
RESEARCH ESSAY

How To Do Things With Institutions? – On An-Archiving, Dis-Placing and Re-Scaling

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Our Artistic Research is realized through a set of performative practices: an-archiving, dis-placing and re-scaling. The paper explores how these practices would install temporary spaces for collaborative speculation and how through those spaces qualities of future institutions could be imagined or even provisionally set in practice. We therefore unfold three performative experimental set-ups: an encounter of two random spectators with a dystopian cross-media fabulation in two wooden boxes as theatrical set-up (1); a staged encounter of a states theatre's colleagues and guests imagining the future of their institution against the background of historical and contemporary model villages (2); the encounter of two festival infrastructures: one actually existing, performatively and architecturally crossed with its alternative drafts (3). What kind of knowledge is activated? How to grasp and disseminate it? What novel modes of instituting do we need to welcome in order to enable those collaborative and performative practices? Or are they necessarily acting beyond institutions, continuously crossing borderlines between institutional frameworks, multiplying institutional affiliations and installing sufficient intersectional practices between institutions and other contexts? The research paper summarizes the three initial experiments of the collaborative PhD-Project 'Institution as Art – Art as Institution. Artistic Research Projects and Performative Transformations' by Melanie Mohren and Bernhard Herbordt, analyses the results of an interview-series with hosts, performers and guests of those experimental set-ups and envisions an upcoming step of the research.

Prologue

Have you ever founded a social movement?
Or have you ever been part of one?
Are you still?
No?
Would you have liked to be?
For what purpose would it be worthwhile to found a movement?
Now that nothing is the way it used to be?
(Performance-Script 1: The Movement 2018)

1. Introduction

An-archiving, dis-placing and re-scaling are performative practices. They install infrastructures for collaborative speculation.¹ How and leading to which results – that's what the following paragraphs are all about. In a short text about a series of performances titled 'The Institution'² we once claimed:

¹ Following two most recent publications on 'speculation' in the field of artistic research by Henk Slager (2019) and Dave Beech, Anders Hultqvist & Valérie Pihet (2017), we are understanding 'speculation' in this text not as 'exercises in profit seeking or demonstrations of the calculability of the possible' (Slager 2019) but as a 'practice of seeing where the future is not remote, but immanent in what is done now in order to bring change' (Slager 2019) and as 'an act of putting artefacts and concepts in non-autonomous network relations in order to resist the reification of an 'outsider' position', as an act 'of sensing the possibilities' (Beech et al. 2017).

² 'The Institution' is a far-reaching project series by Melanie Mohren and Bernhard Herbordt. The project has taken the shape of an art installation, an online archive, a label and a temporary workgroup. 'The Institution' presents new performance formats between

'As these performative experiments are essentially volatile, new potentialities may continuously appear: potentialities that take shape in encounters with guests and visitors.' '[The applied] performative practices are able to seize and enhance patterns of social action – patterns that have become part of a society's set repertory by means of institutionalization.' 'Playing with these patterns enables us to react to social processes of transformation, to influence or even to generate them: Performing Organizations, Institutions and Societies.' (Mohren & Herbordt 2016)

This statement implicitly refers to Peggy Phelan's 'Ontology of Performance' (1993), defining the political qualities of performance as 'un-static' (1993: 165), 'non-reproductive' (1993: 148) and 'non-metaphorical' (1993: 152). It furthermore carries a ghostly echo of John L. Austin's speech act theory (1962) – how the uttering of a sentence can itself become the doing of an action, a 'performative' (1962: 6). And it could finally be related to Judith Butler's recently extended understanding of performative acts as 'not only speech, but the demands of bodily action, gesture, movement, congregation, persistence. [...] Such actions reconfigure what will be public and what will be the space of politics.' (Butler: 75)

But how exactly do performative practices as an-archiving, dis-placing and re-scaling – if at all – transform the circumstances of their realisation? How can they for example influence institutional infrastructures, which are supporting these practices – e.g. the administrative, spatial and/or technical apparatuses for collaboration within a state's theatre, a festival for contemporary music, any town hall, ministry or library? How can the thereby produced knowledge – or the collaborative processes leading to it – be analysed and how can a next experimental set-up³ be based on the results of that analysis?

In order to approach these questions, we arranged three experimental set-ups within different formal and institutional premises – based on the analysis and observation of existing institutions.⁴ We currently conduct interviews with organizers, participants and external observers of those experiments to speculate on a future performance set-up. The text at hand contributes to that process and discusses three examples of performative practices applied in our research – an-archiving, dis-placing and re-scaling – and imagines possible critical remarks by the authors mentioned above on the possible insights provided by the experiments: Judith Butler, Peggy Phelan and John L. Austin. Artefacts of various formats will be combined within the following paragraphs: performance texts, descriptions of performances, personal memories, photographs, excerpts from interviews, critical reflections. And at its very end a next performance experiment might possibly arise, in between the lines of the presented material or suggested by potential critical objections. All together we are installing a research cycle with the elements 'observation', 'speculation', 'experiment'.

art and research, everyday life and theatre stage. More than eleven productions have been created since 2012: What else could an institution, a performance, an audience, a village or a movement be? In question are other possibilities of institutions and how they can be thought of in a more permeable and solidary way through performative transformations. 'The Institution' cooperates with such diverse partners as the Stuttgart Theater Rampe, the Sophiensaele Berlin, the Württembergische Kunstverein Stuttgart, the Zürcher Hochschule der Künste, the Künstlerhaus Mousonturm Frankfurt, the International Research Centre for Interweaving Performance Cultures at the Freie Universität Berlin, the KIT Karlsruhe, the Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe, the Donaueschinger Musiktage, the University of Gothenburg and many others. More information available at: <http://www.die-institution.org/index.php/en/performing-institutions/> [Last accessed 19 June 2020].

³ Thereby our understanding of an experimental set-up follows Hans-Jörg Rheinberger's analysis of an experimental system as materialized extension to processes of imagination (Rheinberger: 66), a labyrinth under construction with no overall building plan but fumbling experimenters (Rheinberger: 57).

⁴ 'The Movement' (Stuttgart Theater Rampe, et al., 2018–2020) – a performance for two spectators. It takes place in the office of a large authority or newspaper editorial office, a district town hall or museum. Credits, video-, photo-, text-documentation available at: <http://www.die-institution.org/index.php/en/2018-the-movement/> [Last accessed 19 June 2020]; 'The Village' (Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe 2019) – staged village festival as public research and performance. Credits, video-, photo-text-documentation available at: <http://www.die-institution.org/index.php/en/2019-the-village/> [Last accessed 19 June 2020]; 'The Festival' (Donaueschinger Festival, Stuttgart Theater Rampe 2019) – 'The Festival' is a fictional festival. It displays radically site-specific or only imagined art, as well as designs of other institutions and neighbourhoods. Children welcome! Credits, video-, photo- text-documentation available at available at: <http://www.die-institution.org/index.php/en/2019-the-festival/> [Last accessed 19 June 2020].

2. First Experimental Set-Up: On 'An-Archiving'



Figure 1: *The Movement*. Performance for two visitors by Melanie Mohren and Bernhard Herbordt. Stuttgart Theater Rampe et al., 2018. Photo: Daniela Wolf.

Do you remember that group longing to establish an interactive memory of all social, artistic and invented movements of all time;
Who was it that wanted to collect examples,
Build a database
And deviate proposals on how to act,
In the time after...
Who wanted to set themselves in motion, for purposes of solidarity, politics of friendship, practices of sharing and hospitality;
Who became more and more;
Who were long ago not just observers anymore;
Until suddenly everything turned into something really different;
Nothing was left but those wooden boxes, along with an accompanying letter.
Actually, where is that letter?
(Performance-Script 2: The Movement 2018)

Two visitors are entering an ordinary office. In what could be any town hall, ministry, library or theatre. They are carrying two wooden boxes. Within the boxes: a self-acting video sound system as performance manual, a collection of objects, images and texts on historical, contemporary or invented social movements and some tools for documenting the performance which is just about to start. The two spectators are alone. They are reading a letter introducing them to a dystopian fabulation about them being the last persons to remember, add to, embody and continue a transnational and partly invented history of social movements. Soon they might build their own shelter out of objects in the boxes. Soon they might read out proposals of how to act. Soon they might embody a possible beginning of the next movement. The archive-in-a-box acts as 'an encouragement of memory to become present' (Phelan 1993: 146).

'During its preparation 'The Movement' actually triggered something in our administration. It would be about resigning from territorial claims, leaving the space, giving it over to someone else. It was about losing control. Questions to be negotiated were: Are we allowing that loss of control

to happen? Where could the performance take place? Who will be willing to clear her*his office? The expectancy, something different than usual would take place in there, something you will never know what it was, how the visitors will have used the space.'
(Interview-Excerpt 1: Martina Grohmann, Artistic Director, Theater Rampe Stuttgart)

As hosts of the performance we remember the two spectators taking the space as it is and turning it into something else. We remember opening the doors to the office after the audio-visual performance tool would have indicated the end of the performance. We remember how the two visitors almost made their home in there. We remember how they found blankets and covers in the wooden boxes and added them as a ceiling, roof, wall or tent to the original spatial structure of the office, re-ordered images and proposals to act all over the space, found positions for themselves to sit, discuss and observe. We remember them saying – while cleaning the space from all the objects, cards, blankets and covers, preparing the wooden boxes for the next two spectators: 'Oh, we need to leave already? We just finished our construction and started to speculate about a next movement in here.'

Does this ephemerality of the situation deprive itself from its purpose or does it link itself to its critical function as Judith Butler might argue? (2015: 20) Are the two visitors in fact creating the appropriate circumstances to do things with their words? (Austin 1962: 8) Are they embodying the possibility to gather and are they exploring conditions for acting together? (Butler 2015: 23)

The two visitors follow indicated links between lists, objects, quotations and images of the archive-in-a-box. They group and re-group the artefacts and – while doing so – they are embodying two persons of a story being told to them. They repeat actions and movements presented to them in the video of the audio-visual performance tool, they take pictures of themselves and fill in a questionnaire on their own involvement (actual or possible) in social movements (existing or to be invented). The collected data will become part of the presented collection itself.

The hereby realized practice could be described as 'an-archiving'⁵: In a possibly unlimited series of performances for two spectators each performance, a possibly unlimited number of authors is actualizing the presented collection in their imagination. They speculate about possible links between presented fragments; they embody physically the underlying narration of the collection's origin and future; they actually propose matters and artefacts to be added. As this practice is constantly disappearing (it begins and ends with the two closed wooden boxes), as it enables new potentialities to appear (the two visitors are setting up their own spatial infrastructure for speculations based on the archived objects, visual and written material) and as the two visitors are physically enacting that potentiality (through their real presence and as revenants of the two persons handing the boxes fictitiously over to them), that practice of 'an-archiving' might be called a performative practice. Its protagonists – the spectators – are enacting through their presence 'a vast field of the unsaid: the anarchiv' as Wolfgang Ernst has named the 'vast emptiness', against which 'every statement forms a border' (Ernst 2015: 27).

Judith Butler might critically add: But 'the body is less an entity than a living set of relations; the body cannot be fully dissociated from the infrastructural and environmental conditions of its living and acting. [...] Moreover, the dependency of human and other creatures on infrastructural support exposes a specific vulnerability that we have when we are unsupported in conditions of precarity.' (2015: 65) As the circumstances of the visitors' encounter are so privileged and well supported, as the institution's office, as powerful infrastructure they are meeting in, stays – beyond the limited time frame of the performative set-up – so untouched and as

⁵ The artists Katrin Deufert and Thomas Plischke gave one of their performance-collaborations with the philosopher Marcus Steinweg the title 'Anarchiv'. 'This choreography invites its audience to join in and play a part right from the beginning [...] A choreography unfolds that in the end is handed over to the audience, to collectively reconstruct and transform what just happened a moment ago' (Deufert & Plischke 2012, <https://deufertandplischke.net/anarchiv2-second-hand> [Last accessed 19 June 2020]); Marcus Steinweg – while being responsible for the text of 'Anarchiv' – defines the living body as 'the archive of humanity, as fathomless as it is fragmentary. [...] With the question of the body, the subject addresses the question of its obscure past. We can call it fathomless because it stretches into the abyss of memory, which is the abyss of thought.' (2017: 200). We borrow the term 'anarchiv' from those authors and originate the reflection about the performative practice 'to an-archive' on their practice-based definition of it: 'to an-archive' therefore refers in the text at hand to a practice of collectively actualizing, physically performing, transforming and expanding a given collection.

the actual set of relations – the visitors' (or the archive's protagonists) bodies are arising from – seems to be so little in the focus of the project's attention, their presence might be reduced to a metaphorical one. And if so, Peggy Phelan could argue, the performance would lack an important attempt, 'the attempt to value that which is nonreproductive, nonmetaphorical.' (1993: 152)

But – not least because one of the strategies proposed by Peggy Phelan in opposition to 'metaphor' and 'reproduction' is 'displacement' (1993: 152) – let us for now move to the next example of this reflection:

3. Second Experimental Set-Up: On 'Dis-Placing'

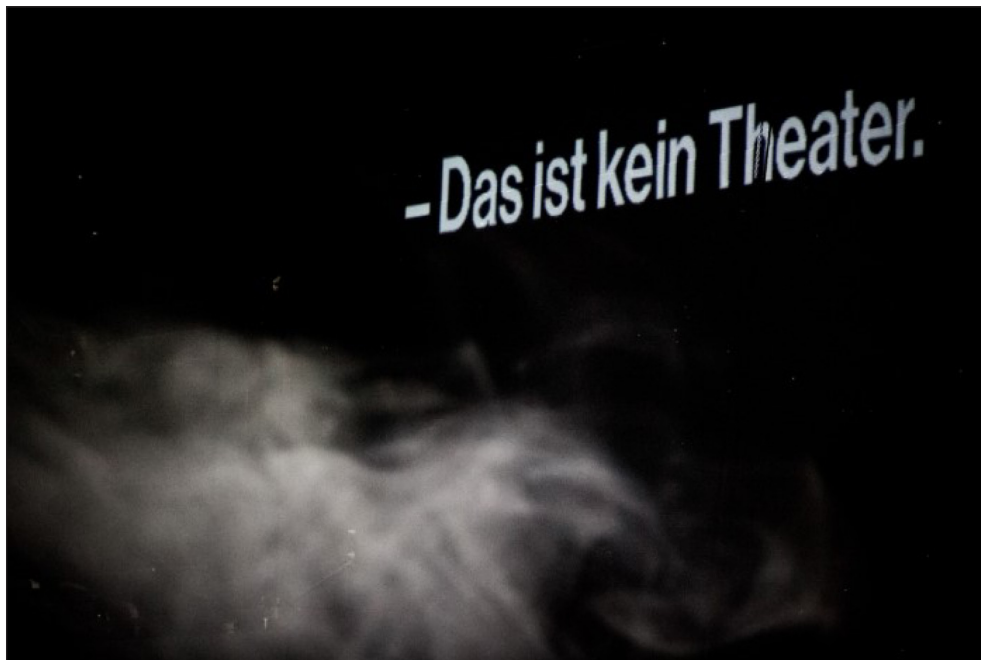


Figure 2: *The Village*. Public research and performance by Melanie Mohren and Bernhard Herbordt, Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe, 2019. Photo: Felix Grünschloss.



Figure 3: *The Theatre*. Performative outings and theatre installations by Melanie Mohren and Bernhard Herbordt, Theater Rampe, et al., 2015. Photo: Florian Model.



Figure 4: *The Theatre*. Performative outings and theatre installations by Melanie Mohren and Bernhard Herbordt, Theater Rampe, et al., 2015. Photo: Bernhard Herbordt.

Part 1, 'The Theatre', Michelbach/Lücke: As the visitors are entering a small village by bus, they are passing a replacement of the town sign, saying 'Theatre Village'. A few minutes later, after being welcomed by a fictitious mayor and several local spokespersons, the visitors are exploring a network of imagined institutions inside abandoned houses all across the village. Or a few months later, almost two hundred kilometres further west, in a Baden-Württemberg State Theatre – Part 2, 'The Village', Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe: visitors are entering a theatre stage set-up as a village festival. A brass quintet is playing, soup is being served, lectures are given, kids are playing, interviews are conducted, discussions being held... Somebody is announcing a three-hour experiment during which the basic principles of a possible model village on the premises of the theatre itself can become collectively imagined. In the first performative situation a village is declared a theatre (part 1), in the second a theatre is declared a model village (part 2).

'Open new perspectives, re-purpose infrastructures, tolerate spaces for alternative experiences! Take 'The Theatre' with its outings to the rural area around. The bus, waiting with its running engine in front of the theatre, tells our audience: Nothing will take place here today. This institution is too small. Let's rather go somewhere else!'

(Interview-Excerpt 2: Martina Grohmann, Artistic Director, Theater Rampe Stuttgart)

We remember some villagers cordially welcoming the arriving buses at the local village square – Sunday by Sunday, for almost two years; we remember visitors performing a music piece especially composed for this occasion along with the villagers – both without any presupposed musical skills; we remember some villagers preparing and sharing cake at the exclusively put up steel sculpture or others just overtaking the equipment of the newly established cinema for their video gaming nights – whenever no visitors were around (part 1). We remember employees of a State Theatre, project collaborators and visitors discussing the im-/possibilities of freedom from anxiety and exploitation in a cultural institution; we remember others proposing how zones of self-criticism, self-empowerment and communal spaces could be implemented; we remember others pointing out how the stage had actually become a village square, where distinctions between those who observe and those who perform were almost evened out – at least for those three hours of the performative situation (part 2).

'In comparison with the social entity 'village' it becomes obvious: the theatre as institution too is a closed social space. It follows specific rules. Through the superimposition of model villages and theatre organisations new potentialities were established. Acting with another self-concept, another consciousness of one's possibilities to form the everyday work within institutions. That's what I learned from the model villages. Some of its protagonists have been self-empowered enough to form and transform the social spaces they were living and working in – within democratic processes. We do not necessarily always act like that in our institutions. We need to take more time to sit together – as in the last scene of 'The Village' – and have open conversations, that than lead to decisions step by step.' (Interview-Excerpt 3: Sarah Stührenberg, Former Dramaturge, Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe)

To some extent the practices applied in 'The Theatre' and 'The Village' are comparable to those of Sophie Calle's 'Last seen' as analysed by Peggy Phelan (1993: 146-147). Just like some paintings in the Isabell Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston and the theatre as traditional art form – where visitors are sitting in the dark observing illuminated others embodying a third one not present at all – are 'stolen' from the audience in the Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe. The hereby created void – on the walls in Sophie Calle's 'Last Seen' or on the stage in 'The Village' – is replaced by something the institution 'does not have and can not offer' (Phelan 1993: 147). Conflicting descriptions of absent paintings on the one hand and a collectively performed speculation about the theatre as model village on the other hand. 'The speech act of memory and description' as in Sophie Calle's Museum intervention, becomes a speech act of imagination and description in 'The Village' and both turn out to be 'performative expressions [...] to fill in, and thus supplement (add to, defer, and displace) the stolen paintings' (Phelan 1993: 147) – or the 'stolen' theatrical agreements.

As it is for any speech act 'necessary that the circumstances in which the words are uttered should be in some way, or ways, appropriate' (Austin 1963: 8), what would it mean to dis-place the same performative situation in another, not that appropriate, context? – E.g. performing alternative institutions in a rural area. Or 'what does it mean to act together when the conditions of acting together are devastating or falling away?' (Butler 2015: 23) – E.g. performing collaborative speculation in a cultural enterprise based on strict division of labour, like in a state theatre? Sarah Stührenberg's statement mentioned above would suggest that at least the consciousness of a tacitly accepted absence – e.g. of that very collaborative speculation – might be caused.

'Those performative practices would probably need to become a more permanent part of the hosting institutions, in order to generate effective transformation processes. Comparable to 'The Theatre', a project which, at least for a given time frame, has indeed modified the social structure 'village'.' (Interview-Excerpt 4: Martina Grohmann, Artistic Director, Theater Rampe Stuttgart)

However, Judith Butler might critically argue that we need to put those questions about possible transformations caused by performative practices back on their feet. Maybe it's not so much about changing the inner infrastructures of cultural institutions (or villages) but about how people gain access to them? Or how the infrastructures would need to change to enable that access? How the 'dependency of human and other creatures on infrastructural support' might be handled, respectively 'the conditions of precarity' we find ourselves in, while being 'radically unsupported' by those infrastructures. (Butler 2015: 65)

Anyway, let's put those critical remarks on record for the concluding sentences of this text. The performative practice of 'dis-placing' as applied in the hereby exemplified experimental set-ups 'The Theatre' and 'The Village' did contribute to the structural and social circumstances of their realisation – as some of the above mentioned interview excerpts and personal memories suggest. The contributions have been transient and cannot be repeated. But they also have been non-metaphorical – as visitors, guests, participants, performers and initiators are constantly swapping roles in a not foreseen performative situation. There is no overall script but an infrastructure of time, space-in-practice⁶ and interwoven contexts to freely dive into.

⁶ With the term space-in-practice we implicitly refer to a notion of Michel de Certeau, who defined 'space' – in differentiation to 'place [...] as instantaneous configuration of positions' – as 'composed of intersections of mobile elements. It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it. Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it,

4. Third Experimental Set-Up: On 'Re-Scaling'



Figure 5: *The Festival*. Performance by Melanie Mohren and Bernhard Herbordt. Donaueschingen Festival, Stuttgart Theater Rampe, 2019. Photo: Ralf Brunner.

Some of the 10.000 or so visitors of the Donaueschingen Festival – the world's oldest and one of the most prestigious festivals for contemporary music – decided to leave the overcrowded foyer of the main venue and enter the performance-course of its meta-sibling 'The Festival'. They first had to pass a several hundred meters long and abandoned guidance system, just to meet their host in a one-on-one-situation. After flipping through an archive of impossible artist's contributions in the basement just below the main concert hall with some 1000 seats, the visitors are – in groups of three – invited to enter a small wooden and improvised cabin attached to the outside of that very concert hall's architecture. Afterwards one performer guides the visitors to the centre of 'The Festival', through the expansive but imagined festival area, in a long-winded manner. In front of a regular office container with glass doors, soup is being served. While miniature compositions for one percussionist and an undefined number of children between 5 and 18 years are rehearsed, premiered and recorded inside. The recordings with a maximum of 60 seconds are presented right before or in between the main concerts in front of those some 1000 other visitors. Most of the composers who wrote miniatures for 'The Festival' have also presented premieres of their work at the Donaueschingen Festival.

'Because you created spaces, only for your own purposes, self-constructed and self-designed, you have had your very own space within the festival. And within that space things have been possible, which would not have been otherwise. I can't prepare soup for every single visitor, but you could. So it became very clear how other spatial configurations enable a completely different understanding of art and a completely different social behaviour. In the playful freedom of your piece, I understood once more the limitations of the usual concert programs. Of course that instance caused a sort of desire.'
(Interview-Excerpt 5: Björn Gottstein, Artistic Director, Donaueschingen Festival)

temporalize it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities. [...] In short, space is a practiced place.' (De Certeau 1984: 326).

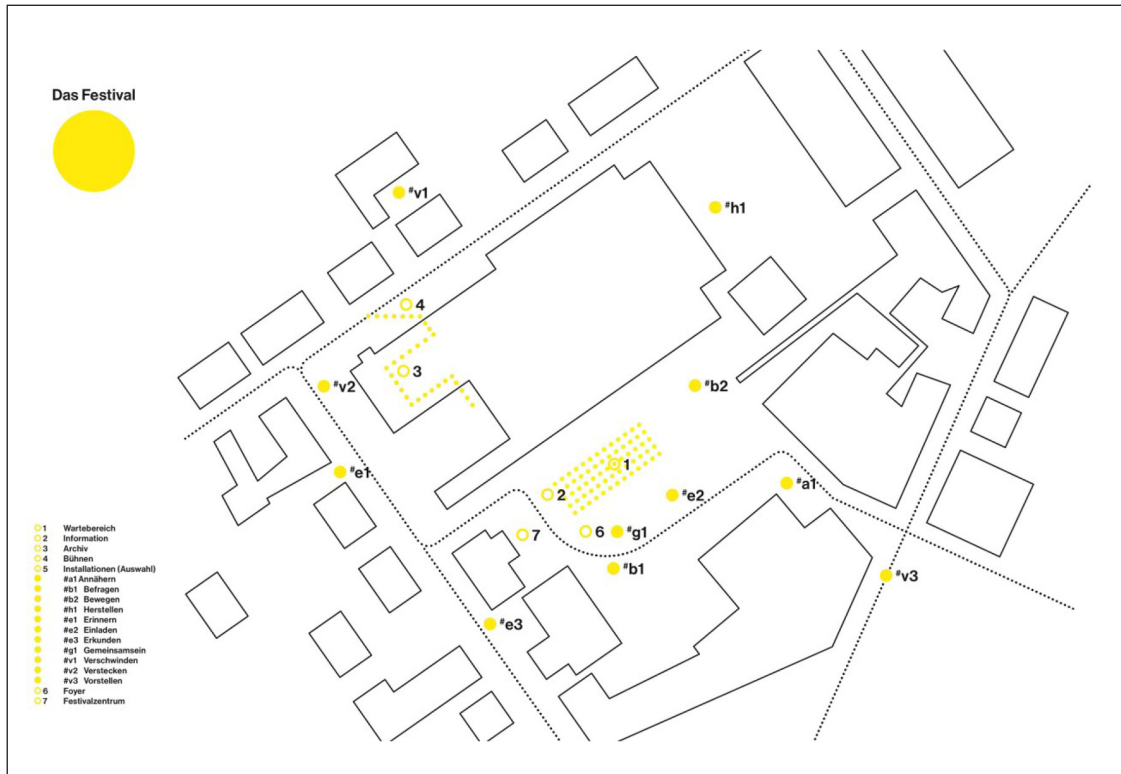
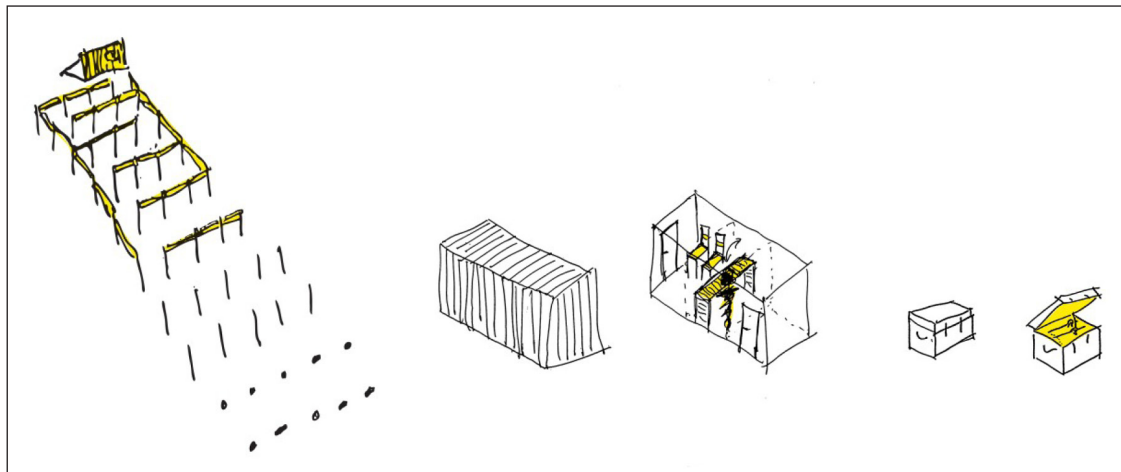


Figure 6: Map for the visitors to navigate through the area of ‘The Festival’ – a performance by Melanie Mohren and Bernhard Herboldt. Donauesschingen Festival, Stuttgart Theater Rampe, 2019. Graphic design: Demian Bern.



Figures 7–9: Sketches for architectural interventions as part of ‘The Festival’ – a performance by Melanie Mohren and Bernhard Herboldt. Donauesschingen Festival, Stuttgart Theater Rampe, 2019. Drafts and Realisation: Bureau Baubotanik – Growing Botanic Infrastructure.

We remember the yellow dots of ‘The Festival’ ’s CI infiltrating the Donauesschingen Festival – on the bags of visitors, on the ground around the main performance venues, on walls, posters and online-appearances; we remember groups of visitors clapping the easy identifiable rhythm of one specific miniature composition⁷ – during regular applause of the main program; we remember people complaining after some of ‘our’ recordings had been presented before ‘their’ concerts; we remember children

⁷ Dietz, B *Lag Model* (‘By 2030 everything will be good’) – a miniature composition for percussionist and an undefined number of children, commissioned by ‘The Festival’ 2019.

participating in the performances day after day; we remember night-guards having soup at the festival centre every evening; we remember presenting more than 50% female composers in our festival; we remember a touched member of the city parliament advocating for years to open the Donaueschingen Festival for younger generations without effect; we remember ourselves explaining over and over again 'The Festival' is not an educational program, it's a piece of art itself!. We remember the extensive architecture of 'The Festival' being loaded on two heavy trucks – and being reinstalled on the rather small stage of Theater Rampe Stuttgart as a walk-in installation. We remember two choreographers performing their piece 'library of dances'⁸ in there – in an even smaller scale: a tiny table in the very centre of the installation.

'The table we are using in that performance is related to more than one possible scale. Sometimes the table is a stage and you are looking at it. As a performer you become part of that dimension, of something that were to be happening on the table. But, however, the performer is still free to get back to the 'ordinary' dimension, to step back into whatever takes place on the real, life-sized stage. Or we are looking down onto ourselves from a position that is bigger than the human scale. The narration happens in relation to those different scales and is being perceived from different perspectives.

-But there are also social dimensions involved, geographical dimensions and dimensions of time. We are broadening the artistic situation to social and political contexts.

-You can talk about the performance in relation to 'The Festival', in relation to the theatre as such, in relation to the neighbourhood, to the city, to the region, to the country, to Europe, to the world. You can relate the performance to many historical backgrounds. We are trying to find a way of connecting the experiences we extracted from art performances to broader contexts.

-Because we truly believe that our artistic work is a political project. With it's own narratives and ethics. We are saying that everything... this glass or this computer or this festival or this project is a composition. They are all related and each one to itself is an artefact of a political project. They are not only a metaphor or a metonymy of a political project. They are the body, the corpus of the political project itself.'

(Interview-Excerpt 6: Jorge Alencar and Neto Machado, Collaborating Artists, 'The Festival')

Spatial realities the visitors of 'The Festival' pass through or look at are continuously re-scaled: they might imagine an expedition through the Western Balkans or a political dance performance taking place on a small yellow table right in front of them during a performance-miniature; they are guided through the premises of an imagined festival ranging from a ship at the Brahmaputra in India to an artist's hotel close to the river Ebro in Spain – without even crossing the street during a guided performance-tour in Donaueschingen; they might circuitously pass a hundreds of meters long waiting area, just to find themselves in a wooden performance box for three visitors and one performer at a time. In 'Poetics of Space' Gaston Bachelard writes: 'The cleverer I am at miniaturizing the world, the better I possess it.' (2014: 273) The visitors – as observers, inhabitants and co-inventors of those realities – are continuously relocated between possession and dispossession of their surroundings. They might speculate on what could appear behind the next door, the next corner or the next transformation of the narrative. It 'is an exercise that has metaphysical freshness; it allows us to be world-conscious at slight risk. [...] The imagination is both vigilant and content.' (Bachelard 2014: 288).

In the temporarily established circumstances of 'The Festival', various and competing scales are interwoven and animated by performers, participants, children, visitors and passers-by. The hereby created and ephemeral infrastructure is set in practice by performative speech acts – be it in form of architectural, physical or spoken utterances: 'This is a festival', 'This is a concert hall', 'This is a worldwide festival area', 'This is a piece of New Music'. The evoked infrastructure might be therefore called performative – the activated speculation might be called collaborative as many professions, perspectives, voices and individuals are equally contributing to it.

⁸ Alencar, J and Machado, N *Library of Dances. Festival Edition* – a choreographic installation. In a space created to bring together fiction, history, theory and poetry, dancers talk, hand to hand, with their audience, share choreographies that have marked their lives and transform their bodies into a performative archive.

5. Conclusion

The exemplified performative practices have shown their ability to enhance patterns of social action: they invited a possibly unlimited number of spectators to actualise a multi-layered collection on historical, contemporary or invented social movements ('an-archiving', The Movement, 2018); they have offered spaces for self-observation and collaborative speculation in a thoroughly hierarchical structure ('dis-placing', The Village, 2019); they have intervened with performative speech acts and architectural gestures within the infrastructure offered by a contemporary music festival ('re-scaling', The Festival, 2019).

Simultaneously critical perspectives on those experiments results – mainly based on the theories by Judith Butler and Peggy Phelan – have raised questions whether the actual presence of the visitors might have been reduced to a metaphorical one, whether infrastructures for collaborative speculation might have been implemented lastingly or whether the experiments might have actually been dealing with the precarious circumstances participants possibly depart from.

Therefore future experimental set-ups might want to focus on how to conceptualize and establish divers options to access the infrastructures of institutions, how to analyse and handle conditions of instability (e.g. through the effective sharing of resources), how to conceptualize, initiate and intervene in democratic processes.

6. Outlook

'We should introduce an institution for interconnectedness. Which refers to alternating relations between various agents. Which is as fluid as any reality or society. Which works on the basis of dis-arrangement. Which stays with the trouble. ... you actually invented that institution: 'The Institution'. It exists. But it would probably need to be acknowledged in another way, outside of the art world.'

(Interview-Excerpt 7: Martina Grohmann, Artistic Director, Theater Rampe Stuttgart)

'An institution composed of a thousand rafts. As mobile and agile and modular and floating so to combine a thousand rafts for one major event or to disassemble them in a thousand individual parts. That would be my vision of an institution to be invented.'

(Interview-Excerpt 8: Björn Gottstein, Artistic Director, Donaueschingen Festival)

'That might be an institution protected from economic requests. But also protected from the taste of an audience. With a politically motivated mode of organisation.'

(Interview-Excerpt 9: Sarah Stührenberg, Former Dramaturge, Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe)

'I cannot interact with this question without being aware of what is happening to the world. It is as if you would ask me what kind of world, of a new world, of a possible world, we should invent. -We have a very close friend, an activist, an actress, who is running for a seat in the next city parliament. I heard her saying: 'Politics should be completely related to life. Otherwise it doesn't work.' I think, we should invent an institution that is completely connected to life, an institution that is open to change, that is open to go with the changes that are needed, in relation to the society, the country, the continent or whatever.'

(Interview-Excerpt 10: Jorge Alencar and Neto Machado, Collaborating Artists, 'The Festival')

Epilogue

Look around for one more time. You are back again. In your present age we have long forgotten.

Maybe it is not too late.

Maybe something is still expected. Somewhere. Right now.

Maybe something is still to be decided.

Maybe it is not too late to collect examples, to build a database and to deviate proposals on how to act. For the time after...

Did you actually take a picture?

Have you filled in a questionnaire?
 No? Catch up on it, if you like.
 The history continues. Every day.
 Nobody is here.
 Someone will show up.
 Let us assume it.
 (Performance-Script 3: The Movement 2018)

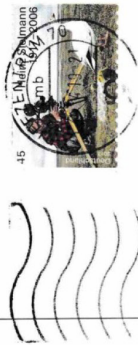


 <p>Die Bewegung c/o Die Institution Altenbergstraße 10 70180 Stuttgart</p> 	 <p>Die Bewegung c/o Die Institution Altenbergstraße 10 70180 Stuttgart</p> <div style="background-color: black; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>„Ich bin die Kreativität, dein Glaube. Du sollst keinen anderen Glauben haben neben mir.“</p> <p>DAS ERSTE GEBOT www.religionderkreativität.de</p> </div>
<p>Haben Sie schon mal eine Bewegung gegründet oder waren Sie Teil einer Bewegung? Von welcher?</p> <p>Kennen Sie jemanden, die oder der eine Bewegung entscheidend mitgeprägt hat? Wer?</p> <p>Mit welchem Ziel?</p> <p>Gibt es eine Aktion, die charakteristisch für diese Bewegung wurde?</p> <p>Ein Objekt?</p> <p>Wofür würde es sich lohnen, eine Bewegung zu gründen? Jetzt, da nichts mehr ist, wie es mal war.</p> <p>Möchten Sie diese Informationen teilen, über weitere Aktionen von ‚Die Bewegung‘ informiert werden und Zugang zur zugehörigen Online-Datenbank erhalten? Tragen Sie hier Ihre E-Mail-Adresse ein und werfen Sie die Postkarte in den nächstgelegenen Briefkasten. Das Porto übernimmt gerne ‚Die Bewegung‘ für Sie.</p> <p>Werden Sie Teil von ‚Die Bewegung‘. Sammeln Sie mit uns. Für die Zeit danach. Für Solidarität, Politiken der Freundschaft, Praktiken des Teilens und Einladens. Wir werden immer mehr.</p>	<p>Haben Sie schon mal eine Bewegung gegründet oder waren Sie Teil einer Bewegung? Von welcher? <i>Die Vielen, Unheilbar</i></p> <p>Kennen Sie jemanden, die oder der eine Bewegung entscheidend mitgeprägt hat? Wer? <i>Maciré</i></p> <p>Mit welchem Ziel? <i>Kolonialgeschichte aufdecken</i></p> <p>Gibt es eine Aktion, die charakteristisch für diese Bewegung wurde? <i>Stadtführungen</i></p> <p>Ein Objekt? <i>Rettungsdecken</i></p> <p>Wofür würde es sich lohnen, eine Bewegung zu gründen? Jetzt, da nichts mehr ist, wie es mal war. <i>Zum Miteinanders-Reden</i></p> <p>Möchten Sie diese Informationen teilen, über weitere Aktionen von ‚Die Bewegung‘ informiert werden und Zugang zur zugehörigen Online-Datenbank erhalten? Tragen Sie hier Ihre E-Mail-Adresse ein und werfen Sie die Postkarte in den nächstgelegenen Briefkasten. Das Porto übernimmt gerne ‚Die Bewegung‘ für Sie.</p> <p>Werden Sie Teil von ‚Die Bewegung‘. Sammeln Sie mit uns. Für die Zeit danach. Für Solidarität, Politiken der Freundschaft, Praktiken des Teilens und Einladens. Wir werden immer mehr.</p>

Figure 10: Questionnaire to be handed over to the visitors of The Movement, a performance for two visitors by Melanie Mohren and Bernhard Herbordt. Stuttgart Theater Rampe et al., 2018. Design: Demian Bern and unknown visitors.

Competing Interests

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

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