

# ***Spangbergianism***

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# ***Spangbergianism***

**Mårten Spångberg**

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For distribution details: [mgn@martenspangberg.org](mailto:mgn@martenspangberg.org)

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I'm not gonna go into some tacky dedication garbage here but, kitschy or not, the stand up attitude, insistence and unconditionality of Krõõt Juurak forms the spine of this book.

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## PREFACE

This book is a performance. It was put together over sixty-four days as a sort of rehearsal, during which every day resulted in a showing [forbid them] in the shape of a blog-post. It's material, form and content is the result of a daily practice, aiming at two minor issues - to change the world [permanently], and second to find a way out of our present predicament [FFW apocalypse] concerning dance and choreography but also capitalism in general [why be modest]. It's one hundred and something pages of hysterical accusations, oversized banalities, slamming of already open doors, over the top categorical statements, unmotivated mood-swings, cheese making and paranoid [in the good sense of the word] arrogance.

It's obviously completely egomaniac but forgets to hide behind conceptual importance [another word for vanity], it aims from the hip and goes machine-gun on as much as possible. It's objective is to hide from nothing, or like a teenager in a horror movie insist on both the basement and the attic in order to confront whatever monsters, although we all know that the adventure will end up in bloody asymmetry and detached limbs.

It fights so badly that any sane person can only laugh uncontrollable, it's embarrassing, but it's certainly not put out there to add even more well-meaning, balanced, fiber

enriched, process based, “we are fine” – no it argues with as little safety-nets as possible [and you’ll all say it so doesn’t]. I’m safe, I know but how could I be something else, this is after all dance and the artistic sector. We are all so secure [don’t try the budget cut argument – we wont miss you if you quit] that most of us leave our weapons at home, forgetting that pacifism without arms is like diet coke, nothing disguised to something [Coke is after all the real thing].

This is a book that shoots itself in the foot, how can it not if it is written because of the despair that the struggle can not be identified. It is a book that attempt to arm itself and its reader with weapons, not in order to use them - but to make sure it is known that they loaded.

That is active pacifism, ready for battle. But the battle is already lost if it is fought with conventional weapons - ultimately this is a book about the invention of new weapons, and the making of oneself into a weapon, a warrior of unknown tactics.

This book was written by one person, yet it is a collective, even non-hierarchical piece. Without you this book would never exist, without your ass-licking behavior and reluctance to sell out without dignity. This book spares nobody - least itself, but thank you all for providing awesome topics and opportunities to attack your sorry asses. You are phenomenal.

It is an attempt to write on dance and choreography in a lingua that don’t identify with either magazine flattery nor to models provided by constipated academics. If we want anything from dance it is imperative that we makers and doers produce our own writing, without leaning on known knowledge. We are all aware that if we don’t open our mouths we wont be kept responsible for nothing. So let’s

get loud, let's speak our word and stand tall. We are engaging in choreography remember and that's important shit. We are not here to justify what we do but to fight for it no matter what. The struggle might be aimless but it is ours.

It's an exorcism, an attempt to engage in the lowest and dirtiest truths, delusions, opportunisms and what we don't talk about. It shows no mercy. This book might consolidate power, hierarchy and sexual habits yet it has only one reason to exist change at any price. It consists of a refusal to be ourselves, to worship identity and to be fuckin natural, human and holistic. Dance is not about the affirmation of life, not about the pleasure of investing in endless possibilities, on the contrary it opens for the opportunity to engage in what is inorganic, weird, what withdraws – that in you that doesn't belong to you. It's a book *for* collateral damage - change doesn't come without consequences - no this is the neo-liberal illusion - that stuff can transform as a simple additive gesture and the dream of an ever expanding capitalism. If we want change somethings gotta go, and if that's me I'm all super duper. Check it out if we don't decide what's on our side and what's not - if we don't act due categories somebody else will decide for us what's in, out and a freaking earthquake.

Don't wait for me! I'm not gonna come up with any solutions, no proposals, no promises, no nuttin. How could I, what do you think? Are you nuts? I'm writing this because of pure and simple despair. Not because I know anything, not because I have anything to offer. I'm not writing this in order to stay human, or in order to fence myself off the brink of madness. No, I'm very happily sane and normal. I write this to stay out of human [I still believer in D&G], organize myself a way out of capitalism and I'm not speaking backdoor or artist entrance. But this is not

about movement, movement is already corporate, this is worse - arbitrary is already here. It is another time now - you aren't making revolts by insisting on being strategic, on being nomadic on "your" spot - on reading Deleuze, or categorically not doing it. There is no time for revolution, no moment of ripe, time for harvest. The only way out is through havoc, apocalypse - something that offers no promises [good or bad] - and I'm shooting myself in the foot - but what else can I have than too big ambitions.

This is a book that want to produce destruction, it's a book that proposes putrefaction as building material, that fuck ghosts [they are anthropocentric, at best surprizing] and identify with octopuses [object and overwhelming], digging canals, organizing surfaces, that shuns distance and work on everything at the same time: it takes no prisoners and betrays all side.

Finally it's a book about love [endless and forever - monogamous and senseless. Whatever -if you know what I mean? - Just because.] and belief [far to naïve], the belief that what we do makes a difference, kicks ass and can't be negotiated. It takes no prisoners. Keep it up, motherfuckers. Don't you dare give up!  
Like you, I'm alone but trust me, my support is unconditional.

# EPISODE 1

## **You Might Call Me A Madman**

So you consider yourself a politically engaged artist?

You apply for subsidy from the art council. You produce one large-scale production per year next to some smaller intervention-like events. You work as a choreographer and hire dancers that you announce as co-creators. You demand undivided devotion, they are after all collaborators, which means no day off. In the studio, where you always work [perhaps you even own it] the reigning atmosphere is sharing, but after the premiere it is only you who talks to interested programmers, meets up for a coffee with the director of the local venue and decides what performance pictures should be available on the webpage. It is only you who shows up for the after-talk. You make sure that the local programmers don't develop any relation to your dancers that of course all are doing their own work [which is obviously insignificant], and you don't want to compete with them.

The contemporary choreographer is a master in manipulating the distribution of power and responsibility in ways that make working conditions unbearable and con-

flict impossible. Luckily the dancer is smart enough not to object. It is at least a job.

How do you manipulate your colleagues, what illusions do you propose in order to make yourself invincible, although you have no idea what you are working on?

How many times have you proposed to your dancers and others an open experimental process, and how many times have you, three or so weeks left to the premiere announced, that the experimental period is now over and that it is time that you make a piece... The formulation is usually not that direct, but it's my firm belief that it happens to every second production. No, more often!

"We work collectively" is another of these wordings destroyed in the same way as an overused "I love you" becomes evidence of the opposite. You're not working collectively, you tell yourself that you are but in fact you are just postponing the fearful moment of taking a decision. You are working collectively because you are a coward! No, in fact you are two cowards, that's the first one, the second, the fact that even though you are [or not as we have seen] working collectively you desperately want the result to look like a conventional, however special, dance performance. How embarrassingly vain.

If the result of a collective process is compatible with "dance piece" the process has not been collective, but simply a conventional one with another name.

You understand yourself as a political choreographer? Obviously every utterance into the world is in some or other way political, but what exactly are your political convictions?

"-Questions", you emphasize, are important in your work, but did you ever question the possibility of stopping. Questions in contemporary choreography are never more fundamental or satanic than: "-How are you?"

You say you work with text, but have forgotten who wrote it. You say you work with text in order to justify that you have no idea. You take an active position in respect of postcolonial discourse but what was his name now, *Spi-va*... something, no?

You consider yourself a politically active artist? You make political work? Somebody comes on stage wearing a burqa, somebody sings a song in Persian or screams in Hebrew. Somebody quotes Marting Luther King, confesse eating disorder or - yeah - a video projection of scenes from a bombed out city.

That doesn't make you more or less political, you are just miming, reproducing images from the everyday which in the theatre become totally and completely irrelevant at best curiosities for your standard middle class audience.

In the after-talk, you talk about your Turkish performers as them or they. They are so this and that, and instead of having anything to say about the ideological and political subtext to your work you – with a self-acknowledging laughter – tell anecdotes that underneath the polished surface come out as patronizing exotification. Your work is as political as the art council that supports you.

You consider yourself a political artist? Do you make performances that you tour to international festivals? You spend your entire subsidy on production, six months rehearsal period, residencies and research labs.

You arrive at the airport where the pickup is waiting. You shake hands with the director or some assistant, receive your per diem and after gaining Internet access announce that you have to start set up... Yes, that's what you get paid for - being busy, so at least pretend. Until next evening you and sometimes your dancers are occupied with curtains, video projectors and slow-motion techni-

cal teams. You spend the next many hours in a black box without windows worrying about the strength of the video projector. You are still a political choreographer busy with human injustice, and you think that the seventy minutes of your performance should first: convince the audience member that his 18€ was well spent, and second: persuade the same person that your political position or opinion is so strong that he will change his mind?

And afterwards, I see you in the foyer chatting with local colleagues and friends. No, you never talk to your dancers in such a situation, that's very inefficient and by the way you are not friends, they are your subordinates. In fact the amount of time you spend on talking to a person is directly linked to how much money he or she can put into your upcoming project.

If the audience reactions were only so good the director tells you with an excusing tone of voice that he has a really early flight tomorrow morning, but that that you will meet in April in Utrecht. "-Yeah yeah, we perform in Bettina's festival" you say enthusiastically, implicitly saying: "-I'm available." If the audience instead were positive you go for dinner with the director and too many other people so that the depth of the conversation will at best reach gossip. Half past midnight we are all back at the hotel answering a few mails, before watching half a downloaded film.

Perhaps you repeat the ritual the day after otherwise you have a flight back home or to the next city. The pick up to the airport, you and the team complain a bit about being tired, check in, all is fine. And you call yourself a politically active artist?

Stop it. If you have any ambitions in respect of politics stop working. Take a few years off and consider exactly what your politics is? How you work, with who, what fic-

tion you use to convince your environment, what sweet talk you apply to satisfy programmers and the art council?

Do you really think that Alain Platel has something to do with transvestites, do you think Constanza Makras gives a flying fuck about immigrants, do you think Anne Teresa De Keersmaecker really bothers about global climate change [the company is still flying], and do you think William Forsythe is in depth concerned about human rights. No, they aren't, no they don't care, if they were really convinced, how come that they only make one show or project concerned with this or that, and how does it happen that their political engagement always coincides with concerns expressed in Time Magazine.

If you want your work as process and practice to reflect political or ideological concerns get ready it will not be successful, because if you want to work differently what will come out will not be the same. And you know, how this business works, if it doesn't look like dance it don't exist. You will be on the street in no time, the business will turn their backs to you. The political work they love is the ones with out any political ambition. You'll be success.

If you still have political ambitions leave the stage, step down, fire your dancers and go to work. Don't apply for residencies, terminate your black box addiction, get rid of your manager, stop going to Brussels, forget to return e-mails, change side of the street, don't pay the rent to your studio, pick fights for no reason, get angry, stop cleaning up.

Do one thing, yes do one thing: Refuse to give up! Every insurrection starts there, with the refusal to give up. Many might call you a madman but remember the refusal to give up contaminates, and tomorrow there's gonna be a whole lot of madmen.

We have a problem. To get out of it isn't an option. No revolutions, when that was still an option, were won by

standing on the outside shouting at the bourgeoisie. Hell no, there is only one thing to do: stay in the middle and fight for your life. Sleep with your enemy as they say, but OMG where is the enemy... to sleep with your enemy today is nothing else than furious masturbation.

Think about it. This is all about going big, biggest, about convincing the middle that it is time to take farewell of the past. Somebody recently said that we in the twenty-first century are backing into the future mourning what we leave behind. This is how we deal with the crisis, any crisis, trying desperately to return to a past that we know fucked us up. Perhaps we manage for a moment by adjusting a little this or a little that, but the name of the game stays the same and at best what we can do is to postpone the moment when hell breaks loose. The only serious way to deal with crisis is to give up the present paradigm and invent new models of life, art or dance. It is high time that we turn to the future, face it straight up and don't hesitate to jump into it. Oh yes, the future is a terrible place, but hey it sure can't get much worse than the current situation.

So what do we do? To go marginal is not an option. To hang about at a tiny and oh so radical festival in the north of Finland admiring each other, slapping each other's backs for repeating the same radical gesture one more time? To act in the margins is comfortable. It's not so difficult to convince those that already are your friends. We all want to belong and in the tiny circle there is no problem, we all agree about how radical we are and how important our mission is for the bigger picture. To take the position of the outsider is like armed pacifism transforming into weapon fetishism. And one day we will realize that although our guns were loaded it was only with salt. The most dangerous position for the arts, next to general cynicism, is to

fall in love with its own radicalism, to fetishize ones own revolutionary spirit. And that 's not exactly dangerous.

Lately a self-proclaimed outsider has shown up on the art market. When institutional critique finally was incorporated by conscious museum directors and, maybe not but possibly, festival directors, the race seems to be over. The logical step would be to step out and set up camp somewhere else, start a community, gather believers, but no, not anymore. The outside has already been incorporated in the capacity of the inside, so now the celebrated artist uses the outside to remain inside as "radicalized". We move out of the institutions in order to boost our value for those same institutions. We make a little excursion into a known territory of instability and a little bit later we show the documents of our endeavor at a museum show. Or why not, advertise our outside in a worldwide newsletter. An e-flux message just popped up in my inbox. Unitednationsplaza was a brilliant marketing stunt, congratulations, but isn't it a bit too transparent what is at stake when the same nation's plaza invites a bunch of top notch artists to celebrate the outside as simply amazing. Today the Finnish festival – the self-celebratory experimental, when performed by the right players, has become an eminent playground for extended cool-factor. To set up a free, or non-aligned university, that of course is deeply critical to anything Bologna today is as revolutionary, or cool, as having dinner at a restaurant owned by Jamie Oliver. You just have to book your table in advance.

“-But even if those educational things aren't proposing anything revolutionary aren't they at least something else than the regular museum, with its empty however mandatory lecture series?” Yeah sure, at least but that at least is precisely as at least as communism with a human face.

However it hurts to say this we have to give up on revolutions. There is nothing to substitute the paving stone. To burn some cars doesn't do anything else than you and me feeling a little happier. Everybody knows that activism proper is past tense and makes absolutely no difference but has become simple self-representation, identity politics.

No, we have to march back into the museums, back into the festivals, and set out to fight a war. I know as little as you do about the first struggle but it is there for us to find out what it is that we struggle for or against, and there is no other place to do it than in the middle.

And I believe we have to do it dressed up in theatrical costumes and start using theatre as a means to unground contexts and conventions. It is time to use illusion to fight illusions of democracy, equality or fair play.

The only way out is in. Let's get back into business, and fight a war not on the mainstream but straight in the heart of it all. This is the only way that previously depoliticized masses can turn into political subjects.

To set out to produce alternative structures is a no go. It will just be understood as cute self-organization. To struggle for new strategies is equally fucked. Self-precarization is a total cul-de-sac, or from another perspective to make oneself a "Tino Sehgal" – That Was So Contemporary ["-Courtesy of the artist, 2005"]. The war in the institution has to be fought through a mechanics that can only take place through tactical betrayal of all sides.

You know, directors of museums don't fear graves, not even empty graves, but they do fear mess - looted and messed up graves. Tacticity is a matter of being absolutely obvious and overtly theatrical, but make sure never to be faithful to the principles you have laid down for yourself.

Next time you receive a commission it is your god-

damn duty to fuck it up. Blame the commissioner, it's not your fault you just did what you were supposed to: loitered, looted and messed up.

And for Christ's sake don't organize yourselves! Don't form associations, deny all memberships, unsubscribe from all newsletters, stop standing around in the bar after the premiere, vomit when you hear the word network and faint whenever somebody uses the hrrrr-hrrr word [read self-organization]. Organizations are not about to change no nothing; they are arrangements for collective self-pity. Organizations are pleasing and helpful, celebrating the cute side of difference and have a tendency to pride themselves with tolerance - - - Ghaaaa. Associations and networks with their possibilities and opportunities are nothing else than sympathetic, red-bull for identity addicts.

Don't go to meetings, if anything scream and destroy. Assemblies are not places for decisions, for action or refusal but for chitchat, idle talk and palaver. Organizations, associations, clubs, networks is all about the feel-good of a common power, but at the same time as the power is common it is also deferred, recognizable and over. To organize is to announce your weapons; it assumes the same status as gaining representation in respect of a dominant discourse.

Know that zombies come in groups operate through mass and are indifferent to collateral damage. A zombie doesn't mourn, he leaves his dead friend behind and is completely organized. You, have no choice than to act on your own behalf, to insist on precariousness or even sovereignty. Mind you, to go solo has nothing to do with egoism, nihilism or some neo-liberal rush hour version of individualism; on the contrary it implies the necessity of giving up identity, of acting without support or belonging and connecting only through intensity not interest, iden-

tity, lack or some other psychoanalytical mumbo jumbo.

You have to do your own reconnaissance, forget to assemble a dossier, act without probability, circulate knowledge without framing, liberate territory, override circumstances, avoid direct confrontation. Invent weapons and do everything in order not to use them. Don't expect something peaceful.

A dance programmer comes up to me and asks: “-So what do you think about the program?” What can I say? We know that under the regime we live today it is unthinkable to object. The first rule of the contemporary artist: Don't ever dispute, never get angry, avoid conflict at any price.

If I'm in the program it is obviously perfect and if I'm not, any objection will be understood as narrow-minded or greedy. Metaphorically my answer is always: “-I'm available” - “- Whatever you propose, I'm in.”

“-I'm working on a really interesting project...” Fuck, I'm bored with stingy choreographers that suck on an idea forever: Let go of your ideas, they won't get better, stop considering consistency or comprehensibility as something good. Exhaustion as methodology is so 90s, and stay the hell away from tacky formulations like you feel that the idea still has something, you know... Stop it!

Yet, I can't just confirm the programmer, so I try an enthusiastic answer that at the same time addresses some kind of asymmetry in the program. No no, I'm of course not questioning how the fuck Ivana Müller ended up in the program, why “Self-Unfinished” is presented for the 467th time, or what Ivo Dimchev's ideology is. No, that's suicide. Perhaps I address an overrepresentation of large-scale companies or choreographers from the old West, an “interesting” thematic or a question mark around the sudden interest in history. - btw I didn't know dance history

is identical with Merce Cunningham, pronounced with a French accent: M'eurse Cönning-gahm.

But *en fait* it doesn't matter what I say because the answer is always the same. A concerned face: “-Yes you are right”, says the programmer, “but you know the budget cuts have been so brutal. It's like impossible. I'm really happy we got this season together at all.” I accept the argument and nod understandingly.

A few months later I meet the programmer after a performance of my new piece. He lets me know that the piece did not fulfill his and implicitly nor the rest of the clan of programmers expectations [you know they decide on the common opinion at some network gathering, probably in Bergen]. A piece that enters the circuit will only do so because it is already inscribed in some network, not because it is in any respect proper art. I look bothered and with a slow shake of the head respond: “-Yes you are right, but you know the budget cuts have been so brutal. It's like impossible. I'm really happy we got the piece together at all.” I don't fuckin' think so! Such an argument doesn't exist in the mouth in of an artist, not even a choreographer. No way, the artistic act is supposed to exist independently of budgets and if there are any cuts or missing funding, the artist is supposed to come up with some brilliant idea; change the format, fire the producer, save money on costumes [“-What about underwear?”], hire faster dancers, anything – anything – the artistic act is sovereign, free and unconditional. Fuck yeah, long live authenticity!

But who would expect a programmer to have a brilliant, or even acceptable idea; to sack the assistant, change the format, skip the big companies, change the marketing strategy, or why not double as a ticket girl, work in the bar, or... Hey, give up a part of his salary? Programmers

are victims of external circumstances, whereas artists only have themselves to blame.

But then, shitgoddamn I'm happy I can't use the apologetic budget bullshit, that I have no choice but to blame myself instead of relying on the internal negotiations of EU-funded networks.

At least I can love what I do without second thought. I'm not part of some swinger club called Next Step, and I don't operate through international networks with low profile web visibility. We don't negotiate, we take it or leave it, we are in no respect strategic, we carry arms and we are ready to use them, we don't save our skin, we sign our e-mails "Fuck You All". We are not members, we don't organize, we don't send out newsletters [how utterly un-cool], we know that only absolutely oversized ambitions will change the world.

Keep it up, motherfuckers. Don't you dare give up! Like you, I'm alone but trust me, my support is unconditional.

\*

“- What's the network?”

In the land of digital communication shared networks imply a multiplication of opportunities without consequences, without being obliged to form a group, having secrets or agreements. The agreement is structural and not strategic, it is impersonal and inconsequential. We don't fill up our bit-torrent client when bandwidth is going thin. It's rather simple, when I click in I'm whoever, not a history of prominence or a marginal who wants to get in – there is no hierarchy between users and engaged ones. When I close the laptop I'm history and keychain, no strings attached,

no lobby to maintain. The structural level of alignment, or the absence of composition is attractive. It operates on the basis of permission rather than under auspices of license. I like it, it offers navigation without ownership.

“-What’s the network?”

Dance, performance art networks operate exactly the other way round. Yes, I dare say without exception, because if you are not in you don’t exist whatever it is that you do. Here networks operate strictly on strategic levels, without concern for structural or tactical openness or deployment. Networks in the cultural sector are absolutely closed and are all about membership. You have to make yourself worthy of being part, you will have to go through a test, and you have to invest a fare amount on energy in lobby and travel-costs.

If digital networks are somehow a masochistic mechanical structure, then networks in the cultural sector operate as a sadistic organicity and this is interesting in relation to surveillance. Masochism deals with explicit contracts and conditions and as long as the condition is fulfilled the subordinate is liberated. Sadism is the flip side, it deals with conventions and operates through ubiquitous control, and the surveillance necessarily operates dialectically, Deleuze once told me this so it’s true (vrai). Dance networks are self-perpetuating, worse and better than a panopticon.

Networks in cultural businesses operate due a mode of production known as “dynamique d’enfer” the dynamics of hell, the basic ideology of which is:

- Identify a reason for engagement.
- Convince partners to chip in.

- Make sure all players are involved in a manner where it becomes too expensive to withdraw.

The network in dance is about fear and pressure without a face. It is: “-If you don’t do as we say...” It is the call to the rookie, the already weak one to kill his best friend, the childhood buddy who fucked up some minor drug deal - s’cuse me - co-production.

It’s not about you... It’s so not about you, but you know that if you don’t do it somebody will lose face and killing will not end. And, losing face is the only thing that matters. If there were a Hollywood film about dance networks the boss, the initiator, would be played by Al Pacino on a really bad day. Dignity is all that counts. So in dance-networks we keep it in the family and no deals, no action without the silent approval of a very old Sicilian.

You kill for the greater good. It’s not even you who does it, it is the organization and you, you are just a... What are you responsible for, actually?

Let me tell you. You are responsible for the maintenance of hierarchies, the preservation of an aristocratic society that operates like a flock of vampires, an apologetic flock of blood-suckers obediently confessing their compulsive lust. “-I do my best, but after all I’m a vampire. I was made a programmer, it wasn’t my desire, and now I’m destined to destruction.” No, stop being apologetic and/or enthusiastic, or just get the fuck out of there.

“-What do you mean, enthusiastic?”

Very simple, enthusiasm is one of these contemporary gestures that means absolutely nothing, is soaked with liberal attitudes and carries zero consequences. Enthusiasm is a vampire with a good conscience, the proactive attitude of

a murderer. Fuck enthusiasm, be a fanatic, allow yourself to be rich enough to be categorical. Enthusiasm is for those that have already given up the possibility of an alternative. Enthusiasm is for those who say “-I like her work... but it’s not exactly my thing...” Enthusiasm is like renting a car, it’s not yours. You have no autonomy.

How does it feel to give up your autonomy and sell out to the network just in order to obtain short-term economical breathing space? Are you aware that the network is making your program, composing your season? Al Pacino runs your business. It’s not you who does the killing but neither is it you who makes anything whatsoever happen. You are a victim of your own life, and you know what, you will spend the rest of your life in a black box. So, pl-ease, don’t call me again.

\*

After having met at a festival somewhere, having sent DVD’s and a bunch of e-mails I meet up with the programmer again and he tells me that his festival would like to invite me to create a work. Make a piece, you know... Yeah, wow – I’m happy... we exchange the conventional worries about this and that, and finally agree that I will write a concept. And, yeah, that it has to happen rather soon cuz you know... The invitation always arrives too late to make sure that power positions are maintained.

I feel good since the programmer has empowered me through comments about how radical my work is, and underlined that I should really not be afraid of you know... but time, you know time. We have to do this right away...

Within a week it’s put together, based on old idea ob-

viously, and I send it in. The proposal should be specific and there is even the desired participatory aspect to it. The keen programmer however doesn't get back to me. Nothing, no e-mail saying that it has arrived, so three weeks later I grab the phone, "-Oh yeah, it arrived but you know, before the EU application..." a billion excuses before we agree on a phone meeting for the following week.

The programmer calls me, and it takes one second to realize: not good. "-We really like your concept. It's very interesting..." another billion of excuses about subsidy that didn't show up, pressuring budget cuts, the co-programmer is not convinced. Finally we agree, I will rescale the project, write a new revised concept and...

The game goes on and the importance of my work as daring and the desired radical proposal has been sanded down to an enthusiastic dance piece with a nice soundtrack.

I have spent three weeks on writing proposals, hooking up with collaborators and the lot. The programmer slash commissioner has spent 25 minutes on the phone, and the time it takes to not convince his colleagues.

But I'm available and obedient pet artist so I continue working on the proposal, spend some of my own money, replace a dancer that got a job with Meg Stuart. We even manage to fish up a residency in a city that I don't remember the name of.

The programmer absolutely absent suddenly calls me asking for a program text and images and yeah and this is very, you know, the festival and... Two days later the e-mail comes back asking for a less complex and more descriptive text... another two days later the new version comes back but now shortened to four lines.

Finally, the two-week residency at the festival before

the premiere, I meet the programmer for a ten minute coffee. We talk about the festival and I answer: “-Yeah, we are doing well...” When I start to talk about the work, the meeting is suddenly over.

We meet again, and the programmer tells me: “-We can’t... and that we really need to think about the audience, you know...” and it’s time for general rehearsal, a small audience – mostly friends. The programmer, with his colleagues, shows up ten minutes late (wonder why) and we can finally start.

Only seven months later, the “we are really interested in your work” has turned into a program text edited by a volunteer, a budget catastrophe and a warning about... “-you know our audience...” but the game is going on.

After the general run, the programmer with entourage comes up to me and after some proper politeness explains that the piece is... too long, “-I think you have to cut...” “-I mean, I like it but you lose the audience...” and here the colleague affirms with a nod and an anxious face.

And me, what do I do? I nod, I look concerned, I look available. I haven’t changed, so this all takes place with me in costume and the programmer with a backpack.

Who the fuck are those people? Yes, I meet them everywhere, at every festival, in every season program. Some of them are even artists. Who do they think they are, showing up late at the dress rehearsal having a problem? After five months without a single word about dance and choreography?

Do they think the length of the piece is an accident? Do they think that I after seven months of work make a piece that is half an hour too long by chance, and that I would respect a person that has already cut 75% of the budget?

What do they think, proposing changes the day before

the premiere? Yeah, we really want to support you? What kind of ethics do you have when the audience is privileged in front of the artist?

Who are you: asking for radical and only wanting something that perfectly plugs into the existing market? When you promote “artistic freedom” [stupid cow] and produce nothing but instrumentalization?

How do you stand yourself, knowing that I know that you don’t give a shit? How do you manage to perform an ethics that is so full of shit that you are not even welcome in hell, especially considering that you don’t get a terrific salary?

Come on, don’t call me again if all you want is to please local politicians and keep your job. Don’t ask me to be radical when your radical equals more of the same.

By the way stop looking happy to see me, and for Christ’s sake don’t ask me how I am.

Half a year in advance somebody sends me an e-mail asking if I could give a talk at a conference about piracy or perhaps something like dance and activism, or choreography as critical experience. Everything is laid out: the topic, the money, the context and how amazing.

I say yes, everybody is happy and soon I receive a mail from an assistant – always a woman – who needs to book my flights. Now! The argument is always the same, if we book well in advance... After yet another few weeks I’m demanded to send in my bio and a short descriptive text on what the talk will focus on. Dude, it’s three and a half month away and I haven’t even started to think about the possibility that that talk should be about anything at all. I’m not very busy, my agenda is not totally thick, but come on, why do conference organizers take for granted that I have nothing to do before their conference?

If that was the case I would only be paid every three months more or less three hundred euro, so guess what, even if I didn't want to have another job... The fact is that the 300€ you pay me should also cover the preparation, including sending bios and writing abstracts. Considering that I'm not hired by an institution but actually self-employed, badly paid and legal. Then three hundred is approximately ten hours of work, and you want me to pop in on Friday evening and get back to my home base only on Sunday evening. Do you really think I can afford writing an abstract, when I can't even afford coming up with an idea that takes time to execute. Pay me a thousand euro and I'll deliver a kick ass abstract, a spiced up bio and give a talk that'll teleport your audience to a place that couldn't even imagine Ted-talks.

How many times haven't I said yes to talks at dance festivals for 150€, hotel (or sofa) and travel? How many times have I accepted to give talks in theatre foyers, lecture spaces in art centers that could have been the set of a movie based on a true story by Solzhenitsyn, or in cafés with coffee grinders that sound like a flock of terminally sick Lamborghinis. How can anybody expect a masterpiece in such contexts, how can anybody expect respect and good preparation when the talk, lecture or conversation takes place over there... with zero technical preparation and a video projector that was old already in 1953.

Of course every dance festival with decency should put up a complementary theory intensive program. Obviously, and yes sir knowledge production is central to dance too, but why is the program always at the wrong moment, in the wrong space, without an audience, badly paid and if we are lucky the programmer pops in for five minutes before leaving for a date to set up another joint co-production?

If we want the theory program to be any good we need to offer it some resources. “-Yes, but you know this year the budget is really tough and we have to focus on shows.” Do you now? Says who, the artists, the audience... Who decided that your festival has to this or that? You decide and if you think something else you are a coward who wants to pretend that you take risks.

Consider that two nights of a middle sized show by Alain Platel cost 30.000€, just the fee. If you pay me 300€ for a talk, that means I could lecture for 100 days. That’s like sort of every day for half a year. Of course it’s not that simple, I know but then it’s not so much more complex neither.

A colleague told me about a programmer that came to see a piece four times before deciding not to present it. Have you ever heard about a presenter traveling and I don’t mean to a theatre or university in the same city but like with an airplane, to see if a theoretician is really the thing. Don’t think so! We say that theory is important in order to renew our practice and that it is important that theory is made in close proximity to dance, but the moment when somebody wants to get paid it’s really not that important. Look, when was the last time you paid Xavier Le Roy 300€ to do Product of Circumstances in a café?

Some years the discourse orientation in the program was extended to include breakfast talks. Theory without food or some other entertainment is not an option. Hey, why don’t you sell fuckin’ popcorns before and during anything with DD Dorvillier, wurst for Sasha Waltz and why not tapas for Juan Dominguez? Support: They are boring!

The breakfast talks are great, an intimate format with no more than twenty people showing up. If this format would be of any interest to you, why hasn’t it ever hap-

pened that we have breakfast performances and program the talks at eight thirty prime time? You know why, because you are a coward that has no what so ever interest in challenging your audience's behavior.

I have finally sent in the bio, after seven reminders. The flight is booked. Now silence. A lot of silence until a week before the situation is taking place. Suddenly a burst of e-mails, including a question concerning the possibility to translate my lecture in order to make it available for those that aren't familiar with English. "-Look, I haven't even started to think about it, and what makes you think that I would write it down like a paper. You told me that it isn't academic but an opportunity for dancers and choreographers to engage in discourse. And now you want a lecture, a paper?"

After another too many mails I arrive in the city. I'm picked up at the airport by a guy who knows nothing about the event or festival but whose job is to dump me at the hotel. I find my way to the venue where I after a little bit of confusion shake hands with the director or the assistant who immediately passes me over to the technical something who will show me the venue.

The director is very happy to see me but has no time for further conversation. We will talk afterwards of course, but afterwards there is another event, and the talk wasn't really what was expected of me so the director comes up to me and says: "-I just wanted to thank you..." but when I respond with a question about what he thought about it... he has suddenly no time but has to clean out the stage for the next event, must set the café for the lunch guests, must a lot of things in order not to have a conversation. It can of course be that I'm not very friendly or something but I have double checked this is the same for all of us that give talks and engage in discourse. So what happens is that I

have lunch or dinner or whatever with a friend from the local scene and suddenly I find myself with the same guy that took me to the hotel on the way to the airport and...

If you have invested half a year on me, insisted on the bio, been keen on translating my lecture, so intensively wanting to introduce more discourse into the dance field, why were you text-messaging during half of the talk, looking absent minded the second half, didn't talk to me before, during or after and didn't send me an e-mail afterwards? Why? And by the way made an introduction so badly prepared and with a totally stone age bio, that I certainly had not sent in to anybody at all.

Or consider that this is a weekend conference, and there are eight speakers per day and panels and artist presentations. Why did you still not invest any time in talking to me, but were chatting with your assistant throughout the dinner? And why did you decide to pay all those talkers a bad fee when you could also have changed the template, paid them double the amount and instead of insisting on keeping the schedule allow things to take time, really long time? Or why did you need to underline that it is really important to let the local audience in, when there was never enough time for Q and A?

Check it out I have been to endless of these sessions and organized a bunch, addressing interesting and important subject, but why is the proposed template nothing but talks and dialogues in 45 minutes slots where we know nothing will happen but superficial exchange of self-promotional slogans. Why does all these events want representation vis-à-vis dominant discourse? Why not set up a forum, why not remix the whole shebang? Why not fuck identity and belonging and community and especially the freakin' book table.

Well, obviously because you are actually not interested in the topic. You are only interested in having a job.

## EPISODE 2

### **“We’re only in it for the money”**

...once resonated of something provocative. When Frank Zappa said it in 1968 it echoed of the spoiled, doped, post-war American welfare state, surfer and cruise culture, with an excellent critical edge. This was the time of active self-precarisation, free sex, hippies, a handful of liberation movements, and an almost cute belief in the possibility of an outside. When, Ebba Grön – the Swedish Sex Pistols [only problem, they were kind of authentic] – in 1982 baptized their first album “We’re only in it for the money”, life was fairly different. Remember – MTV launched August 1, 1981, yet even then the slogan had balls, carrying a sense of factory worker with a firm belief in communism and at-least-looking-a-little-scary. This time self-precarious was swapped for a kind of pride slash fuck you parasite attitude.

Independent of perspective, actual or ironic, we’re only in it for the money proposed an outside, a place where politics didn’t, rule where harmony was established and where, on second thought, life must have been like permanent house music: boring, stylized and middle-class drunk Ibiza. But what does it mean today, when there is

no outside when there is only one option and we have no choice but to be “in it for the money”, when provocation has been incorporated into economical discourse, when free social networks are integral to marketing campaigns and your biggest wish is that your product is hijacked by your customer. To name your debut album “we’re only...” today could only be the work of either Ashley Simpson or a Turbo-folk group from Novi Sad.

In the 60s individuals and groups made themselves precarious, moved out into the forests and practiced free sex; cut themselves loose from middleclass USA and celebrated the individual. In today’s political landscape self-precarisation is a wet-dream for neo-liberalism, the perfect self-employed entrepreneur being so goddamn creative and imaginative with his homemade half Chinese import put it together yourself services. Individual is everything, but of course we tend to forget that there is somebody that makes piles of money on you working on yourself. Why? Well, otherwise you’d be striving for something else. Your imagination is not yours, Leonardo Di Caprio isn’t science fiction, contemporary capitalism is “Inception” – at its best – especially Ellen Page as the young architect or is she the brain behind it all, the business.

Be more yourself, re-create your identity from a DIY kit that is offered by every corporate, cultural, non-profit and community agency, but identity is always provided and produced and only the illusion of deterritorialization. Your self is like Kellogg’s hell of a lot of different ones but they are all Kellogg’s and there’s no way for you not to choose. *Pas de tout*, you are so fucked – doomed not only to be human but also to be human with a name. Just like Kellogg’s identity, the contemporary social apparatus has terminated its intrinsic self-annihilating capacity in favor

of this precise illusion, re-create yourself through centrally distributed social networks. This social apparatus, following Agamben, is designed to maintain itself intact, yet producing the illusion of progress, alternation, differentiation. The result, at least initially, is the exhaustion and emptying out of energy sources. This is like a British television series that doesn't change the template until its far too late.

Recently Maurizio Lazzarato proposed that "capitalism is not a mode of production, but a production of modes and worlds", in other words capitalism has become ubiquitous and thus obsolete to any significant critique [and we know that criticality only is a lubricant for capitalism, according to Irit Rogoff, roll your eyes]. Other thinkers and economists, such as Paulo Virno, Akseli Virtanen and Christian Marazzi argue in parallel with Lazzarato that contemporary capitalism equals life. Dualities such as work and life, private and public, producer and consumer, subject and object are thus falling apart and we experience an emergence of a hyper-multiplicity, i.e. an endless heterogenization in which infinite forkings can only but play along with a capitalism within which manufacturing, and thus conventional modes of measure, are no longer relevant. Today, commodities and goods are like appendixes to the real shit, the inevitable leftovers of the production of immaterial value, cognitive capital.

We experience a transformation of valorization processes dedicated to the production of goods and services, processes that, so to say, are extending beyond factory gates, in the sense that valorization enters directly into the sphere of the circulation of capital. In other words it is an extension of the process of extracting value from the sphere of reproduction and distribution, towards a bio-economy or bio-capitalism characterized by its growing entanglement with the very lives of human beings.

Classical capitalism resorted primarily to the function of transformation of raw material carried out by machines and bodies of the workers. Bio-capitalism produces value by extracting it not only from the body functioning as the material instrument of work, but the body understood in its globality. An example is how capitalism has colonized the circulation of language, semio-capitalism is the term used by Franco Bifo, to the point of transforming the consumer into a veritable producer of economical value. The customer is today a co-producer. The individual is the co-producer of what he consumes, contributing to creating the market, producing performances, managing damages and hazards, sorting litter, even administration. The coproduction concerns all the mass performances and specifically services: retail, bank, transportation, free time, restaurant, media, education, health, culture... most of all the cultural experience has become the watchword, it is all about being activated.

Outsourcing is a common phenomenon but today it extends beyond the cleaning service or consultants, outsourcing has become “crowdsourcing”, which implies that the consumers function as labor, usually involuntary or in exchange of access to e.g. a social network. Every time you login to your Facebook account you work for Mr Zuckerberg.

This process is what Christian Marazzi termed the financialization of life, which implies the extraction of surplus value from common actions such as sharing a blog post, linking a page, writing comments; basically the sharing of any experience, such as a concert, performance or museum visit.

As long as capitalism has existed we have always been both producers and consumers but what is taking place

now is that the boundaries are dissolving. Not only in respect of how IKEA outsourced the assembling of their products, not because they like you to handle a screwdriver or because it was an option to displace a large economy and lower the prices of the products marginally, but in respect that life itself has become economy. This is what bio-capitalism proposes: that the body in its globality has become commodity, that life as such [bare life, see Agamben] has become economy.

Leaving behind Fordist production processes implies shifting away from goods and conventional processes of manufacturing. Post-Fordist society is also leaving behind service and enters new economical spheres, the first step of which was the experience economy but now immaterial capital has entered the body in its globality. If a cultural venue, e.g. the museum can be correlated to modes of production of a society in general, the sphere of the venue (museum) necessarily has to leave objects and its reproduction (or non-reproduction) behind. If the 19th century museum celebrated the nation state and if the 20th century museum celebrated the industrial society, what is the museum celebrating today: immaterial labor and the financialization of life?

Moreover, aren't the institutions that surround us necessarily correlated to modes of production, e.g. the separation of life and labor. But when such dualities evaporate, when hyper-multiplicity enters life these institutions have only two futures: to change rapidly and drastically or to become bastions of the past.

If the cultural venue and its artist should have any future at all the first thing to do is to stop thinking about representation, design, audience etc and rethink the position and how art operates under these circumstances.

For instance, let's address the cultural venue in respect of rent. We – the directors, curators, cultural workers – rent our museum from the nation. At least in democratic regimes the nation is the people who can come to the museum who pay rent (such as taxes) to take part in an experience, the people that also are our clients. This is exactly the implication of contemporary capitalism where the very circulation of value produces economy in the sense of work, employment, welfare. One could say that this is the moment where rent become profitable.

In respect of the process of enclosure, capitalist rent has been the other face of the common. It is the outcome of a process of expropriation that is the starting point and essential feature of the reproduction of capital over time and space.

Rent, in other words, represents not only the starting point but also the becoming of contemporary capitalism, because as the law of value-labor time is in crisis and the cooperation of labor appears to become increasingly autonomous from the managerial functions of capital, the very frontiers between rent and profit begin to disintegrate.

How, and in respect of what modes of valorization, does rent, when introduced to the museum, become a mode of production of culture?

In order to produce art that has any validity at all we have no choice but to take up the arms of contemporary bio-capitalism. You know there is a difference between being corrupt and knowing about corruption, let's go all the way: long live corruption. Sell out, unground. This is not about staying healthy and at the outside, the only way to investigate illness is to become infected, engage in pathology: paraseptic. The first step is to engage in how the transformation of economical reality is provocative in re-

spect of contemporary art venues and formats, artistic and cultural production.

Yes, we're only in it for the money.

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“Oh no, don't do it... No, not the ladder, not the attic.” It happens every time – sweet American adolescents – about to be slaughtered, cut to pieces, ripped apart, their panic ridden gazes... I know it's just a film and it is supposed to produce fear, but still I can't hold back. “Don't go there!” I'm addicted to fear. It makes me feel alive. Fear is my new autopoiesis, it's silent like my psychoanalyst. It's not the violence, blood or gore that makes it, it's the suspended time, the lack of telos that is so attractive. The blood part might be scary and disgusting, but that's just a matter of cleaning up, using an efficient tool or wearing rubber gloves. Fear is the shit, and it is fear exactly because it's not recognizable and offers no solutions. That's the groovy part; fear is the experience of authenticity. Fear is my new sexual fantasy, the latest wet dream produced by capitalism, and the experience of authenticity its latest commodity.

No, it's obviously not about becoming authentic – you will still have your performativity – it's about the experience of authenticity, which can only be provided by a simulated situation that disqualifies telos, departs from communication in favor of pure communicability. It abandons causality and calls for so to say, disinterested movement or gesture without signification. This experience is necessarily individual, it is not as we have seen discursive and it cannot be inscribed in modes of interpretation; it operates directly on subjectivity, i.e. on one's own subjectivity thus becoming a product one consumes.

Make pieces that produce fear. That make the audience pale, totally fear ridden when helplessly applauding at the end of the performance. Affect, our last outpost, has become commodity. It's pretty much amazing, global capitalism has managed to financialize potentiality as such. But as much as fear can produce economy and stability in respect of immobility; fear can also become productive of other economies - instability and corruption. Insist on fear, put your spectators in a state of an endless "don't go there". This has obviously nothing to do with proposing something violent or spectacularly dangerous, not at all, what is scary is excessive abstraction. An abstraction produced through strong entities and extremely weak connections. Fear is precisely the lack of connection, organization and frame. Fear isn't collaborating, it isn't negotiating, it doesn't talk to programmers, doesn't love its audience, doesn't present itself: fear exists.

Vampires are last Friday and their films a sentimentalism vis-à-vis a long gone capitalism organized around materiality and whatever that could be extracted from the environment. The zombie is a kind of immaterial worker that travels in flocks compulsively laboring as pure activity. The new zombie isn't a Bolshevik or some grey communist, oh no nowadays the zombie is an interior decorator that lives in London, listens to well-balanced house music in his office, drives a SUV and is really good with kids. Haven't we all become auto-vampires, consuming our own subjectivity, like sucking our own blood. Capitalism has entered its homeopathic era, we are in a loop that produces economy due an endless consumption of one's own subjectivity.

We have no choice but to be meta-vampires suckin ourselves, but to the same extent that capital can produce

experience of this kind, so can you and me. We have no choice but to engage in the worst most ruthless and amazing of financial and capitalist strategies, and in fact we have no choice, cuz we can't have any other intentions than to do the same. There is no disguise anymore, we can only produce more, and there is no escape but that is perhaps an opportunity as well... I like it, the possibility of consuming my own attention, that's when hyper-camouflage becomes tangible.

It's sort of fearful in itself, but are you aware of the fact that your next, and my upcoming piece will deal with time and space – yes, that shit that we have always rejected as a bad excuse or some sick relation to exploration [btw exploration is a bad word, it's like bad education: patronizing] – but this time it is not what time and space can do, or what the body can do with, or in it, but rather it is a matter of producing time as pure duration [unconditioned time] and a space without signification. This isn't some sillilitude about smooth shit, oh no this is a time that can but be experienced although not measured, related or codified, it is a space that intensifies experience but offers no horizon. This is like an endlessly suspended journey up in the attic. There won't be nobody to say *boohoo*, no ghost that can be removed with a brush or monster that needs a visit to the dentist, it will be nothing at all and that is just fear. Colorless fear.

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Now I know! At first it doesn't seem too bad but on second thought, this is a disaster. Thinking about choreography created right here, right now provokes roughly the same sense of contemporary as sex with a Christian

high school boy. Committed, inexperienced, far too caring and convinced of not finishing on time. And worst of all, the teenager is desperately trying to please you. Working it this and working it that, and all these attempts makes it even more obvious. Choreography has become so overwhelmingly liberal and democratic, so amazingly well-meaning that it has gone totally blind to it's own conservatism. In times of crisis dance will be the first art form to start squirreling away whatever is left of its relations to the present. But since the crisis is already going on its seventh year that sense of novelty is one that without the slightest doubt would announce Raimund Hoghe a contemporary dance-maker. But then... You know what... Anne Teresa de Keersmaecker is in fact the most contemporary Belgian choreographer around. Seriously, and that is pretty freakin sad.

Contemporary is hard work. The radically contemporary must be irrelevant and must not expect recognition. To be contemporary is not additive, it is not history plus, it is rather about renouncing, the act contemporary is one of subtraction, and the first to be taken away is "you". Contemporary is all about forgetting oneself. And if you now think yeah, leap of faith you are so on the wrong track. Fuck faith and fuck jumping, contemporary is without faith, it is without history, without concern. Paradoxically enough: The contemporary doesn't give a fuck. The moment when it does it's, so to say, shit pommes frites passé.

The contemporary can't be measured, localized, when it is put into the program it's already over. Don't take the season program for a promise of contemporary but rather as the diagnostic of the already out-of-date. You should fear the phone call when your national dance platform proposes your participation, or the moment when John

Ashford wants to present your work. And you know, the definition of panic, that's when Rio Rutzinger offers you a teaching opportunity or credits you in Juice. OMG, that my friend, that is the nightmare.

However, the sad reality is that you have worked for that moment for your entire career, and so have I. There is nothing else to do, the way artistic production functions is precisely in that gap, the double desire for contemporaneity and at the same time for relevance.

“-I want to do work that concerns people. To catch the audience off guard, to make them feel something... something specific, you know something political.”

But you know, there is no way out of that paradox. Something political is never contemporary, it's just more of the same. Simple opinions however complex, it just doesn't matter. Politics never matters, mattering is not part of its job. And if you want your audience to feel something, and even worse something specific you better think again. Feelings are not contemporary, emotions are definitely not, they are conventional, commissioned and co-produced. Feelings, emotions and lately even affects have already been in PACT for a residency. Choreography is trapped in its own fresh conservatism.

If you really want to go contemporary, you have to give yourself up, forget about Judith Butler and leave choreography behind, terminate your relation with Kaai Theatre and, this is imperative, stop making pieces where you take off your clothes.

Choreography today is like imagining Manhattan as a part of Sweden. In the sense of being totally and exceptionally nostalgic and at the same time so well-meaning and appropriately on time that it didn't even hurt. Choreography is like Camper shoes, fashionable and orthope-

dic. No, it's better choreography and dance is like – but maybe this one is too cool: this is kind of Barbara Raes fresh or should we say Fred Gies fashionista... dance and choreography is like Cheap Mondays. At the same time Comme des Garçons for the poor and H&M for the rich. It's so fitting I just can't wear it, so out of the question I can't stop [I freakin masturbate to that logo, you know the happy corpse kind of naïve with meaning. Fuck yeah!].

Time has caught up with us. We have nothing else left but to leave. Don't look for an itinerary, there won't be no call-cheat. Get the fuck out of here. Leave Manhattan once and for all, let's erase Brussels from our souls, fuck Sweden. Well, it is not about geopolitics after all, so stay put but remember: comfortable is not an option, afford to be vain, insist on being a star, stop being appreciative – don't ever use the words “at least” – and celebrate without acknowledging tomorrow. Whatever works, is no fuckin option. “It's not enough” is a positive critique.

Wear make up, too much, sleep around, too often, miss flights, too early, accept only outrageous ideas, too late, and insist, insist, insist on absolute irrelevance.

It's common knowledge that the Eskimo people have no less than fourteen different words for snow. Dude, fourteen ways of saying snow...

Now, I wonder if there was a language spoken only by artists, a sort of international artist lingua. Then, how many words would there be for vanity?

Oh yes, I can almost hear you taste it. Vanity, you say to yourself. You recall artists that made it their life to be special. You think about Marina Abramovic in her white dress, plastic boobs and embarrassing retrospective in

MoMA. You contemplate Cecilia and François for a moment. You recall somebody else... “-OMG what a diva” – good that his/her career is not going that well. You think about Pina, but forgive her – rest in peace. You don’t think about Alain Platel – such a nice guy. And you don’t think about Nature Theatre of Oklahoma, but you should!

Vanity doesn’t resonate particularly well, doesn’t taste that good in your mouth. You don’t want to be known as the vain artist, nope. It’s romantic, echoes of bohemian lifestyle, illustrated delicacy and we don’t want that. We don’t want to devote our lives to how to wear a shawl, how to work on our penetrative gaze or the color of our training pants. Don’t think so, the artist should be understood to be a grounded individual with control of the situation, a clear mind and the ability for hard work. Vanity is so not currency in 2010.

This is very bad. It’s a disaster. We aren’t artists anymore but crisis managers. We are like leftists who have lost all their visions and are just about maintaining a comfortable position. The love of the underdog. This is fucked up. Seriously fucked up!

Vanity is dead long live vanity. Shit, I miss Martha Graham.

We should work more on it, we should devote all our time to our vain attitudes. Be a diva, promise! Be vain, can you afford not to be? At least act as if you were rich beyond reason. We must not accept that there is only one word for our elevated manners. Fourteen is not enough. I want devotion. Unlimited admiration. We must reject premiere parties that don’t feature authentic champagne. We must refuse interviews in magazines without worldwide distribution. Reject theatres that don’t provide four-star hotels. Ravage about festivals that want to put you in the

same program as Superamas. And of course cancel shows at the last moment, just because. Or for no other reason than to make the life of your assistant a living hell. By the way, you don't have a producer or manager but you surround yourself with assistants. A lot of them.

But why? Just because, but also because what has happened to the artist today is an incorporation into the world of management. The artist today is a negotiator, a person that would do a much better job than Obama on a visit to the Middle East. The artist of today is somebody who runs a declining business and desperately wants to get back onto the main stage. The choreographer is no longer a movement maker but has become a specialist in moving and choreographing co-productions, residency visits, occasional site specific projects, you name it.

Oh, it's all good. Cool. We are doing fine. But the artists – you and me – have lost our privileged position. It is time to take it back, to insist on being special, to stop any kind of modest behavior. No way, we are not managers, producers of this or that. We are artists and we insist. We insist on special treatment. Be vain, be vain as fuck. The more vain you get the more fanatically you will have to defend your territory. The vain is ready to fall, to fall without any chance of recovery. The vain rejects everything that is not immediately favorable. Fucks strategic thinking in favor of being photographed from the right angle. The vain, the artistah, hits the critic in the face after a bad review. The vain, the artistah, is not having an after-talk or some idiotic discussion. The vain, the artistah, has admirers, devoted fans and is absolutely categorical. The vain takes everything personal.

“If you don't like my show. I can have somebody show you the way out. Capish!”

Let's sign up with Eskimos [minorities together yeah...], although it might be cold and lonely out there, we need at least fourteen words for vanity. Remember you are an artist. You don't need to have any reasons, you don't need to be clear [P.A.R.T.S.], you don't need a fuckin' concept, you don't need to have good or decent ideas, you are not responsible for the audience. Not for their emancipation. Forget about transparency. You are an artist and you rock 'n fuckin' roll.

Those who are truly contemporary, who truly belong to their time are those who neither perfectly coincide with it nor adjust themselves to its demands. They are, and here it comes, in this sense irrelevant. The contemporary, in its more radical sense, does not mean to be in time, to be fashionable, on the top 40 or in the magazine. No way, the stuff that ends up in the festival program is there precisely because it has slipped out of the contemporary with a one-way ticket to those ordinary things that can be evaluated. The contemporary is precisely that which is beyond good and/or bad, that has yet to gain a position in the landscape we call history, or perhaps even time. In the contemporary there are no fifteen minutes of fame, not even fifteen seconds in the light. The contemporary is brief, very brief, and this brief moment is scary, very very scary.

Why do rock stars drink and shoot up? Because they are under pressure, forced to go out there and make the audience experience the contemporary, the now, that presence, night after night. I don't think so. It's not because they are stupid or "live the dream". The real deal is that they are mourning, mourning the contemporary that made them and is forever gone. Once popular there is no contemporary.

The rock star engages in the self-medication called Jack Daniels, and the manager adds social everything, including the blondes, which makes the situation even worse. What the star mourns can not be healed with party, conversation or good company. It is the opposite; he mourns the exuberant loneliness of the contemporary. The contemporary indeed is a moment that lacks identity, where the individual is sovereign and hence not conditioned by any law. The contemporary lacks any orientation points, any addresses or stabilities. The contemporary is smooth and mind you, there's not even a horizon. Sounds boring? Well, it is and it isn't, the contemporary doesn't concern itself with such categories exactly because they are based on valorization, comparison and forms of representation. The contemporary could almost be thought of as an Artaudian concept, because indeed the contemporary is cruel: it is absolute horror and absolute bliss. It's death, orgasm and pure immanence.

Somewhere Michel Foucault writes that one should be happy if during a lifetime one has just one or two unique thoughts. I think Foucault was right, although up until now my understanding was that not even super smart people think unique things on a daily basis. But what if Foucault meant the opposite? Praise the lords that unique thoughts don't pop up on a regular basis, because unique in its radical sense coincides with the contemporary, and the contemporary hurts. The moment when you do end up in the festival program or fashion magazine, I can assure you that the pain you will feel will be conventional, and your sole agony is of being kicked out.

Lewis Carroll granted the world some serious knowledge in his poem "The Hunting of The Snark", in which a curious captain and researcher is about to set off on an excursion to hunt the mystical Snark. Naturally a map is

needed. After extensive inquiries the captain returns and presents the map for his crew, that after having worried, now celebrates their captain's faculties for bringing a map that is an absolute blank. Because, as they concur, conventional signs such as equators and poles, longitudes and so on, with certitude will not bring them anywhere remotely close to an adventure, even halfway to where the Snark hangs out. An adventure is a journey to you-don't-know-where.

As the poem proceeds we get to know that the Snark is rarely observed and that narratives of encounters with the mystical creature are even more uncommon, not least because it is said that any person making eye contact with a Snark is transformed into stone. What if Snark is another word for the Contemporary?

Institutions can by definition not be contemporary, but are always out of time, fastened to history by clusters of more or less recognizable rules or codes of conduct. Yet, institutions persevere exactly as long as they are gratuitous for some kind of society or context. It is of course we, each of us as individuals and groups that grant institutions their existence, simultaneously institutions provide context for our existence, granting us identity and consistency. Without institutions, in a broader sense of the word, we wouldn't be able to communicate, collaborate or have conflicts. So, as much as we find ourselves trapped by slow and heavy institutions reeking with bureaucracy and alcohol smelling paper turners, we should value our institutions for what they enable. They enable constraints. Institutions provide us with a sense of consistency or safety that enables movement, dynamism, navigation: a safety that grants the possibility for differentiation.

Jacques Derrida, as the indecent post-structuralist that he was, proposes that nature doesn't exist, but that there

is only naturalization and denaturalization. Nature as such operates outside discourse, outside culture, and we humans have no access to it, and therefore nature cannot exist, or if it does we can't know about it. Perhaps it is somewhat a shot in the dark to argue that institutions are non-existent [text indeed being one], but it might possibly be generative to consider, however paradoxical, that there is only institutionalization and deinstitutionalization. The alphabet provides a frame for a production that deterritorializes it, similarly to how the museum offers a frame for the possibility of transformation of aesthetic experiences.

It is in any case far too easy to blame institutions for anything at all, but as institutions propel some kind instinct to survive, which of course will become even stronger considering that sustainability also must apply to institutions, or worse: recycling, it can not not propose itself as a oneness, a unity. This, I believe, is crucial and a malady of the ignorant, if institutions are understood in respect of, so to say, Existence, i.e. as static and "eternal", and as a one, what is left is only to lie down and die. But if on the contrary understood as temporary and as constructed, i.e. a multiplicity, there is unlimited potentiality in both institutionalization and deinstitutionalization. It is all up to you or us, but remember it will be an easy battle because it is fought only, and this is axiomatic, through conventional signs, and remember again, institutions feed on, metaphorically speaking, fossil fuel [so passé], whereas you cultivate the contemporary, which is pure intensity.

Beware of those who complain about the evil of institutions, most probably they are sponsored by them, or being hired as double agents in institutional espionage. Those are the forces in society that produce the institutions' static,

especially considered within a neo-liberal regime where complaints have been rendered a commodity.

In the late 70s the same Michel Foucault wrote a short note on, what he called, a new time of curiosity: a time when a ubiquitous social democracy would give us individuals some slack, when homogenization would be past tense, the free spirit would flourish and institutions would let go of our lives. Today, some thirty years later, Michel Foucault's words, however grand, have acquired new meaning and resonate like a neo-liberal manifesto, a call for an unconditional individuality that needs no interventionist state, no institutional consistency. What neo-liberalism wants from us, and I mean in particular from cultural producers, is minimal effort and maximum revenue. This is rendered through a minimum of institutional bodies, considering The State as an institution and consumption as its opposite, and, further, revenue as always already conventional and hence measurable. Thus neo-liberal governance is by definition in time, or, in other words, the absolute enemy of the contemporary.

Long live our institutions! They make possible the anachronism of the contemporary.



## EPISODE 3

### **Who's your target group?**

You are a choreographer and you run a business. Correct, your job is to develop and manufacture products that you push on individuals with titles such as programmer, curator or festival director, organizations such as the art council, Goethe Institutes, educations and – the new cool hip – corporate economies. But check it out, your target group and your client are not identical, on the contrary, they are significantly different and don't even know one another.

So what do you do? You continue to push products called dance performances without analyzing who your client and your target group really are – no let's not talk about "your audience" – that's irrelevant. The business strategy utilized by the majority of dance and performance practitioners is simple: hoping for the best.

Your client is not cool; she doesn't stay up late, has no idea about what a beat mix is, and if she has a FB account she has less than 250 friends yet still more than 60. Are you d'accord with this, are you fine knowing that your client's idea about life is approximately as contemporary as your vintage sneakers were last year? Your client has

heard about bittorrent but has never used it. She still considers that music is something stored on stable media, that mp3 is not authentic, and she has all the Patti Smith's albums on CD [she had all of them on LP, but you know... times change]. Check it out, that's the person that buys your show. Are you happy about the fact that she likes your work? Are you okay with the fact that your work adheres to her taste, or that she thinks that your stuff has potentiality?

Most of your clients spend time with their grandchildren. Think about that!

Dance, especially dance produced by choreographers without health insurance, addresses without exception one and the same target group. This kind of choreography, created with too small budgets but always state funded, is directed to itself. The target individual is identical to the maker: young, good looking, middle class, fresh and conservative. The target individual dresses badly and considers it uncool to be cool. The target individual considers herself contemporary but doesn't know the address to Colette. The target person considers himself contemporary but listens to soul music.

Dance and choreography, shape up! It's not a defeat to know your client or detect your target group. Anybody who doesn't is either ignorant and lazy, or has a firm belief in authenticity, somebody who thinks that art is special. Stop that! You are not your work, and your work is not supposed to consolidate your identity. Dance performance does not become less superficial because you think it's deep: it is after all not much more than approximately an hour of classical representation accompanied by creative electronic music [help]. Choreography will not lose its specificity because it's glossy, effective, fast, aggressive or fuckin' nuts. But it will have no specificity whatsoever as

long as you, and me, desperately continue to try to please programmers, managers, our friends and worst of all the audience, especially when we do it by being alternative, healthy, medium rare, positive, disillusioned, a little bit crazy and always available.

Summarizing the last ten years of season and festival programs brings me to a simple conclusion: dance, nah art in general, is experiencing a deep crisis and this is signified by a continuous mass emigration towards the general. The watchword of dance today is: one size fits all. And worst of all it lacks any kind of attitude.

The reason is obvious: production value, belonging, identity and staying alive are more important than specificity, excess, cocaine, revolt or pandemonium. Of course I'm pathetic, but what's the alternative? Modesty, Buddhism, demure, enthusiasm, faith? Are these the notions that you'd like to signify your practice? Did you make life difficult for yourself deciding to be a choreographer in order to confirm such an attitude? If you did, I don't want to be your friend!

Dancers, choreographers and all you others, we have a job, and here it comes:

\* Stop working for your clients, they don't care – they just want more money.

\* Evacuate your audience, and don't let them in again until they are ready to kill for it.

\* Fuck modesty and all other well-meaning aspirations. If you don't consider your mission an armed struggle, ready to declare war, you are not needed.

\* Accept no interviews, agree to no essays published in dance magazines or written by dance scholars. To be

published in a dance magazine is a disaster, it means your work is good.

\* Spend more time on producing press images, rumors and attitude than rehearsing and processing your next piece. The project is you and your piece is nothing more than an hors d'oeuvre.

\* Stop collaborating, and show too much attitude! Hierarchy is the only way to change the notion of success.

\* Sleep around. Stop decency now!

\* Fuck enthusiasm. It's just another word for priorities, moderate ideas and a balanced psyche. Enthusiasm is another word for shrinking in front of circumstances. Enthusiasm is another word for insecurity.

\* Practice being categorical. Be glam.

\* Execute your client. Be a fool.

Show No Mercy!

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Choreography over the last millennium has developed some sort of deep addiction to forgiveness, it's time to go cold turkey – to get rid of that it-could-be-worse attitude and claim some explicit territory. It is time to stop the notion that a bad dance piece is better than no dance piece. Negotiate this, dance is not based on scarcity any more – never mind when was it [fuck the NYC dance scene and their complaint of lack of infrastructure, they are just lazy sentimentalists that remember nineteen-eighty-something-lower-east-anecdotes]? Get this, you get what you deserve,

whatever political agenda you produce, and recall this Steve Paxton is as neo-liberal as Carlos Castaneda [and that's supposed to be funny], or for the young reader - as Harmony Korine, or change context Cameron Diaz in *Bad Teacher*.

Recently, however, choreography has discovered a new method, and it's not nice. The craft has turned interdisciplinary on the level of production [groovy] and imported a fresh technique from cinema. Actually from Hollywood and there is some mismatch going on because it's in fact not appropriating a method [which potentially is cool], but what is really at stake is mixing up method and narrative twist.

Choreography has over the last fifty years developed from a craft – connected to efficiency and consolidation of form on the basis of a general – to an expertise, which is all about being special and individual in respect of a defined common territory. Lately though choreography has developed further into a competence that perceives choreography as a field of specific capacities disconnected from determined, or known, expressions. Choreography today is disconnected from dance or dance-like expressions and can/should instead be understood as a set of generic tools or operations that can be applied, both in respect of production and analysis, to more or less any spatio-temporal capacity.

Independent of the approach, however, these three paradigms or modes of production – craft, expertise, competence - propose consistency or coherence, or even an at least weak causality between production and expression. A choreographer's work might, or should take different forms but yet always be identified due, some or other, its consistency [individual yet not selfish]. A conservative

voice might propose something like, there is a red-thread missing, that the work lacks identity or something else romantic, tacky or hetero-normative, but, mind you, consistency has it's up-side - it proposes a practice to be evolutionary in the modernist sense of the word, recognizable and predictable and hence potentially subject to "proper" critique, and that it's not horse shit. But, and this is crucial, recently linearity and a sense of one after the other have been contested by an alternative, and this is when choreography went Hollywood.

This new, exiting, alternative "method" [or better attitude] inflates all linearity of production and cancels out any opportunity of critique. Reminiscent of a sort of 19th century – kind of Schubert, nature remixed with suffering – contemporary syphilis - artist identity, it has been given prominence in artist talk after artist talk, endless post-performance sessions and has slowly but surely become common sense, used by close to everybody.

The day choreography happened to me, could be said to be its axiom and this is precisely how it operates. It is as if every choreographer suddenly and without further notice stepped into a choreography – "-Oups...", or simply found him- or herself in choreography with the only possible response being that facial expression curious yet surprised.

This is where cinema enters the scene because this choreographic method could be best described through a classical Hollywood narrative. A set up that we know from films like Martin Scorsese's "After Hours" or Jonathan Demme's "Something Wild" in which the mystical woman [Melanie Griffith fuck yeah] "abducts" the boring office clerk for an absolutely wicked adventure. It's as if choreography today happens to people like an accident

or mystical coincidence. The *deus ex machina*, or divine intervention solving complex plots in Greek theatre is no longer happening in the end of the show, it's happening all the time during the whole process. In fact choreography as such has turned into one wide-eyed adventure sort of discovery channel amazing.

The situation is in fact excellent as the it happened to me model makes the choreographer immune to any kind of critique. “-The reason for the animal part? Oh, you know... and then we saw this documentary and we thought that perhaps...” or “-No, that part came in very late. It was the result of a game we use that I have forgotten the rules for...” or “-The title? Well, that was so funny. I was watching South Park, you know South Park - and there was this character that...” I love it. Isn't it great, everything that the choreographer says turns into a charming anecdote, artist talks are like watching morning television - amazing without ambition. It's indeed an improvement - nowadays it's void but occasionally entertaining whereas historically the choreographer was simply boring.

But I wonder how the contemporary choreographer sleeps at night knowing that he or she didn't actually make the piece but outsourced it to a company, thoroughly inscribed in capitalism, called “Happy Coincidence” or “Serendipity”. The present choreographic paradigm, the new method – you know first we had conceptual dance and then dance-dance – will be remembered as Hope for the best dance.

It is perfect, hope-for-the-best-dance is a congenial excuse for having nothing to say, an excellent response to neo-liberalism and a brilliant reason to be absolutely fine. Hope-for-the-best-dance is the ultimate self-delusion, terminally fooled into the option that the choreographer isn't

responsible for the consequences of his or her activities.

Hope-for-the-best-dance is the perfect formula for all those choreographers that want to think that they are politically engaged but in fact just want to be loved. The magic potion for entire populations of dance makers that have no idea what they are doing and are happy about it. So, who do you want to be: hope for the best or prepare for the worst?

Behind the mask of hope for the best lies fear. Something, on the other hand that you are prepared for is nothing to be scared of, and that implies that when something is not going as planned there is nothing to hide behind but “-We fucked up” or articulation. For the hope artist fear and difficulty is one of those welcome monsters to hide behind.

But who said that it should be difficult to make art? Or why are people making art as if it is so difficult, so intimately connected with angst, trauma, self-denial? First of all, it's not hard to make art. It's fun, it's great, wonderful and liberating, or it should be, why do you otherwise continue? To make really great art might be demanding and laborious, but that doesn't automatically connected it with fear, sleeplessness, difficulty and mood-swings. Art is nothing personal, or doesn't have to be, and the other way around art is always personal so why bother have a problem. Art's connection to the soul is a lie promoted by the Vatican.

Further on, art-making is not supposed to be connected with tenacity, self-contempt, constipation, psychological tension and breakdown. It should be a pleasure to go to the studio, put the key into the lock of your residency atelier, not to mention the premiere, opening or release, those are brilliant moments. Why do you put yourself un-

der the pressure of premieres if you hate them so badly? Why do you expose yourself in this way, if it makes you toss and turn through the nights for weeks, months, years? Premieres should be fantastic, exiting and the time of your life. Let's celebrate. If nothing else, they are reason enough to have another drink. If it is hard to make art, if it is trauma trauma t r a u m a, stop it! Listen carefully, I say this only once: Stop it.

You don't have to, you are not obliged, especially today when format, content, deconstruction, appropriation, remixing is open wide and your first task is to not do whatever somebody else has already done. Chill, if the universe is open like a "svenska flicka" why have any problems at all? This is brilliant: we are the winners in whatever we do. Art is about changing the world, so of course its gonna be scary, but you know it's not the art that is scary it's what the world might change into. Your angst is not there because it is hard to make art, it is you attacking yourself because you are so embarrassingly scared of not being loved.

So let's cook this argument. Lets bring it through the Agatha Christie machine, slow yet revealing. Aha, the problem is the position of responsibility, both in respect of what and when. Stop taking it upon yourself to be responsible for the other, stop taking upon yourself the responsibility of yourself, stop taking upon yourself to be responsible for the state of art. You have only one responsibility and that is to change the world. It is a huge responsibility but it can only take place utilizing a fair amount of, exactly, irresponsibility. And most of all and finally: stop feeling responsible for what people think about you, allow yourself to be considered a fool. Engage in shame, embarrass yourself. Life doesn't happen to kids that think that humbleness is a virtue. Stop behaving, terminate ca-

reer surveillance, tell you boss to fuck off, sleep with your colleagues [all of them], make art before lunch and make some more just because. Remember it was love at first sight. And I still love you, unconditionally.

Not at all, I'm not speaking of conceptual here. Conceptual is not enough. In fact it's not even enough to accuse somebody for being, definitely not in 2010 not even in the mid 90s but for other reasons. "-You conceptual..."

But I remember a worldwide dance maker dissing one French so called conceptual choreographer for making dance with only three centimeters of the body: the three above a his eyebrows. That was probably the only time that that choreographer, or rather, theatre-maker with dance routines, said something funny. And I think it is funny for two reasons, the obvious one that it's quite funny as an accusation – "precise" if you know what I mean – and second because exactly that accusation is so embarrassingly obvious, not to mention how it again divides the holistic image of the organism into always so dangerous body-mind split. To make dance with only the body is great, but – if possible – only with the brain that's like a billion years in hell.

If we lay aside the notion that all artworks retroactively gained a conceptual level from some moment in the early seventies, then what does it mean? Conceptual. For most people it means nothing at all but is a term that shows up oscillating from being genuinely negative to something one says about things that feels nice. You know, not that I know what it means, or want to know, but it feels good. "It's kind of conceptual..." or "Yes, my work is a little bit conceptual..." [I especially like the little bit, little bit conceptual is like being Christian on Tuesdays or be in love with only the left side of a boyfriend] feels good but doesn't matter. Next time you end up having to talk to a choreographer, listen to how often he or she says "kind

of”, “a little bit”, “I don’t know” or “something like that” – and you’ll see that there are more works constructed through connecting some “something like that” with a fair bit of “... I don’t know” topped with a French cuisine sort of nouvelle “kind of” and “you know what I mean”. I totally don’t want to defend articulation, reason, coherence, inner logic, but “kind of” and reason is not dialectical, nor distinctly separated, they are, in dance and choreography, the same bullshit.

Conceptual is not enough. Nope, and what does it mean in the first place and what is it’s relation to “concept”. Conceptual in dance, eh – means absolutely nothing at all. At one moment somebody told me Hooman Sharifi did conceptual work – “but he has a dramaturge” – which obviously is the first thing the conceptual choreographer doesn’t. Yes, of course in dance conceptual could also be interpreted as over protective, paranoid [in the bad sense of the word], hyper proprietary, so I guess in that sense whatever his name that Norwegian choreographer is indeed a strongly conceptual choreographer.

“-Why overprotective, what do you mean?” – Isn’t it funny that so called conceptual choreography in the nineties was totally obsessed with authorship and it’s relation to dance, movement and the body, and at the same time the conceptuall’s first dictum was to rid themselves of the influence of production, process, performativity and performer. Conceptual is stupidly male, totally defensive and the first sign of malign control obsession. Conceptual, obviously the result of a childhood trauma [spit on Woody Allen], is the little boy screaming: “-I can, I can myself...” – conceptual is the residue of the child’s failed emancipation. Conceptual is deeply neurotic and continues to live at mother’s place. It is also possible that that sentence wasn’t entirely serious, but who knows?

It is also possible that conceptual dance never existed? It did and it didn't, depending on what exactly conceptual would mean. Conceptual, in either meaning has nothing and nada to do with concept or concepts. Considering that a dance could be conceptual in the sense of representing an engagement with a conceptual framework, protocol or procedure, then conceptual dance never existed, it couldn't – as such representation necessarily must disqualify time, at least initially or on the level of illusion, and cannot depend on climate, circumstances and the performers' feelings. Conceptual in this sense is about remaining the same, indeed it is about consolidating the same, the self, norm and leaning steadily on discourse or even worse linguistics. But if conceptual means to think a bit before going to the studio, and perhaps considering that scribbling in the notebook about creativity and chance operations is not to think, but to apply some repeatable procedures to one's work, then conceptual dance has been there long before the name was given by the author.

Conceptual, have we forgotten, is not exactly a contemporary term. Mind you, when it first saw the light in the museum it was more or less the fault of a handful of people that in their insecurity signed up to structuralism in order to at the same time gain stability when modernism had lost its momentum and slip out of whatever kind of political/critical work taking to the streets or supporting the revolution.

Conceptual art was already 1970 a conservative blunder. Especially in the case of Kosuth and Weiner, conceptual had only to do with language and modes of signification, whereas Berry and LeWitt at least had some fun. No, Berry had a lot of fun, but whatever fun there are only two options: Kosuth showing that he is smart and that art,

beauty and aesthetic criteria is the result of more or less stable conventions, or LeWitt and Berry inviting the visitor to take a look at the result of some or other procedure. Smart, certainly but only to the degree where it asks a question without contesting anything at all. Conceptual art is bogus in the sense that it completely confirms the modernist regime of representation.

Conceptual is all about interpretation and has nothing to do with the production of concepts. A concept is something that negates interpretation, a complex of potential connections that evades localization, stability and repetition. Of course, the art object is always inscribed in global market economies and has no critical potentiality whatsoever, but capitalism tends to forget that an object can be more than a oneness, and also function as a machine. As an object visual art, dance and poetry has no chance, but it's machinic capacity has yet to be thoroughly explored, i.e. the machine as object is inscribed but the engagement it produces with the visitor is not yet commodified, or it is – engagement is certainly commodity, but consumption of one's own subjectivity can still be charged.

Concept work, which is exactly not conceptual, in other words, is an art that instead of representing an engagement or idea, produces engagement in such a way that the visitor or spectator can not maintain his or her comfortable position. That sets the spectator out of balance and disobeys criteria and quality. It is so totally not communist, nor is it liberal but it contests the very criteria of democracy. Concept art is anti-democratic, or it just doesn't apply to democracy. It doesn't vote, and it doesn't not vote, it fucks conditions. Concept art is an art that you can't give an answer to. That you can't reproach nor leave behind. It's an art that is so not smart. It's the absolute opposite to

Maurizio Cattelan. It's an art so void of good ideas, that it completely fucks the idea of "brilliant" and doesn't give a fuck about its audience.

Why? Aha, because it never had one, and never relied on one, but is producing one right now, i.e. idea or not. Of course concept art is very timely, it fades quick and doesn't sell. But it saves lives, at least mine, and yours. It doesn't postpone the crises but proposes the apocalypse. It is exactly not enough, but a bit too much. Concept art refuses the crisp "simple" of a really good piece of art, exactly because those criteria in no way make us think differently but just sit there and like it. Concept art is irresponsible, demanding, it corrupts and makes people throw up, it betrays all sides and has only one perspective – change at any price.

Pleasant, no not at all, it totally sucks, but at least it sucks, sucks like Oh My Fuckin God. It's Axl Rose, like abstract if you know what I mean.

Conceptual is not enough, propositions are worse than pickup lines, and theatre is not about changing the set, it's about – it's about – it's about getting the fuck over it, over it to the extent where there is no, and I mean *no* turning back.

Are you ready, are you a warrior. Unfasten your seatbelts, disobey speed limits, ignore customs and tax numbers – Mel Gibson my man – betray all sides and be a motherfuckin dragon.

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## **Serial Killer or Emancipated Spectator**

Are you a killer? Do you have it in yourself, to murder somebody... or several... how would you do it...

Looking back at 20th century it is interesting to find that the birth of the contemporary serial killer and different critiques of representation within the arts coincide. Is it only circumstantial that the Manson Family and Joseph Kosuth's "Art and Philosophy" both happen in 69? If not, does the serial killer pave the way for conceptual art or is it the other way around? We can certainly speculate if the two Ohio born perpetrators were accomplices? Obviously they, or we, put the wrong guy behind bars – Kosuth's might neither have executed the acts but the amount of torture he is responsible for is totally den Haag scale – yet we shouldn't confuse Manson for a dark precursor of conceptual work when what he really was was a dumbass art student that mixed up abstract expressionism with portrait painting. I mean it's a bit far fetched to understand finishing off an actress as an act of institutional critique before Tate Modern was even conceived.

The conventional Hollywood murder movie is obsessing around murder as representation. It is a one-off set up and the job of the detective or whatever authority is to trace the expression back to its manifestation and thus confirm the regime of representation both framing and making possible the motif for the criminal act. Hollywood takes its job serious. The objective of the murder movie is not to induce fear in the viewer, not to produce havoc on the streets of American cities but to reinforce the regimes of represen-

tation governing life. The killer is not even a pimple on the imperialist face but a mouche strategically placed to on the one hand cover the corrupt nature of the capitalist machinery and simultaneously confirm the necessity of a repressive state apparatus.

Following Walter Benjamin and his writing on the author as producer the logical solution must be that any anti-capitalist movies must not deal with singular murder cases, but if at all with murder as a mode of ungrounding or corrupting representation, thus capitalism.

From another point of view one would need to look closer into the notion of authorship in respect of murder movies where the killer is known from the start or only discovered in the last scene. It is possible that Manson had access to Barthes' "Death of the Author" published in the US in 1967, or is Barthes text an ode to Charles?

If the conventional killer is one that organizes murder in respect of causality, form follows function, less is more and most of all the motive is inscribed in the image [exactly like so many performances represent the process and thus justifying the subsidy], the serial killer addresses representation differently. However the killings might be more manifest as images his or her work is a matter of critically addressing representation. The modernist killer is black and white a rational existence that brings together Western philosophy, an autonomous subject and executes his deeds due some metaphysical necessity. The serial instead is a Bergsonist operating vis à vis duration – the element of torture -, intuition as method – the necessary decoding/recoding of patterns -, with a badly hidden appetite for post-structuralism – text – the endless reference to the bible -, iteration – one more time – all charged with an in-autonomous subject haunted by bodies that matter.

Through repetition and slight differentiation the now classical serial killer questions representation and produces a moment of instability. He or she is of course not concerned with images as such but of the politics and ideologies underlying image production. The object of violence or destruction is not a human being with a name but the “real” object which the fundamentals upon which our ethics rest. The serial killer is not a critic, or not any more, he is hooked up with criticality – studied Visual Studies at Goldsmiths – and it is not he who kills but late capitalism and control society and yet he is faster than a superhero in announcing himself as guilty. The serial killer destabilizes responsibility or authorship with a Lacanian twist: “-I did it but it wasn’t me.” or “-I did it but it wasn’t me?”

But as usual it is not the job of the critique to execute destruction. His job is simply to point in the right direction, which is perhaps why Manson stands out as “genius” making it, so to say, impossible for his “family” to not execute the murders. But then fortunately or not there are good folks like Brad Pitt and Morgan Freeman (Sev7en) to terminate those ungrounding forces and restore representation safe and sound. But wait a second who is the Brad’s and Morgan’s of the artistic field? Is it critics, education, programmers and curators or who, cuz normally it’s the state that authorizes the killings, the artist being some sort of needed yet not necessary war machine. Or is Morgan and Brad performed by Michael Asher and Tino Sehgal, two generations of institutional critique: whilst seemingly taking a stand against the institution – the serial killer can only be apprehended through unorthodox methods, engagement with the dark side and an even bigger genius – are in fact authorizing or even consolidating granted regimes of representation.

However, the worst case must after all be the museum/festival-director, curator or critic that feels the inner urge to step into the mind of the perpetrator. That understand that only by seeing with the eyes of the killer, only by becoming his/her subjectivity can the case be solved. But isn't this exactly the moment when the curator also becomes the artist and the institution poses a critique onto itself. Utter vanity, personified by William Peterson in "Manhunter" – solving the case by taking up the subject of the killer he implicitly also admit that he could already have done it – delicately resurrected as Grissom in CSI.

But as we know the serial killer has already become a historical character firmly rooted in cold-war rhetoric. Today the destabilizing killer has become neo-liberalism's best friend being a kind of self-employed and self-organized asset that through his non-causal administration and execution of activity becomes valuable. Further, his departure from classical regimes of representation can be seen as a shift to post-Fordist production, or a kind of immaterial labor, focusing on activity, sharing and process rather than finitude and the circulation of goods/representations. Today the serial killer has become the norm – an anti-authoritarian, post-hierarchical, rhizomatic, knowledge sharing guy that isn't involved in making "pieces" but engages in practice based performance. The family has become a loosely distributed network with only three rules: make it possible for others, the doer decide and leave no traces, hierarchies are weak, the curriculum is self-organized and any division between life and labor has been extinct.

The serial killer now operate as a collective, comes together to practice not to produce. To practice the subject, not in respect of any given hierarchy or assumed set of

values but instead in order to engage in self-enhancement. Producing representation proper issues responsibility whereas the practice based serial killer production implies a deterritorialization of responsibility that disqualifies any kind of critique. The practice based performance is not guilty for having done the deed, because the act was what the context asked for. “-I could not have done otherwise.”

It is high time that we revise our protocols and end the apologetic regime of the serial killer, sharpen our knives, reload our weapons and aim at defined targets, definite objects and embrace the violent regimes of straightforward representation. The chicken shit attitude towards representation has to come to an end, there is no time for negotiation and regurgitation about image production, institutional critique, tautological or self-referential self-enhancement – that’s the job of well-meaning leftists and psychoanalysts. But hell no, it’s not about a re-industrialization of artistic activity, hell no this is about speculation and realist formation, away from anthropocentric well-fare “kunst” – towards the end of art as a relational terrain, in favor of a hermetic gesture that asks for no forgiveness, that pays no respect to the spectator, resents emancipation and aims at the motherfuckin heart.

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Since a while I’m carrying around a film scene. Can’t really get it out of my head, and yeah – I think – it could be the opening scene of a sort of horror movie. If I were caught up in the situation myself I would definitely have to hold back. It would be a struggle with my inner serial killer. I’d have to put up all of the cultural entrepreneur kind of strength as the last effort of will to maintain myself on the right side of evil, perversion and the unimaginable.

The scene: Contemporary times. A good son, say nine years old, in company with his father – could be an architect, if an artist perhaps a composer – entering an ordinary North-American school. We see them in corridors, taking a corner, slightly scary, and finally ending up at the teacher’s office. Yes, it is time for that talk. Midterm evaluation, something that until recently implied misbehavior, detention, breakfast club, but no more. Everything is cool, civilized, fine, knowledge intensive. Seated, the female teacher, perhaps forty and an inch older, goes along outlining the general situation, touching upon some minor asymmetries, emphasizing the son’s attentiveness and proactive behavior. Everybody is happy and the session is coming to an end.

“-Well thank you then...” says the father with a hand on his son’s shoulder, about to stand up. Cut to the teacher, who with a face signifying contemplation

“-Mr Smith, your son is... very creative, so...

Cut back to the father. We see his hand closing around the boys shoulder, his face cringe, hardening. The teacher senses the cold atmosphere, something dark just entered the room. Trying to save the situation, the teacher now...

“-so... eh... imaginative.”

Cut back to the father, the hand on the shoulder now so hard that he is hurting the son, his face contracted, a mixture of disgust and primitive anger [is this turning into a vampire fim. Oh no.], and suddenly the father in no time, barges over the table, tightens his hands around the teacher’s neck. The son curios yet surprised, freezes, as his dad shakes the woman with ever more ferocity [nothing vampire, this is primitive yet calculated rage]. His eyes now black, hate pouring from his very being as the teacher with

a final spasm – graceful like a Meg Stuart dancer – passes over to the dark side. She is dead, her body lifeless.

“-Nobody” screams the father ”-No-body”, now with a lower almost whispery voice, “-No-body, calls my son creative. No one, no one... humiliates my child like that, accusing him for being imaginative.”

Cut. The film goes on, son and father on the run, away from justice and away from creativity and imagination.

Admit it, you have felt the same. Closing up to the border where you might lose it after somebody said: “-Use your imagination.” Fuck off, twice - imagination is for pot smokers.

Consider the idea that there would be a rumor about you, say, that you were very creative in bed. What horror. No, there is no therapy against that, only the Vatican could help you: endless celibacy.

To have your child called imaginative equals that she is completely mediocre, absolutely average and a total waste of time. Imagination is always within the range, it’s already suitable and just a little bit eccentric. Creative is like another word for cute, or perhaps the more contemporary “sweet”. Holy macaroni. It gets even better, the creative, those that know how to use their imagination, they listen to house music. They know the title of the last Hot Chip album and say Swedish House Mafia as if it were their friends. Yeah. Creative people have lunch with their parents and the pregnant girlfriend at the local contemporary art museum and would like to ride a single-speed bike but instead take yoga classes. Ashtanga, bitch!

Slavoj Zizek mentioned in a lecture a few years ago, that, you know, one says that people have dogs because they can’t stand people. “-In fact”, he went on, “it’s the

other way around, we spend time with people because we can't stand dogs." This obviously has to do with theatre: as long as we are with humans we are safe. As long as we are with people we don't need to face who we are. The same goes for creativity and imagination, normally it is considered that we use our imagination because we have something to say. It's the other way around, it's because we have nothing to say we seek refuge in imagination.

What haunts the creative is the possibility that somebody else did something similar, that some other designer already had thought about that, or used a resembling angle. I apologize for psychoanalysis, but you know – the creative is sort of a contemporary hysterical, somebody that through all possible means will cover the fact that they are totally average, mediocre and are scared shitless about risk, change and off balance. The creative stands in front of a dilemma: I have nothing to say and I want to be loved. I have never had an idea and I want to reach people. Great, like a paralyzed leg insert creativity. Use your imagination, nothing is a problem. I'm fine.

Imagination is one of those words that over the last decade have changed into some kind of a monster. Not as bad as creativity, corrupted into a business proposal, a job and a class. Imagination resonates positivity. To possess imagination is a good thing and a sign of inner beauty, but is it really? Imagination in the radical sense is nothing positive per se. My imagination is dark, dirty and probably perverse, but today it seems like imagination is all about well-meaning, behaving, state subsidized and more often privately funded. Both general and individual imagination have been corporatized, become commodity, but not manufactured by kids somewhere in China. You and me are the factories, everything and every time you use your

imagination you are working for the big corporation. It's clear, your creatively composed messages on your Facebook profile is you working as a volunteer for Mark Zuckerberg, but don't worry you're just one of the 500 million laborers. Workers international suddenly got a new vibe.

Every hour you spend with your NGO is an hour creativity that can be harvested in order to boost a CEO. Every DIY moment of your spare time is you working for no pay.

Imagination is not free. What one can imagine is always already possible. Imaginary things might be weird and suspicious but they are without exception installed in representation. Recalling Roland Barthes, you are not the author of your imagination. At best you are the DJ of your mind.

Imagination is not enough, it will never change anything it will just make you feel comfortable. People complain that they dream too much, the dreams you have when you sleep are just there to boost your identity. Imagine that! And even then you work for somebody, your dreams, creativity and imagination are making somebody make a lot of money. It's called financialization, capital dispersed into forms of life, individual and collective imagination.

We have to work harder, the only thing worthwhile imagining is the unimaginable. Shape up, we have to imagine what we can't even imagine imagining. This is hard work and endangers the subject, but as long as we are sufficient with imagining; blondes at beauty pageants will still answer: Peace on earth.

Creativity is not real it is realized and possible, it has nothing to do with the virtual and certainly no nothing to do with potentiality. Creativity is like James Bond, he might do it with excellence but he is only licensed to kill. Remember that scene in Fight Club where Brad Pitt gives his combatants the homework to pick a fight and lose. The

subject is given permission to expand what can be experienced, the moment is affective and “whatever”. But then of course, not even David Fincher dares to stay, keep the cool, but here comes the creative, things starts to change, movement, dramaturgy, scenes, silly costumes. Sadly and without any other option the permission to whatever turns into a license to imagine. The longer the experience lasts the more restricted my imagination, the longer it lasts the more stylized what I’m licensed to confirm.

The teacher that announced that your kid was creative – she is dead now right – has totally missed the point. Creative is the centerfold of well-meaning, good student. Creativity is a little bit crazy, but offers nothing else than healthy interpretation instead of insisting on production due no prior unity.

The end of creativity can easily backfire and come out like some sort of fundamental formalism or minimal electronica that operates as cover for some slimy romantic transcendence. To take on the task of abolishing imagination is immense, perhaps even impossible. The problem is that it’s damn hard to fail with enough dignity, to dare to set the things loose instead of bringing the ferry to the land of the dead safely over the river. Creativity is like a virgin consuming pornography. A teasing promise yet completely harmless, or even better: a feel-good show for identity suckers that claim to be, but aren’t into group sex.

Creativity is like emancipation so totally over. Emancipation? Is that a guy with ponytail? What is this talk about the spectator emancipating himself? Oh, I know it’s old school and so 2005, but I still hear it out there, e-man-cipa-tion – what a nice word to use. Bah, most art has no desire to emancipate anything at all and perhaps they’re better off with their curious yet surprised view on the world.

No emancipation. No way, it's business as usual. You know that choreographers have no idea. No idea what they are working on nor why. It's just some inner feeling that makes it happen, a sort of a mix between poetry, "I want to be an artist" and business-mindedness. The worst is interest. Bleuurgh! "-I'm interested in..." this is bad, very bad. What do you mean you are interested in...? I believe it means the cultivation of unconventional or even foreign capacities remaining within a given territory. It also means to postpone a possible statement and remain negotiable. People that are "interested in" won't stand up for their shit, totally not ready for the emancipation and that's where we misread Rancière. Eat this, if our spectators emancipate themselves they won't come back to the theatre.

Emancipation is for art what sex is for the discothèque.

I always thought that the main purpose for the disco was to have the guests rush home for a bang-fiesta. That the colored light and sweaty music was there to make you and me absolutely crazy – so "it's getting hot in here" we'd perform oral pleasure already in the taxi to horizontalism. How utterly disappointing to realize that discothèque isn't on a mission for free sex. They don't even want a bit of petting or a sensual moment without clothes. Fuck, what happened to idealism?

In fact, it's the other way around: disco, and emancipation in the arts, is there to make us go home alone, to skulk back to base solo, wake up miserable or fiddle with ourselves until we doze off exhausted, ridden by dreams where we have sex with an ex that left us for somebody younger. A Greek composer, or an eco friendly furniture designer. But, oups – back to the disco! Exactly that's what the disco wants, it wants us to come back, again and again. Disco don't make money on us practicing multi-

ple orgasms or even trying out the strap-on. The disco, my friend, the disco is performing the promise of wow... fuck me, harder, that was sooo good. And it will do its very very best in letting you down night after night, night after night.

If The Swedish House Mafia is on a mission it's not sex on the beach when the sun comes up, it's about making Ibiza free from sexually transmitted inconveniences. If you are into sex, stop dancing. Of course we already knew that musicians all are sexually frustrated, but the DJ is an individual with a deep sexual trauma, something about guilt, coming too early, size, substituting the sexual act with beat mixing and a back-spin. – I'm coming – But the disco is, I must confess, slightly benevolent to one-night stands. On the basis of repetition, let's have another one tomorrow... – and fear, like the pest, that you and I start a relationship. The disco hates kids, it's the evidence for failing to fool us in relation to that promise. The disco wants you to stay, it wants you to sweat and dance and drink as much as possible, every night, until six in the morning and let's go on. The disco is for making money and we aren't exactly shopping when doing it on the hotel room floor.

Same with emancipation, dance and theatre don't want it. Just the promise and it should fail time and again. I like it, when we go see those critical dance and theatre groups, they are so incredibly theatre – you know something is loose upstairs – the elevator is not going all the way to the top thing – that they don't even know that they are performing the promise of an emancipation that they wish to fail. Emancipated spectators know that theatre is stupid – they don't come back. So next time you are about to take off for a dance show, forget about it and have sex instead.

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Sociology. Taste it. What do you experience?  
So-ci-o-lo-gy

Admit it, it's embarrassing. There is a taste of enthusiasm, of desire to engage, however always at decent distance. I shiver, when I think about it. Check it out: somebody slides up to you at a party with a hello sexy kind of gaze. After some proper small talk, the mandatory "so what do you do" question pops up. I would lie, say I'm a hairdresser, interior decorator or even that I design furniture, rather than to have to admit: "I'm a sociologist" or – holy fuckin' Moses – even worse "I work in sociology". I'd rather die, spend the night with Oprah Winfrey without knickers or watch all the films by the guy who did Amores Perros, without breaks, even without a bottle of whiskey to calm my nerves. – Did you like that film Babel, shame on you SHAME – - This one is even better, what if you – the Sociologist – would slide up to a superbabe and after some proper chit chat have to admit you in fact are a sociologist. I mean, what would you do if your date would say something like: "I'm really interested in people." Oh my fuckin god, where's the exit. I mean even if your date were a look-a-like of, what's his name, Sean Penn – Oh yeah he was the protagonist in the Amores movie. Get out of town.

I believe we have found a little brother to Woody and his psychoanalytical mumbo-jumbo, the kid is known as Sociology, not really interested in minds and identity, but in people. You know people in general without generalization, and the worst of all he is contemporary which is to say he has exchanged ideology for forgiveness, and he

forgives to a soundtrack by Gustavo Santaolalla. Now that is seriously fucked up.

It is obvious that theatre makers are in fact just a bunch of failed psychoanalysts, and those are the good ones. The bad ones are more like family therapists, common shrinks or, lately, cognitive behavioral therapists. The really good ones, I mean they are of course all very bad, after all they are theatre directors, have probably terminated their practice and spend their time at the university. Those are the really evil ones because they are, you know, undercover, and might like appear, like, interesting to begin with. But don't worry they are like American serial killers, they really want to be caught. So if you're smart you will soon detect patterns, signs, combinations. Just remember don't try to think as they think, it will only make it worse. Be polite, excuse yourself and disappear. They won't take offense, remember, they have really cool state institutions to fall back on.

What is not so obvious is that almost all dance makers and choreographers, are – I don't really know which – failed or really successful sociologists. No they are better than that, they are dance makers because they were too embarrassed to work in sociology, but never-the-less they all are. Something has gone terribly wrong with dance, it's flooded with sociology all over the place. What the fuck happened to abstraction, what's wrong with seriously homogenous bodies. Give me back some serious geometry [no, I don't mean Emilio Greco, and btw stop stop stop making dance installations, that's not even sociology, it's embarrassing and the night side of betrayal of our practice.] Pina Bausch was at least decent enough to do proper field studies [chain smoking and deeply alcoholic], but the contemporary choreographer... and you know they all work

with some kind of improvisation, and most of them have no fuckin idea about what choreography is but use every excuse not to have to make any of it, or are using sociological protocols even for that. Help me from those so called dance performances where the executors, oh so personally, already after 20 minutes have danced, talked, sung, played theatre and help me god played some instruments. Dance performances with folk music should be forbidden, especially engaging kletzmer.

With a generous gesture they, the sociologists, offer their dancers create the choreography by themselves, obviously under supervision of the author who through this gesture swears himself free from any kind of responsibility and at the same time produces himself as invincible. The sociologist collects and distributes perfectly balanced pieces in order not to make anybody choke. Sociology is for ladies over 50, oh it makes them feel good. So very good.

They are everywhere – perhaps not in the US – but there are tons of them in Europe. In Berlin, flocks, and they are of course really good in institutional policy – they know people but have no idea about choreography – so all of them are on lifelong contracts with state funded venues. In Belgium the policy is different, so they have established private clinics or institutes instead, tendentially with the result that they forget to do fundamental research and become exactly the media hungry 20 second researchers that Bourdieu warned us of.

The sociologists in dance are necessarily anti-intellectual. They are interested in people, in developing and refining a body of knowledge about human social activity, and the goal is always to make our lives less complicated, less fucked up, to give us solace and hope about the human condition. To make us appreciate each other as we

really are, to see our real identities behind the masks of the everyday. Fuck off! Dance is not about comfort, it's not about consolation, not a hand on your shoulder when you cry. Dance is about constructions, its artifice and precision. When Cunningham says: "When I dance I dance there is nothing more to it" – haven't you understood, that it is not an urgency for authenticity or body, it is a celebration of becoming inhuman, to become blank.

Cunningham didn't engage in eastern practices to become a softy and move to San Francisco, no it was in order to get away from the all too human modes of composition etc. including heterosexual dominance that we operate through in the west.

Hey, you guys that nowadays talk about how hard and angular Cunningham's material really was, with an attached OMG. Get it, that's what makes him bearable, and that's where Bill Forsythe lost it. Fuckin sociologist. Come on, stop that improvisation nonsense, you just want to be loved, go back to the neoclassical and deconstructed, that was at least hard and didn't excuse itself or its academic self-obsession.

The really bad ones, those that one would call hobby sociologists are those that defend the body as something that carries another knowledge, some other I don't know what capacity to open our petit subjects to a bigger "you know what I mean". Those that obsessively search for practices that produce states, that go visit shamans or think that BMC or authentic movement will make them richer than engagement in reason or thought. Those are bad. No there is one worse type, the self-sociologist, or the kind of dance maker that is interested in people as long as it equals himself.

Think about it, the next time you sail up to that Ashton Kutcher type gorgeous, or slide inbetween Angelina and Cameron, is it really appropriate that you respond with dance maker or choreographer, or – hand on your heart – is it time that you face the fact: You are a sociologist.

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Attending a show a while ago the following reflections arose. The piece spins on rock n' roll as experience - it's loud, spectacular and intensely stupid. This show is like dirty talk on the level of the square root of 69 is 8 some-thing' right?

The material – one of those terms that too many use seemingly without knowing what it means – is in no respect elaborate and the use of space has more to do with flashing lights, smoke, bitches and leather jackets than Euclid or dramaturgy [thank God for that]. Without ornamentation it's equivocal in the same way as Axl Rose is an anagram for oral sex. The audience is shaken, blown away and for the encore – mandatory, as this is about the spirit of rock – they stand up and shout hands in the air to “We Will Rock You”. The piece has zero to do with analysis, it is pure intensity, without safety net, it's rockshow.

Next to me a colleague, the only person in the space not standing on her toes, preferring to maintain distance and keep the analytical façade up. After the show she explains that she has many things to say but that it's not the right moment, assuming that that could-should have some influence on the piece?

What does she think? That the piece will be better off because she has something to say? Why does she pronounce herself as an authority of choreography and dance?

This, fellow travelers, is the famous critical distance, once necessary but now nothing more than a means to consolidate what dance can already be. Today critical distance equals conservative, a defensive posture that maintains a defined territory. It's the face of somebody that looks for answers or, even worse, questions, of a person that has decided not to be part of the game.

This is not a crusade against critical or critique. Criticality is certainly nauseating but that's another story. No, the problem is the moment, or timing, of critique. If we want to produce something with and for dance, we must also be ready to put away distance and step into the mess. Critical in respect of experiences concerned with representation, makes no difference, but if it is posed onto the self, i.e. an actual reflexive labor, it can indeed move mountains. What you should ask yourself, instead of do I perform the correct ignorant distance, is, how you are able to participate in the experience given? Why does a dance audience desire to present the stone-face attitude which most of all reminds me of how I, myself, am totally unable to make it happen in a social-dance situation. The skeptical distance that I put up is precisely a miserable reminder that I'm not brave enough to hit the floor, go nuts to the wrong music or give in to self-expression. Spectacle doesn't become less spectacle because you put on the skeptical face, propose yourself as an observer or a benevolent critic. Critical distance reproduces recognition and asserts established hierarchies.

We are all familiar with discourses that propose that critique has been incorporated by capitalism and lost its touch. So why do we still insist? Why do we sit there with our skeptical faces looking like we don't know what enjoying oneself means? Why do we sit around as if perma-

nently constipated trying to reinstate every experience into something known?

A few years ago it became synonymous with good pieces if the performer looked as if he or she was thinking or inspecting his or her own behavior on stage. That was all fine, but two weeks after the fad kicked in, the self-aware sort of meta-alienation became style and however the performer had done the show so and so many times he or she still looked like it was happening for the first time. Curious yet comfortable, and it didn't matter if the show had been rehearsed for three months. Overnight the "thinking" performer was made representation and all was restored and past-tense.

Another few years ago the fad was about clarity. A piece was not clear enough? Clear what, and who'd be interested in clear? A proposal that wasn't transparent was disqualified for capitalizing on the audience [somebody had read the first chapter of one or other Luhmann book but not the following eighteen]. But isn't transparency equal to having to risk elimination. Transparency reinstalls the division between body and mind and makes sure nothing unexpected can happen.

The moment something is clear, when we know what it is, it is as exiting as an aquarium, an Oxfam commercial or Matt Damon, the only thing we can cherish is excellence and culpability. The thinking performer, the skeptical distance and clarity has turned dance into a zombie. But in dance the zombie is not symbolizing the unknown other but has instead incorporated the zombie-life into itself: it feeds on the few exceptions, on the few choreographers that are brave enough to be at least a little bit foolish. Dance has become exiting in the same way as zombies practicing safe sex.

The zombie in dance has ripped to pieces the last little spirit to breach traditions in favor of a ubiquitous concern for the well-being of dance. In order to get around the problem it's time we call in Max von Sydow to exorcise the zombie within. It is time that we put away that skeptical face, the face that seems to want to tell all those that are enjoying themselves that they are stupid. It is time to celebrate dance and cherish a sense of havoc and tumult, no matter what.

Yet another few year ago - say a thousand, at the premiere party of the first dance piece I was part of, an old friend and choreographer came up to me and said: "... but why?". "... but why? Why, Mårten..." - using my first name to sort of emphasize that this is about to be painful: "-Why do you always have to do things that you have absolutely no idea about?"

The moment that followed, still present in my body is vivid, my self-esteem, the sensation of having created something, having engaged in an adventure momentarily turned into a sense of failure and anger. How stupid, to estimate that a "professional" choreographer would show me respect. My naïveté had been impressive. What we had performed obviously posed a threat to her - we had no idea - and I thought she'd value what we had done? Stupid. I still carry that comment with me, day to day, for fifteen years: "... but why?" It was devastating, traumatizing and a blow to my embarrassing conviction to idealism. But unfortunate for the choreographer and even more so to choreography, the reaction wasn't exactly benevolent to her but resulted in an ongoing fuck you and fuck your interior decoration dance. Fuck your well-meaning arguments. I'm not interested in knowing what I'm doing, that's like buying an album with Devendra Banhart on iTunes.

Today, the choreographer is still active, my age and a celebrity in dance (almost): loved and appreciated, and considering the previous statement, it all makes sense, because she is still doing exactly what she was really good at fifteen years ago. More of the same. Jesus, she must be bored?

“-Why, Mårten...” – well, if for no other reason than not to get bored, but more profoundly because doing what I have no idea about is puts things under pressure. Doing what I can’t offers two opportunities, first: the contestation of the self, i.e. a capacity of becoming other, and second: the sense of having nothing to lose, and thus opening for a possible destabilization of a given territory.

To do things you have no idea about, is a means to complexify conventions, norms and identification processes. It is a means to abolish excellence, which as we know is by definition homogenizing, the axiom of maintenance of norm, something that feeds on exclusion.

It is easy to admire and a tough job to keep excellence away as it is one part of the Janus face of capitalism: territorialization.

Sitting through another piece by Jerome Bel, which is a tragedy exactly in that sense. How did it happen that an artist with such passion for doing the wrong... not so many years later has been completely consumed by excellence, finesse [another word for dramaturgy] and compulsive fetishism [another word for a need to be loved].

Don’t go anti, but fear excellence; it’s a state-funded army, be a war-machine expel yourself, hide in the dessert. Only by insisting on doing what you can’t you are a threat to good governance. Excellence knows its arms our job is to invent new weapons.

Don't disguise yourself, don't go undercover, abolish history, don't choose your fights, fuck negotiation and, remember, betray all sides

Take drugs. Law abiding citizens are not for us. Enjoy all kinds of mystical stimuli. We have excluded the word addiction from our vocabulary. “-Good, no?” Take drugs but refuse the idea of user. User directed networks, quite embarrassing. Instead take drugs. I like alternative movies, indie films, French movies, even, but alternative cinemas, movie theatres are, to say the least a bit *comme ci comme ça*. They smoke pot those people and some have colorful tattoos on one arm. Not a good idea. Take drugs. You would obviously never take drugs at a party or whilst clubbing. Take drugs on Tuesdays, around two in the afternoon. That's a good moment, and preferably alone. And say Amen when you inhale. One should keep away from taking drugs with close friends of the same sex, and never with persons to which one have whatever amorous relation. Sex on cocaine is really overrated. Avoid that.

Dance – dance a lot, but don't become a user. Enjoy all kinds of movements – up and down, even side to side – but reject any temptation of becoming a dancer, and even worse a choreographer. You “are” not a choreographer. Choreography is something one does, not something that defines one's being. You know it already, but this cannot be repeated enough many times, it's a profession, a job, work, trade, and it is not a calling. You don't have a gift, you are not addicted! Madonna was right all the time, choreography is like love, it's something that we do. The moment it touches upon something else – obsession – it all goes down the drain. Obviously, somebody that would consider that love is something special, not just an activity,

or choreography a calling, would be both a worthless lover and choreographer. Why, well if it's not entirely in my own power but actually choreography, on some transcendental basis that makes choreography, I can but confirm choreography. I want a lover that decides, not one that is addicted, I don't want a user. I want my lover to take me on Tuesday around fourteen hundred hours, and not after the party, half drunk and not completely decided, but you know...

Passionate. When somebody is baptized passionate, "such a passionate person" you know it's time to disappear. We don't want passionate, that's worse than having a calling. We want reason, labor, activity, style, superficiality, sex, darkness, carnival and putrefaction but, by God, not passion. Passionate is self-promotion and conservative. At the end of the day it's simply narrow-minded since it prefers quantity in front of quality. People that are passionate about dance utter things like, maybe it wasn't a masterpiece but at least they are doing something. That's very bad, very very bad. At least- is never good. Tell people to stop, me too – dance should better die, be terminated for good than "at least" be doing something. Fuck passion, let's go to work. Quality is also fucked up, but that's another story. Stop your disgusting desire for dialectics. We can think without it!

Passion is not enough. Passion is enthusiastic and forgiving. Passion is because because [in the bad sense of because]. Passionate individuals say that they organize things laterally, they give workshops were you can feel stuff but only what you are supposed to. Vera Mantero is passionate, and she improvises. Passionate people take an interest in opening up – opening up the body, exploring its limits and depths. But opening up is always in style, it always defends the body vis à vis a state of barbarism.

They worship the body as a possibility for a deeper experience, for something not civilized, for something that language cannot grasp. Those are the people that will betray the revolution. Abolish them, send them to France – oh my they already live there.

I prefer poetry. Poetry is excellent. I like poetry because it is excessive and only created. There is no deeper experience in poetry. It's just language straight up. Poetry is not passionate, but constructed. It's precise and not about breathing. When somebody starts to talk about poetry in respect of rhythm - change the subject. We like poetry because it is inorganic, superficial, non-human. We hate passion because it wants us all well, we denounce passion because it strives for oneness. We love poetry because it is violent and aggressive. We do poetry because it divides, differentiates and breaches.

Passion is not enough, it's passive and reactive. We totally don't "just do it" – that's like Beckett – göööööö. We do things, we do things, we do things, we do things, because we refuse to stick to what we know. We are pretending to be fanatics, but what we do is poetry, not music – no no no we make sounds. We don't organize them, we just make sounds, poetry - we make ourselves non-human. We do things, we do things, we do things like Egyptians – hieroglyphs – poetry made of strong entities and weak connections. Connections so weak they can only be made, only manufactured, only artificial. Connections so vague, sounds so superficial, poetry so hollow, we become inorganic. That's what we do. We are not passionate, no chance, but we like what we do.

## EPISODE 4

### Nice Girlfriend Choreography

A few years ago a not so close friend told me that me and my at the time already ex or something girlfriend really fit so good together. Like as it was an absolute impossibility that we'd terminate our relation, that we should have stayed together to show that life isn't that bad after all. But what is that person saying actually? Was I s'posed to apologize for being unable to maintain a relation even with somebody I fit so well together with? Feel guilty for stealing an excellent compatibility from the world, a duet that must have served as an example or something for I don't know what?

I hear myself say, "Yeah, that's exactly why we broke up..." I mean why spend your life with something that fits well, work, is uncomplicated, suitable and confirms the excellence and sustainability of a heterosexual couple relation. Suddenly it struck me, if I'm a fitting girlfriend kind of guy what kind of choreographer am I then? Shit, I don't even dare to mention any names, it's too embarrassing. It's beyond dance theatre [that's at least drama and an occasional pained negligee-dance with erect nipples], it must be something British... not Wayne MacGregor – that's at

least in it for the money [MacGregor's collaborations with composers, video and set is like "I know she is ugly but at least she is from a rich family] – more like Michael Clark in Tate Modern.

From that moment on I decided that anything girlfriend like that fits is an instant no-no. Anything that's like hand in glove or "it feels so natural" is an absolute CUL8ER. The argumentation is simple, a partner that makes things easy, soft, linear, friendly, and we share so much – stabilize me – her - us and the rest of the freakin world – is that what I'm interested in? It's not that I'm looking for trouble – well maybe I am – but I hope my ambitions due love and partnership is a bit more advanced than my choice of food processor, e-mail software or – - – OMG, think about the idea of a girlfriend that's like that house music they play in advertisement bureaus. You know what I mean – - – music you don't hear but that, metaphorically speaking, makes you lose your peripheral vision.

Give it one more second. How does it feel? Think about it, a partner that isn't an excessive effort and constant renegotiation is a waste of time or something that just offers comfort. Is that what you want? A girl/boyfriend that says "You're okay..." that wants you to be just like you are? Why would I need a girlfriend if I was okay, and why would I like to continue to be this myself? Or, another of those tacky Western utterances: "-You are the first girlfriend that hasn't tried to change who I am, that allow me to be myself." If you want to be yourself be single! Hello, relations, whatever kind is not about making you more of the same. No, it's about producing change, it's about making life difficult.

You guest it, the contemporary dance, performance and art landscape is more and more resembling one of those

girl or boyfriends that makes no noise what so ever, that supports your petty little ego, boosts your average personality, is comfortable, gives you just a little bit bad-consciousness when you accidentally end up between the legs of another, and use floss.

Lately I feel invaded by girlfriend dance. Not my girlfriend's dances but indeed dance pieces and choreographies, exhibitions, festival programs and what not that is designed to be exactly like the worst kind of girlfriend. I can't stand those pieces – a significant part of which is produced in Belgium – works that present a little, fairly well articulated idea, or proposition, although nothing that would make you do anything more radical then raise your eyebrow ever so little. Propositions that makes you utter an inner “wow”, but not because of a set of awesome hooters, a seriously advanced this or that but exactly because its so well formulated, so medium rare, so exquisitely harmless and totally comfortable middleclass shared economy should we move in together.

Those disgusting performances, always understood as dance pieces but never with outspoken choreographic ambitions, are soaked in well contained modesty, political well-meaning without propagating nothing at all, are conceptually accurate without being conceptual, dressed in a kind of almost quotidian but not quite and they are more – yes – way more predictable than any boyfriend. They are in one word transparent, crystal clear and without even a trace of trouble, trickery or truth. They are trustworthy without demand. They ask for nothing and are condescending when you make an effort.

After the little idea is presented. Remember with my eyebrow elevated an inkling, a series of more or less precise perspectives or reflections upon the idea is presented.

Or should we say approaches are beings “played” with, although not in a very playful way. This goes on, for far too long – consistency is of utmost importance – until the idea is exposed in all it’s, or lack of, complexity. We are not speaking of over production, of going over the top, some production of lack, incompatibility or weird, but exactly about perspectives and proportion. Stuff that consolidate the already available -asks no questions about format or programming strategies - and fulfills the estimations of production value, touring opportunities, collaboration, participation and social engagement imposed by art councils, residency programs, production houses and education.

So far so good, there is in neo-liberalism nothing good per se in biting the hand that feed you [the opportunist is obviously more than ever the “winner”], but what makes this kind of work unbearable is that it undermines any kind of political critique or even conversation. They are so elegantly put together that the only thing that I can say is “well done”, “very...”, “good” – “sympathetic” is an expression that comes to mind, but really, it’s fulfillment without content, engagement without differentiation, or even better they are self-fulfilling prophecies although the prophecies aren’t exactly all encompassing revolutions, the end of the world or something else groovy, but rather some “delicate” matter that fits perfectly well in a notebook and can be explained to programmers with ADHD or some other attention deficit issue.

Yep, these pieces are like perfect perfect girlfriends - they fit so well that the day you stop seeing her it’s like nothing happened. Great whilst it lasted and no loss when ended. Like John Legend. Like no further comments. In one word self-explanatory. Like Kirsten Dunst before “Melancholia”, you know when she was so Mary Jane Watson.

There was time when dance and choreography needed to distance itself from being an art-form spoken about as “oh how interesting” or “what beautiful bodies...”. But the urge for transparency, clarity, conceptual display and the body as sign totally resonates of Butler, language theory, the 90s, millennial anxiety [We are all gonna die...] and somebody misreading Roland Barthes, and that time is totally passé. What we need today, in the midst of ubiquitous capitalism with know way out, is so not a nice girlfriend but an overwhelming mismatch, a deep conflict, an absolutely impossible situation, an unsolvable mystery all in order to disqualify any and every solution, any and every imagination, any and every family therapy.

Dance and performance of today that is not absolutely and totally impossible to form a relationship with is simply a waste of time. Choreographies to which there are reliable interpretational tools must be abolished. What we need is things that withdraw, so hopelessly complicated that they refuse to be named, so dark that only speculation can grasp them.

What art is good for is not probability, transparency, reliability or media specificity. Fuck no, after decades of mistrust it is time to forgive Bruce Nauman for saying: “You know... what an artists does is to uncover mystic truths.” Goddamn, if he wasn’t right.

The scenario however can get so much worse. Not only is the partner nice and so amazing [in the negative sense of the word], of course he/she is amazing who isn’t in 2011, but what kind of relationship are you engaging in? Gotcha...

Are you having an open relationship? Are you, hands on the heart? That’s like so...

Me, I always wondered what that could mean? Sure, I know it means something in relation to sexuality, but of course only within certain limits. Usually not defined until it's already too late and afterwards we don't speak with each other for years. Hate, or is it rather greed, is spreading because we were so open.

In fact we, or you, weren't open to anything, we were just securing a certain negotiability in respect of our individual subjectivities. We spoke about it in whispery voices and referred to previous experiences in vague words. We didn't want to lock each other and our new love up, celebrated liberty and told each other about the importance of not transforming love into an institution. If we'd been art students we'd be inscribed in the individual study plan at the art academy entitled: Free Art. You know make art, be free, everything is open as long as it sleeps with exhibition contexts and makes out with the white cube. I wonder if they have a document in the art academy that defines what that program actually implies? The program Free Art [Freie Kunst or Fri Konst] is exactly as liberated as our open relationship. It's easy peasy to vote for openness but to live the consequences is not always that sportif et tres chique.

Yepp, that's how open we are, approximately not at all! Open in our present regime means to maintain one's self-employment even when entering an institutional frame, never to give up availability expecting nothing and never investing more than what you know you can bring back on short-term basis. Open and affirmative is today's answer to 19s century peasant economy: secure the future, don't invest without security, trust nobody and stick to yourself. Open and affirmative is this season's name for survival economy and means essentially that I can afford you. My

openness depends on my capacity to assume your investment negotiated in respect of my capital. If you exceed the capacity which can be afforded, it will be cracked, and such crack can not produce strength as it is built on proximity and not on structural reliability. Openness in this respect implies an escalating regime of surveillance as the stakes are getting higher [you suddenly gave her a key, he paid for the flight tickets to... and didn't you look for a flat...] and yet open open open open open... – until every move potentially breaches the agreement: “-I so don't want to stand there without you and you run off with that Greek composer.” Openness is the word neo-liberalism uses for paranoia.

When the choreographer, three months before rehearsal starts trying to convince you, accompanied with a pleasant hand gesture: “I'm really looking forward to an open process” you know what it means? Sneak out the back door. If he or she moves on ranting about sharing and affirmation, don't sneak but run for the nearest exit! Contemporary dance and choreography is slam packed with open - open people, open work, open programs, open research, open start with yourself, open labs and openness in general - flooded in fact - and we obviously know that it is the name of the game if you want to survive, hire a producer and make it onto the market.

You are invited to sleep around the best you want and we might not even work on one thing. We do parallel play like kids, next to instead of on top of. Sure, we know that choreographers are never interested in any form of radical openness, but you – the doer is calculated as affordance. You are supposed to satisfy the choreographer also due your excursions into other territories and obviously the moment you are allowed to invest, the choreographer is

certainly about to use his or her opportunities to capitalize on you. Your employer, the choreographer will first demand his or her relative freedom in return and when the breach happens, turning her back on you forever, backstabbing as soon as there is an opportunity.

Dance and choreography of today is constituted on the basis of such liberal well-meaning affirmative openness. Dance is circulated around a permission that can merely result in a panoptic economy that eradicates any attempt of expansion, experiment, deterritorialization or consideration of an outside. We must terminate our desire for openness independently if it is concerning the body, concepts, choreography, practices, processes, production, products or whatever p-word as it only makes us more constipated, worried, psychoanalytical [spit on it], closed and paranoid. The only thing such an openness can produce is mediocre sex with all your lovers, read investments and affordances, because you can't engage in sex but will be occupied with calculating risk economy and probability of investment. You'll fear that your investment will not be returned. You will be doing surveillance instead of having group sex with the neighbors.

A self-proclaimed perfectionist, somebody that utter sentences like: "I'm a perfectionist, you know!" What a shitty thing to do to oneself but what does it mean? In fact the auto-perfectionist is a person that has interiorized openness into the subject and enjoys it with a certain sadistic pleasure. You don't have to be particularly clever to realize that the perfectionist will shun radical openness for anything. Perfectionism in this sense is precisely about securing investments.

You can do a perfectionist warning self-test. Scrutinize yourself. Are you normally happier about the original pro-

posal than the finished product? Are you sometimes disappointed in the people you worked with because the result didn't come out as you had expected?

If yes, this is a bad sign, a very bad sign. You are a perfectionist! You are a perfectionist and you will never make anything happen, just surveil your own activities and maybe not die poor but your inner life will be desert. You will be successful in life but will be remembered only by Milos Forman.

Get rid of your perfectionist attitudes, your childhood trauma was bad but don't let it stand in your way. Just because you felt left out as a kid, that you suffered anxiety attacks as a young teenager, don't allow yourself to make that render your work and your time as a grown up suck too. Stop it. I'll back you, I totally will! Thug life-style: Word-up.

Openness is not the absence of closure on the contrary, radical openness, is a matter of engaging in strategic closure, a kind of self-imposed restriction that forces you to produce solutions without direction. Strategic closure is the method of radical openness, an openness that breaches and opens to a real outside. This is the openness of a character the perfectionist cannot access precisely because it is not offering itself to criteria such as good or bad, light or dark, it simply isn't dialectic. The perfectionist is a sucker for dialectics and will propose things like: without dialectics we can't think and mean it in a positive sense. A radical openness gives up dialectics, waves bye-bye to creativity and imagination in favor of an innovative action, or better as innovation today appears to take place not as breach but as a slow process of so-to-say daily upgrades which are so slow and fast that we don't notice them transforming our subjectivities. Better – an immigratory action, which here

becomes associated with a kind of a state of exception. Innovation can be traced; can be subject to reversed engineering, and it remains well-meaning however turbulent, but immigration is apocalyptic in so matter that the subject cannot return, and either must live life mourning the past or grab whatever is around. Whatever not in the sense of opportunities but as real, undifferentiated substance. Immigration, as opposed to the formally indifferent modification of the commodity, involves a distributed decision that cannot refer to any normative condition or application of grammatical rules.

Rules can never stipulate their application. Immigration is not simply something that breaks rules [simultaneously affirming them in the act of transgression] but an action that changes the grammatical system itself, operating in a space where the grammatical rule cannot be distinguished from the empirical event. This space is the space of radical openness, a space of zero reliability and arbitrary power, but as we have seen it can not be approached, in any sense, least not through protocols of openness, but can only be set in motion through the insertion of closure, of incompatible protocols that entangle the subject to the extent that he or she can but fuck up magnificently. A kind of *d'enfer*, a satanic dynamic that opens the subject, space or time to an endless corruption. Radical openness is change produced without prior unity.

Ladies and gentlemen, if you want sex to be amazing the first thing to do is to go monogamy. Closure is the new multiple orgasm, radical openness is that, seriously I have no idea moment of: aimless conviction.

Aimless conviction has nothing to do with freedom. On the contrary, it's the suspended moment when nothing else must be done, the moment when probability leaves the

building, when reality gains necessity not because of this or that, but what is is contingent. “-Feel free...” that’s the moment when you leave. You just walk out and into the world, and you might actually feel free, but then feeling is obviously not free. It didn’t come as a surprise your suspicions were just confirmed. It all started with the word “dialogue”, became obvious with “I’m most of all interested in you and your work” and the curtain went all the way down when the importance of taking time was emphasized and repeated. “-Feel free” was just the last drop. Never again.

“-Feel free” are you totally out of your mind, don’t tell me anything about free. I decide when I want to be liberated, it is my freedom, and watch out, you don’t want to have anything to do with it. The moment you oblige me to feel free you have done nothing smaller than obliterated any opportunity to free anything at all. The more free you want me to be the more bulimic I’ll become. “Feel free” and you have already decided how free looks, how it performs a certain pleasant conviviality within the boundaries of contemporary liberal capitalism. Free as in individual yet confirming your existence i.e. you. Indeed you have to pursue, scrutinize and leave behind your personal interests for any kind of freedom, a freedom that is not just a weekend in the country side, or a conference about autonomous knowledge.

Workshop, workshop, workshops – something dance and performance have developed a rather obsessive relationship to. And how many times have I, you, we heard the workshop host tell us to feel free. Yeah, sure it might have been important, however fucked up during the heyday of hegemonic welfare state. “Feel free” might have been an option when Erica Jong, a kundalini handbook and

Robert Pirsig's "Zen and The Art of Motorcycle Maintenance" were collaborating on your night table, but today "feel free" is like asking me to become a communist, and I don't even remember who Uncle Ho, as in Chi Minh, was?

Same thing with this dialogue BS. Why would I participate in a workshop, perhaps even pay for it in order to "have a dialogue"? I have dialogues every day all the time, I'm fuckin full of social networks, Skype and SMS-hysteria. Let me be, talk to me and I'll listen I didn't come here to chit chat, that's what the world is made of, so why. Do I appear like someone from Williamsburg? – Look, workshops aren't for lonely people that go shopping to have somebody to talk to. And you are not responsible to make me happy, but rather the contrary. Be hostile. I participate in a workshop to get as much information as possible. Pack me full, we have no desire at all to listen to the workshop host having a dialogue with some whatever dance artist from Scotland that missed the train already decades ago. Or, oh my, the older artists that participate in workshops who haven't understood that their career options are totally over and can't stop telling anecdotes without a punch line. No, I'm sorry I'm not giving workshops to engage in a dialogue, this is about knowledge production. Full stop.

And we all know what the urgency for taking one's time actually is? It's just a means to to disguise that I haven't got that much to say and in fact I have no idea what I'm doing here. The taking-once-time-hang-up – goddamn I hate artistic research and its petty arguments around slowing down and meeting other artists – I have nothing but artists around me and most of them are far too slow – The taking-once-time-hang-up is not for you it is for the sake of the workshop host. Look, I can take my time the whole year, every day if I want. I take my time right now. And if

I want to take my time it's certainly not by slowing down. Long silences are not an evidence that a workshop was good, intense or mind expanding, it's more often just the result of not being good enough. Slowing down doesn't imply a critique of capitalism, slow is already incorporated and a concept Jamie Oliver sold to Channel 4. It's called slow-food.

Workshops are a menace. Don't take them, they are bad for you, they make you a devotee to people that want attention. What do you think you will learn from a week five hours a day with whoever artist? Do you think Robert Stein will provide a revelation, that Tim Etchells will show you the light or Ivo Dimchew make you make a solo worthy of yourself? If I can deliver you, you were on the wrong track in the first place. Stay home, don't fall for it. Make your own workshop if you need, it's there all of it on the internet, and internet won't need your confirmation. The workshop host just wants to be loved. Make your own and love yourself. I mean why do you give workshops? Because you are so busy touring your own works? Because you run a large-scale dance company consuming the festival circuit? I don't think so, we are d'accord right, people that give workshops are losers. Expel all workshop hosts, put them all up in some reality show on a deserted island, and start doing it yourself.

The reason why workshops are so bad is because if they were great then the mediocre artists would gain opportunities in teaching that would stand in the way for the up-keeping of their mediocre careers in the field, and that in turn would subtract even more belonging and sense of being a choreographer or performance artist. Workshops are bad because they have to be, not because of lack on knowledge. Wishful thinking? Stop taking them.

At the same time workshop is obviously totally contemporary. The piece-making choreographer enjoys Fordist economies and modes of circulation, which basically means convincing an audience member that his so or so much of money was worth investing and on top of that the approach to the world proposed by the piece was so cool that I – the spectator – will change my mind about... like everything. Not very likely, but in a workshop the whole idea is that the participant has already decided that the situation is awesome and is there to be transformed. Stop thinking that knowledge should be linear, clear, casual and sympathetic to general narratives. No, the workshop host's job is not to regurgitate but to ruminate with the participants. But of course to ruminate totally inside out, in reverse - to process knowledge – practical and theoretical – in ways that make the participant completely dizzy, not able to nod anything at all and certainly not say “-Ah, I understand.”

Don't try to give another one's workshop, insist on the format being you and nobody else. Be a capitalist, be the Gordon Gekko of Arsenal, i.e. the Wallstreet of dance workshops. David Zambrano, is amazing, but he is also the last giant. There is no place for such anymore, no workshop can be fresh and groovy for half a century. Workshops are like pop music best before and best before is right now quite soon [which of course is excellent, since the only alternatives are stagnation and bore]. Technique is over, skill-based training is dead, workshop is about becoming specific, fuck experts, the next cool is all about competence.

Workshop today is not about freeing somebody, perhaps the opposite – yes indeed the problem is that people are so free they have no idea what they are doing or what

doing is. Nor for that matter about facilitating knowledge. Workshop is a line of flight, a convergence gone astray, it is a set of circumstances that organizes responsibility, social relations, power and knowledge in ways that obey the rules of capitalism and simultaneously propose the possibility of another systematic. Don't give workshops to survive, but to die a little.

Workshop is amazing the moment you give up your pretense to knowledge. The market of performances and dance pieces is saturated and fucked from left to right by networks, subsidy frames and cowardly programmers, workshop, obviously, is the place to be – dance pieces are things, workshops are cognitive production – so where do you want to be. Dance pieces are things, workshops are experiences and transformation – so where do you want to be?

Workshops is where we can experiment, make fools of ourselves, come up with absolutely idiotic stuff and talk for too long, like really too long and like every day for two weeks. It's brilliant, and you have endless opportunities to manipulate people, brainwash them, if you want. Yes, Benoit Lachambre is a great teacher but the only thing he does is to make you him. Workshops featuring legacy, is so not contemporary. Fuck that, I manipulate you to become different than me, that's the future. My job is to individuate you. Shake you out of belonging and make you make the impossible move. Away away away, to a free that has no feelings, to a free that knows no interests, but is desire pure and simple.

In the workshop we have nothing to lose so let's lose it. And hey, don't you dare to say thank you. I didn't do it as a service. I didn't do it for your sake. I did it just because. Just because! Workshop is like the contemporary version of free sex, free group sex.

When we are anyways at it, forbid showings. Forbid showings! They are a menace and nothing but a grey day. Stop them, they are like Prozac – they make you happy for the wrong reason. Stop them, they are calls for help – “-I don’t know what to do now, help me? Offer me a solution.” Stop showings they don’t make the mediocre better and that’s a bad thing.

A choreographer explains: “-What we will experience today is the result of a week’s work.” Stop this apologetic bullshit, at least keep up a good face. Do you apologize before a one-night stand, too?

A choreographer says, “-Great if you come. It’s gonna be rough but I’m really interested in what you think.” Stop that, what rough? Do you also apologize before burying your nails in your lover’s back?

Come on, don’t do this to yourself – showings are like going out clubbing making out with a bunch of – both men and women – finally going home alone having safe sex, i.e. masturbate to lesbian porn.

Showings are your contribution to the prevailing power distribution. Your showing is a means for other choreographers, programmers and education directors to make sure you are not doing something inappropriate, that you don’t jeopardize power centers or shake things’ identity.

Showings are your contribution to the immobilization of dance, showings is like pacifism without arms. Very promising but basically a laugh.

No I’m not proposing the prevalence of premieres, that’d be a reindustrialization of theatre as classical commodity.

No I’m not proposing some neo-liberal version of the emancipated spectator, that’d just be a call for be more yourself.

Don't be proud, for god's sake don't be proud. Fuck showings – show off – and if you're anyways taking somebody home for the night, the nails trick is not enough. Holding back is so 00s it's time to put on your diabolic self. I mean if you anyway has made the decision to do it, do it all freakin way.

But you are not such a person... like some... no you are... Scrutinize yourself, what kind of a person are you? Are you a person that has opinions, do you express others' opinions or do you actually stand tall? Do you do it all the way or do you rather excuse yourself after the second glass of Chardonnay. Or are you ready to clench fists and pay the consequences?

Opinions are like creativity and imagination, a great medicine for people that want to remain on the safe side. Opinions are for graphic designers and musicians that make soundtracks for dance pieces. “-It's a good way to fill the gaps in my economy” exactly, you talk about your devotion, the importance of your own project, but in fact you don't have a project, i.e. your project will always just be another project. Stop pretending and get yourself a kid. Opinions are a means to stay under the roof, to maintain oneself within the balanced and well-meaning.

Most people in the arts have understood that having opinions is a good strategy. Have you forgotten that opinions are not about to produce urgency – which is a pissy word – but, say, are not supposed to produce any impact whatsoever on the current situation. Opinions are just bad excuses. But of course you don't want to dismiss an argument, appear narrow-minded or categorical, but is that really the case? Just because you occupy a position doesn't necessarily mean that you are obsessively about to converge every other person. Opinions are just for you who

want to surround yourself with consensus, or the illusion of it. Take a stand, give me something that contests my position. Beat me up.

Recently a particular character has emerged in the creative field. The so called “last-meeting-person” – you know a person with a little bit of power however not on the top position, a person who continuously changes his perspective in respect of the last meeting. And I tell you those people have a lot of meetings. Those are people that want to, and find it important to have opinions, but the sad thing is that the opinions that they have always belong to somebody that they just met. It’s particularly common among dance programmers – dramaturges hired by dance venues, such – and you wonder: “-Oh that was a u-turn! Oh, but it’s actually a reiteration of the opinions of...”

Those people are obviously far smarter than yourself, because they have understood that this is a strategy that makes them immune to any claim, subject to no conflict and benevolent to everything. On the other hand they are always afraid, always scared; they sleep well at night but have never experienced real fear. But then they have never had anything else than half bad sex, and sloppy bottoms. The only really bad thing with those is that they end up in dance because they are too illiterate to fit into some other more lucrative business. And they know how to support each other endlessly, sit in each other’s boards, sleep in the same bed, and produce more blanket-like policy that avoids exclusion at any cost.

What the last meeting person fears most is collateral damage. They endure. They know they are not really loved or even appreciated but they persevere until too many have forgotten that they have nothing to offer, zero to add and are totally void of conviction. Those people would never

give up their salary, but love to complain about bad budgets, they are full of see-through excuses “We would really like to present your work but...” – you are so lame you can’t even tell me up in the face. But they persevere until they have become part of the landscape and impossible to get rid of.

Scrutinize yourself, do you actually have an opinion, or do you prefer to strategize and repeat after...? Are you like on an endless Spanish course or do make your mind up?

Take a stand, I know it’s impossible but just do it. Get ready to lose your honor, if it can’t be stated on the basis of expression to take a stand can also mean staging the impossible and living the consequences. You won’t be successful, because your position will not be confirmative to all and everybody, but are you ready to give yourself up for general accessibility. Are you that cheap? Sell out without return. Take a stand, and you will fear –but at least you will know that you are alive.

Fuck opinions, they like you, like creativity, imagination, concentration and enthusiasm. Take a stand, stop thinking vis-à-vis policy, act categorically, be fanatic. Utilize instruments you can’t master, play Helmut Lachenmann and do it as loud as you possibly can. No, louder than that and with a sub-woofer.

Stop writing self-interviews. It’s self-celebratory in the guise of modesty. You sit there at your semi-improvised writing table and after some initial struggle you get into it. You suddenly feel enthusiastic, you see a piece taking form in your mind. You can imagine how nice it will be to collaborate with those favorite performers of yours that just a few moments ago, made you a bit worried to meet because your proposal might be understood as vague. But

what is your proposal? Really what is it? And you say “I’m interested in”, but what do you mean you are interested? I’m also interested, like in waterskiing and dance duets and facial expression, but what have you asked yourself? Most choreographers are more interested in “or something like that” than in anything else. More interested in “you know what I mean” and “I don’t know, but…” and you are okay cause everyone nods understandingly. Self-interview is the lazy man’s way out of self-scrutiny, you don’t have to do anything to yourself whilst doing it, self-interviews carry no consequences, but make you feel like a good person afterwards. There is something utterly qualm about self-interviews, a tone of well-meaning yet sexually repressed Christianity.

The catholic self-interview is disgusting but at least it can opt for forgiveness. Confessional and chatty, obviously not coming to a point, and feeling extremely good with itself. And by the way why should you write it at all when there are really nice interviews on the internet that you can copy and paste from.

It is the protestant self-interview that really sucks, and OMG it sucks with its self-righteous tone of I’m exposing the truth and, you have no idea how painful it is for me to lower my defenses and say those things. Force them out of myself like some dogmatic madman in a Dan Brown novel. Stop it. You are such a hypocrite, self-interviews are the worst kind of auto-poiesis, a kind of redundant psychoanalysis that produces trauma rather than get you going. Self-interview would be the title of the book Lacanians would have written, had they not been so occupied with annihilating Anti-Oedipus. Justify your works with whatever theory you don’t know, but doing it through self-interview, that’s like eating muesli pretending it’s a bloody

beef, having yogi tea imagining it to be glass of gasoline. Self-interview is like a wooden sword, the making of an epic movie, an image of armed struggle, where is your machine gun.

Self-interview is like taking prisoners, and only as many as you can handle. We don't take prisoners and if we do we take so many that the position become catastrophic. Self-interview is the pleasure of imagining how it would be to inflict physical pain to oneself. You have a job stab somebody in the back.

Self-interview is monotheism for balanced liberals, auto-realization for artists that suffer in the studio, for those who celebrate the painful in art, that shy away from confrontation and believe in civilization. Self-interviews are all about becoming comprehensible and elaborating your work as a sympathetic one-ness, serving programmers [they love one-thing concepts and coherence]. It is not enough to say "but I'm working against coherence", no way. Vague is not an option. Self-interview is for people that think café-latte is a little bit special and the artist's studio an autonomous zone. Self-interview is for those who with a considerate tone state "-Well, there is also a day tomorrow". Stop it, self-interviews are a time wasting dialogue, the equalization of everything, the end of aggression. The production of causality. Go to war, fuck being considered. Self-interview is the opposite of hate, it's the negation of tears. Self-interviews don't clean your eyes, they make you see the same. Self-interviews no way, hit somebody in the face.

Write self-interviews, but make absolutely sure you don't try to justify your existence, your amateurish relation to philosophy and aesthetic theory or your dilettante

knowledge about the body. Write tons of self-interviews and publish them on your FB page, upload them on aaaaarg and create a Myspace page where you offer the world to listen to the audio version. Write self-interviews every day – make it undermine your practice, use the format to rip it apart, to make life hell. But the moment you start using the format in order to make life easier, to obtain satisfaction you are on the wrong track. It's you and me that are responsible for how the self-interview became the trailer trash of dance.

“-Could you read my self-interview? This summer I was in a kind of crisis, but I think something really interesting...”

Jesus, how out of focus are you. Come on if you have a crisis, to write a self-interview of three and a half A4 is not an option. That was not a crisis, you just wanted to pity yourself a bit. Pity yourself a lot, like a lot, and make it your artist identity, but then don't even think about writing self-interviews. And btw if you are currently in an education program, quit it. It will violate you, brainwash you, make you a small person and a nice individual. Art education is the social democratic version of hell.

Write self-interview as the only thing you do for the three months you spend in the studio. Nothing else before the premiere. Write self-interviews not in order to have ideas, or to pin point your problem. Write them for all other reasons, or for no reason at all, but the moment it starts to smell of therapy get the fuck out. That's the moment when justification arrives, that's the moment when self-righteous confession gets to be your superhero. Self-interviews are not there to make you special. Self-interviews are not a DIY kind of AA meeting: “-I'm a choreographer.... I can say it.”

Who do you want to be: Spiderman or Superman? Spiderman wrote a lot of self-interviews, and tendentially started with a “How are you today?”– therapy for a confused kid projecting superhero images on every possible surface. Spiderman is the manifestation of desire as lack. Peter Parker is conducting self-interviews as a substitute for not having a girlfriend to settle down with. Superman doesn’t do self-interviews – he is from outer space, a place where Andy Warhol couldn’t reach him with his silent Freudian questions about what’s underneath, there is nothing. Superman has no depth, and no stretch, but in that telephone booth [is he about to dress up in the Iphone in the next episode?] he’s operating in the crack. Fuck self-interviews, be Superman and step down to the people and do journalism.

Self-interview is a mourning process, obviously a revenge for not being interviewed by the magazines. For not having a spread in the local dance paper... Oups – maybe not, but do the stars have that drive to self-interview? They don’t, the problem of dance and choreography is its deep addiction to modesty and self-critique. So boring. Haven’t you understood that self-critical is another word for self-obsession and a masochistic kind of compulsive auto-poiesis. Self-interview proposes that there is something noble in being humble. This has to be exorcised now.

Only if we give up on our desire to know what we desire, can something happen. No insurrection has started with a self-interview. Self-interviews are striation and lack, we need an antidote – no manifestos SVP – that’s the same thing but in Italian – no we need nothing else than to invent new forms of articulation, alternative concepts to produce knowledge. Be naïve and make it now, we have

no time for elaboration, in any case elaboration brings you away from the crack, and into something tacky called deep or to the surface called dance theatre. BMC is bad for you; stop thinking that somebody will save you. It's your job, to stab yourself in the back, that's what self-interviews are for. They should be like ninja stars in your chest, a machete deep between your shoulder blades. You have no idea about the body.

Self-interviews imply asking with a curious yet hesitating smile: "Where will the revolution come from?"

Hello, it doesn't come from somewhere, it doesn't give interviews, it emerges with the liberation of desire.

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### **Stop Having a Body, Stop Calling Yourself Dancer**

Stop talking about yourself as a dancer. You are not a dancer! Perhaps you have enjoyed an education in dance perhaps you have taken a few dance classes or been to a disco? But you are not a dancer. Something that is, announces itself as static, as autonomous in the most uninteresting of ways, as independent in the sense of not being part of the game.

The moment you announce yourself a dancer you give yourself the romantic artist image, or upgraded the image of a worker or laborer. Probably same same just that the first wouldn't have a labor union to hook up with but only a melancholic face.

Dance is something that one does, not something one is. And further as long as we announce ourselves as dancers, that is, we have to be loyal to all dancers, we are the same existence.

Dance is something that we do and I don't have to confirm what you do! The moment dance becomes something we do, we can like each other and dislike each other's dance. If dancer is what we are then the dance expresses our existence, this is a very very bad moment cuz it means there is some horrible core, nucleus or essence that you possess. Dance is something that you do, like driving a taxi or being a civil servant. We like it a lot but don't let that make it into a calling, some internal urgency or a reason to not get paid properly.

Moreover as long as you call yourself a dancer and identify with being a dancer, other people will continue to talk about you as a lower existence, something that is less important and is something that shows you how beautiful and tough life can be. Fuck that. Same thing with the body, stop thinking about the body as special. This is good.

“-What are you doing?”

“-I'm thinking. What are you doing?”

“-I'm bodying.”

We should stop the stupid idea of having a body and instead consider our bodies as activity, as verbs, as movement and becoming. As long as we “have” and “possess” a body we are always gonna feel violated by language, discourse and the rest of representation. But when body is something we do, we can possibly start speaking about a body politics, or rather a politics of the body that is not essential, universal, natural and whatever. The body is not “myself”. Your body has as little do with yourself as sex has to do with love, or the museum guard with that awfully fucked up bad exhibition, Top Gear with cars, or the body with organs.

Let's go: We still have to learn what the body can do, writes Michel Foucault. He, the thinker of the body or the thinker laboring in thought through the body, elaborates on the body in an epoch, in a time when the body is still firmly situated in a disciplinary regime. Certainly not the subject, mental capacities or language, such simple matter had already been emancipated from feudalism and truth, but the body was still firmly buckled up in the backseat a pre-modern vehicle. The sentence "We still have to learn what the body can do" could function as a summary, for the oeuvre of Foucault and his engagement in the liberation of the body from its disciplinary confinement. His writing opens for a body that performs, that has been given permission not to exist.

The soul is not a prisoner of the body, it is the other way around, the body is imprisoned by the soul, another proposition by Foucault, confirms our suspicion that the western society has produced the body as an object, an object that exists. But is Foucault not simply reversing and confirming the equivocity that needs to be terminated, namely the hierarchical divisions between the body and mind, mind and soul, soul and transcendence, in favor of a univocity in which given hierarchies are terminated in favor of play and tension between intensities. Univocity implies the permission of a body performing, performing on its own premise and not in respect of, or in relation to... which it always does in a system determined by equivocity, where the soul is not the body, but its initiator. The soul, or mind is, so to say, kept responsible for the body. Hence, it is equally stupid to propose that the soul is the prisoner of the body, and equally in reverse the fear of cyberspace stealing our bodies away: we will be bodyless brains. Univocity enables the body to form its own systematic, an order not of

things or nouns but of verbs or actions due which it can transmit eternity in a completely new manner. This body is not descriptive due eternity in respect of which it is always epitomized as failure, but instead as being part of an eternal process. This body is mortal, temporary, organizational yet not organized, subject to disciplines yet not defined by discipline. It is not settled, sculptural or architectural, it's on the move, it is choreographing.

Foucault, however doesn't simply reverse but opens for a body without organs [I know]. An institutional body without organs, an educational body without organs, a structural body without organs, a bullet proof body without organs, an expressional body without organs, a mediated body without organs. A body without organs is not a smooth body, it is and must maintain itself striated. The matter is not if or to what extent striation explicates, positions the body but instead in what respect and vis-à-vis what dynamics striation is undulating and multiplicit in respect of direction. The moment the body leaves a referential striation entirely it will obviously either collapse and detach from representation – thus disappear – or be re-inscribed in its entirety, recoded. The body without organs is not an organless body of pure potentiality but is rather surfing out of representation onto a complexity unfolding without reference to prior unity. Foucault's seemingly dialectical argumentation thus empowers the body, gives it opportunity to negotiate liberty.

In a way Foucault's entire oeuvre could be said to labor for the production of agency of the body, an agency that also resonates in relation to modes of subjectivity, i.e. is not self-referential but expansive and active in processes of coagulation of social apparatuses [dispositif]. In a late interview Foucault suggests that the problem with homo-

sexuality isn't that boys make out or that girls roll around with each other, but rather how gay people potentially can and will reform ways of life. Disqualifying the family as the singular mode of life performs an extensive threat vis-à-vis the dominant social apparatus of the western world.

A more complex issue is how and to what extent the departure from discipline is not simultaneously an introduction into another regime. The moment discipline moves out, control moves in, striation is little by little substituted by the soft machinery of control and the body is, so to say, sinking into a rhizomatic terrain due which it can make no resistance, especially not in respect of quasi-permanent structures. Foucault operates from a climate where citizenship is understood as given, and provided by the state, a state that in post 68' France, and all over western Europe, is ubiquitous and in particular in respect of a left on the verge of collapse under a burden of empty political discourse. It is also possible to read Foucault's proposal as a hesitant gesture in relation to control. He is aware of the smoothness of control both in relation to expansion and a sort of self-perpetuating society void of ideological consistency, a society of unlimited opportunities, of endless potential when it comes to neo-liberalism, and of endless surveillance where liberty has become both currency and imprisonment.

Self-precarious gestures with their different expressions emerging all over the western world from the early 50s, from hippies to Burning Man, from self-employment to yoga with their initial attempt to destabilize structures (according to Foucault), and later, say by 1989, when control society had made its irreversible entry into the world on strategic levels. Yoga, tai chi and other bodily practices, were also in the 90s practiced in weird basements or

during obscure weekend camps has become a matter of identity and production, i.e. liberty as something that the individual can obtain within a quasi-smooth terrain. The body here becomes an opportunity for relative emancipation, i.e. identity politics.

Today however the body and its interiority have been swallowed up by control and the body is given no whatsoever opportunity to distance itself, liberate itself from an omnipresent capitalism. If once, the body, assisted by hope for the best by Foucault, could perform potentiality in respect of dominant social apparatus, potentiality has today become the center of political life. There is only a capitalist body. The body today is cherished exactly in respect of its ability to perform, to produce pure production. The body in itself has become potentiality, it is as if we have completed a full circle and are back on square one where the body as pure body is value. In other words the body has no longer “good life”, is no longer political, but has become bare life, it has become arbitrary power, or economy as pure immanence.

“Be yourself” seems to be a suitable watchword for our present society. But what does it mean? It has certainly nothing to do with the “Express Yourself” proposed by NWA in 1983. No, there is no need for self-expression anymore, nobody bothers to market it and its possible subversive intensity has inflated. “Be Yourself” is not corporate interest in identity politics. It is, but for what reason, a call for personal decision. It is, but for what reason, an empowering gesture. It is, but for what reason, a notice on the basis that you make a difference.

“Be Yourself” is the ironic, or depressing reality, of late

neo-liberalism. “Be Yourself” is We making money. “Be Yourself” is the short summery of the fact that trustworthy dualism is over: life and labor, public and private, permanent and temporary, past and present, virtual and reality, mind and body. Or in other words bio-politics has turned into arbitrary power. The human being as such has entered the political and economical reality.

Bio-politics as proposed by Michel Foucault has turned on itself and we have entered a reality where the human being has turned into pure potentiality, or following Agamben has entered a state of bare life. Thus “Be Yourself” today equals pure economy.

Remember to never trust David Burne, and his mediocre singing about “Stop making sense” – you don’t make anybody happy through not making sense, that’s just a bad excuse. The only way out is pure tacticity. The power is no longer in becoming authentic, but indeed, in the production of simulacra as simulacra. Translated to bodily practices this means, simply, to invent somatic practices. Fake them, invent them, and perhaps we can find another body hidden away somewhere under a forgotten chair, or in a vacant space next to.

Do like Jay-Z, address the body like a microphone: “Is this thing on?”

Only then can we say it, only then:

POWER TO THE BODY

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## **Spit On The Dramaturge**

The dramaturge is a useless person for useless choreographers. Full stop. That's just it! From a classical point of view, like – who the hell is an artist that needs assistance with the work? I'd never hire a dramaturge, it's an announcement, loud and clear: I'm useless, have no idea what I'm doing and I'm totally confused. A dramaturge? What is this person supposed to do, what on earth could he or she offer. Research, yeah sure, but obviously the dramaturge will only present what is reasonable, what is along the lines of a present agenda in dance and choreography. But why, because the choreographer's job is to confirm the validity of the dramaturge and therefore a dramaturge will never take the risk of being dismissed. The dramaturge is for dance and choreography what a parole officer is for freedom.

But, you say, there must be some example of... dramaturge? No, there isn't cuz the job as such proposes "mediocre". Either you are a dramaturge and totally irrelevant or you're not. Dramaturgy is like waste sorting, an excellent method to postpone the collapse pretending to save the world. Dramaturgy is the antithesis of innovation. It's one of those activities defined by more of the same.

From a more contemporary perspective, you so don't need a dramaturge. You know, the dramaturges by definition defend classical values in art. Why? Because if they weren't, they'd be artists, scientists or mad professors, which obviously is a no no for any dramaturge, since it would undermine the autonomy of his position. Denounce

every study program in dramaturgy. Dismiss every dramaturgy conference, seminar or little course. Spit on the dramaturge and their profession as you spit on psychoanalysis and it's supporters: Woody Allen, Andy Warhol, all those terrible British filmmakers – Uhhh, there are too many of them, the list is endless. Denounce Slavoj Zizek, blame him for expanding psychoanalysis into a generic, universal world view. Psychoanalysis is evil, it's the little brother of consolidating capitalism, and exactly like dramaturgy, it is there to bring your sick mind and your anomalies back into normality. Dramaturgy is the antichrist of revolution.

Seriously, a dramaturge that occupies him or herself with psychological effect or accuracy, no no – or symbolic meaning OM-fuckin-G – that's unforgivable. Dance and choreography is great, exactly because it doesn't represent emotions, psychology or anything in that direction. We have a lot of feelings, emotions and what not when we dance but praise the lord we do not represent psychological states. Abolish symbolism and keep up the dance.

Dance don't need no explanation. And a piece should stay the hell out of some self-explanatory hick up. Don't do this to yourself, it is only self-instrumentalization, cuz you'd like the explanation to fit the world or make your work accessible. That's not your job insist on hermetic, enigmatic and totally incomprehensible.

How can it be that all those programmers and art council staff, managers, co-producers, jury members and post-performance talk people always want us to be radical, experimental, demanding, out there, mind blowing, questioning, destabilizing and then, the second after, everything should, must, unconditionally be explained, packaged, given context, again and again explained. If we want anything radical, anything to have a lasting impact on in-

stability it won't give itself to explanation. Dude, we talk about folds, right – not explanation. The whole world talks about complexity and all we ever wanted was explanation, accessibility, accuracy.

The dramaturgy is the in-house version of packaging, making your great, totally ridiculous ideas handsome, well-meaning and decent. Don't fire the dramaturge, how could you, you don't have one – but set the whole dramaturgy department on fire. They are for dance and choreography what ecology is for the world: a defense of outdated, non-functional systems, a celebration of self-incapacitation.

We don't need no explanation, stop babbling about context. Fuck the dramaturgical embrace and use your fists. Do it again, spit on the dramaturge.

William Forsythe is not a god, stop being so fuckin fascinated. He just makes dance performances, and they are not necessarily good. Haven't you devotees understood that you are doing the guy a bad favor? If you at least told him that this or that was plain bullshit he'd have to consider – but now, come on, give the dude a hand, stop confirming. Stop being so fuckin fascinated. What is it? Really what is it? Tell me tell me right now what's so special, what's so specific? You have no idea, you just like to be amazed, like to be around creative minds.

Somebody tells me, about the last work of I can't remember the name, "It was really well done" – Yeah, first of all that's an insult to the artist. What do you mean, well done – that's like – announcing that you voted for the liberals because the candidate's wife dress really well. Well done, means superbly packaged indifference. And you know what the person said, before the well done sentence, that he wasn't sure about the content. I guess he also take an interest in good wine. Tell me one thing that is worse than a hobby sommelier.

Such people are value conservative liberals with a bad breath. They preach good mixture, and address their wives with a well-balanced chauvinism. They are bad in bed and happy when others experiment but prefer mod culture.

Welldone, my ass. You have designer chairs in your too small kitchen.

In the studio, the dancer being grateful for being allowed to work with the elevated choreographer, and of course those dancers or whatever position that they take obviously appreciate the work for totally the wrong reasons. Usually because the works classical references and for the joy of dance, the in depth of the body and humanistic innerlichkeit.

Fascinated, curious about everything the choreographer says, amazed about every detail. That's disgusting, the dancers announcing: "-He has such an eye for detail" or "-It is really in the details that his genius can be felt" or this one "Yes, but you know if you haven't worked with him in the studio..." Don't be so fuckin fascinated.

One more thing, everything that touches on chaos theory, abandon ship! Chaos theory is for fascinated people, it's like the chemistry box for eight-year-olds, or for people that think it's exciting to visit the attic and all those mystical things. Chaos theory is for people that prefer no solution and business as usual.

It is time for dance to emancipate itself from the stuck up minds of dramaturges and let the body lead the way. Dramaturgy is a fundamentally discursive practice that disregards the body and its movements. It is time that we release the body from its hostage situation. We have to free the body from the kidnap drama before it starts to develop some Stockholm syndrome, starting to defend the dramaturge. Only if we let go of our dependence to the

dramaturge, only if we realize that they are snakes that feed on our practice, only when we acknowledge that the dramaturge is a double agent hired by the local venue or the art council, can we bring dance into the future. The dramaturge is somebody who once read Patrick Suskind and denies it today, somebody who promotes coherence.

Oh, you thought I'd let you go that easy. Not yet, maybe not soon. Fire your dramaturge. Fire your dramaturge. – how tiring – One more time: Fire your dramaturge. It doesn't matter if he or she shows up once a month, it's still a dramaturge. It doesn't matter if you listen to him, or if you keep him on a leash, it's a dramaturge. Fire him.

“-Yeah, but I need him, cuz I'm in the piece and it's important to have an outside eye.” Oh yes it is, but not a dramaturge. Call your mother, ask your brother's ex to come by, they also have an outside eye and I tell you it's totally much more outside than the dramaturge. The dramaturge is a parasite, he sucks you dry, he makes you make good pieces – but they won't sell – and you tell the world that he is okay the moment he is in your evening program, on your webpage, on your mind. You authorize him or her, you are responsible, isn't it enough that your work is being destroyed. Do you need to tell others it's a good idea too? Don't do this to upcoming choreographers that don't need a nanny, and still believe to believe in themselves.

Watch out, the worst kind of dramaturge speaks Flemish. Not that I think any of those choreographers could do work that is worthwhile sitting in the dark for, but it would certainly be much better had they fired that disgusting spineless creature in time. Perhaps one or two of those choreographers, or whatever name we could come up with cuz when seeing their shows I can't ever count to more than eight or perhaps nine seconds of choreography, the

rest is more like charades and capoeira enthusiastic dancing around. The dramaturge never knows anything about choreography, neither. But let's call these people choreographers for now, and yes, perhaps one or two of them might have stopped hadn't the dramaturge encouraged them to do one more. "I know you can do it. I stand by you all the way through." – that's what the dramaturge is so good at; being a parasite that keeps the host alive - forever. The dramaturge is for dance what restoration is for visual art.

The dramaturge is original in the most predictable way and preferably with a historical touch to it. He is so nostalgic that his sexual fantasies feature older women. Do you think Don Corleone had a dramaturge? No, he had a hit man. Do you think Al Capone surrounded himself with some skinny dude with a notepad and an aging laptop? I don't think so – no he had a muscleman – oh no, not very intelligent – who was ready to take a bullet when shit hit the fan. I tell you one thing, your dramaturge will duck and cover in the dressing room the moment the soft breeze of collaboration turns into stormy arguments.

Fire him.

Get this, programmers often have a background as dramaturges. A lot of them... don't trust them! They don't have opinions they just appropriate, they are thieves that store their goods in a garage so greedy they wont even sell their TV-sets on eBay – they are so not pirates, they don't steal in order to maintain themselves mobile or become sovereign. Dramaturges are by definition proprietary, they are interested in looking like creative commons but no way, they are parasites.

There is one reason to use a dramaturge, and that is a bad one. Programmers of a certain type will be more benevolent to your propositions if you also talk about your

dramaturge and how important he or she is for the work. Don't bring him just talk about him. And when the dramaturge wants to come with you on tour, it's never for you it's to get another job. Have him stay home and continue to fantasize about...

Why, I mean the programmers' benevolence? Oh, obviously the dramaturge is evidence that your show will in no respect challenge anything at all. This is the wet dream of festival directors something that on the paper gives a taste of advanced, is a little bit kinky or pushes the limits but after being surveilled by the dramaturge will come out perfectly conventional and without any ambition.

This is the real problem with the dramaturge, they are hired by Conventional Inc. and are there to reinsert your ideas and your work into language, signification, comprehension and context. The only moment when the dramaturge is doing a good job is when he or she utters: I have no idea what this was? I have nothing to say about... and then in embarrassment leaves the room never to be seen again. Never. That's the moment when dramaturgy works.

## FIRE THE DRAMATURGE

And remember, choreographers and dancers don't ever, ever, do something that includes interactive or installation. Computer games are interactive; sex is not, nor skype, fist fights or filesharing. What the hell is a non-interactive installation, or did interactive suddenly start to mean communication human to human. To me a Pierre Huyghe installation becomes interactive the moment I start thinking: This is shit!

You are a dance artist, you identify yourself as a choreographer – stay the hell away from installation. A dance

installation is probably as stupid as performative interior decoration.

Installation is objects and things spread out in a room, dance and performance is not, it's action and intensity spread out in time. Installations are sitting in the museum, or in the storage, on the basis of eternity. Dance, choreography and performance have one thing that is specific — it's over when it's over. There is nothing left but some indifferent rumor.

No, I didn't use the word, and I didn't think about it. Stop using the word "memory", it is bad for dance, it is bad for you! Every book you have that spends time on memory and dance, burn it. It's not enough that you put it aside or throw it away. Burn it. Those books are written by academics and historians, people that were born sentimental, that by definition are conservative, argue that a futon is a really great alternative and don't garbage their eau de cologne before the bottle is really empty. Those are people that would have liked to be poets had they just had the courage. Those are people that wet their lips when they come up with a historical connection and wouldn't read Zizek because it's cheap to quote from popular movies and not because he is a fan of Woody Allan. Those are people that would come spontaneously the moment they fiddle a Madeleine cookie into their defensive writing. Texts where they speak about Isadora as if she was a friend and thus valued, and still write the full name of the three choreographers that they have decided to devote their lives to and of course is only almost contemporary. We've had enough of memory. Those defensive self-proclaimed ambassadors of dance have made dance back into the future, mourning its past and proceeding into the coming without having the slightest idea.

A word to academics and historians: If you could just make dance and choreography rut and disappear really fast we would have something to celebrate you for. Stop defending shit that was bad already in the first place.

Passus before we come back to interactive and whatever. You talk about doing something different, something really – you know – ... different. You want to make another kind of, something really... remember if you want to do something different it also implies that you'll have to leave something behind, and in your case this is dance. Sasha Waltz, Philippe Gemacher, Franz Poelstra even Mathilde Monnier, Jerome Bel, Boris Charmatz, Rachid Ouramdane, Grand Magasin, Regine Chopinot, Alain Buffard, Xavier Le Roy, Maurice Bejart, Anglein Preljocaj, Emmanuelle Huynh, Jean-Claud Gallotta, Hervé Robbe, Maguy Marin, Christian Rizzo, Philippe Decouflé, Alice Chauchat, Cecilia Bengolea, François Chaignaud and Anne Collot are all convinced that what they are doing is totally a different kind of dance, that they are on to something really really yeah, new amazing other.

There's just one problem they will never allow for the necessary collateral damage. They will never, never give up dance, never do something that cannot be recognized as choreography proper. If you want to do something different the first thing you have to do is to forget about dance and fuck choreography.

It's not enough, not even half way okay to engage in some interactive or equally idiotic installation – if you want to work in a context of installation you have to give up dance and choreography, performance and moving around. Instead of trying to remain yourself as one allow yourself to become other and differ. It will imply fear and cruelty but there's no way around BS. You have to become a visual artist or you will just be embarrassing.

As we are anyway at it, don't collaborate with artists from other fields, spit on interdisciplinary. Inter, trans etc. disciplinary has no autonomous value, it's terms used only in application, it's a ticklish something on policy makers fat bellies. It's a word that when related to research is confused with revolution.

Don't consider it something good that visual artists are doing performances, or taking an interest in dance. They bring choreography back to the dark ages, they make choreography exiting and "moving", they make of dance what we have worked to get rid of for the last decades. Visual art is to choreography what steam engines are to a Prius, what Olafur Eliason is to quantum physics or Santiago Sierra to unemployment. Denounce Allan Kaprow and remember what you hate most of all, what you hate most of all is reconstruction. That is choreography's benevolent response to academia and backing into the future. Fuck memory, and fuck that mumbo jumbo about presence too.

History and repetition appear to have been a slight problem for 20th century man. Never have we seen such a hysterical relation to preservation. Why; what's good with veteran cars, vintage sneakers and old buildings? Bulldoze the crap away. Look, you don't become an imperialist just because you want something to go. Just because buildings are old they are not cute or climate friendly, no they are discriminating, fuck ecology [which might be a plus] and are aesthetically repulsive. Move out!

History hasn't been good, but only through remembering can we avoid making the same mistakes again. A paradox builds on an idea that history proceeds without collapses, without holes, ruptures or radical paradigm shifts, but crawls along the axis of time like a snail leaving a trace behind itself to know how to find the way back home

again. Consistently history has left a trace and its presence has faced the future. The trace has had different qualities and sometimes consisted of some slimy goo that made time crawl even slower. There is still a trace but today the snail seems to crawl with the rear end first, exploring the next cool thing with its ass instead of tentacles. Enough of metaphors,

If history is to repeat itself it also has to remain the same, remain at last identical in respect of kind. Repetition, in the sense of history, as well as variation lives on the ability to maintain itself as one. Thus remembering history not only makes repetition possible but insists on its repetition. Obviously change is not enough. Change is gradual and not a breach. Change is positive and not connected to some terror, it's open and kind of a better version. Change in 2010 equals upgrade, and repetition is inscribed so handy. The way out of the trap of repetition implies a bigger risk, not a change within history, or the historical development, what is needed is to change what history itself is. History as we know it is open and forgiving, sympathetic and violent enough to disgust us, but never bad enough to make us kick it out of the system.

Stop making reconstructions. Just stop it. Dance and choreography is in a bad enough state as it is. We don't need to dive back into its more or less tacky past, it is already horrible and it will not get better if we turn to already used material. Let it rot.

What is it you think you are doing when you resurrect older pieces, when you do Trisha Brown's "Accumulations" with your students or force them to dance something as embarrassing as "Trio A"? Every time they dance some of the so admirable 60s stuff they are not operating here and now, every time you have your students do contraction

they are not doing here and now. Reconstruction is nice, it's sympathetic and good. In school it violates the students and makes them admire, but as the person reconstructing the whatever piece basically never met the choreographer it is all in the wrong sense. However, it is of course much better than to have to listen to the artist's anecdotes about how amazing it was when... and circumstances this and that, and New York at that time, how... Save me from reconstruction. Save me from Yvonne Rainer, and save me from Deborah Hay. And save me from all others who want to make money on past sins. Stand up loser, if you don't have anything better to offer than surveilling history then stay home, close the door one last time and stay home.

And for you who reconstruct other people's work, shape up: we know that you are just doing it for the sake of money, value or fame. If it was important for you, and not for the market, why don't you just keep it in the studio? Oh, the programmer saw it by accident and you were totally innocent. No, you are just too mediocre to do anything decent and need someone else's wave to surf, and so does the programmer. Obviously it is perfect, if you do a reconstruction of whatever, the programmer can make money on both you and the choreographer that you reconstruct. Oh, you think you do it for some kind of historical accuracy, and what do we need that for? You think it is important for others to get to know about this and that piece, why? Because you want to say you invented it, found it... Because you want to reclaim your history stolen from you by performance studies? But hey, was it that good anyway, let them have it. But hey one cool thing they didn't just take the good part they also took all that crap that your fello choreographers did that's a little bit embarrassing. Let the Americans have it. Push it all on RoseLee she deserves it.

Even more compromised are exhibitions that attempt to draft a narrative through recent history in respect of some more or less pertinent notion. Stop resurrecting old pieces, stop it. Especially stuff from the 50s, 60s and 70s. Nothing is getting better because there is something from that time around. Permanent collections are fine but that's an entirely other story. How many times do I have to see that time delay piece from Dan Graham, how many times do I have to consider that horrible corridor by Bruce Nauman, and even worse - I know I'm racist, misogynic and colonial - but how many times do I have to encounter Lygia Clark. Leave it behind. I hate those rubber bands, forget that plastic net to carry home your fruit, and especially forget about these big pieces where you are supposed to sense whatever it is yourself and your spirit. No thanks, they were exceptional then and there but today they totally remind me of activities during an empowerment day at work. I don't want anymore, and you know those pieces are just there because the dead artist's foundation thinks it's a good idea, and because you are a coward. Every time, e-ve-ry time you put up a Clark you are not exhibiting somebody else woman, Brazilian or anything else. Every time you insist on Graham, fuck you. I like it too but hey why the hell do you have a museum store. The reason why you want to show those things is because you have no better ideas. Because it feels good, because everybody else did it before you.

Stop the archives. Forbid them. I don't want to see people with headphones and flat screens fascinated by Ana Mendieta. She was, and so before her time, but not anymore. Make a hole and put it all away. And when you are anyways at it, dig a hole for Mike Kelley as well, he is the Woody Allen of visual art. Spit on him, no spit on the place

where the hole was where you buried all that crap.

I like history, but not this one. I don't like any versions of it, and certainly not today when history, too, has become commodity. But history is excellent and all so contemporary. Yet it is time to turn to history, to turn back. This is not about turning around this is about turning back, to a moment, to a historical instance that is totally incompatible with our contemporary discourse. We have to turn back to history constructed through a different paradigm, through another mood of thinking, a way of coping with the world that we are simply foreign to. We have to stop making ourselves open to history and instead turn to a history that is so closed, so locked away, so hard and stubborn that the only way to deal with it is to change who we are.

No, I'm not interested in repeating it, or reliving it. I don't cherish feudalism, knighthood, dirt, slavery, witch burning or whatever. What I'm talking about is turning to a history that cannot be understood. Engaging in something incompatible to our own historical paradigm is the only way that we can change history in a radical sense, by making ourselves open to an absolute closed system, not because it is "closes" but because it does in no respect belong to us. Only then can we produce a history that won't promise to repeat itself, that won't want to make us feel fine but shiver in fear.

Time machines are not enough, it's just a criss-cross between known moments in history, what we need is a time war-machine, an apparatus that can catapult us out of our very understanding of time itself. Perhaps it is not us that needs to be or not afraid of repeating history, but we should instead offer ourselves like a good meal to history to make it repeat us. It will be catastrophically unpleasant, a morbid festival. Make yourself a fresh meal for history.

## EPISODE 5

### **No More Production Value**

Most shows created nowadays don't play for more than ten nights. If you aren't inside the network business, didn't graduate from the Anne Teresa school, you are fucked! How much time do you spend preparing, applying for money, rehearsing, discussing with costume designers or cooling down the musician in artistic crisis? Months? All your time? You teach a little here and there but otherwise, the lot? Actually, whenever we can get three months in the studio, out of which two weeks should take place in Essen or some other god forgotten place with a residency platform that promotes your stuff. A year's work on the production and after the premiere that nobody really commented upon you show the work at your other three co-producers, perhaps even one or so other date. At the end of the day your three months in the studio to create an hour-long piece gave a dozen hours on stage. It's not exactly efficient, in any respect to work more or less a month for each hour on stage.

Btw, fire the musician and do the soundtrack yourself. Musicians aren't there for your sake but to boost their own careers. They believe they are hired to be artists, and will

sooner or later complain: “-I don’t feel that there is any space for my creativity...” as if your work would become better because of their musical conviction? Pitiful, my God, these sad, melodramatic men with guitars, or set-designers that think they could really make installations, you know for museums.

Production value in dance has over the past fifteen years stabilized into a rather unhealthy climate. The good old six weeks rehearsal period was ten or so years ago disqualified in a favor of endless processes enabled by far too generous art councils, especially the Flemish one. The generosity of the Swedish art council during the 90s is a central reason for why Swedish dance today is completely passé and old school. Why do anything at all if we know there will 200.000€ on the bank account next year too.

Production value evidently sets the standards for quality. If you don’t work three months your work can’t be good. If you do work three months there are often too many people involved to make sure that the work can’t be allowed to be shit. The interest of the business is to make sure that every production by Giselle Vienne will be good from now until eternity. Every time you work for three months you also assume the hegemony of your art council and since every producer in Europe worships Brussels what you do is vote for Les Ballet C de la B. And you know what that means: financially independent and socially engaged dance theatre. And you thought you were special.

Why would you argue for the importance of the process? The relevance of practical choreographic research with half a dozen dancers? Well, obviously because if you can fool some halfwit cultural politician that just discovered the fad of artistic research you get your ass covered for half a year. Bravo, but if you did research for half a

year how does it happen that what came out was just as boring as last year's attempt: just another show, in just the same format, in just the same venue. From where the hell do you get the energy?

Stop working for three months at a time, stop trying to sell your piece before or after the premiere. Stop sending newsletters, stop informing programmers. Forget to reply to e-mails. It will crush you. It will destroy you. It will strip you of your dreams, cancel your ability to laugh and make you a dead-living that operates through public appreciation, revenge and holding back. You will become one of those nice vampires in Twilight that after falling in love with a normal babe desperately tries to secure humanity. I'm not telling you to be yourself, but check it out it is not your job to save festivals and season programs; it is not your job to help the art council. Your job is to destroy, to turn them down but not through simple refusal but by bypassing circumstances, by jumping over fences and creating situations due which you dictate the conditions. You know that the 25.000€ you received from the art council is not because of your art. You know that you got the money in order for them to be able to control you. As a venue director I will insist on the necessity of three months rehearsal period in the studio, obviously. But why? Because if this is how it works I can be sure nothing will change and I can work long-term without making any extra efforts. If this is how you work then I know where to find you.

Choreographers of the world disguise yourselves. No that's not enough we have to operate even deeper; this is hyper-camouflage, the purpose of which is to keep a considerable part of the enemy's resources occupied, whilst undermining the rest of it. Be an opportunist. Be innocent with blue eyes.

Lately I have heard half a dozen cultural managers, curators and programmers say: “-Oh, it’s really a lot of work right now.” Don’t do this, you have chosen to work here because you say you are interested in art. Stop, saying it’s too much, it’s never too much, it’s never even enough. How can it be, you are s’posed to like what you do so enjoy yourself. Every time you allow yourself to utter the too-much-bullshit you have also signed up to a culture that pleasures itself with being in pain, that prides itself through negativity. A colleague at the university tells me before summer holidays: “Oh, so nice to turn off the mobile and to take a break from e-mail.” What do you want: to sit in your favorite armchair reading a novel? Is that what it is? But then why didn’t you make this your job, instead of programming dance in a venue that is continuously, as you always say, threatened by budget cuts.

Don’t’ you see, it’s your lucky day when the council for the so many years in a row announces that they might have to cut all your funding. Then you don’t need to think at all. You fucking masochist! Admit it, it makes you hot. And you know as much as I that the city can’t afford to close the venue not because of you, the program or anything like that but simply because its too much work, too much fuzz.

I believe you pleasure yourself most of all when you sit in your armchair reading an introduction to artistic research, or an application for the upcoming network meeting. Yes, you do, because afterwards, in bed with your partner, you can whisper things like: “I’m so happy that I finally read those applications.” and still you did it in your favorite chair, with a blanket on your knees and with a glass of not exactly expensive Rioja. You walk with a stone in your shoe to feel alive.

Stop complaining about writing applications. It’s amazing, just the very idea of articulating your work, in

whatever form, it's amazing. To set out to produce new projects, to take another risk, it's fab. If we don't get the money, great, cuz then we don't need to make economical reports and we don't need to rent a studio somewhere half way to the suburbs where we can't even have sushi for lunch. Just think about the hilarious lies you will make up to sound convincing. Or the travel grants you received without any kind of invitation but wrote just because it would be so fun to visit Tokyo. "When the hell should I have time to go there?"

A friend, an admirable one, told me the other day: "I want to change the work, I'm sick of it. I'm getting too well fed, too comfortable. We need to come up with something that nobody wants to pay us for, start from the beginning and fuck it up."

People that do Sudoku should die. People that defend that bullshit for being good for your mind or make you smarter, burn in hell, real slow. Fuck you, write a debate article, list all choreographers you can't stand, make drawings of pieces you can't remember. Write a public letter about how embarrassingly stupid it is to put Michael Clark on a residency in the Turbine Hall of Tate Modern, or create some nasty gossip about a friend. Do something that is more than putting 1 to 9 into a grid.

To actively break with production value is more provocative than the work it results in. What you show is always already authorized by somebody, it's up there right, but how you organize your resources that is up to you. So break it break it break it.

So, you didn't get the money you expected. What do you do? Downscale a bit, perhaps it can work with three dancers... perhaps, maybe the dancers can work half time the first rehearsal period? Don't do this to yourself, it's

exactly what they want. Best choice, tell them to keep the money, but it is also okay to keep it as long as you fuck downscale change the circumstances for the production.

If you will anyway only be able to show the work seven times, why spend an eternity in the studio making choreography. Why don't we just make a piece in two days and spend the rest of the time doing something amazing, like something we have no idea about. Something that won't psyche us out? Why, if we anyway will have only 200 people for the premiere and half the second day, should we get stressed out already four weeks before showtime. Look at this, your wonderful spectators will be so much happier to see a show or whatever it might be if you've had a great process and high fidelity time together.

Yeah, you do political pieces, so why not start working in the streets where we meet people all the time. Is it really better to stay in the studio and close the door, turn off the mobiles and etc. so that we at least think we are important and do valuable work. Why not rent out the space to Woody Allen or something and hang out in a café with a bunch of books so we can learn something else. Or why not just offer each other the pleasure of being without kids or... What we do is business so the moment you start something up you also decide in what ways resources produce, organize relations and independency, and not least what kind of power and hierarchies do you want your resources to produce or reproduce. If we anyway don't have any money why do we work as if we were a commercial operation that has to put something out there? Fuck that, you don't have to anything. You're an artist enjoy the privileges, stop acting as if you were a responsible citizen, stop admiring Renzo Martens and act with endless ego.

We all agree with the idea that art, whatever the expression, reflects its mode of production. You make your work in a studio that's twelve by twelve and you will inevitably make a twelve by twelve art piece. The moment you close the door behind you and start creating, you will make work that is not exactly open, transparent or inviting. Set up a process of three months and you will obviously make a three months process work. Thus, if you don't want to make work that looks like Alain Platel's make sure not to set out for a five months rehearsal process. Or, if you don't want to make work that resembles Meg Stuart's keep away from video documentation. Seriously, if you from the start estimate to make work that can be documented, work that so to say fits in a video camera, work that can be converted to some notation, or fiddled into some search-word story your work is just not radical enough and already defined by the mode of documentation. Ban people that speak about the importance of documentation. Your work won't be better because the documentation was high-res or elaborated through some fancy software.

Whether your artistic endeavor is supported by the state or not does not make you more or less independent. The sort of dance that we do always belongs to the state, no exceptions! It's always already inscribed in the stage machine, like where would you present your work if not within the sphere of the state. By the way, if you have BalletTanz lying around in your work environment you will be making BalletTanz dance. I think it is a very good idea that you stop doing that kind of dance. Terminate your subscription, mega-loser. Stop it and throw away all back issues. Make sure to erase the name of anybody who ever wrote for the magazine from your mind. So your work is funded by the art council, and you know who sits

in the jury deciding who will and who will not... that's the circumstances that govern your work... No wonder you make shit.

Dance and choreography, art, whatever - it's all business. Nothing special, selling choreography is like selling cars, dealing and wheeling on Craig's list or renting out your flat far too expensively. But then, if your work is resonating of its mode of production, aren't you then making business dance. You are not making money but yet you are commercial. Tadam, I knew it! You run your business well, very well. You always send in the reports on time, perfect bookkeeping, and you make dance? Yeah, so what you do is perfect bookkeeping dance?

Hmmm, perhaps not even dance is that linear, but watch your ass, before you know, it's the accountant that makes your stuff as touring becomes priority and keeping the business together is your magnum opus. In any case, whatever conditions you work under, you have only one thing that should concern you. It's simple, banal and hellufalot of work: master the circumstances and make sure never to fall victim for them. Make yourself king of the circumstances that are at your disposal.

If you have no money to rent a studio, stop complaining about it and spend the time working somewhere else. There are lots of big rooms in the world where dance and choreography can be made amazing. The local nightclub, the town square, the beach or the phone? You want to work in a studio because it makes you feel like a choreographer. Choreographers don't work on the beach, surfers do. And you are so keen to feel and look and move like a choreographer that you'll never give up your precious twelve by twelve studio. A space that you probably have given a name. If you ever visit the choreographic centre in Mont-

pellier, you'll know exactly what I mean. Moreover who says making work in a big room is a good idea. Fuck that, make choreography in small confined spaces. Make it in the bathtub and it might come out like an early Jerome Bel piece? Make it whilst you commute to work and it'll be mobile work. OMG, people that complain about having a day job, and not blah blah dance – they make day job choreography – not because they have to but because they want. They are just so happy victimizing themselves under the burden of being a waitress. Fuck that, and make your waitress choreography. There's no lack of infrastructure, not even in NYC, it's just that you are too lacy to track them and make them work for you.

This is exactly why making yourself king of circumstances is a gargantuan enterprise, the adventure of you life, because it means you'll have to give something up. To obey to whatever circumstances is sweet because it feels good and boosts your identity. At the same time only if we challenge circumstances can we produce something that will not be just more of the same. If you have a company, sell it! If you have a manager, bitch like you were Argentinian! If you have a dramaturge, fire him! – I say it again – If you have a dramaturge, FIRE him! – Two is not enough: If you have a dramaturge, fire him. No send him to another galaxy. He'll be very happy cuz he probably also admires Douglas Adams, and still laughs about the tacky jokes about a planet inhabited by bed-sheets. If somebody wants to make a book about you and your work, run for your life. If you have a studio, rent it out – but make sure not to rent it to something dance.

So you say, but maybe if a dramaturge is such a bad thing maybe I should keep him, produce closure and hence make myself open to radical change, to breach? Might, be

a good idea but when it comes to the dramaturge this is not a fact, because he or she is somebody that always operates vis-à-vis priority. Making yourself king of circumstances is exactly a matter of passing through a distinct closure, or perhaps even better the moment of mastering circumstances, i.e. emancipating your production from its mode of governance, you will necessarily configure an open. Or perhaps, the moment of emancipation from circumstances implies a shift from multiplicity to multitude, that is a space of innovation or becoming.

Obviously, this process implies renouncing identity. To rule your circumstances will by default make you appear like a fool, an idiot, irresponsible, unprofessional and laughable, naïve or childish. Yes, emancipation, in this sense, proposes a certain refusal to negotiation, or a least a refusal to a change in the terms of negotiation, a suspense of negotiation until the field has been reset, rebooted. This can only take place by some kind of unconditionality, such as fanaticism, obsessivity, non-provoked postponement, total irreliability, some sort of humor. Humor in the sense of collapsing signifier chains: a joke is the deliberate formation of signifiers that at the same time construct consistency and incompatibility, that produce incoherence where coherence rules, or in other words that is both and and or at the same time. The joke, the mastery of circumstances, opens for a space of innovation, for a space where the subject can no longer possess the sentence I feel, but is deferred to a position that is being felt.

We all agree that the mode of production governs the result, the production or product. Fuck you, not any more it does! Refuse it. Just goddamn repudiate. And this, as you know, means one kick ass thing: betray all sides.

Order, structural accuracy and separable steps could be the three watchwords of classical production. Repressed people state things like: order and tidy and you get paid on Friday (which is like *catchy* in Swedish), but you know as much as I that this is *passé*. We don't first design, then build, then test, then market and then sell. No way, that's a waste of time and resource, but it's not enough to reverse the order either. That's not change but just happy variation, says Bruno Latour - you know how it goes, what has to be changed is not this or that but the modes of change themselves. So to start with marketing is not an option.

Today you won't get the good money on Friday if you keep up order, on the contrary, if you do, your competitor will in no time detect your strategies and you end up in a business agreement with Nokia. Corporate business doesn't do "showings" halfway through the process to which they invite competitors. No, this is all about release dates and the right kind of cool power-point presentations. Contemporary production does everything to produce more mess, the messier the better, weak organization, strong entities, vague hierarchies and personal responsibility. Soft-undercover, shadows, lateral production and leaking narratives.

We have to get rid of the Western model based on weak entities and strong organization - like the alphabet. Instead we better go Egyptian, where the entity - the hieroglyph - is strong, but the organization is weak. Stability is there anyway, what is needed is speed and the ability to navigate. Make sure you can change your mind, transform a research process into a commodity, a product into a campaign. Stability is there anyway, what is needed is even more mobility and even less static resources. Stability is there anyway, sell your house, don't open a space - it's

the most stupid idea. Are you willing to pay most of your subsidy in order to feel like a typical performance artist? Yes, I know if you have a space your funding is secured, but dude – don't go there – it's a trap cuz the increase of funding is correlated to becoming stable, and thus being disabled from expanding markets. Pina Bausch was the ultimate Fordist choreographer and nothing to aspire to. Dance and choreography shouldn't mourn and complain about the lack of structures and big houses – look what has happened to dance in Germany. On the contrary use this as an opportunity. We have speed and we can use it to not have to do what we can. We don't need to become a communist party, but we can occupy ourselves with lines of flight.

You know what, the most uncool ever is to see the evidence of the process in the performance.

Make sure that you are not justifying a creation in respect of the process. More research is bullshit, and yet it has to be there, but mind you, research is not a good thing, it's as corrupt as business, families and class struggle.

I wonder why dance still obsesses about being professional? That was important ten, twenty or fifty years ago, but today it's exactly the wrong question. We don't need to fight for our survival any more, check it out there is Queen Elizabeth Hall and whatever de la Ville. We have what we wanted, now it's about getting rid of it. Yes, sure institutions, such as educations, dance venues etc. need to watch out with quality assessment, but if your art is being understood as professional quality it also means that it is supporting established markets and measures of quality. Professional quality is always well and balanced. If you want to make something that kicks ass you have to accept accusations of being unprofessional [which obviously has

nothing to do with provocation, body fluids or badly prepared work]. Ditch your good ideas, exactly because they are good which means that they behave, fit and seem to work. – The only thing professional I want is kids – If you get invited two years in a row your work is simply not evil enough. You can do better!

Why, and I seriously can't get it right, do we so ambitiously try to appear bigger than we are, to secure structures and represent our practice in relation to other art-forms. Yvonne Rainer's No-manifesto is not good, brilliant or even half ass smart when it comes to producing dance – Trio A is a failure [and fuck Beckett] – and it's quite boring that Rainer is making it even more of a failure today – but it is also the most important impressive and sparkling manifesto in respect of dance being specific to other art forms and expressions. It denounces the idea that dance is compatible with any other art form, or position in respect of dominant discourse, and instead it resurrects dance as singularity. The No-manifesto should not be used vis-à-vis expression, shape, look or attitude but in the sense of production in order to unground our little sister complex and need for reliability, and instead intensify us to operate exactly through volatility, vagueness, ephemerality, movement and mobility. Yeah, as if by magic dance just ended up being totally contemporary. Let's surf the wave, we have one chance and there is no looking back. Do you really have something to lose? Is what you want to keep up some more of the same?

Check it out, we know – our audience will remain super tiny, our future won't be amazing and the subsidy will not multiply, we have no chance to go commercial and are doomed to be small, marginal, budget, exception – so let's stop pretending something else, and at the same time stop

being forgiving and tolerant. – Terminate all opera ballets NOW – No, upgrading is not an option and we don't need them as museums – we don't need Dixieland Jazz museums, so why should there be opera ballet – sure I'd be fine with an opera and ballet museum but not before we have a contemporary venue and scene that maintains a similar amount of state coverage. Every country that builds a new opera house, should be excluded from EU, UN, IMF and some other abbreviations. It's not acceptable especially as it is anyway just a means to support local entrepreneurs, builders and security companies. Forget about it – there is nothing whatsoever good about Verdi's Othello, nothing, not even when staged by Alain Platel.

Let's return here! So let's stop pretending, the situation is excellent – basically nobody cares about what we do, nobody bothers about dance. We are too small – we don't even have a decent magazine – like whatever Artforum, like even poetry has a cooler magazine than we: “What's it called?”

“-Oh, the poetry magazine? I forgot.” That's how bad the situation is in dance. We have no history, no size, no money, no nothing. No nothing except, passion.

So stop thinking about one thing at a time. Stop asking for money before you start to work, use the marketing campaign as rehearsal, rehearse in spaces that don't belong to you – you don't need 150 m2 to make a dance – if you have one, it's gonna be exactly a 150 m2 dance, and that's what every dance show is, so why make another one? Rehearse in the kitchen, over the phone, stop wanting to be a choreographer – look what they have done so far! Mess everything up and sell out. Stop cleaning up- work, fuck transparency – without confusion nothing different. Stop being confused as a means of justifying your lazy attitude.

If your audience has nothing better to say after the show than that they liked it but that it was too long, you have not done your job. Make people ravage. Allow yourself to be boring boring very boring. Make really small shows, and short ones. Make tanz-theater and hate dance theater. We have nothing to justify, and hello why should we? Don't even think about thinking about some idea that you are privileged to work in dance. That's the moment when you start making really shit work. That's like saying thank you to somebody that you just had sex with. Look, I didn't do it as a service. I didn't do it for your sake. I didn't do it for any other reason than the fact that I like having sex with you, like a lot. Take me to bed now, let's dance.

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Let's turn to the audience. Who needs an audience that goes home? At the festival office part of the hard work surrounding the two weeks of public presence, consists of finding new audiences. "-We want to reach out to individuals and groups that don't find their way to contemporary dance." Do we really? The programmer underlines the importance of his local audience and how the program is specific for the local context. Interesting, I'm curious cuz it seems a number of shows are local and special everywhere.

Somebody said:

"Sweden is really a special country when it comes to theatre."

"How do you mean?"

"Well, it's the only country in Europe where Forced Entertainment is only presented every second year."

The festival crew works hard on attracting new audiences, obviously it's only according to demographic populations such as immigrants and kids or immigrants and kids, or sometimes due a strike of genius kids and immigrants. Interest groups seem to be a foreign concept, but guess why: those aren't part of the local government's statistics.

As part of the hard work, we hire a marketing company that's very professional and innovative. After some months of hard thinking and uncountable hours on consultant fees the company pitches a marketing strategy that everyone celebrates because it is absolutely identical to last years'. It consists solely of conventional signs, longitudes and latitudes, so we can be certain that nothing will go wrong. Business as usual. Yes, it is remarkable to what extent marketing campaigns for festivals fail to be different.

The problem with dance and choreography is that there's only one wallet, one sack of money. There is no mi casa blah blah, no way: the State runs the business. Goddamn, I envy visual art for their commercial players, if for no other reason then that dealers and collectors are in it for the money not just for keeping their job. Our expression, on the other hand, is financed exclusively by state money which implies that the festival as much as the artist will do nothing else than more of the same. Why change if it worked fine last year and the previous ten? After all, the festival director won't become a millionaire even if the ticket sales increased a billion percent. As a business model dance and choreography is a sucker, it is currently approaching the future through what is commonly known as classical Fordism. A large part of the business however is still operating due an economic model called feudalism. It's kind of weird that however volatile and immaterial

dance and performance is, it is treated strictly as a product that operates independently of relations.

On the other hand since we know that the State needs art and culture, that it's part of your city's unique selling point and the festival is part of the bigger picture, why, if we don't even get a good pay, don't we invest in risk economy like it was our family name. We have nothing to lose; yes it's just a festival, just a piece, just a season or intervention. Basically, who cares? But since nobody does it's also the time of our lives.

The festival is busy looking for new audiences, however only until the show starts. Sometimes the new audience is even granted an explanatory introduction, as if anybody would need escort to be able to consume a dance piece. Give me a break and stop patronizing people. During the show they, next to us, a "we" that doesn't belong together, sit there in the dark, without communicating anything at all. Patiently we take in solos and duos, if we are lucky somewhat abstract choreographic attempts, but more often poor choreography dressed up in theatre: I can't think of an appropriate punishment for the invention of tanz-theater. — Ouch — It's amazing. There we are a few hundred curious individuals [at least in the beginning] sitting in the dark attentively consuming some dancy monologue that at best resembles a nostalgic documentary about someone's memories. And then, we all rush out, the entire audience seems to be blown out of the venue as if a tsunami just passed the fourth wall. Grandiose.

The only people staying around after the show are professionals, dancers and local choreographers, a presenter or two flown in for the day, everybody in intimate conversations. The bar is perfect to fit 18 people and if we are lucky they even have two kinds of white wine. Moderation.

A good half an hour later the performer shows up, perhaps even the choreographer. Now, dressed in pseudo fashionable after-work outfits. They have a drink, probably mineral water, and after a short conversation with the flown in programmers take off for dinner. “Yeah, I really need something to eat.” But come on, what happened to the audience? Is it really so bad, that we only need them to buy tickets? The moment the statistics are fulfilled we get rid of them, and fast. Seriously, what do we need the audience for? Do we really want them to go home? Do we want them to stop thinking about the show already on the tram home? Do we want them to make it home for the late news? Have we forgotten about the possibility that those people might have something on their mind, at home they can't inform us, with the girlfriend and the glass of wine they can't participate. Can we afford not to listen, not to overhear and share all these conversations which are about our work, are we really so cynical that we can ignore our audience and stop our mission in dance and choreography after the applause?

What are you doing in the dressing room after the show? Giving notes, save them for tomorrow, stop trying so hard to be a choreographer. “-It's important to take one's distance. You know to come down after a show...” Oh yeah, is that how important this is for you? So important that you have to regain yourself in the dressing-room? I'm sure that's how you make revolutions. Come on, sitting around in the dressing room is all about feeling important. In the dressing room you are still the star, not just some average dude in a three star hotel.

And what is the festival crew doing? Oh, they stand around talking to mafia brothers, or colleagues engaged in the same network. And where is the new audience? Have

we absolutely given up on the possibility of sharing anything at all? This isn't news but worthwhile repeating: you are not interested in a new audience but in keeping your job and serving local politicians.

Yeah. Something is wrong in the state of dance. Stop obsessing about the show and think about what the relations are that your work produces. Whatever position we occupy, it's the same, but what kind of relations does our work produce? Do we really think our pieces have an impact on the people seated in the auditorium? Sorry, no fuckin chance. It doesn't work that way, the idea of devoted attention, the impact of that thing up there, is a multiplex cinema, no more. That's like being a devoted anarchist and not realizing that politics is a game for posers. The reason for cultural consumption is no longer about the intensity of experience, on the contrary it is about how it is communicated and about the capacity of spending time together. The era of television is over we live in the age of Youtube. It's not about making something amazing, a good movie, an exposing documentary, it's about being part. Youtube is not about images, it's about relations.

So we wonder what does the festival think when the investments in shows are so many thousand – a regular size show with ten performers is, just the fee, about 15.000€ per night and I'm not counting infrastructure and rents etc. – and the investment in the after-party is, well, the same amount but without the thousands. Of course our festivals will suck: dance performances are boring, have tacky soundtracks and poor light design. Dancers were perhaps something sexy in the mid 70s but today? I can have everything sexy on the Iphone.

The festival should focus on everything else than the show. Let's change the numbers around. Or think about it

in this way. I spend a year on making a piece or a festival. I invest my entire life in this, in exactly this. It is this performance I want nothing else! But at the same time I allow some local loser to take care of the catering, decide what wine we should drink, and that quiche with spinach is like amazing.

Who needs an audience that goes home, we don't – the question is can we afford having an audience that doesn't stay? Can we afford not to make them talk with us at least until the sun comes up? The audience is the only thing we have – next to the co-producer – so let's enjoy it and make it enjoy itself. Free drinks for everybody, and hey – no fucking pasta salad. Stop it, fuck that premiere party backstage – it's not exactly VIP and hey you already know everybody and where is the film team – let's invite everybody.

“-But it will be very expensive?” Yes, exactly, in times of economic, not to mention creative crisis, the budget for the after party should be the last thing to save on. If we are anyways going down, let's go down with a glass, no a bottle, of champagne. Cynical no way, fanatic fuck yeah.

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Size matters. Yes it does. Don't go there to the sort of early 90s attitude, that it doesn't. Stop that sexually neutral argument and face the fact that it matters and it matters a lot. However what matter is only structural and abolishing it is of course even more repressive to the out of the normal. Let's reestablish that size matters and instead of a passive one size fits all mindset, see what the difference of size can do.

Check it out, who would you bring home? Mr Big, no way – a dude that relies on size and quantity. Boring. Big-

ness makes you immobile, think about the bodybuilder: lots of muscle but for what use? The contemporary muscle man is simply mass with only one ability: to pose. The tiny, small scale on the other hand has nothing else to rely on than agility, technique and innovation. Mr Big is about to be a sloppy bottom passing responsibility to you, whereas Tiny is the total promise of adventure.

If capitalism is not a mode of production, but instead a production of modes and worlds, this is true all the way to horizontal activities or concerning size. To propose that size doesn't matter is a statement typical of a capitalism operating on a regional level to which there exists a possible outside, and in any case size doesn't matter homogenizes, resonates of welfare state and lighter shades of communism. The moment we enter capitalism without borders the only thing that matters is size, but it matters not on a structural level but only in respect of how size makes you mobile, dynamic and fast.

Those that disrespect size will end up in the same position as the automotive industry which lives on the lie you-are-good-as-you-are... no need to upgrade, change or mess shit up. So even if size doesn't matter, like fundamentally, still to consider that it does implies the necessity of strategic and tactical differentiation.

Dance venues and festivals, and in fact dance makers and choreographers too, utilize an economical system that isn't exactly contemporary and it is apparent that they have abandoned the importance of size completely. "Have they?" you ask. Yes, and it is even better, it is as if dance tries with endless effort to gain exactly the same size and is completely obsessed with the equalization of the experience.

Have you noticed that independently of circumstances dance insists on one size, and one size implies one strategy, one single tactic and the absolute absence of novelty or innovation. Think about it, independent of size every dance venue operates through a season program. Each one of them, but why? For the big players, wouldn't it be better to present your program on a five year basis, it is anyway not about to change. No, you didn't change program over the last 27 years. Come on you have presented Rosas since 1982. If you have size then why not rely on it and make supersize me moves, instead of pretending to be a middle sized venue that can't afford anything at all and a marketing campaign without budget? And for you Tiny, why do you insist on a season program if you anyway don't prepare your productions more than a month in advance? You just want to look like the big guy, you just want to feel important, but man, you aren't. You don't have the infrastructure, so stop thinking about yourself as an international trafficking syndicate and realize you are just a local pusher without importance. But hey, your situation is brilliant. You know, the moment you realize who you are, consider your size, you have everything to win. Stop comparing yourself with anything and start working. Check it out, you have had the same audience numbers for the last ten years, sometimes a little better most of the time not, so why not change strategy: as long as you work on season programs, your audience will not change, and I tell you, you will show exactly the same dance season after season. Namely: Season program dance, and how exciting is that?

Think about marketing campaigns for dance and choreography. How come that every house, no matter what size, utilizes the exact same campaign. The idiotic accordion with the exact same images and the exact same text

length. Why why why? Don't you have higher ambitions than that. It's not the money, confess, it's not! It's because it's easy, because we know that it works. Make a book, a season catalogue – if they can in visual art and business why can't you? Because you are lazy and a coward! And hello, the small local venue, why do you send out 15.000 programs when you know that the audience will anyway be 150 people per production. The print and sending out is not for free. Why don't you just call the people you know will come anyway, why not buy a bicycle and go visit your audience in person. That's gonna be convincing.

Who has decided that pieces, no matter what size the venue, can only be presented a maximum of four times? That is the size doesn't matter concept. Since you anyway didn't have enough audience for the second show, why not show it another 15 times. Stop relying on the one size satisfy all notion and start appreciating your specific context, work with the circumstances you have instead of complaining and victimizing yourself under pushed rental contracts and failing support.

And for the artists, dance makers and so on. Not since the introduction of lecture performance have we seen anything new. No, everybody takes the same format, operates with the same production rhythm and aspires to be small yet big, contemporary and tradition preserving, a small body builder.

You won't tour this year either, so why spend the entire budget on trying to make a larger production. You either are on the list or you are not. You know if you are. Stop hoping for the best. How can dance allow itself to so completely support the good hour format of dance performances? Why do you insist on making a quartet, give me a break? Why, are you so keen on suffering?

And why, are you, big type choreographers, addicted to one show per year. You have the money, you have the license, you're on the list, why not make something out of it. Why not invest in some decent mess. No, you are so embarrassingly geared on recognition that you will always phase in on one-size fits all in the end. Don't you understand that your reliability is the end of dance? You are not a good businessman if you survive, you only are if you proliferate. Did you grow as much as Google over the last ten years. You didn't, why not. Because you rather chicken out.

Capitalism is here and it is all over the place. It is active 24/7 and doesn't excuse dance and choreography. We are in it big time however much we hope we wouldn't be. As long as we maintain that position we are totally harmless, presenting simplified and "fair" images of a dream world that is already so passé. Only if we give up our desire for sameness and accept that it is all about technique, ability, adventure and innovation, can dance and choreography make a difference.

Size matters, but yours is always too small as long as you don't know how to use it, and mind you there is no manual for that. This is up to you, you have no one to rely on, but then check it out the only thing you have to be scared of is freedom.

Dance and choreography are wonderful, but right now, since fifteen years, you and me, your neighbor and the art council, your producer and the middle-sized audience have made it into a thing, a pitiful thing. It's time to wake up, size is not what makes the news it's the show. Not things but action. Use your size, appreciate it for what it is, and make it move in mysterious ways.

Magic makes size matter, what's your trick? Come on, come on, come on set me up, use the trap door, enter the prestige, violate me, mess me up. I don't want to wake up to modest excuses.

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Theft is a seriously underrated concept in dance. The only problem today is that one can not exactly know what it is that one are s'posed to steal.

There is something endearing with theft, perhaps similar to a gift. A respectable thief doesn't ask for anything back, but is willing to eye the consequences. Theft requires a certain cool, similar to when you offer somebody a gift. There's but one thing you can't ask for and that is appreciation. Perhaps that is the dilemma of capitalism, that the thief as much as the one that offers a gift expects something in return. Capitalism steals from the poor and is still expected to be treated like Robin Hood. That equation doesn't make a home run. Nope, a proper thief stands tall without remorse, willing to pay the price. "... thug life, from now till' the muthafuckin' ever" – said 2Pac

Ok, I'm going romantic here, but so what? Steal more, and make sure you leave traces. Steal in front of people's noses, steal when everyone can see you and make sure you put the loot into action. Don't ever ask for a ransom, that's the low life. So do ask for a ransom, but only one that is completely out of scale, too small so that it doesn't matter shit, or outrageously over-sized. Stop acting vis-a-vis some hideously old school notion of dignity. Revenge is so stone age not even Italians have time for it. Theft today should be a means of undermining and corrupting a field, making a landscape completely unstable, making it shaky under your own as well as the others' feet.

In a society based on discipline theft still carries with it an opportunity to operate between layers of rule, but we aren't there any longer. In a society of control theft is as good as any other business strategy. The romantic posture would then be to propose, that the thief as any other business engagement must know what her act produces. But fuck that, this only implies a return to known models of reason. As long as you are aware of the consequences of your act they are justifiable, but again justification is always resting on established conventions. So nothing else than theft without reason, without conditioned revenue, will contest conventions and norms. Theft in this respect complexifies and ungrounds.

After Roland Barthes we know that there is no other way to pursue the world than to thieve around, to borrow and steal from wherever, is the only way to bring the bacon home. The title of the contemporary thief is DJ. With this knowledge in mind we have at least two choices, we can continue to steal as if innocent and somehow continue to ride a dead horse, i.e. although we know it's not an option to maintain that the artistic act operates due to a calling, or to consider exactly not what we steal, but in respect of the aspirations due which theft takes place.

Initially, we can consider theft in respect of time and space. To steal ideas is excellent because ideas don't operate in the world but instead make the world operable. In other words to steal ideas is brilliant since their capacity to unfold is endless. Ideas are made of proliferation but left to the user - the entity that handles it - to choose how to cultivate it, i.e. to steal ideas undermines models of ownership, proposes a notion of open source, and must be considered to produce surplus for all involved parties.

To steal modes of production, methods or, let's say, capacities of cultivation is also dandy, as they cannot not point back to an idea, which if we are not speaking simple plagiarism, must differ. However such acts of theft are rare because they don't make life simpler for the thief, but in fact imply the same or even bigger efforts. The most common thief however steals expression, and that is in no way cool. Theft of expression operates on the basis of dislocating actual value, i.e. it qualifies in respect of identity or recognition. The dude that steals expression, or representations is just somebody without imagination that wants effortless admiration, belonging, and he or she will inevitably claim innocence, or simply pretend that it's raining.

Don't worry such people don't sleep well at night, you just might end up a little poorer for a moment, but pride yourself you are good enough to elaborate a new even cooler thingy in no time. Be brave, don't lock the door and fuck backing up.

We could also consider theft in respect of capacity. Stealing structures should not be considered, that's what we do every time we make pieces for the stage. It feels good exactly because it provides safety, yet it also makes it impossible to assume anything else than a little bit more or less, left or right and maintains systems. To steal strategies is equally uncool as it inevitably confirms the initial owner. Stealing strategies is comparable to wearing vintage fashion or stealing from a second hand shop. Theft of tactics is more complex, as it basically means to steal something that has no reason as long as it is not connected to some or other strategy and structure. To steal tactics makes life complicated as its application in a foreign territory necessitates transformation of the territory. In other words, it's like stealing something you have absolutely no use for and

insisting on not getting rid of it. It demands individuation and unprecedented change. Tactics are digital in the sense that they don't lose value when duplicated, and to steal them implies the necessity of producing new surfaces for their proliferation. To steal tactics is like doing a bank robbery through digging endless canals, it makes the ground to which it's inserted more and more unstable.

If to steal structures and strategies equals further stabilization and conventional decision-making based on reaction, to steal tactics is the opposite, it implies to make yourself unable to maintain resistance, and produces action, or even better activation. When you steal a structure you're simply afraid to get caught, when you steal tactics you fear not being noticed at all.

Why if we consider theft a productive force don't we set up a gangster syndicate and start to work in mobs? No no no, that's exactly the wrong way, that's not even theft, that's more like a theatrical form of redistribution of ownership, or in our field consensual forms of collaboration (it will always end up in a known disaster). It won't be easy, but unfortunately you will have to put on your thug outfit and sneak around all alone. Steal without reflection, without sympathy, without discernment, steal ideas and tactics, steal for no other reason than to corrupt.

Your identity is not the sum of your relations. Detach your relations from yourself, and operate without mission. Only if we leave the current obsession with identity, only if we let go of desiring representation in the dominant discourse – the workers' movement is ontologically over – forget your activist past [or wore presence] – only if we push out the coffin scene also from the deleted scenes department can we bring it on like a decent cheerleading trope. This is not about satisfaction, this is not about you

or me, this is not about the subject standing up, this is not about Antigone's brothers, so not about Obi-Wan Kenobi (an acronym to Freud with the spellcheck of Darth Wadar), this is not about creativity, this is about group sex and the creation of the world. A breach of the condition for success!

The time is now for rotten politics, the time is now to fuck Woody and vote for putrefaction. Stop the revolution, the future is built on de-solidification. Abandon ship, motherfuckers. Let's board the enemy's territory and swing our stolen swords. It is not a matter of acquiring gold or Penelope Cruz but about the act of boarding, of breaking ground of creating a general havoc. Havoc is not deep, nor stretching out, havoc is the crack, not the promise, victory, debauchery, it's the horror vacui between, contingency. We are engaging in a break that ends no where [this is so not about difference], it's about difference without reference.

Break out, we know there's no way out of capitalism [degree is not a way of, but ways out always implies kind]. One can think of two kinds of break with confinements proposed by the law [literally or metaphorically speaking]. Prison break – a breach with a conventional and continuous imprisonment that without exception results in the subject looking over his shoulder. It is only a matter of time for the law to catch up with him. The subject will inevitably return to his original imprisonment where he will finally feel relief. The prison break operates on the basis of breaking through and leaving a trace, whereas a clean break implies a shift of discourse, i.e. the prison guard will not even know that the subject has disappeared. The result is identical, but after a clean break the subject will continu-

ously look over his shoulder hoping for somebody to look for him. A clean break implies sovereignty, a lonely place, and nobody to gossip with.

Let's consider copyright for a moment, not least in respect of the body. How is piracy formulating itself a break, or is there an option for a third kind of break, a break that maintains itself in the crack.

Piracy as a simple prison break is a crossing of a conventional restriction in order to get away with some or other thing, or simply to obtain value. But piracy can also be compared to the clean break, especially considering digital media where a copy is not destabilizing value. Is it possible to consider piracy not only as a strategic endeavor, but as an operation on structural or tactical levels? We would like to understand piracy as a concept, as a heterogeneous huddle of incompatible connections raising questions that cannot be answered within our present predicament or as a cluster of mutating lines carrying the potentiality of ungrounding established capacities of dualist discourse.

The language apparatuses that define present political contexts have over the past twenty-five years lost their deterritorializing agency, i.e. any political emergence or social movement can but be canonized due the dominant discourse of Western representational democracy, hence the multiplicity has made itself invincible. As long as tomorrow is designated by yesterday's idioms, difference can only operate on levels of degree, in particular in a reality where capitalism has become omnipresent.

There is nothing to fight against any more, no battles to choose, no struggles that make sense, precisely because the enemy is within. Activism and public manifestation have become an empty spectacle and an identity booster for souls that enjoy the comfortable position of being a

little bit lost. The crisis must not be solved, nothing must be repaired since that only implies further consolidation of impotent language apparatuses. The complete compatibility between capital, cognitary labor and control implies the rise of arbitrary power; a power that is its own body without organs, that is difference without reference to a prior unity and hence resistant, or even unimaginable to prevailing political discourse. But as there is nothing to rely on, potentiality becomes an open question; arbitrary power releases the possibility for a radical breach of subjectivity.

The primary function of western models of governance, democratic or not, is to produce stability. In short, good governance is “supposed” to establish long-term conditions to ensure economic expansion, prosperity etc. Politics, also today – especially its representations, operates on the basis of discipline and its striated production, distribution and accountability, i.e. stability is always prior to transformation; change is reactive to a common continuous and divisible organization.

In “Cyclonopedia” Reza Negarestani turns this model around taking as a starting point an ongoing production of instability, proposing a political context that operates through ungrounding and corruption of systems and grammar. Populations and subjects appear to strive for stability, survival and probability; capacities that implicitly strengthen identity and the understanding of belonging, to a family, tribe or commune. A politics of ungrounding that multiplies surfaces and increases incompatibility must, if maintained properly, constantly threaten belonging, identity, the need for cartographies and consistent modes of navigation in favor of affective production. A production that is not creative but possibly creational, and calls for an

idea that stability is formed as a response to activity, or that change is active, discontinuous and indivisible. Change in this sense is unorganized and expansive, improbable and potentially disruptive in respect of power, knowledge and subjectivity.

Certain authorities were quick in localizing piracy in relation to modes of maintenance of established social apparatuses. Piracy is theft, end of discussion, which further implies that it operates on the basis of strategy. We would like to propose piracy as an ungrounding, activational capacity, an affective mode of production, that challenges established political discourse. It's about theft, but not of "some thing", but of something irreplaceable, i.e. the ability to authorize voice. Thus we should understand piracy as a concept contesting political discourse on a structural level.

Similar authorities have scripted piracy as a grass root movement the motif of which is to crush Hollywood or kill the music business. Piracy is destructive, end of discussion, which again situates it in respect of strategy. We would like to propose piracy not as strategy but as pure tacticity, even an open set of pure tacticities, which must be understood as mechano-in-organic insinuations of fear, surprise and havoc. Seemingly event-specific they remain indifferent to, but complicit with, the very medium/organization in which it/they are actuated. Pure tacticities consist of a series of betrayals, an ungrounding mechanics that can only take place through a tactical betrayal of all sides. Thus we should understand piracy as a concept that, metaphorically speaking, betrays the grammatical, or compositional reference to, of a digital order, in favor of an empirical, non-compositional experience in, of an analogue unfolding.

Prison breaks as well as clean breaks configure desire on the basis of lack. Piracy is never about lack, it is a desiring machine that instead of breaking out, is breaking apart, opening for the emergence of an alternative politics: the capacity of a struggle that matters.

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“Everything under heaven is chaos, the situation is excellent” said Mao – Oh no, is Spangbergianism doing yet another loop into communism, “We’ve had enough of your leftist jargon!” – Tahaa, nope I’m not, cuz think about it, this is exactly what every politician that is not a present day communist says. As long as there is chaos the world needs politics and politicians, and the moment when all units are go go and house music has turned omnipresent then we don’t need politics no more. Politicians have a shared hidden agenda, to never let stability rule the dance floor. Hence, chaos equals excellent independent of your political aptitude, and “Houston, we have a problem” is precisely all units are go go.

But admit it, it’s pretty cool to dare to say it like Father Mao, instead of pretending to be a well-meaning maintenance unit, like present day politics and its staff members. They aren’t nasty enough to be called politicians no more. Politics has come to face the same destiny as architecture. In the old days – you sentimental fuck – architects had ambitions, their job was to build cities, societies, worlds, futures; today architects only desperately hold on to cornerstones no longer attached to buildings, but they still do because what else is there: selling out to construction companies that think that Greenpeace is a fertilizer. The

problem is just that what else is there that has already happened. Greenpeace is a fertilizer and the harder you tighten your grip around those old grab handles the easier it is to overtake you. You are not Ayrton Senna, but just because you're not, does not free you from the obligation to be in control.

Contemporary politics issues a clever double play on the basis of identity. In particular in respect of expression, politicians uphold the position of the architect of the society, a proud yet humble servant with an ear to every citizen, but on the level of production the story is quite another. Politicians have uncovered the wail of today's capitalism and realized that politics is not formed around consequence or repercussion but has become a play with values. It's not a matter of staying in control, nor of trust in the classical sense, or even presenting a reasonable political agenda, it is about risk management, based on risk understood as commodity.

However, when Mao proposed his chaos-theory it was obviously excessive of ambition and power: personal, collective, global and pretty much amazing. It was smooth, chaos as the absence of horizon, chaos to be civilized, to be brought out of the shadowlands of capitalism. And he managed, and we all helped out. Today the excellence of the situation is rather to maintain chaos, and preferably without theory, but smack packed, filled to the brim with affect, i.e. unconditioned possibility. But watch out this is not potentiality, but exactly its commodified neighbor. The real deal of contemporary capitalism is corporatized affect. Life in the mainstream is no longer about reliability, trust, generations and a football team connected to your business, it's about the ability to change, to never coagulate, to never gain identity proper, but to always show up

somewhere else without negotiation, without storage or real-estate, without employees or products. Let's circulate.

For a while there we lived the dream and thought that change, mobility, becoming, rhizome, BwO, war-machines and other assemblages were the Eigentum of a conceptually advanced population but, ouch – how wrong we were, today all those terms are the building blocks, or rather the soft-subversion with which every company, organization and community builds their multifaceted identities. Capitalism of today doesn't give a flying fuck about identity it lives on and sells individuation. It's not about upgrading or new models but about innovation pure and simple.

“Everything under heaven is total chaos, the situation is excellent” and I'm still wondering why am I doing good work, and why are we all trying so hard. If everything is chaos and that is excellent why do we make such efforts to produce order, why do we make things that are not chaos at all, why are we trying so embarrassingly hard to be transparent, linear, balanced, stable and dramaturgical. In fact I think most dance works if they were filmed would look pretty much like *The Lord of The Rings*, i.e. if *The Lord of The Rings* were filmed outside Brussels.

Dance and choreography, and art in general, is to an overwhelming amount creating images, movements and situations that have lost every compatibility to present-day political reality and reproduce imagery that is only there to comfort the audience, that embraces like a grandmother in a long skirt, smelling of butter, a somewhat liberated version of Jane Austen. The utopian, dystopian or whatever –topian is just so feel-good and Haagen Dazs that nothing can ever happen, up or down. Dance is a kind of well-behaving bulimic.

We, the dancers and choreographers, the immaterial workers of all times, the champions of post-Fordism we don't have to any more, we don't need to feel intimidated about our vague syntax, we don't have to insist on composition but should, perhaps even with a smile and some high-fiving, leave these terms behind and celebrate that everything is total chaos, open our eyes to the excellence and allow ourselves to be as enigmatic as our expression. Stop making pieces about anything at all, and especially not about identity, gender, differently able bodies, immigrants or Katrina. We should of course make pieces exactly about these issues but only all of them and at the same time, or without any proportion. But look, if you make a piece about something make sure you don't celebrate that thing, cuz you know, celebration is always for those that celebrate not for the celebrated.

In fact we have a responsibility here, and there is no second option, we have to leave something behind – the desire to become architects, the builders of society. We should look only forward and engage in the excellence and the chaos but not in order to generate order and stability but in order to make sure that the chaos is getting even more chaotic, for excellence to be a word that speaks about pushing positions. Causality, must be left behind. Causality is like sex-toys, we think it expands our opportunities but in fact makes us even more conventional. Sex-toys are for sentimental souls, it makes you feel imaginative and maybe you practice some group sex with your boyfriend, only the two of you.

In order to undo excellence it is a good idea to leave the notion of the body of works behind. To make totally unrecognizable stuff. It is not your works that produce the right kind of fear but the fact that they cannot be connect-

ed: a fear that makes people move and stop holding back. Maybe even act a bit out of frame.

In order to stay within the chaos it would be favorable to leave consensus behind. To be judgmental all the time but never judgmental concerning the center. Getting obsessed with details and not only the good ones. Be extremely enigmatic with your opinions, and change them without warning, make pieces that you rearrange every day and yet make them very formal. Read the wrong books by Rancière, and stop feeling guilty about reading novels. Hyperstition is the term used for the creation of intact worlds that have no compatibility to our reality.

It is time to stop thinking about yourself as a brand, to forget your Hollywood dreams. There are no riches there for you to administer, so let's bring the chaos on ourselves and start making really foolish things. No, this has nothing to do with being unprepared but perhaps about new modes of understanding satisfaction and joy. It has nothing to do with those too long too slow rehearsal periods when nobody dares to have an idea, and it has nothing to do with speed. There is nothing subversive in being slow or fast, speed is something we consume, not produce.

We have nothing to lose except chaos and excellence, so let's keep it alive. Let's take it as our responsibility to cultivate it. We must take seriously the fact that capitalism has asked us to return affect, and turned it away from potentiality or the virtual. We can't rely on Deleuze and Guattari no more, we need new concepts. But you know, I think innovation is not enough, inventions, neither, cuz they all build upon the previous and are constructed in respect of transformation. From day to day, and we hardly notice how inventions enter our lives and change them. We must become immigrants – curse interdisciplinary practices – we must immigrate on a daily basis, we must im-

migrate for every piece, we must break with the past, must break even more with our known and friendly relatives and landscapes. We must immigrate in order to be solidaric.

Change your mind for no particular reason but just because. Be as enigmatic as you can, but this is not vain. Renounce vanity like Tilda Swinton, be modest but totally without consistency of opinion, and from time to time, make sure you don't fall in the trap of becoming totally void of outlines. Make up stories about why and when, and change them all over on a daily basis. Make projects that are totally hermetic. Refuse risks, they are corporate anyway. Turn over a rare Ming vase at a party, and forget to spend your subsidy. Affect is for beginners, experience isn't much better than enunciation. Embrace your inner chaos, change with it.

I'm scared, the situation is excellent. Remember we don't believe in the future, we believe the future. There's nothing to project on just plain and simple production.





