Tropicalismo und des Candomblés, in dem der afro-brasilianische Samba, die Praxis der Synästhesie und das spirituelle Ritual den Ton angaben.

Solche massenkulturellen (Gegen-)Spektakel funktionierten selbstredend nur im Kontext revolutionär gestimmter Gegenkulturen, die inzwischen jedoch eine weitgehende Erosion im Zuge gewandelter (Medien-)Öffentlichkeiten erfahren haben: Damit ist nicht zuletzt deren Fusion mit Kultur- und Eventindustrien gemeint, an welchen der Performancehype fraglos teilhat. Umso bezeichnender, dass Noujaims Modell der Performance eher einer ‚learning exercise‘ im Sinne einer neuen Diagrammatik des Sozialen ähnelt – einer Diagrammatik, die es erlaubt, situative Mikroöffentlichkeiten inner- und außerhalb von Kunsträumen herzustellen. Hierbei geht es, den in den 1960er Jahren entwickelten R.S.V.P. Cycles von Anna und Lawrence Halprin vergleichbar, um ein score- und/ oder regelbasiertes Herstellen kollektiv geteilter körperlicher, mentaler und sozialer Ressourcen und Fähigkeiten. Nicht formale Virtuosität, sondern praktisch-ästhetisches ‚know how‘ steht hier im Vordergrund. Der zentrale Gedanke ist nicht das über sich selbst aufgeklärte, befreite Subjekt, das Debord vorschwebte: Vielmehr geht es um ein in variierenden räumlichen und zeitlichen Situationen einzuübenden Verbindungen von Körpern, Materialien und Umgebungen zu Zeichensystemen, die jene interdependenten Relationen zum Vorschein bringen, welche wir als ‚scoring‘ alternativer Infrastrukturen des Sozialen lesen.

Das heißt nicht, dass performative Praktiken des Probens das Gegenteil des Spektakels darstellen, zumal das Produktivwerden der Körper eine abschöpfbare Ressource für das bio-mediale Live-Event, gleichsam eine lebendige Ware bilden. Denn die performative Lernübung birgt immer auch ein aufgeschobenes und sich nicht erfüllendes Moment, repräsentiert sie doch ein unbefriedigendes, weil unvollständiges (Bild-)Produkt, das seinen medialen Sinn nur in der zeitaufwändigen, von physischer, mentaler und sozialer Interaktion handelnden Teilhabe vieler entfaltet. Performance

beyond the spectacle hängt somit von materiell teilbaren, d.h. von kontingent entstehenden und verfügbaren Infrastrukturen ab. Auch wenn die partizipative Performance das "neue Spektakel" verkörpert, verweist sie auf die Möglichkeit eines Dahinter, dessen Repräsentation nicht mehr länger von der wenn auch zeichenhaften Materialität der (Inter-)Relationen und (Inter-)Aktionen getrennt werden kann.

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Performance with/in alternative infrastructures

Sabeth Buchmann

(Lectorate of English Translation by Sean Kenney)

Despite its event character, performance in the visual arts is considered to be the antithesis of the spectacle - above all because performance challenges the dominance of the image, and thus of the visual commodity, with the seemingly fleeting moment of the performance of body and language, and thus of gestures and actions, of voice and sound. Performance theorists such as Philipp Ausländer, Barbara Clausen, Peggy Phelan, and many others¹ have, on the other hand, pointed out the inherent media reproducibility of the performance genre, which leads us to ask whether and to what extent it can be reconciled with the "Construction of Situations" that Guy Debord (1931-1994), who developed the notion of the spectacle in critical theory, invoked in his famous essay "The Society of the Spectacle" (in the original French *La société du spectacle*)². Published in 1967, on the eve of the civil unrest in France of May '68, the book was a declaration of war against the reification of art – and of performance. Equating the commodity and its becoming an image with the ideological representation of capitalist class society in the mass media, which was expanding through film and television, Debord stated: "The spectacle unites the alienated, but only as alienated."³ With his diagnosis of the "one-sided communication" of the mass media, he thus described social alienation as the essence of modernity and economic abstraction as the 'spectacle' concrete mode of being. The French author and artist thus sought to determine the relationship between technical form and media content within an industrial society marked by progressive individualization. The core of the form-content relationship of mass communication thus consists in the fact that the primary content of the media takes a back seat to the secondary content, its technical functioning: "The society of the spectacle is the form (...) that chooses its own technical content." ⁴

Although this diagnosis is reminiscent of Marshall McLuhan's⁵ "Die magischen Kanäle/ Understanding Media" (1964), it differs in one essential point: for unlike the Canadian philosopher (1911-1980), Debord did not regard the form/content relationship of mass communication as being a type of technical automatism: according to his view, it is not the technical structure that becomes the content of the media, and thus the form does not allow its content to become arbitrary. Rather, Debord's notion of spectacle is based

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on the assumption that the transforming relationships between technical form and media content are the consequence of transformations of social domination on an abstract level higher than that of forming. Accordingly, the form of the spectacle is bound to the form of domination and is not a technological-media phenomenon independent of it.

The socio-critical dimension of Debord's concept of spectacle is, in my opinion, decisive for a classification of the performance tradition that positions itself against the prevailing logic of image- and event culture. Of course, many genealogies could be cited in this regard, genealogies that reach back into the historical Avant-garde and are based on anything but Situationism and its predecessor, Lettrism: One might also think of the Fluxus and Happening movements, Minimalism and Conceptualism, New Dance and post-dramatic theater, expanded cinema and feminist-queer body art. The horizon of an experience that deviates from and is incommensurable with normative bodies, subjectivities, and aesthetics is what makes their approaches comparable to Debord's concept of the 'Construction of Situations', despite all their (identity-political) differences. At the same time, a look at the main lines of performance precisely shows that it did not place the procedures of "Detournement," i.e., the expropriation and recoding of normative images and forms of consumption, in High Art, which was considered elitist, but in the mass media.⁶ This means that performance has always entered precisely that sphere of so-called Simulation which Debord saw as the root of all evil, i.e., of social alienation.

A crucial aspect of Beyond the Spectacle thus lies in a type of performance that is dedicated to reconnecting social subjects as a way of countering the perceptual and behavioral conventions contaminated by spectacle through the (re)learning and (re)testing of bodily forms of interaction. This is true, for example, of Maria Noujaim's work insofar as it recalls the role of spectacle critique for the Latin American resistance movements against the military dictatorships that came to power in the 1960s and 70s. The aim was to recognize and strengthen fragile and marginalized subject positions, as they determined the everyday lives of indigenous groups and the descendants of African slaves, lives characterized by political repression, racism, patriarchalism, and class rule, as well as by the effects of colonialism. In contrast to Debord's radically negative concept of the spectacle, however, socially critical Latin American artists have relied on a positive and in part therapeutic combination of activist and artistic practice within the framework

of collective events. Thus, 'lived' experience in the Brazilian culture that diverged from imperial commodity culture recurred in the popular-cultural events and concepts of carnival, tropicalismo, and candomblé, in which Afro-Brazilian samba, the practice of synesthesia, and spiritual ritual set the tone.

It goes without saying that such mass-cultural (counter)spectacles functioned only within the context of revolutionary countercultures, which, in the course of changing (media) public spheres, have since experienced extensive erosion. This refers not least to these spectacles' fusion with cultural and event industries, in which performance hype unquestionably plays a role. It is all the more significant that Noujaim's model of performance rather resembles a 'learning exercise' in the sense of new a diagrammatic of the social - a diagrammatic that makes it possible to create situational micro-publics inside and outside art spaces. Similar to Anna and Lawrence Halprin's R.S.V.P. Cycles developed in the 1960s, this is a score- and/or rule-based production of collectively shared physical, mental, and social resources and skills. Not formal virtuosity, but practical-aesthetic 'know how' is in the foreground here. The central idea is not the self-enlightened, liberated subject that Debord had in mind, rather it is about a connection of bodies, materials, and environments to semantic systems that are practiced in varying spatial and temporal situations, which bring to light those interdependent relations that we read as the scoring of alternative infrastructures of the social.

This does not mean that performative practices of rehearsal represent the opposite of the spectacle, especially since the becoming performative of bodies forms a resource that the bio-medial live event can exploit, a living commodity, as it were.⁸ Because the performative learning exercise always also entails a deferred and unfulfilling moment, representing an unsatisfactory, as it is incomplete, (image) product that unfolds its medial meaning only through the time-consuming participation of the many. it deals with physical, mental, and social interaction. Performance, according to Beyond the Spectacle, thus depends on materially divisible, i.e., contingently emerging and available infrastructures. Even if participatory performance embodies the "new spectacle,"⁹ it points to the possibility of something behind it, something whose representation can no longer be separated from the materiality, albeit sign-like quality, of (inter)relationships and (inter)actions.

RESEARCH DIALOGUE

Research Dialogue is a unique format of communication designed for this project that documents a dialogue between the curator and the artists of this exhibition. The curator created a set of diagrams as an interpretation of the curatorial note as a way to further investigate the cross section of the dynamic between artist and audience. The diagrams stand as starting points and prompts to question the various dynamics which exist between the agencies: the “observer”, the “observed” and the “environment”, and the subsequent moments when during the exchange between these agencies, a “spectacle” is created. The artists were invited to respond to these probes by creating diagram(s) of their own.

The intention of this component of the project is to establish and continue an active relationship between the curator and the artist, and imagine new ways of engaging in and documenting discourse. As part of the Research Dialogue, artists were invited to question, reject, add, edit, and extend the diagrams and prompts in any way, and use their unique positioning to broaden the scope of this discourse.

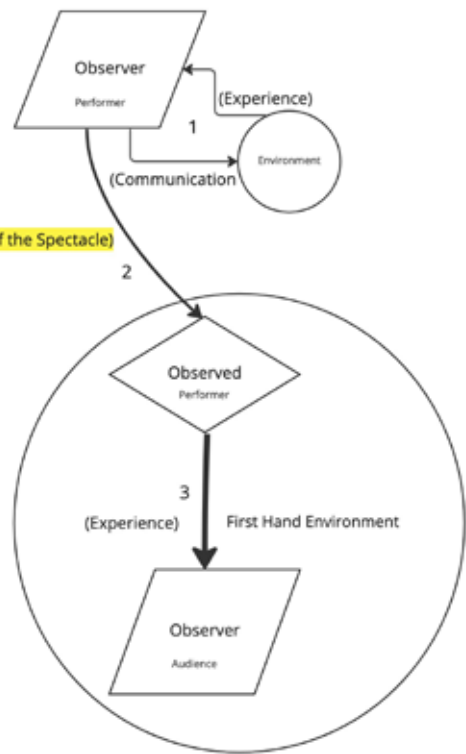
Research Dialogue

This project is part of an on-going investigation around performance and how it creates and transforms the body. Performance art is usually conflated with theater and therefor often takes on the role of spectacle to be consumed in a voyeuristic manner. This understanding of performance leaves very little room for it to grow or develop as an art form uniquely, as it leaves experiential, material, emotional, interactive or any number of facets of performance unexplored. As a way to dissect this further, a set of diagrams were created to understand the existing dynamics between the body of the performer and the observer of that performer (the audience).

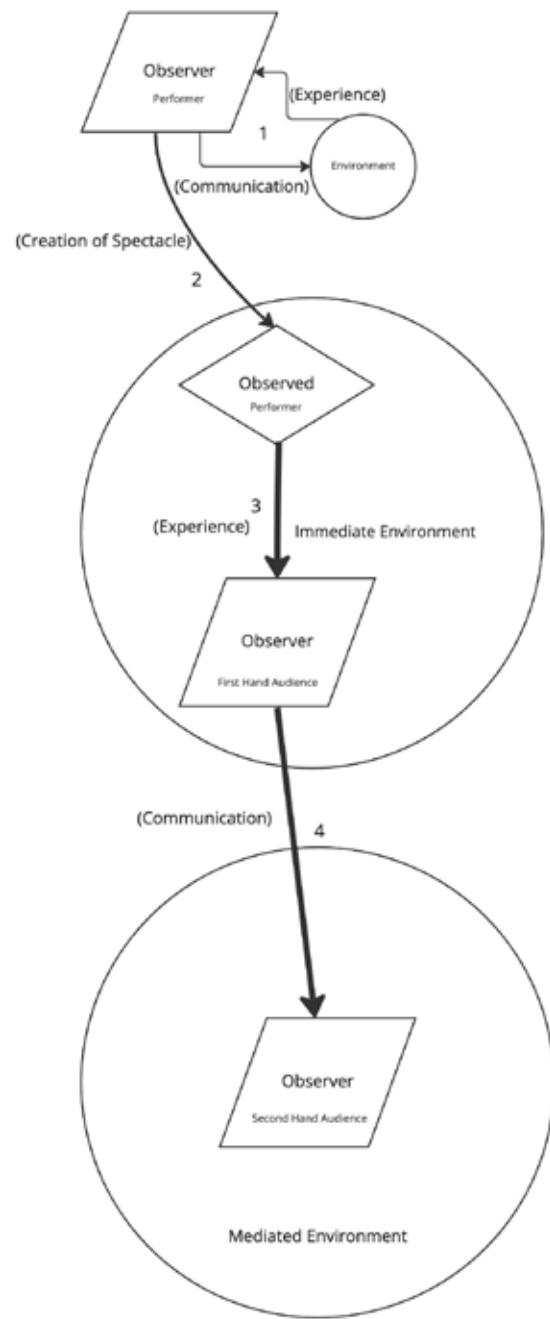
Diagrams are a schematic representation of a thought. While they can limit and be restrictive to a singular point of view, they also open room for interpretation and analysis. For this exhibition, the curatorial note was reorganized in the form of diagrams with an intention to invite artists to respond, question and contribute their point of view and expand the inquiry further.

I have been dissecting and investigating the various roles that shape the relationship between the ‘observer’ and the ‘observed’ -may it be in a curatorial, institutional or social context. Following you will find diagrammatic interpretations of these dynamics. Each diagram has been drawn from art practices that incorporate the body as a medium, investigating the possible relationships between the artists and the audience. In order to illustrate these relationships, I further dissected them into “agents”: “observer”, “observed”, and “environment”. The possible communications between these agents are realized as “actions” while also outlining the subsequent moment of the “Creation of Spectacle”. Creation of Spectacle is a significant element in these diagrams as it points to the center of the conflicts which this project aims to identify and look beyond. Each artist has responded with their understanding and positioning around these relationships and dynamics.

Performance Art with a Live Audience



Performance Art with a Live Audience (As Documentation)



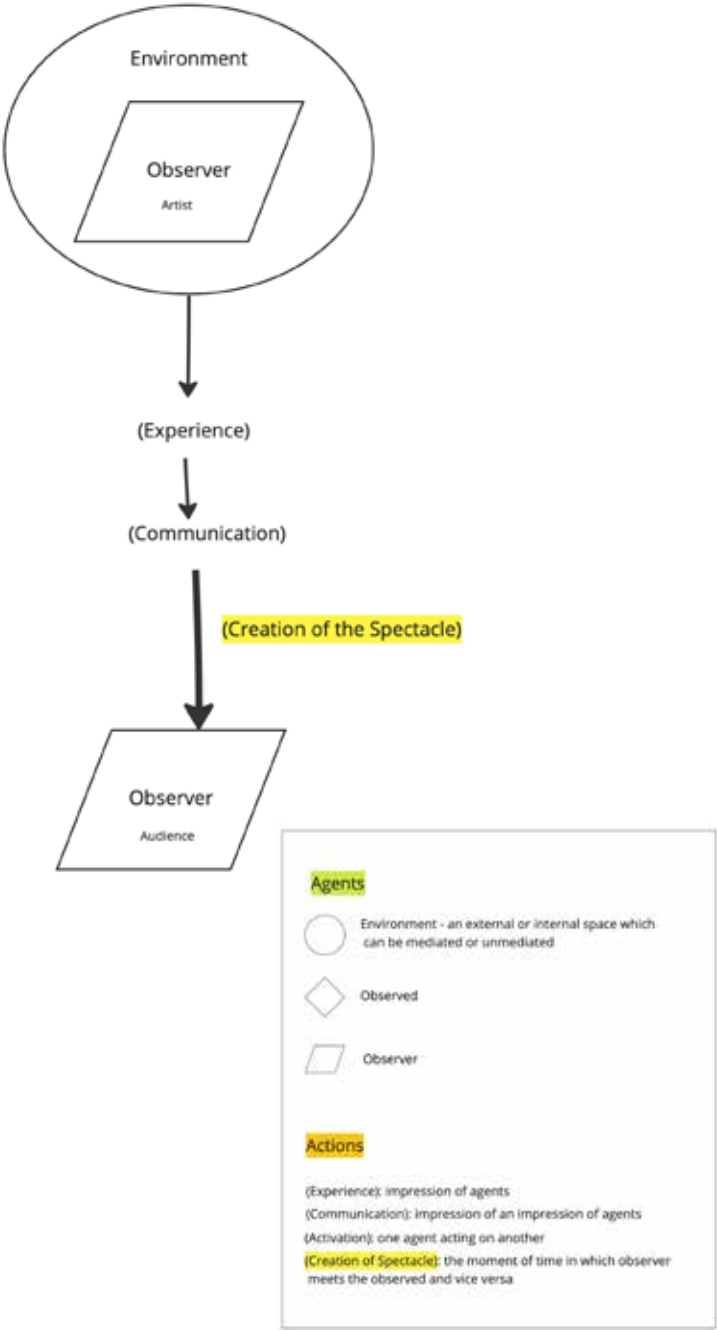
Agents

- Environment - an external or internal space which can be mediated or unmediated
- Observed
- Observer

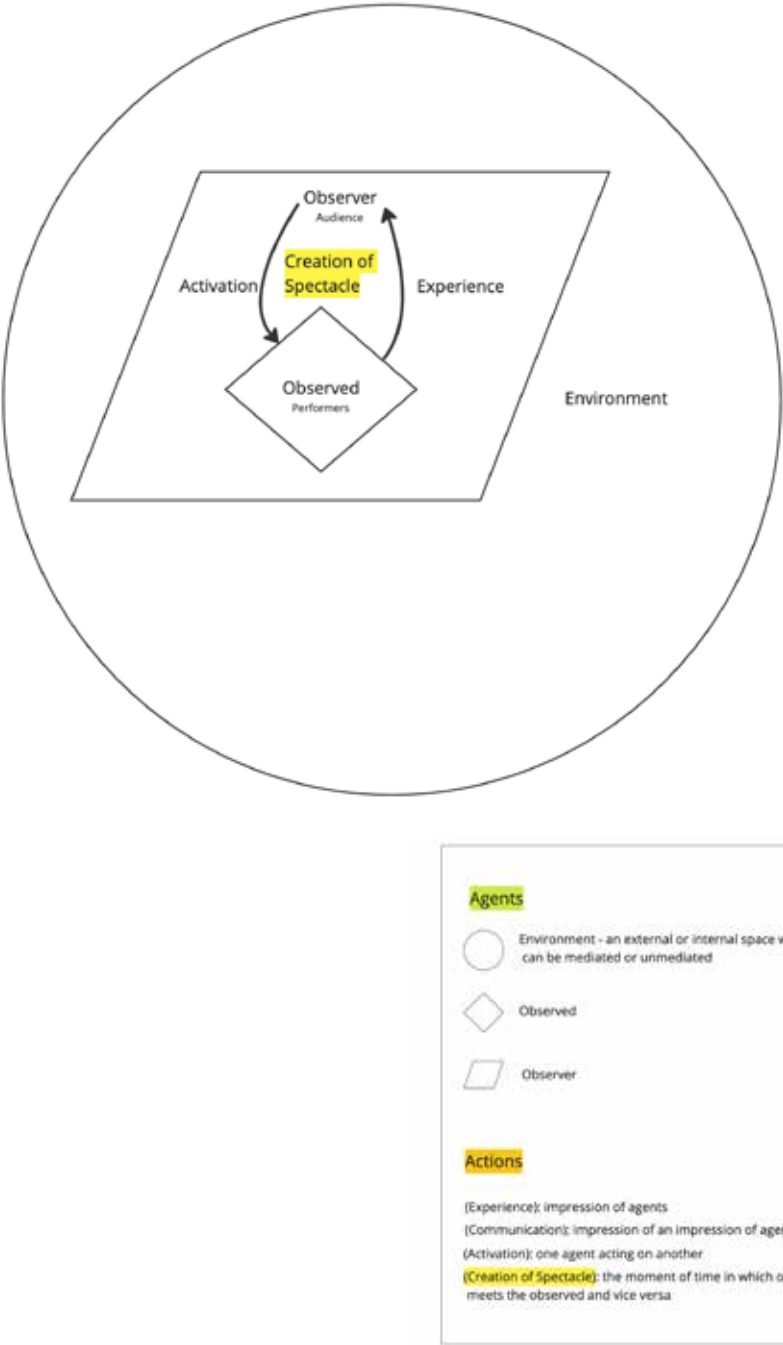
Actions

- (Experience): impression of agents
- (Communication): impression of an impression of agents
- (Activation): one agent acting on another
- (Creation of Spectacle): the moment of time in which observer meets the observed and vice versa

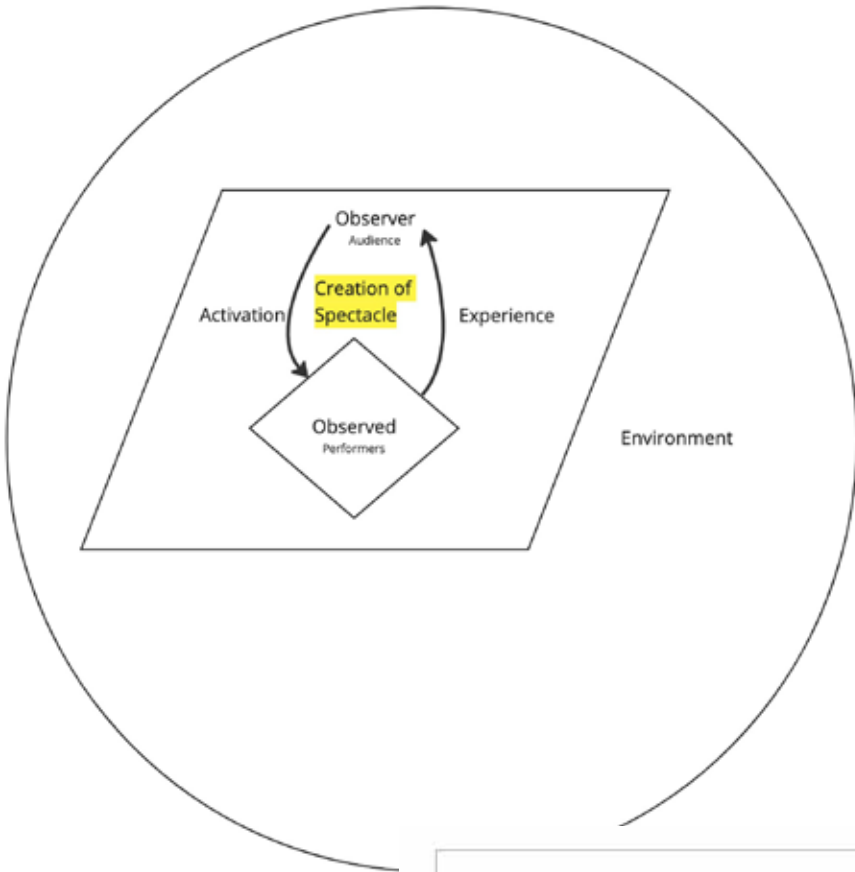
Research based Art



Relational Aesthetics



Performance as Installation



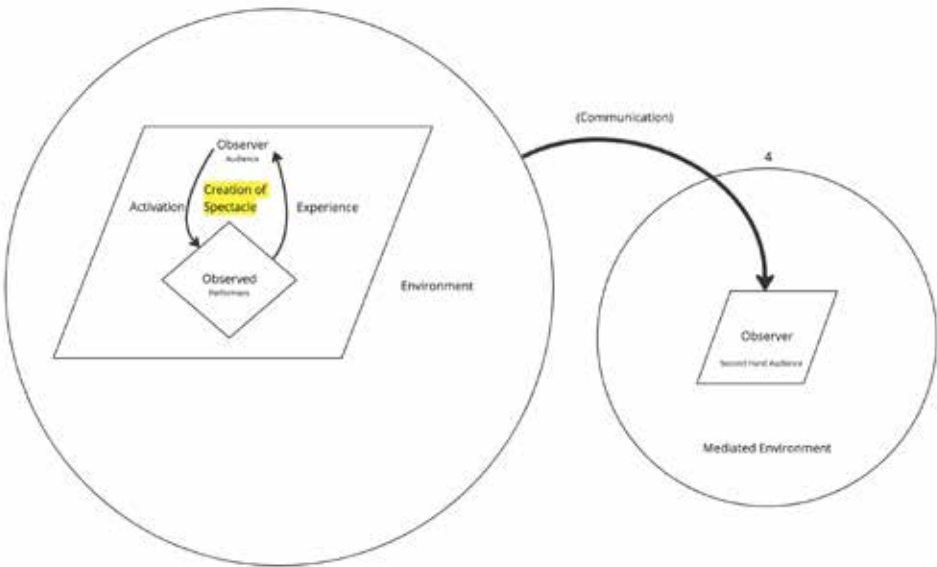
Agents

- Environment - an external or internal space which can be mediated or unmediated
- Observed
- Observer

Actions

- (Experience): impression of agents
- (Communication): impression of an impression of agents
- (Activation): one agent acting on another
- (Creation of Spectacle): the moment of time in which observer meets the observed and vice versa

Performance as Installation (as Documentation)



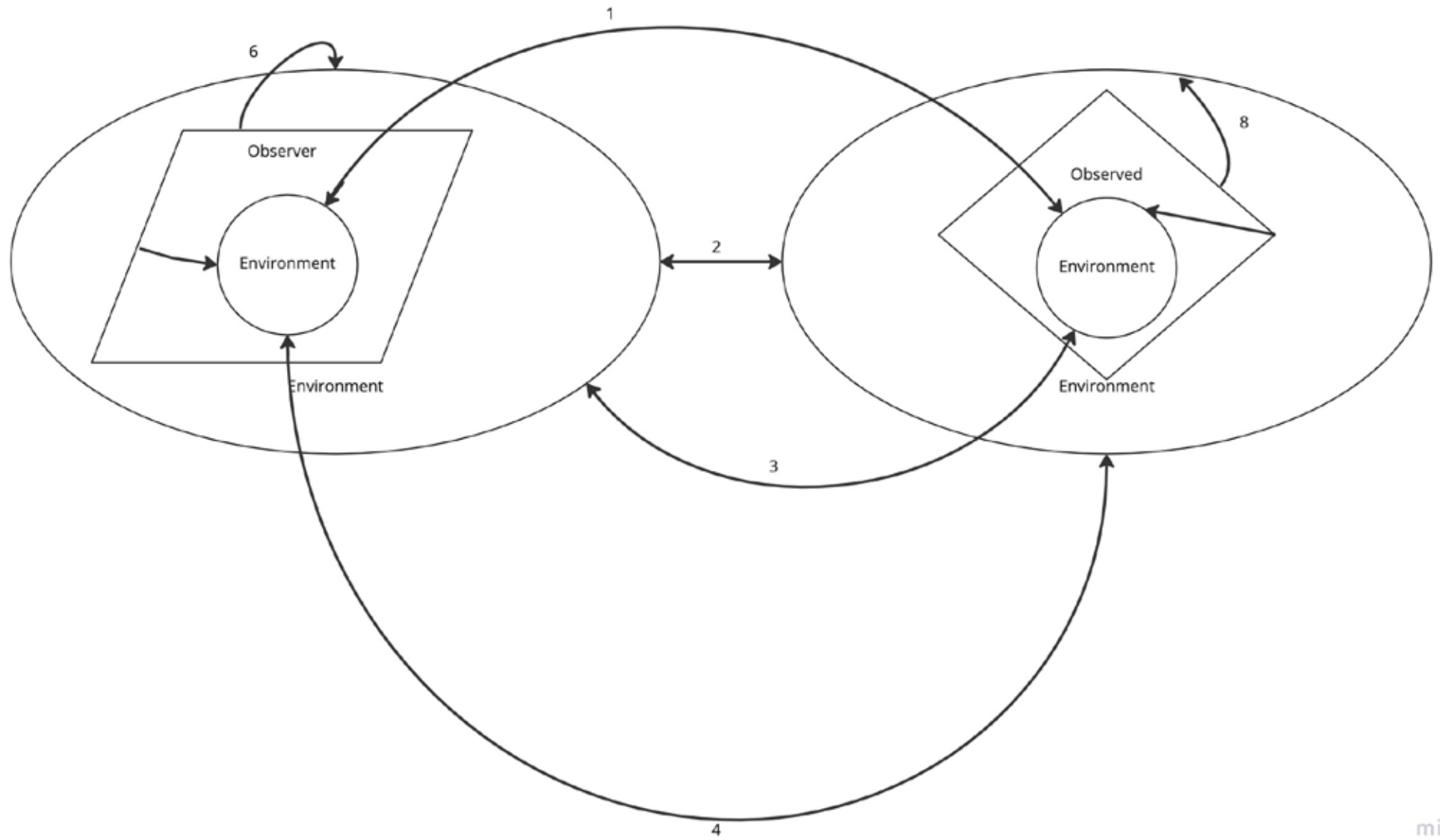
Agents

- Environment - an external or internal space which can be mediated or unmediated
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- Observer

Actions

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- (Creation of Spectacle): the moment of time in which observer meets the observed and vice versa

Beyond the Spectacle



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Vafa Aminikia

Project in the Exhibition

7 Windows to a Mirror Without a Surface is an interactive machine/game. The game allows the full engagement of only one player at a time and can be accessed through 7 stations (windows). While the artist conducts each game (as time/narrator) every interaction offers a different perspective to the picture that lays behind the window. The activation process of this machine as a system, regulated by the same force that it is trying to reflect, results in the notation of a melody that replaces the conductor by the end of its performance. Further details on the mechanism of the machine cannot be stated since, for the game to function more profoundly, each player should approach each window with minimum ideas and presumptions about what will happen. It is not recommended to have more than one interaction per person in the same day.

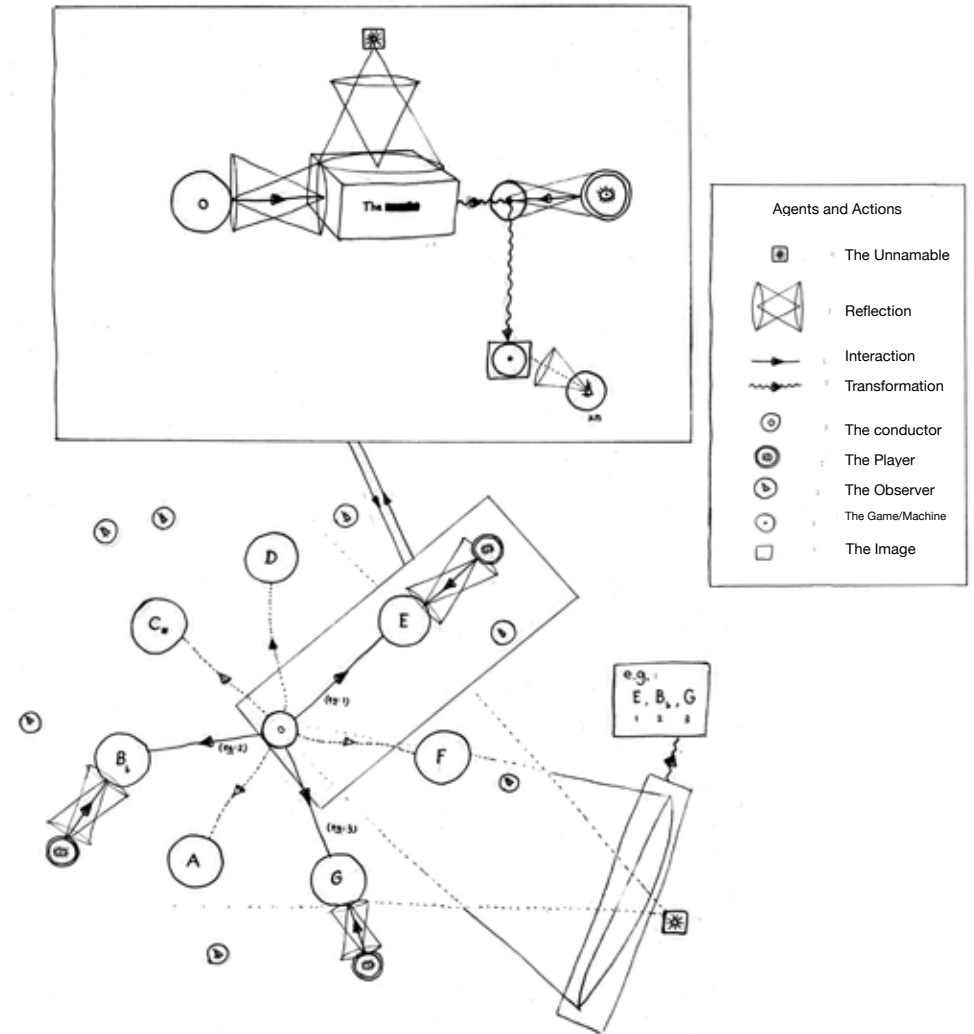
Research Dialogue

7 Windows to a Mirror Without a Surface is a system in which each outer part reflects the inner part.

On a macro level, the work could be described as a machine or game. Within itself, it holds a visible or invisible logical puzzle that, through the performance of the conductor, gets activated and ideally creates the possibility of a mirror in front of each player.

On a micro level, while it provides the possibility of reflection for any player, at the moment of activation, the conductor becomes the force that unravels what the player consciously or unconsciously decides to unroll. In a totality of its existence (the game/ machine+the conductor+the observer+the player), it attempts to noticeably merge with the image of the reflection of what is described as "the unnamable": an eternal omnipresent observer and unraveling force that ultimately the piece aims to mirror.

The seven windows and the interaction of the players with them are then translated into music notes that will remain in the space as a still image of the true conductor (the unnamable) through the activation of the game/machine that took place through the performative act of the artist as in fact only a mediator.



Sandra Bejarano

Project in the Exhibition

Thank you for your performance

The following proposal, specially designed for the Beyond the Spectacle exhibition, aims to explore the limits of performance by dispensing with its main characteristic: the physical presence of the artist. Is it possible to perform without using the human body? Who should then be responsible for the action?

Taking into account the position of the spectator in the exhibition context and the usual formalities at opening events, the aim is to make the public the protagonist of the performance. The goal is that, through their presence and participation in the event, the spectator replaces the performer artist without being aware of it until they become the executor of the action.

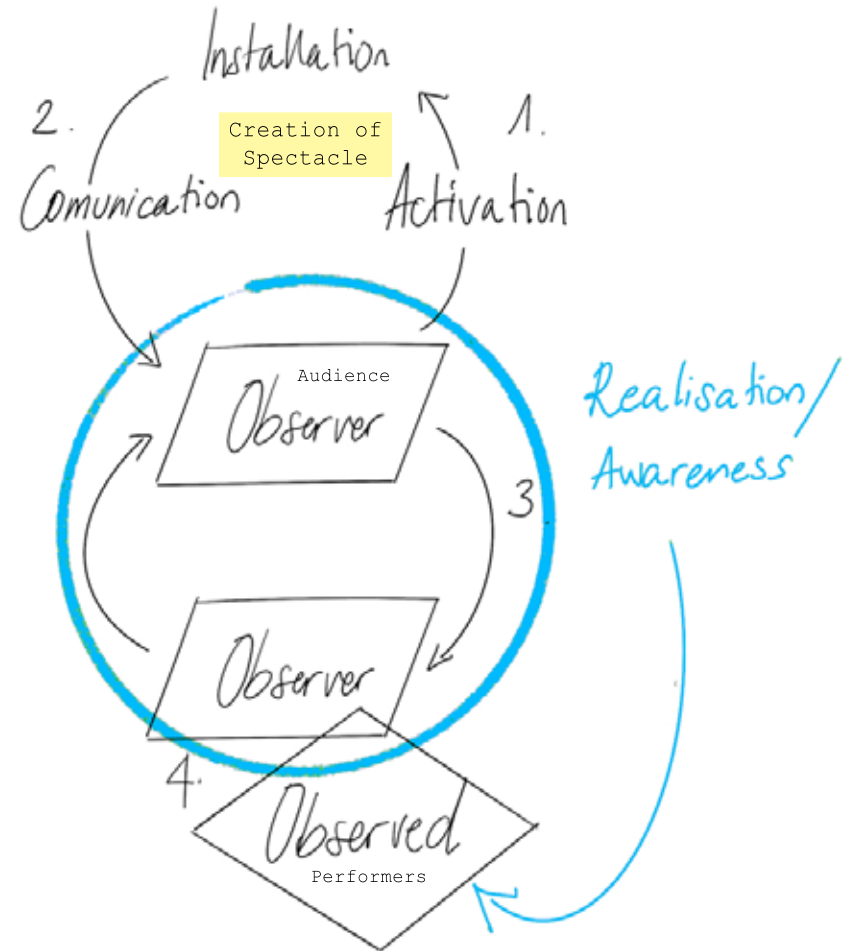
By exchanging the roles of "observer" and "observed" and turning the everyday act of an opening into the performance itself, the aim is to experiment and question the possibility of representation beyond the centralization of the body.

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This installation questions the limits of Performance and whether it is possible to replace the presence of the artist with the active involvement of spectators. In this way, it poses a reflection on the centralization and exhibition of the body of artists and the role that visitors play in contemporary art.

Research Dialogue

1. The audience activates the installation in the exhibition space where the action is expected to take place.
2. Through participation, communication is produced between the installation and the observer.
3. The spectator becomes aware that the observer is being observed by themselves.
4. In this way, the observer becomes the observed and their roles merge.



Veronika Dräxler

Project in the Exhibition

In *Broken Branches*, Veronika Dräxler undertakes a performance walk. At the beginning of a set route, the artist chooses a branch and then carries it to the destination while documenting the performance. Veronika Dräxler bases this work on the fact that she selects branches according to criteria that have become unconscious through trained vision at art academies. Through time as a natural resource and work in the form of artistic performance as a human resource, she charges the branch with value.

Research Dialogue

The performer carries encounters with environments, subjects and objects, transforming impressions into expressions.

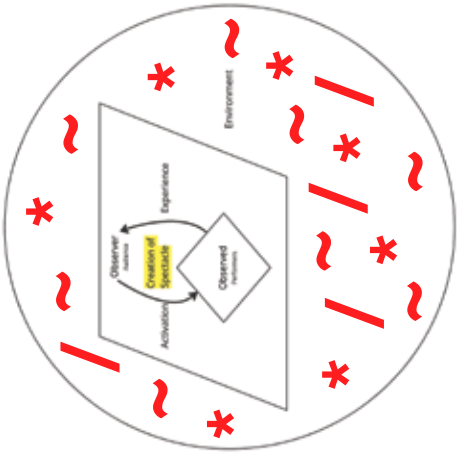
Only the intention makes a difference between the observer and the observed.

The fluidity of in/at/tention.
To stretch out. To stretch toward.

Trauma is the opposite of connection.

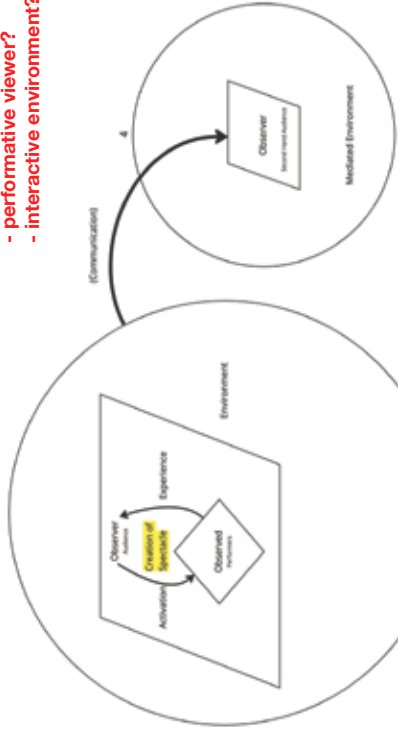
Comments by Veronika Dräxler, 03/05/2023

Performance as Installation



- * Objects?
- ~ Immersion?
- / Distraction?

Performance as Installation (as Documentation)



- performative objects?
- performative viewer?
- interactive environment?

- The performer carries encounters with environments, subjects and objects, transforming impressions into expressions.
- Only the intention makes a difference between the observer and the observed.
- The fluidity of in/at/tention.
- To stretch out. To stretch toward.
- Trauma is the opposite of connection.



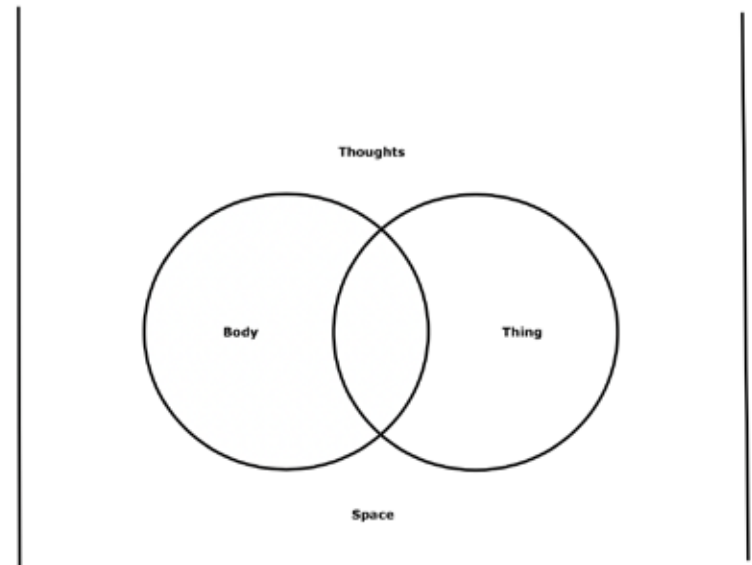
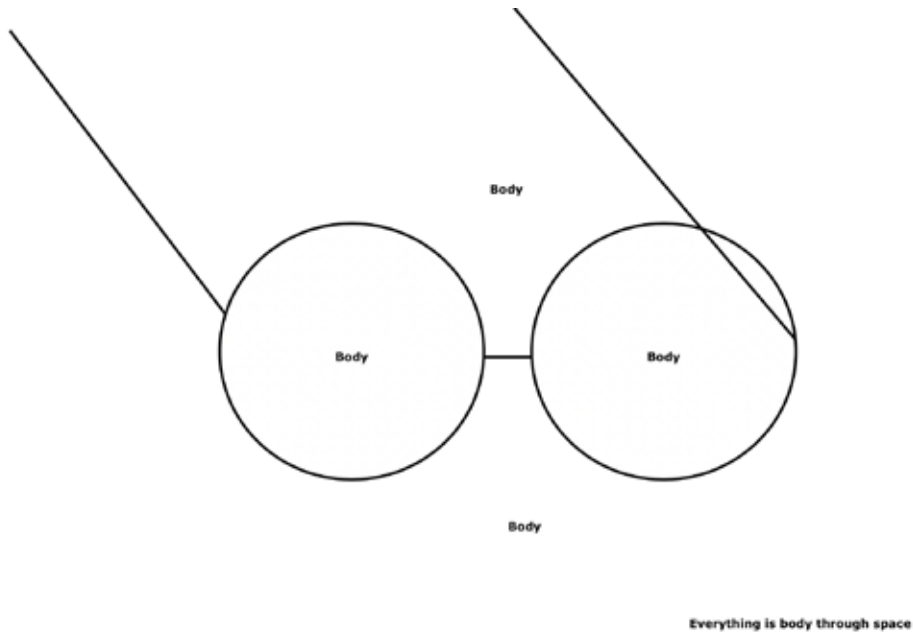
Maria Noujaim

Project in the Exhibition

Suspended Circle is a publication by Maria Noujaim, commissioned and launched by Moraes-Barbosa Collection (São Paulo - BR), that mixes text, correspondence and performance. Inspired by Anna Halprin's RSVP cycles, the text is a device for circularity and exchange with an imagined correspondent. The blank space on the page between each textual proposition is an invitation for both the hand and the body, so that the emptiness circumvented by the writing becomes elastic and unfolds in other languages.

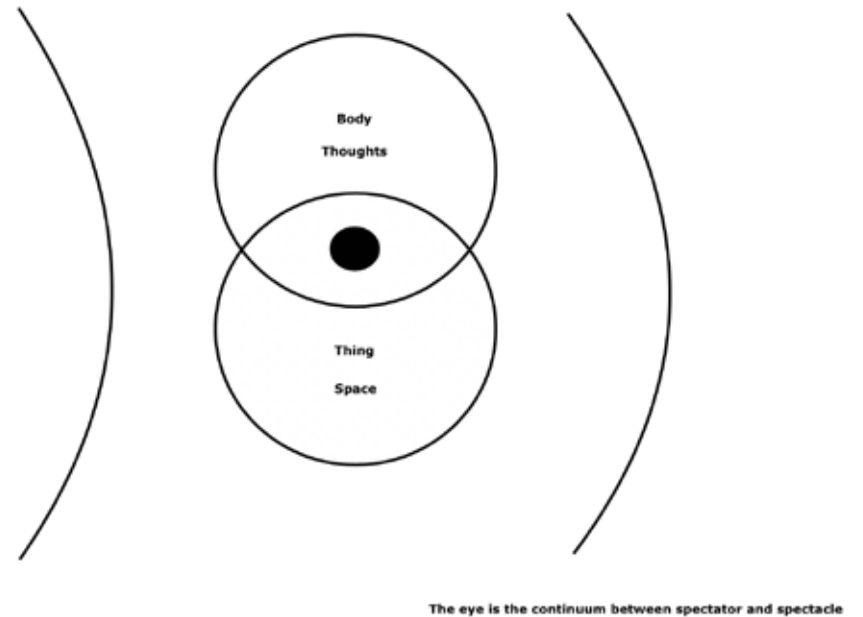
Research Dialogue

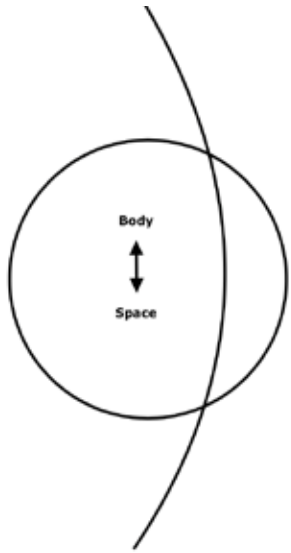
32



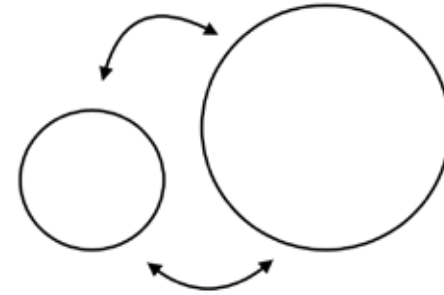
We see our frames

33

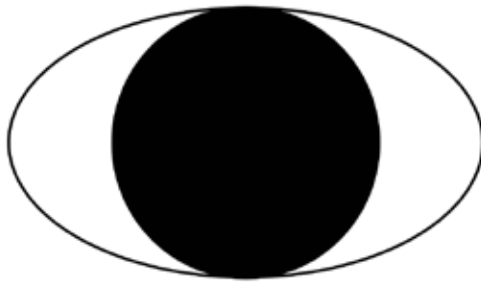




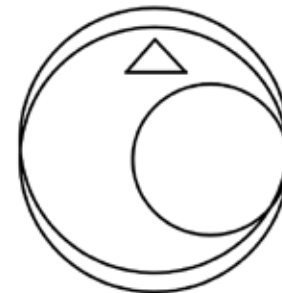
The performance art brought every-body to the scene
Art is no more some-thing made from some-one but a device to every-body's expression



The spectator is a future artist



Art as a field of performances



There is no other

Yasmana Pishvaei

Project in the Exhibition

SimulFlux delves into the sensory and visceral experience of the body in protest, free from the sociopolitical context that often shapes our perception of it. Through a fusion of audio-visual, text, and performance elements, the piece seeks to evoke a deep intuitive and implicit understanding of the lived experience of other bodies, moving beyond preconceived associations and image interpretation.

By tapping into the shared human experience, *SimulFlux* transcends the limitations of representation and offers an invitation to connect with one another on a deeper, more intrinsic level. The artwork encourages us to set aside norms and expectations, and instead engage with the raw, and ambiguous experiences of our own and others' bodies, providing a space for felt exploration and connection.

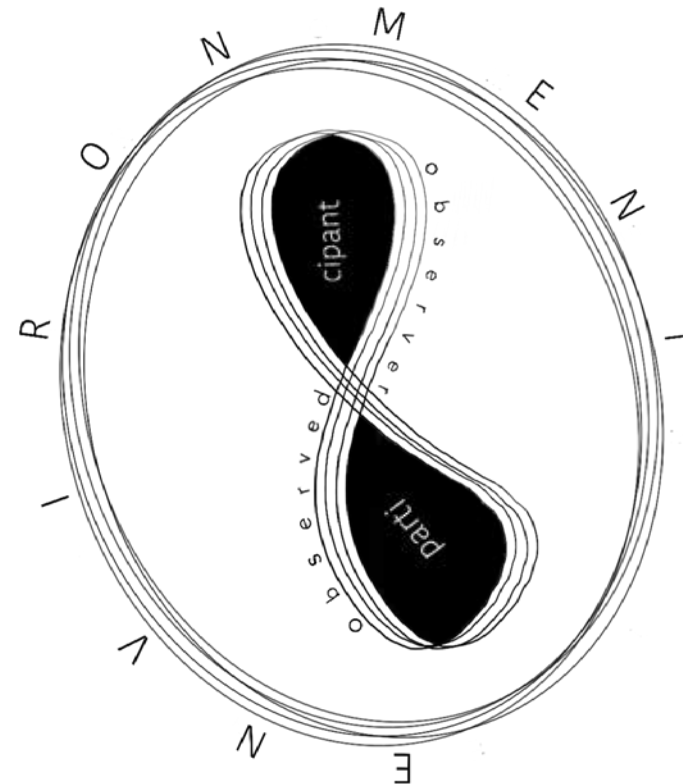
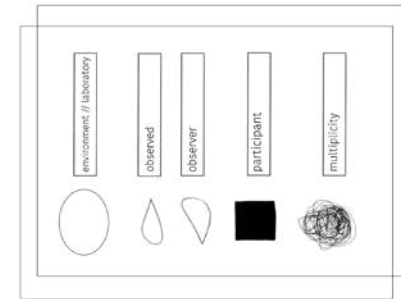
Research Dialogue

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When examining art from a process-oriented or research-oriented perspective, it can be said that the environment in which the observer and observed encounter is similar to a laboratory. In this environment, a framework is established but the outcome is subject to change and expansion. This environment is conducive to unexpected developments, as it is constantly being shaped and reshaped by the micro-environments that arise through the interaction between the observer and observed.

The observed may be images, sound, text, performance, or other forms of artistic expression, and the audience are the observers. However, the observers themselves are also being observed by one another. Here, the boundaries between the environments of the observer and the observed begin to blur, and a sense of mutuality emerges between them, shifting or expanding their roles to active participants.

This dynamic environment fosters a collaborative and interactive experience that encourages experimentation and exploration. It is through this process-oriented approach that the audience is able to engage with the art in a more profound and meaningful way, as they become active participants in the creation and evolution of the art itself. Ultimately, this approach challenges traditional notions of art and its consumption, encouraging a more dynamic and fluid understanding of the relationship between the observer and the observed.



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Simon Pfeffel

Project in the Exhibition

Gewicht eines Atemzugs

Duration: approximately one hour

Practice: performance / video / live stream

I am pulling myself over the urban ground while carrying a camera in one of my hands whereas puffing a feather in front of me over the ground. In the live streamed video, which is generated while the performance, we hear the breath of the actor, which is produced by the arduous movement. We can't see the body as well as the exertion of the artist but just the feather, which flies easily across the lithic floor. And we hear the dialogues between the artist and strangers, crossing the irritating action. Some of them help to move the feather.

Research Dialogue

- 1) Instead of agents: level of involvement
- 2) Instead of actions: task by motivation
- 3) Performative situation in public space: motivational situation

In performative situations in urban spaces, viewers (passersby) receive different levels of participation. In these spaces, artists lose the ability of allocating levels of participation in the same level as the influence of the art institution (art museums, Kunstvereine, project spaces) vanishes. If the influence of the art institution vanishes, also the borders of the performative situation become blurry as well as locally unclear (no architectural borders as well as a missing artistical context of the situation). Reducing the influence of the art institution by setting up an artistical situation in urban spaces means to strengthen different tasks of the observers, mainly: viewers, creators and order and/or law enforcers. Viewers are passersby, who stay mainly in a certain distance to a performative situation. Creators are former viewers, who decide to enter the performative situation to not just be a part of it but to force its evolvement. Order enforcers are former viewers who decide to enter the performative situation to stop its evolvement. Order enforcers are not necessarily equal to law enforcers: While law enforcers try to preserve the context of law (social structure), order enforcers try to preserve the context of (their personal definition of) order (individual structure). Artists need to become passive viewers to set up this performative situation. Therefore the ranking of artists as well as of art institutions needs to vanish in comparison to the ranking of the observers to enforce effective levels of participation.

Layers of participation in performative situations



Viewers: passersby (artist becomes viewer as well while losing control over the situation)

Job: Observing the situation without being necessarily involved.



Creators: Passerby, who tries to evolve the situation.

Job: Trying to convince the artist to find a better place for this action.



Order enforcers: In this situation, the order enforcer = law enforcer. A police man, who tries to preserve law and order in urban spaces.

Jobs:

- 1) Convincing the artist to stop the action because it seems to be forbidden.
- 2) Actively waiting beside the artist until the performative situation ends.



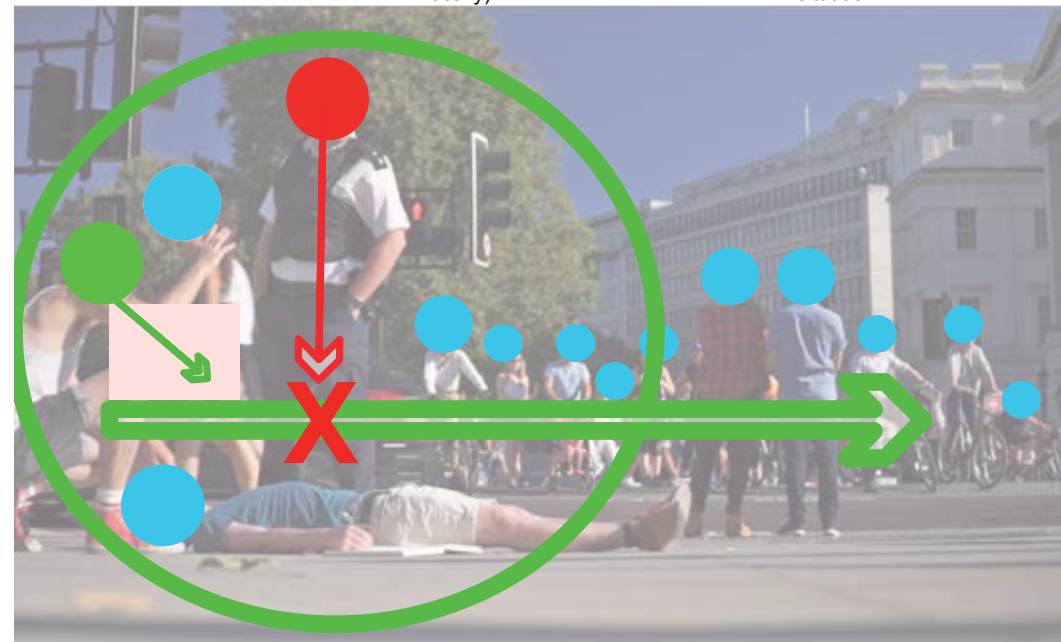
Performative situation in urban spaces.



Participation in the situation (in this case: locally).



Disruption of the participation in the situation.



Project in the Exhibition

*Widerstand – Aneignung, Übersetzung und Transfer. Ein Realitätstheater.
book, video, script*

The printed book “Realität–Theater–Körper–Aneignung–Übersetzung–Transfer. Möglichkeiten und Unmöglichkeiten des Widerstands”, published by adocs publishing, was repeatedly revised by Frauke Zabel in collaboration with the designer Anna Lena von Helldorff after its publication. The long-term project takes its starting point in a discussion between five cultural workers in São Paulo about resistance against neo-fascism, right-wing populism and censorship in Brazil. Already in this conversation, the role of Frauke Zabel, as a white, German artist in Brazil who invited to this discussion and sits at the table, comes into focus.

The reworking and reflection on this role has been transferred as an ongoing process into a video work. In the video, the performative reading of the text becomes visible alongside the editing and reworking of the printed book, as a continuous examination and process of learning. The script makes the steps, places, people involved and production conditions of the long-term project transparent.

Research Dialogue

RT Skript, Fassung I, Mai 2023

*Debütförderung LH München
DAAD Stipendium*

São Paulo/ esponja
Diskussion

→ **RT Vorlage**
Cláudio Bueno
Bárbara Esmeria
Peter Pál Pelbart
Sylvia Prado
Márcia Silva
Frauke Zabel
Lu Mugayar

Debütant:innenförderung

gedrucktes Buch

→ **RT Fassung I**
Paula van Erven
Anna Lena von Helldorff
Oliver Precht
Juliane Schickedanz
Frauke Zabel

→ **RT Errata** **neue Zeitebene**
Anna Lena von Helldorff
Frauke Zabel

München/ Neues Rathaus
performative Lesung

→ **RT Fassung II**
Vivi Balby
Isabelle Cohn
Jules* Elting
Anne Kulbatzki
Diana Marie Müller
Mehmet Sözer
Frauke Zabel
Daniel Door
Constanza Meléndez
Mira Sacher
Julia Swoboda
Anne Weiß-Vogtmann

→ **RT Errata**
neue Zeitebene
Anna Lena von Helldorff
Frauke Zabel

Leipzig/ KV Leipzig
performative Lesung

→ **RT Fassung III**
Diana Felber
Louis Hay
Anna Lena von Helldorff
Anna Jehle
Juliane Schickedanz
Nora Wehofsits
Frauke Zabel
Katrin Mayer
Caspar Sanger

*Wiederaufnahmeförderung
LH München*

München/ Lyrik Kabinett
Rio de Janeiro/ online
Diskussion

→ **RT Vorlage**
Adriana Schneider Alcure
Katrina Mäntele
Lisa Jeschke
Frauke Zabel
Felix Kruis
Mira Mann
Verena Wössner

→ **RT Errata**
neue Zeitebene/ Textteile
Anna Lena von Helldorff
Frauke Zabel

Berlin

→ **RT Videotutorial –
How to update RT**
Nadja Buttendorf
Frauke Zabel

München
Libken

→ **RT Videofassung**
Anne Kulbatzki
Frauke Zabel
Felix Kruis
Anna Bartholdy
Mattias Hauck

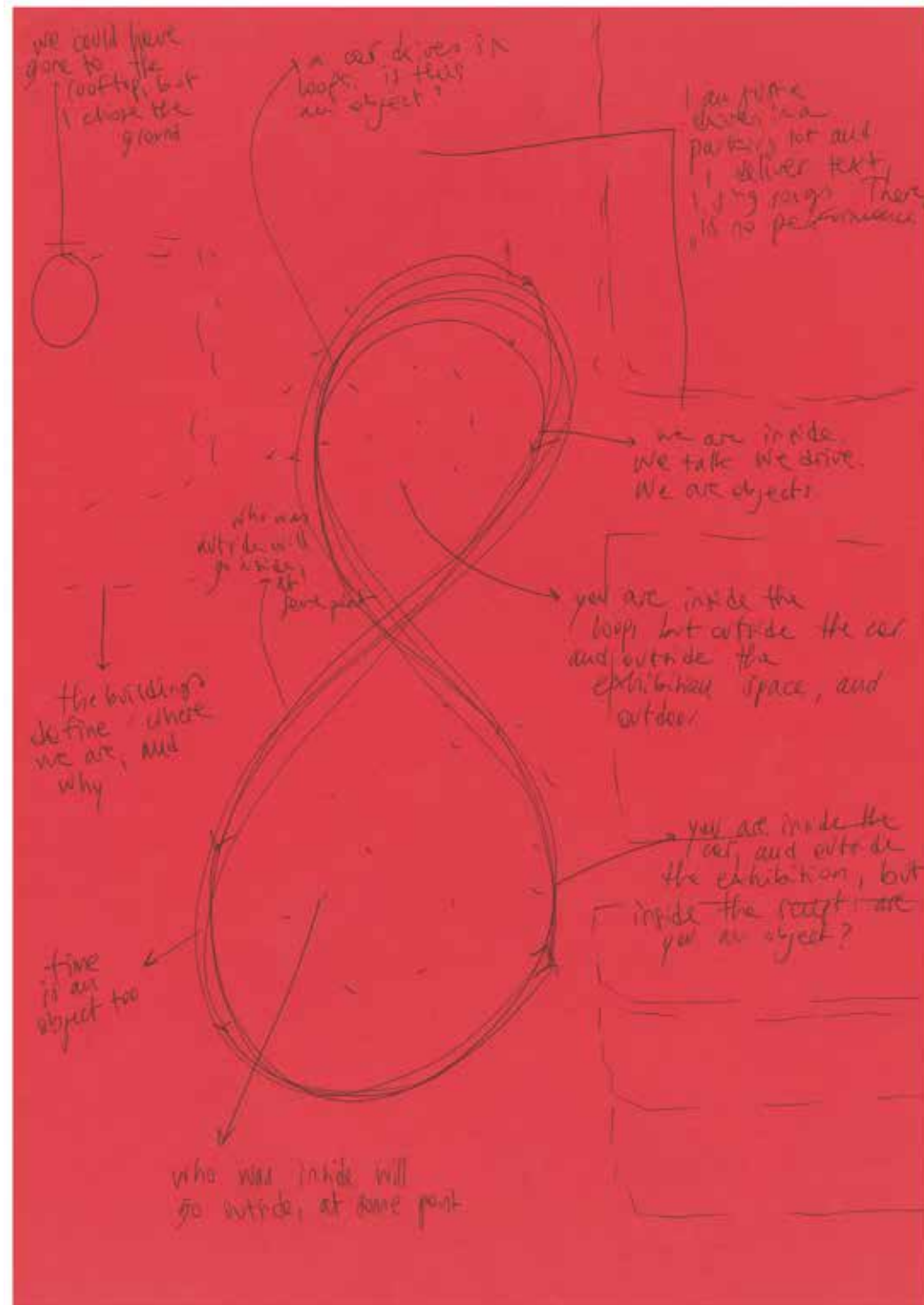
Giulia Zabarella

Project in the Exhibition

Not one, but a myriad fugitive yet present, untouchable yet concrete bodies inhabit the cityscape. *Velvet Arteria*, which articulates through a video-installation and a one-time performance at sunrise in the parking lot of Platform, is an exercise in understanding urban characters and who is acting them, by manipulating, consuming and flipping images of contemporary Capitalocene. The human flood, the rush hour, the love serenade, the sandwich-men, the mass, merchandise, modular feelings and the performing and producing of time build an askew skeleton-script for "the city": a place lingering between collective potentials and downright catastrophe.

Research Dialogue

The distinction between public and (performative) object (which usually identifies the object with the artist who manufactured it) generates the very idea of spectacle in the first place. This comes out of a naturalized understanding of the labour division between 1. the producer, 2. the product and 3. the target market for that product. The same goes for shoes, poetry, an apartment block, or a fashion magazine. But what happens when extending such static, ossified definitions and confusing them, in order to find new words for what artistic experience can be? To flip such assumptions on their head can be a shallow exercise as well as a real, muscular training for imagining exciting scenarios of what "making (cultural) objects" might mean. To overcome "the spectacle", considered as a mere static, optical phenomenon of passive consumption, if not outright voyeurism, we must flip, or at least problematize, the dyad of observer and observed, both within the artistic "experience" (I-subject look at something that exists outside of me) and within the artistic "production" (I-subject make something that exists outside of me). Words have been used, such as "interaction" or "activation" of an audience through a "relational aesthetics", which nonetheless still confirm, if not strengthen, the hierarchy of a choreographing game-master (the artist, or the institution) onto a mob of patronized-upon individuals. In my work, I try to expose and question how the so-called "public" could blur between object of observation, unwanted intruder, prisoner, joke, peer and quantifiable human capital.



ONLINE TALKS

A series of panel discussions hosted to explore the curatorial, academic and artistic positionings around the role of institutions in art, performance art in public spaces and the relationship between the physical and metaphysical presence of the body.

Theme:1 Capitalist burden on ephemeral art

How does ephemeral art survive and thrive in capitalist art market? Is making an art object may it be in form of an artefact, a remnant or a documentation of an event an outmoded expectation? Is the necessity of a spectacle or display an unnecessary burden on artists? This panel discussion aims to address these concerns and open dialogue towards the role institutions play in shaping frameworks of displaying and engaging with art. It furthermore aims to shed light on the ways artists are engaging with the white cube space, while working within certain frameworks and also bringing art outside these spaces to the public.

Panelists:

Agustina Strüngmann | Independant Cuartor, Salta Art Foundation
Damian Lentini | Curator, Haus Der Kunst
Giulia Zabarella | Artist
Simon Pfeffel | Artist

Moderator:

Natasha Jozi | Curator

Theme 2: Nature, ritual and metaphysical presence of body

Is there a spiritual, metaphysical experience at the core of art? How much do we value art that does not appear intuitively or socially productive? This panel delves deep into examining ways artists approach their art practices, maintain intimacy in their work and how they navigate the purity of the isolated process of creating art. It aims to question is anything lost in the essence of art while making it into an object and whether the sanctity of the lived experience of the artist is threatened through the imposition of the mediated experience of the broader audience. We further examine how can artists who work with culturally, socially, and experientially specific themes and rituals engage with a broader art community.

Panelists:

Veronika Dräxler | Artist
Yasaman Pishvaei | Artist
Maria Noujaim | Artist

Moderator:

Natasha Jozi | Curator

Biographies

Vafa Aminikia

Vafa Aminikia's artistic practice starts with an effort to unravel the puzzling states of experiencing 'being' in social or personal contexts by creating maps of reality. and continuing with creating dolls as figures that tell the story of those maps through animation and music. the final results of this cycle of processes, are performative works that because of the unclear nature of their experience are expressed as games/machines/etc. Vafa seeks to understand and re-express an underlying truth that he believes will forever require a constant effort to be (re) expressed in a relatable way to each time, space, and its society.

Sandra Bejarano

Sandra Bejarano was born in Madrid (Spain) in 1991 and graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts at the Complutense University of the Complutense University of Madrid. In 2018 she received her diploma in "Free Art" as a master student with Professor Olaf Metzel at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich. Among the awards he has received throughout his career include the KULTURPREIS BAYERN 2018, the DAAD Award for Outstanding Achievement of Foreign Students for his Diploma Thesis 2018 and the Stipendienprogramm des Freistaats Bayern "Junge Kunst und neue Wege" in 2022, which enabled him to realise the publication of his first artist catalogue and solo exhibition at the GEDOK Gallery in Munich. His work has also been exhibited at the Penzberg Museum (Bavaria), Galerie der Künstler*innen-BBK (Munich), as well as at Galerie Prisma (Bolzano), Galerie Prisma (Bolzano), among others.

Veronika Dräxler

Veronika Christine Dräxler is a media and performance artist and author. She received a Diploma in media art at the AdBK Munich (2017). She is a Debutant of GEDOK Munich (2019). Art and media master student at the UdK Berlin (2022). She is currently conducting interdisciplinary research on processing patterns of intergenerational trauma and how they shape cultural landscapes. Her solo exhibition include; "Traces of Life / How to Kill" at Kunstverein Grafschaft Bentheim (2022/23), "Beuys, Recall: Urgent!" (2021) at galerie weißer elefant in Berlin, "Post-Everything Ritualism & Hypernatrality" at GEDOKmuc gallery in Munich (2019). Her work has been shown at atopos, Venice (2022), Motorenhalle, Dresden (2019), Stellwerk, Kassel (2019), Museo Pumapungo Cuenca, Ecuador (2018), and Manifesta 11, Zurich (2016), among others. For her blog "Selbstdarstellungssucht. de" she received the award "Kultur- und Kreativpilotin Deutschland"(2015) from the German government.

Maria Noujaim

Maria Noujaim born in 1986 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, is an artist, graduated in Dance from Escola Angel Vianna (RJ). Her work consists of a practical and conceptual meditation on dance, working in the hybrid areas between performance, notation and experimental pedagogy. From a research that emerges in the body, her practice carries its own spatiality through the use of materials, drawings and production of scores in the work with the public and interpreters. Since 2018 she has been taking part in exhibitions locally and abroad. In 2020 she was selected for the Grants and Commissions Program Award from the Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation (Miami, USA) and in 2021 was part of Momentum 11 Biennale (Moss - Norway). In 2021 she co-founded CAMPO, a non-profit association dedicated to experimental pedagogies. Noujaim lives and works between Itamonte - MG and São Paulo - SP.

Yasmana Pishvaei

Yasaman (Yassi) Pishvaei is an Iranian multimedia artist, Expressive Arts therapist, and researcher based in Potsdam, Germany. She is passionate about the transformative qualities of art and its ability to cultivate deeper intrapersonal and interpersonal understanding, connection, and hybridization. Yassi employs Expressive Arts and Interpersonal Neurobiology frameworks to research human experience, and to design and facilitate intermodal workshops and arts-based research processes. Currently, she is designing an intercultural training program, "Understanding Humanity Through the Arts", for the Institute of Expressive Arts Berlin.

Simon Pfeffel

Simon Pfeffel (born 1985 in Nuremberg) studied at the State Academies of Fine Arts in Karlsruhe and Stuttgart under professors Silvia Bächli, John Bock, Christian Jankowski and Leni Hoffmann. Since then, he has been working internationally as a performance artist, exhibiting at the renowned Palais de Tokyo in Paris in 2017 and the Moscow Museum of Modern Art in 2018, among numerous other national and international exhibition venues. For his performative practice, he has received some of the most relevant artist grants in the German-speaking world, including funding from the Kunst-Stiftung Bonn and two grants from the Kunststiftung Baden-Württemberg.

Frauke Zabel

Frauke Zabel is an artist and art mediator. She studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich and the Universidade de São Paulo. For her research-based performance, video and text productions, she often works in dialogue with friends and collaborators. Many of her research based works have developed out of different archived and non-archived materials or the archives themselves. Her interest lies in the transfer and translation between languages, generations, media, times and places in the light of a possible deconstruction of hegemonic readings of history(ies).

Giulia Zabarella

Giulia Zabarella (IT, 1993) studied Painting at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera, Milan (2016) and Sculpture at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Munich (2022). In 2021 she attended the Maumaus Independent Study Program in Lisbon. Since then she is living between Portugal and Germany, working across disciplines such as visual and performance arts, translating, writing and publishing. Her work has been exhibited, among others, at: Kunstpavillon, Munich (DE), Kunstpavillon Luzern (CH), Longega Project (IT), Public Art Munich 2018 (DE), Chunk3 Brescia (IT). In 2022 she has been awarded the Stipendium für Bildende Künste der Landeshauptstadt München and in 2023 the residency Stipendium at Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris.

Natasha Jozi

Natasha Jozi is a Fulbright scholar, performance artist and curator from Pakistan, interested in the collective human experiences, South Asian rituals and the intersection of science and the spiritual body. She has widely performed and exhibited her work in Germany, Pakistan, New York, Chicago, Delaware, Canada, UK, Switzerland, Korea, India, Sri Lanka, and Venice. She is the founder and director of 'House Ltd.' an independent initiative that explores the notion of 'City as a performing organism' and works towards generating a discourse around performance art in South Asia. Through her curatorial projects, she strives to generate critical discourse around body, gender and censorship. Jozi recently published an essay titled "I am, A Spectacle: Reclaiming Female Consciousness through Performance Art in Pakistan" in an academic journal, Research in Arts and Education. Jozi resides and works in Germany.f

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Christian Landspersky (Project Manager at PLATFORM) for his intellectual insight and valuable feedback, and for creating room for this project to grow.

I would also like to thank Matthieu Chladek (Project Assistant at PLATFORM) for being generous with his time and involvement, and for lending his critical insight into helping me execute this project smoothly, and for always having my back.

My husband and partner Taimur who was ever so supportive, patient and understanding throughout this project.

Best for last, my daughter Ayla who stayed with me through it all, first in my womb and then in my lap.

This publication is published on the occasion of the exhibition 'Beyond the Spectacle' in the hall of PLATFORM, 15.06. - 04.07.2023, curated by Natasha Jozi

Text and Layout
Natasha Jozi

Lectorate of English Translation of Essay by Sabeth Buchmann
Sean Kenney

Title illustration
Studio MLLR

Printing
Flyer Alarm

Copies: 250

PLATFORM
Kistlerhofstraße 70 Haus 60, 3. Stock 81379 München

PLATFORM sponsored by Münchner Arbeit gGmbH

Managing Directors: Gerhard Scherbaum, Johann Stelzer
Munich Registration Court, HRB 98967
Chairman of the Supervisory Board: Manuel Pretzl

PLATFORM is funded by the Munich Employment and Qualification Program (MBQ). Further information at www.muenchen.de/mbq



