Let's talk about work
(and life)

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advancing performing arts project

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Introduction

(And Jacopo Lanteri)
chosen in order to initiate an exchange about current approaches to artistic and/or curatorial practice. How do the artists, curators and researchers work? What methods and strategies do they apply? What interests them at the moment? How does artistic work relate to ‘private’ life and vice versa? The series of talks was conceived as an opportunity for the guests to reflect upon their work in the light of the interests and viewpoints of another person.

On four evenings between February and June 2015, 16 participants in the contemporary dance and performing arts scene currently based in Berlin met at the Tanzfabrik in order to discuss questions of work (and life), initially in dialogue with each other, and then with the audience. Since the format of the evenings was partly created in order to give to the scene the opportunity to represent itself, the main curatorial choice consisted of initiating a chain of communication as a space for people who already knew each other as well as for new encounters. For this reason, instead deciding on a fixed series of guests, the two curators invited one person each evening who then chose an initial conversation partner. This second guest then invited a third person to talk to, and this was repeated with the third person asking a fourth. The evening concluded with the fourth participant talking to the first person who had been invited to begin the series of conversations.

This publication features five dialogues. Four of them are edited transcriptions of conversations that took place in Studio 13. The dialogue between Giulia Palladini’s statements and Erik Göngrich's
drawings was made after their conversation in Tanzfabrik and continues an ongoing collaboration that had already started before the Studio 13 talk. The voices represented in this publication come from different backgrounds and different European countries, therefore the discussions are both specific to the Berlin scene and characterise issues present throughout Europe. As a series of conversations, the contributions selected for the publication are a personal exchange about current work (and life) and furthermore have a certain thematic coherence which offers a more general viewpoint of the conditions of artistic work and its entanglement in private life.

The concept of work has various dimensions that the contributions chosen for this publication reflect. Work can be seen as a political instrument ("a political invention of a form of life", Giulia Palladini), as an activity that reveals individual visions of life (a personal “investment of effort and will”, Igor Dobričić) or as the production of an outcome, a tangible product, or the survival of a family. According to this the word ‘work’ describes political, social and economic situations in which the individual inscribes his or her ways of creating meaning.

Work is considered from different points of view in the dialogues without offering a systematic approach. On an analytical level one could say that they complete each other, leading to an understanding of work as the realisation of certain goals, often measured in → time and → money, that takes place in concrete → spaces and → institutions and involves other people in various forms of → collaboration. These notions served as a guide and structuring device for the curatorial choices for five of the 16 dialogues in the series.

However, what the contributions actually have in common is something different. They all provide visions of work that go beyond the somewhat sterile matrix described above, revealing the deep entanglement of work in this field with the dynamics of real life. Even more importantly, artistic work appears in the dialogues as a way of reacting to contemporary concepts of work, which influence artistic practices but which they also disrupt, or pose various methods of resistance to. It is this relationship between work and life that the current publication wants to point out and to which the cross-references allude, connecting different contributions and introducing a second level of reading alongside the linearity of the spoken word.

More concretely, the dialogues can be read as reactions to contemporary working conditions that crystallise in the breathless rhythm of conceiving and realising one project after another. This concept of work is based on constant networking, product-oriented funding systems, a growing blurring of the line between work and life at the risk of submitting artistic and private choices to the constraints of the market. In one of the dialogues from the 2015 series, Florian Feigl described the artist’s work as self-exploitation which according to him, is precisely what turns it into an embodiment of the neoliberal work concept. In the field of the arts it seems especially hard to discern where work starts and where it ends, how it can be
could it even be a part of it? Where does the modern fetish for productivity lead us? Can the → (waste) involved in every production process also be considered work?

The different working procedures proposed in this publication can be understood as statements about the role of contemporary arts and artistic work in our society. This confers a certain political dimension on them. The statements emphasise that artistic work is not performed by people outside society - strange individuals dealing with society from an aesthetic distance. It is not the privilege of a lucky few who thanks to a special talent, manage to transform labour into work or potential suffering into pleasure. The aesthetic distance involved in producing art does not separate the artists from society but on the contrary, places them at the core of it. They are a mirror, commenting upon and highlighting current issues that concern society as whole, in the arts and beyond.

This is of course only one possible point of view from which the conversations can be read. The book is not conceived as a handbook of solutions but as a space of exchange - raising questions, describing situations, pointing out recurrent problems that are relevant both on a local and an international level. The dialogues are starting points for further discussion in the sense that they all end abruptly as they did in the original format of the series. Each dialogue was interrupted after 25 minutes by a song that, sometimes ironically, commented upon a topic mentioned during the talk. ☺
Igor Dobričić & Diego Agulló

(and friendship)
Igor - Some months ago, Diego and I started a common practice: We meet regularly for conversations that we record. So this occasion, “Let’s talk about work (and life)”, gives us an opportunity to test it in front of other people, we are curious about the potential that conversation has of being a performance. In a funny way this repeats what we are very interested in: the contents of how we work and the form - the two of us sitting here, collapsing into each other. So what we are talking about is what we are already doing. That is what I find interesting - in practice in general. What it is about and the action are one and the same... I don’t know where to start.

Diego - Well, I am glad you invited me, especially because we haven’t seen each other for some weeks, any opportunity counts. You mentioned the word ‘work’. I remember, on the very first day of our week together in Croatia in January, where we went in order to follow our practice of conversation, we thought about finding a different word for it, since we were feeling a bit uncomfortable about it. You already said it, we are practising. Or we are exercising, or training. I wonder how much this practice can become work? We have never clarified that. I am a little bit sceptical about thinking about our practice as work - also because we are friends.

I - I have a thought in my mind from the moment I saw this clock here. It is a very common saying - time is money. It is the most scary, profoundly disturbing statement that was launched into the social field quite some time ago. I think that that statement is like a magical utterance. If you say ‘time is money’, the practice becomes work because it starts being measured. And for work to be measured, in terms that somehow blackmail you, you need to use a clock and the time that passes on it has to be translated into money.

Diego - Today it is pretty clear that there is a clock. And it is the very first time that we are getting paid to talk to each other. Do you think we always have this object next to us, symbolically?

I - No, that is why we can have the luxury of sitting in my mother’s house in Croatia and not calling it work. We just decided to go there, spend time and do what mattered to us at a certain moment. But in the overall construction of social reality in which we are embedded, this is considered
an extravagant thing, at best a holi-
day, at worst a kind of eccentricity.
Because it is a waste of time, no
money is involved.
So this is for me an issue about how
we work. Because how we work
doesn’t matter as long as everything
is measured in money.

D - I am going to insist a little bit more
on being suspicious about this word
‘work’. I would like to make a distinc-
tion between becoming friends
through working together and being
friends first and then deciding to work
together. There is a huge difference. I
wonder if friendship is immediately
work for anyone, because if we
strictly say that what we are practis-
ing is friendship... How do you dare
say that we are working when we are
simply being friends together?

I - Exercise is a word that also inter-
ested us from the beginning of our
conversations. I am a bit wary of the
word practice since the word has a
certain history. Exercising is a funny
word, especially ‘exercising friend-
ship’. What is the function of conver-
sation in that? From my perspective,
of being a dramaturge, this is what I
do all the time anyway – I have
conversations. I actually earn my
money from having conversations.

And although I try not to measure
collection in time, at the end of the
day, it always does get measured in
some way through the time I spent
which is then translated into the
money I get from it. If this fact is
removed, the question is what is the
situation we are in? Now our conver-
sation is being measured in time and
paid in money but we do the same as
what we did in Croatia - or is that
already over? So what are we doing
here now?

D - Maybe making a mistake? Then
there is also the fact that for the very
first time we are surrounded by other
bodies, eyes and ears. I could predict
that I would either feel naked or
sharing an intimacy, so this will also
become exhibitionist. I was a little bit
concerned about what it means to
share our practice in front of other
people. It is not actually so much
about self-promotion. One of the
problems here is also self-indulgence
- in connection with exhibitionism. My
concern was why it is important that
other people listen to what we are
talking about. How much can we
transcend or go beyond our personal
history and make the effort of trans-
lating our passions, our problems, our
questions so that they are understood
by others?
I - Do we have to talk about criteria and values? Can we say anything about it to the people now? About one of the subjects of our conversations? I can say what bothers me. If we continue our conversation where it stopped in January, there is the simple fact that we haven’t managed to meet from the beginning of January until now, the 23rd of February 2015. Although we have a commitment of a certain rhythm there was no way to meet. How can that be, that two friends who are practising something that they enjoy and who like to meet each other and to talk with each other have no time to meet?

D - Well, I had time to meet you.

I - I didn’t.

D - Yes, I know.

I - Maybe it is my subject, not yours. Time is a big problem I don’t know what to do with. The problem of how the time is being used and how it passes.

D - For instance what were the criteria or values that made you work with Meg Stuart during this time rather than meeting me?

I - Meg is also a friend in a way. I have never been in a process with her, I always had these very private conversations.

I am very bad with planning in advance, so my agenda is a mess because I just say yes to things without thinking. The problem is that time just happens to me. And I am quite foolish about it because I don’t manage my time very well. The problem is that as soon as I start managing time too well I feel even more uncomfortable, because I become a business. I start feeling I am in some way forced to be an institution.

So in this mess of my own timing, the work with Meg Stuart just happened. And all of a sudden, I realised that there was a concrete time schedule and that I had to honour my commitment, not just because I signed a contract, but because I said yes to a friend.

D - We didn’t sign any contract and we didn’t say we would meet every day or twice a week at a specific moment. But the fact that we don’t have a bureaucratic agreement shouldn’t be a reason not to do something. How are you and I able to sign a contract that actually doesn’t exist as a paper but as a form of commitment, engagement or fidelity to our practice? So that we know that even if Meg Stuart or any other big
name from the field arrives, we will keep this promise.

I - We didn’t make any agreements, that is the difference between projects or work and life. We didn’t make any commitments that were precisely defined in time like saying we will meet every Monday. That is the difference between a commitment to work and a commitment you make in life, there is no time frame to it, which is not necessarily bad. Let’s not think that to overcome this problem we should all now start putting appointments in agendas. When I arrived here from the Balkans, this was one of the biggest shocks for me, that people make private appointments with each other in their agendas. I had never seen that before. It doesn’t exist in my culture. It would be an offensive thing to do. You don’t make appointments with your friends.

D - Yes, but this is what I mean, you say we didn’t make any appointments but somehow we were able to maintain a continuity without a clear schedule.

I - There are no appointments, that could also mean that we don’t meet for three months. I get frustrated by it, but for me somehow it doesn’t really make a big difference because when we meet we will continue where we left off. The question of course is, is there a limit to it? Because maybe two months, three months, four months, six months or two years will pass. Is there at a certain point a break in this promise that doesn’t rely on putting appointments in agendas?

D - Any practice survives by happening repetitively and this situation of the exercise is actually what we are interested in. When we went to Croatia we were together 24 hours a day for seven days. At the end of the week we said: “Wow! What a big difference it made to insist on, to persist in a practice!” I think it is the same with dance, with any kind of exercise. The more you train, the more you reach levels that you wouldn’t reach otherwise. That is why I think there is a great capacity in friendship and in the fact of exercising a friendship or even training it. It is yet to be discovered – what the potential of this capacity for friendship is. I am not differentiating between love and friendship right now, I think in any strong connection between two things, two people, there is something we still don’t know what it is capable of. For me it is one of the most powerful things when two people commit to something. What can come out of that
is definitely one of my main interests. So what is friendship capable of? This is a good question for me. Understanding also that one of the reasons we started meeting each other was a passion for philosophy. There is an intimate affinity between philosophy and friendship, some form of attraction. It already becomes obvious in the etymology of the word ‘philosophy’, meaning love or friend of wisdom. But friendship can also be considered a philosophical frame. I am very interested in the frame of friendship, of love and attraction - sometimes a conversation can be an act of love as well. How much can you enter the deepest part of somebody’s soul through words? - That’s why you don’t need to make appointments with your lover, somehow love brings the two people together, there is an attraction that happens by itself. This is the difference I think, I have never considered what we do a collaboration. I wouldn’t dare call it a collaboration. From this specific definition of friendship and philosophy in the practice of love I cannot imagine arranging appointments for instance. It can happen that you arrange an appointment with your lover, but it is taken for granted that the attraction has already brought the two of you together.

I - Yes, but in the age we live in this doesn’t function any more in my opinion. And we need to ask why. Why is the logic of work affecting any - every - kind of relationship to the point that life becomes work? And when life becomes work, then it isn’t work any more, it becomes what I call labour, which is a form of slavery. This is a problem that goes beyond romantic notions or even philosophical notions of friendship, which were mostly defined 2000 years ago. There is something about history and politics in the age we are living in that needs to be addressed or attacked or put on the table. The problem is that I fail to voice my resistance to it or to give a shape to that resistance, I constantly fall back in my life and work to this slavery, to the proclamation that time is money.

D - But friendship can be understood as a practice of resistance to that.

I - I agree. It is a practice of resistance if we have time for it. (laughing)

(long silence)

I - I think it is also about that silence. The first work is to produce words, to generate words. The problem becomes obvious in the fact that silence is not tolerated. There is panic in the
moment of silence. It is so easy to test that, in any social situation. Allow yourself to stay silent for a fraction longer than is appropriate and the more time passes the more alarms start ringing. Of course it is also extremely liberating.

There is something about silence. Wasting time.

(long silence)

It is also waiting for the words to come. It is luxury, friendship.

D - I don't know, something in me doesn't want to understand friendship as a luxury.

I - Let's not become slaves to the wrong use of words. Let's choose those words we can appreciate. There is in Bataille a notion of luxury as something vital, not as something like a cherry on top of the cake. According to him, the luxury or this excess is not something at all usable. Useless. Something that is pure means, not an object. Just enjoying wasting time and energy.

D - I wonder, why call it work then, if it is so much about non-profit, uselessness.

I - For me work is something very simple, it is an activity in which I engage will and effort, not in the sense of translating it into a value, into commercial value, or even producing objects or anything. It is an investment of effort and will. I don't have a problem with work as long as I can understand it in that way.

D - But don't you think that the question is also if we are going to produce an outcome of this, if there is a will to generate an artistic outcome? Why would we need to do that? Why should friendship become work when friendship can simply be friendship?
Agata Siniarska & Sophia New (and gender)
Agata – In order to situate this talk, it is important to say that Sophia and I got to know each other when I was still a student: I was participating in a workshop in re.act.feminism and asked her to be my mentor at HZT (Hochschulübergreifendes Zentrum Tanz, Inter-university Centre for Dance, Berlin).

I chose you, Sophia, as my guest because I would like to talk about two topics. One is women at work. Is this an issue that exists only in theory, as a myth, or, on the contrary, is it a very tangible problem?

The second topic concerns working conditions. I just recently finished at HZT and entered the so-called dance market and I find it quite problematic to be part of it.

I would like to begin with a question, is gender an issue in the context of dance and choreography? Let’s start with facts and figures. Women are in the majority in dance and choreography education, almost 85-90% of all students. But later when we look at the statistics of the festival programmes, we usually see men. If we count the very successful ones, the percentage of men is even higher. For example in Tanz im August in 2013, there were 18 men and 13 women invited, in Impulstanz in 2014, 23 men and 17 women.

Sophia - I wonder if this is a general phenomenon throughout the arts. It might appear stronger in our field, but it is probably happening a lot in acting as well. I guess historically, dance has been seen as a more acceptable area to go into for women than men, but at a certain point it is very, very difficult to get further. For example, at HZT we were discussing whether we needed a women’s officer - someone to push for making sure that women get jobs in institutions. There was a radical idea at one point put forward by students I think, where it was suggested not to try for fifty-fifty, let’s try for 70% women, 30% men represented in the staff.

A - Has it already happened that only women were chosen for the first year of the MA SODA (Solo Dance Authorship) programme?

S - No, but interestingly enough, this year is the first time ever that we take more women than men. We have always tried to have half men and half women in terms of new students.

A - But it is still not a real fifty-fifty situation because if we look at the applications, we have more women applying than men. So we can say that statistically, men have bigger chances than women to get into dance education.
S - Yes, that's true, let's take it as a fact.

A - Do you know what the situation is with women who graduate? In terms of potential jobs, is there a difference between women and men entering the art market or do women have the same chances?

S - Good question, I don't know. For me, I think it is more interesting to ask if people are going back into the patterns they had before. For instance, students who worked a lot as performers for other people before they did their MA - are they finding a way to pursue their own practice, maybe a solo, or do they feel under pressure to keep doing the jobs from the people who employed them before? It is hard to do both. And there is also another pressure, which I think you know about, Berlin seems like a really great place to move to, but at a certain point, if you don’t speak German or you are not earning enough money, then maybe you feel like going home or going somewhere else. It is not a city that can always hold everybody. I would like to know more about what the whole alumni situation is like. I would like to invite people back and ask them what their experience was, how do they get along now, what decisions have they made, based on what they have been through for the last two years during their education at HZT?

It is also tricky because some people were already doing well before they began and then they just built on the opportunity to go further. And then there are certain people who are really, really careful about the conditions that they want for their work and maybe they don’t even want to enter into the market in the way that everybody else does. This leads me to the question of how to determine success in the market, some people simply don’t want to be part of it. And that’s why sometimes they choose an educational course because they want to step out of the market for a while, which is also interesting.

A - That’s true, the master programme can turn into a two-year residency. Nowadays it is almost impossible to find a residency programme that offers time to research that is not part of a production process or does not demand any presentation or product.

S - We try not to call it that. But yes, it is definitely a way to get out of this six week rotation of a new thing and another new thing and so on, and of staying with something for a longer
period of time. That’s why people also start to do artistic PhDs, they get fed up with the way that the market forces them to have a certain model of doing things. I mean, Germany does not really have that opportunity, which is frustrating. Artistic PhDs do not really exist here in the same way they do in Scandinavian countries, for example.

A - I would like to come back to the question of gender division. When you look at your students, do you find any differences regarding artistic practices? I love a quote of Boris Groys, who said, “The only difference between western and eastern European art is that eastern art always comes from the east.” I wonder if the difference between men’s and women’s art is that women’s art always comes from women. How much is the label “woman” already inscribed in women’s artistic practice? Can women make art without that label?

S - Tricky to know, I guess it depends how much you want to own the position or label of ‘female artist’. This brings up the question of what might be the difference between women’s work and feminist work. Your point is, what if being a woman artist or feminism is not relevant to your content, is it still going to be a label put on you? In terms of content it will always be an issue, I guess it is something you can’t entirely escape and people make conscious decisions about how to deal with that or not. I am thinking about a friend, she has gone back to making sculpture, really butch, big stuff and her partner, a painter, is doing really sweet, little paintings of flowers. It is very interesting that they have such a difference. She really knows how to deal with such great, big, huge materials and he is painting small still lifes of flowers.

A – This makes me think of my issues with minimal art, which I really love, but somehow steel and hard materials belonged to men - only men could use them, put them into galleries. And women had to arrange the feathers and embroideries around to make the reality softer and more delicate. I wonder how these things create a certain myth around women’s work and men’s work.

S - I have to say that I am always uncomfortable with gender in terms of binaries of women and men. I was just listening to bell hooks and she was talking about feminism not as a noun but as a verb. Something that you do, rather than this simple idea that
women *are* feminists. I found it very useful to think about it as something that you do. This brings us back to the topic of women’s practice or the way we work. But I saw it suddenly in a different light actually, she didn’t want to get into the conversation, ‘Come in, be feminist!’ or not, she sees it as a practice you choose to do - you choose to use it.

A - This is interesting, because I think feminism at a certain moment became an identity category, not a practice, not a verb, not an action. I was just listening to Rosi Braidotti who said that there were so many attempts to kill the subject - this white, male, European subject. As a consequence, people started to create studies of many different subject categories and now there are postcolonial studies, women’s studies, queer studies, death studies, peace studies and so on. Every particular group started to claim their space, by defining their identity. And I want to see in feminism not another identity category but something to practice and to act. But then, in your opinion, is there anything specific about feminism or is it just another critical theory?

S - I think we should open up this discourse, because we are just talking about higher education, but we all know it goes much further down the chain. A Swedish friend just recently left Berlin because she didn’t want her son to go to school here and never ever have gender studies at school. I found it very interesting to consider how school sets up ideas about gender very, very quickly. Suddenly you go to school and the girls don’t want to be with the boys and, oh, a boy got invited to the party, and suddenly there is this clear division about what can and can’t be done. Couldn’t it be plural, a bit more complex and out of this binary situation? But, coming back to feminism, I think feminism is a criticality, it is a practice of criticality, and that doesn’t mean it can’t be a positive kind of criticality, criticism in our society is always connected with something negative.

A - Yes, I agree. It can be a very affirmative action. - Do you practice feminism?

S - In a way, I hope so, I try to, but I don’t know. Recently, Cathy Turner interviewed me for her book, *Walking Women: Shifting the Tales and Scales of Mobility*. She asked me what it was to consider women that walk. Is there any difference to men that walk? What does it mean to be in public
space? I guess there are all kinds of uncomfortable things around that. It reminded me of a friend, Kerstin Honeit, who asked me to be in a video piece where I had to do the absolute opposite, I had to be still in the street. She asked me to do that in a very specific area, in a red light area. She was filming from a car on the other side of the street, so I was kind of alone. The whole idea started because she noticed that in her area there were a lot of men just on the streets, and she was asking herself: What are all these men doing in the streets? Slowly it became more and more intriguing to her. She observed that they were not meeting anyone, they were not waiting for anything. What were they doing? And what if I asked women to do this? Is it any different? - And it was very different. I thought naively that cannot be an issue to do something like that for an artist. But when I did it, it was super uncomfortable. She asked me just to ‘be’ on the streets, and that was horrible.

A – Since you mentioned a topic of horrible and uncomfortable situations: I remember when I started to study at SNDO (School for New Dance Development, Amsterdam) my mentor at the time, she asked me, “How do you make money?” I answered, “Well, I work in a restaurant.”, “Do you clean apartments?”, “Well, not yet.”, “Do you do modelling work for the academy?”, “Yes.”, “Pole dancing?” I said, “No!” and she said, “Ah, that will come during your third year.” I didn’t get to the third year, nevertheless I tried once, not pole dancing, but something similar - I was dancing in the middle of a club, with chocolate. That was such a dramatic experience. I only did it once and I decided that this is not the way I want to sustain my education. Then I moved to Berlin.

S - Did it get any better?

A - Yes, you know, Berlin is cheaper. Anyway, we said that we can practice feminism, we can choose it as a tool for working, but what we often cannot choose are situations where “being a woman” is assigned to us. For example, when you walk on the street and you hear all these wolf whistles that is supposed to make you feel much more sexy. I just wonder if in the context of dance and choreography you face difficulties that make you think, “Oh, that would never have happened to me if I was a man!” We were talking before about an interview with Björk in which she said, “I have to say five times what men just say once”. Is that also your experience?

S - Something interesting happened
only last week with the exchange students. We had to communicate to them that the lunch was five Euro. I said it personally and I said it by email but suddenly everybody asked, “What? We have to pay for the food? Why do we have to pay for the food?” There are little things like that that make me think, yes, I have to say things a few more times. For me it is also a cultural problem because I am British and sometimes when you’re in the UK, you might say, “We have a slight problem!” You know that it actually means that absolutely everything is going spectacularly wrong. I think it has to do with some kind of owning of space sometimes, there can be a kind of presumption that you own a space, you can say certain things and demand a certain type of authority. I think you also have to practice authority. Maybe you need to fake it until you make it a little bit more.

A - You work at HZT, you are one of the creators of the programme, you are responsible for it, so you have a certain position at HZT, you are not just a guest teacher.

S - Well, if you talk about conditions, I am still called a guest. I have a six month contract.

A - Oh, really? - And your boss is a man?

S - (laughing) Yes, with a permanent job. He can get rid of me very easily, we can’t get rid of him very easily. I think he also worked hard to get there.

A - A few months ago I was in Ljubljana, at the “City of Women” festival where only women artists are invited and where the audience consisted almost only of women as well. Do you think there is a need for festivals like that, promoting women’s work, knowing that it will be seen mostly by women?

S - I think I would love to go, it sounds great. - But, why this question? Did the festival not have a wide enough outreach for you, not enough impact?

A - I just wonder - why can’t there be a festival with only women’s works, chosen for the sake of the programme, not because it is a feminist festival. But it doesn’t happen. Is it really necessary to create this kind of bubble?

S - I mean, there is the simple fact that these kind of festivals exist, and in that specific case, for a long time
already - 20 years, I think. It is very established. There was a need to begin with and there is obviously a need to continue. For me the question is, do we need that everywhere? Do we need that here in Berlin for instance?

A - I am dreaming about curating a festival that has a secret agenda. For example, a festival that officially deals with the topic of time and “accidentally” only invites women artists. But that would be my secret agenda, I wouldn’t say openly that it is a women’s festival, exclusively for women. This manipulation could also bring a male audience and would overcome this idea that “women’s art” is only for women. Do you think Berlin needs this kind of festival?

S - Well, even if the Berlin Senate doesn’t feel like it needs another festival, I do. The Senate doesn’t think that we need any more festivals. In fact you have to specifically try and make every application you put in not be a festival. But I think there is a need for something else like that because it creates a certain dynamic. I am wondering about your secret agenda. Because you really have to have all the power in your hands and be really committed, to hide it. How do you deal with questions about your secret agenda in the press, for example?

A - I think I would just insist on the fact that there are chosen works and by chance there are only works by women. Or the programme could be constructed with the titles of the works only, without the artists’ names. That is also a recent phenomenon with festivals, how much a programme is constructed around names.
(and waste)
Giulia - The work of art making and the work of thought production have a very singular temporality. It is a temporality characterised by anticipation and delay. A temporality haunted by the potential realisation of labour in a specific unit or form, suspended between the blurring boundaries of its beginning and its end. This temporality is also characterised by repetition, return, glimpses of ideas which do not arrive on time at the appointment with their possible realisation as value, or which keep returning well beyond the moment in which they could possibly have met a suitable form. This temporality characterises the act of production and its outside: it is the indefinable domain of preparation, procrastination, repetition, mistake, fatigue, and most of all, waiting.
There is a measurement of work which is imposed on us from the necessity for accountability, which is paramount in neoliberal capitalism and its related organisation of work - the need for creative work to be first promised and then realised, funded, exhibited and valued in its public form. There is, on the other hand, the intrinsic immeasurable nature of creative work in its continuity - the delightful excess of a process of production, the longue durée of a work which reclaims its own measure. How do we create another measurement for the temporality of our work?
We both prefer the word ‘complicity’ to collaboration, although in our past work we have both engaged in many forms of collaboration. I wonder why. Perhaps this has to do with a desire to reclaim the practice of collaboration outside of the language of ‘networking’ which is rampant in current discourses on artistic practice, and seems to be a key word in any funding scheme for any art or research project today. It has to do, at least on my part, with a certain suspicion toward the way the idea of collaboration has been infected, in a sense, by such language, reducing the complexity of the many effects at stake in the coming together of different subjectivities at work.
In a sense, complicity seems to point to a secret plan which the explicit form of collaboration does not reveal - it might function as a horizon of intimacy and solidarity which endures beyond the singular collaboration, and also counter the absolute solitude of production, along with its long lasting mythology in narratives of writing and art-making. Complicity is perhaps the secret intimacy enabling creative work to sustain itself beyond our own burden of ‘authorship’, and at the same time it reconfigures collaboration as something not necessarily synonymous with ‘sharing’. We can be strangers but accomplices - partners in crime. To a certain extent, our playful idea of realising a ‘Luna Park of thought’ (see pp. 58-59) can be imagined as creating an environment for our complicity. We were both fascinated by how a collaboration between a thinker and an artist could proceed, beyond the classical pattern in which a theory is applied to the art work, or the other way around, an art work is commented on in writing. We are also fascinated by imagining together the creation of a machine of sorts, in which thoughts and forms can be rehearsed and used - made available for people to play with: us, first of all, and then someone else perhaps - strangers, or accomplices alike.
G - What is waste in our work? Is it what is left behind, what happens outside of the limits of a particular unit recognised as 'work'? Is it that which never gets to be recognised, paid or evaluated as 'work'? Is it that which is 'not yet' work? Is it all the time that we don’t consider to be the core of our work: writing, drawing, taking notes, building a form – but is, however, necessary for the 'work' to be done – writing emails, meeting people, meeting deadlines, coming to terms with conditions of production we would not necessarily choose?

G - Jack Smith - an artist whose work has been central to my understanding of the strange, delightful, frightening temporality of art-making - once imagined a city built around a huge heap of junk, which he called the Free Paradise of Abandoned Objects. This undisciplined pile of objects would be made of everything discarded by the inhabitants of the city, taken up by others then discarded again. What fascinates me in this image is that it operates on an imaginative level well beyond a simple rhetoric of recycling. In this utopian idea of a city built around discarded objects, there is both the potential for objects to be taken up and used again according to different desires and necessities, as well as a radical image of an architecture of waste. In other words, waste would be made visible, public, terrifying as it is, potentially decaying as it is, leading to nothing or to something but creating precarious forms on the way, forms accidentally made by the juxtaposition of broken toys, empty tyres, rotting flowers, photographs of people whose names are long forgotten. How can we imagine such an architecture of waste for our working process? Could we?
All drawn answers by Erik Göngrich

'Fun fair of thoughts' by Erik Göngrich and Thomas Rustemeyer, drawing from thoughts and words by Giulia Palladini, in the frame of the project 'Zu ICH um WIR zu sein', curated by Cora Hegewald, Galerie der Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst, Leipzig 2014.
(and resistance)
Marie-José - Eva comes from the field of dance and performance and I come from visual art, nevertheless we share a common set of questions. We just spoke about the problem of how our work can be financed and about the relationship that exists between the city and the artist. Eva told me that she doesn’t earn most of her money in Berlin but from contracts abroad but still being invited as a Berlin artist.

Eva - Yes. Many years ago, in 2002, I made a performance called *Death is Certain*, a show that still tours extensively, all over the world. During that time, Xavier Le Roy asked me if I had ever gotten funding from the city of Berlin. I said “No”, because this hadn’t been the case at that point. He said, “That’s not OK. You carry the name of Berlin into the world and don’t get funding here”. I write applications from time to time, but in fact I don’t do it so often. That is one way to get funding for a project. If you get it, you can realise one project. And then? I have been working in the field for more than 15 years now. Actually, during the last two years I felt a strong resistance to this rhythm of doing one project after the other – this repeated cycle being the only way of generating money. I found it interesting when Giulia Palladini asked tonight, do we always want to fit in the system, be functional in it? Is it also possible to refuse to take part in the system and not be instrumentalised by it? That is what I have been doing during the last years, refusing - not doing a few things.

M - For example?
E - I remember, when I started working with my new production manager, I told her very clearly that I could not write an application yet, or rather that I didn’t want to. I was not ready to start a new project. It is difficult when other people depend on you. But being an artist is really a strange job. You are constantly searching for something, trying to find out things that you do not know yet. You have a lot of freedom, but on the other hand you have to take huge risks too. And you never get a guarantee that things will work out. It is a strong kind of commitment, having a job that is a permanent quest. I don’t want to praise myself too much here, but I think that artists in general, whether you like their work or not, are doing something that should be cherished, it really deserves respect.

Sometimes you also lose perspective or you get stuck in some kind of pattern. Then you have to find new orientations, change things again in order to tread new paths. Because when you know at the beginning what it will be at the end, there is nothing to discover. A good concept well realised - there is nothing quite as boring as that. There is nothing to learn there. I think that if there is not some kind of detour, a challenge, something that makes you leave the trodden path, the project is actually a failure.

M - Do you differentiate between projects you really appreciate and projects you earn money with in order to continue another project? Is there a project you realise only in order to get money and to follow something else?

E - Well, I need money...
to survive. I also have children and they have to survive as well. But if it is really something I am not convinced of, then I don’t do it, even if I could get money for it. I guess I am pretty rigorous there. But still I get into situations where I wonder. For example, I was invited to Kenya to take part in the project *Climate: Change the Conversation* with German-French funding, for the World Environment Day on 5th June 2015. Local Kenyan artists developed a project and the organisers asked for a German and a French artist to accompany the process. The organisers applied for funding without having any of the artists in mind. Once they got the money they had to find artists to fit the project. They needed a German artist who had already worked on climate change and they ended up asking me. Or someone else. Still, I actually do consider very carefully why I am going there. Do I only go there for the money? Or because I have a specific concern, because I am interested in Nairobi or in climate change or in meeting the people? Once I was invited for a project in Sudan, where I worked with local artists. It was extremely interesting. Especially because the picture you get of Sudan in Germany is very limited. It is only about horrible news - most of the time it is probably true - but there are actually also very different aspects to Sudan that are not represented at all. I think in the arts it is possible to see things from another perspective - the things that surround us - not from the superficial perspective the media present as a consensus. That is important to me, also in works that I like by other people.
M - Your example shows that there is a risk that art is turned into an instrument of politics, of institutions or of cities who select an artist in order to improve their reputation or to hide other problems.

E - In this concrete case, it was organised by Goethe Institute and Alliance Française - these two institutions are organised very differently. The Goethe Institute is not that hierarchical, the Alliance Française is more top-down.

M - And they usually promote emblematic artists.

E - Yes. There was a conversation in which I said I would be more interested in getting there first in order to see what the situation is, to see who is there, to focus on the encounter. The French artist immediately had an idea of how the light should be in the final show. He already had a clear result in mind even before going there, without meeting anybody. This is a completely different approach to a project.

M - This is a real instrumentalisation of artists. That's always the risk when you work with state institutions, when you apply for funding. On the other hand it is also of course an opportunity to realise something that you didn't have in mind before - to play with something. This is connected with the topic of residencies, when you get money to do your work in another city or country. You just told me that this is also quite problematic if you have a family.

E - Yes, I actually found it problematic even before I had children. There are people who live a life from one residency to another. It fits
some people’s temper-ament and for others it is rather difficult. It was really hard for me to say to someone, “You are not really doing me a favour by offering me this residency because actually I don’t want to go away.” I don’t think there is a general rule. Everybody finds her/his own way of putting things together. I was lucky with that one piece, *Death is Certain*, I lived from it for years, it toured like crazy. That made me independent but it couldn’t have been planned that way of course.

M - And how did it go with the cooking project?

E - *Cooking Catastrophes* is a performance in which three chefs prepare a meal including several courses from the starter to the dessert. The dishes take the form of catastrophes: floods, nuclear catastrophes, 9/11, a tornado. The tornado for example, is a soup in a big glass, by stirring it, it makes the shape of a tornado. It is filmed and the picture of the tornado is projected live. Then the content of the glass, the soup, is poured out on a landscape made of cucumbers, carrots and other things that look like a city. In the end, every spectator gets a spoon and can eat the dishes.

M - Is this the project you got a lot of funding for?

E - No, no. It was developed in Sweden with an organisation called Mossutställningar. The organisation specialises in projects in public space - in any case not in the white cube or the black box. They have a series in the context of restaurants, so that
fitted well. We also received money from the Swedish fund Innovativ Kultur to make it. But not so much. What was interesting in this project is that the Swedish chefs were not artists in the sense in which we were. Although of course there is also an art to cooking. It took a while until we were able to communicate in a way that we understood each other.

M - And how do you work concretely? In every project you work with several people coming from different areas. Do you see that as curatorial work or is it something completely different?

E - It means combining people and experts. Sometimes I make decisions on my own, sometimes it is in collaboration, then we find a common decision. But that doesn’t mean that each of us always has to agree on everything. I have dealt a lot with the question of how to collaborate. I find it very uncomfortable to be in a collaborative project and to think all the time that actually we are one. For me it is very important that there is a diversity, that there is space for it. And that the artistic project is a little bit off the mark, at the margin and on a path that is not so well known.

M - You just mentioned your partners. That means you collaborate with people, you develop a project together and then you ask other people to participate. How does that work?

E - I remember some years ago, in 2008, Kate McIntosh contacted me because she wanted to spend a short period of time with different artists, producing very small outcomes, no big
everybody was involved in, we two directors, the camera woman and all the chefs. After these discussions the head chef had another discussion with his fellow chefs and distributed the tasks.

M - So that means you two, Eva Meyer-Keller and Sybille Müller, worked on a concept, spoke about it with the head chef and he then communicated it to the other chefs?

E - Actually, that was not what we had in mind at first. We wanted all the chefs to create dishes. But it was not possible with the dynamic in that first team. Now we have a new team of chefs, they are a bit older and more experienced, they dare to create their own dishes. And they let the others do their thing.

M – Is *Cooking Catastrophes* similar or do you work differently there?

E - Actually, chefs are not used to working on par with other chefs. There is an incredible hierarchy in the kitchen. There is one head chef and the other chefs do what he says. We tried to open this up a little bit, and had discussions...
(and contingency)
Mattef - I have different points of interest I want to talk about with you. One is the relationship between the internationality and the locality of your work. I was born here in Berlin but I realised that in the last few years I have almost exclusively been working with non-Berliners. Another point is that although we are not really ‘old people’ we have been working as artists for really a long time now. What do you think about becoming older as a performance artist?

Siegmar - I would like to consider both questions from one point of view, which is precisely how life relates to work for me. This point of view is the practice of “othering”. Some years ago I became a parent. As Berlin based artists we have the luxury of having kids, which is not the case everywhere in the world. And the luxury of getting older, having children, brought another change for me on a very pragmatic level. As part of an international collaboration project with Steve Heather, an Australian, Xander de Boer, a Dutch person and myself, we used to work exclusively during residencies. Then of course having kids with one of them... we couldn’t go on residencies all the time any more.

M - So how do you continue this collaboration?

S – Our first child was born in 2009 and around that same time I realised that many colleagues who had been working internationally a lot, whether they have kids or not, got tired of always having to jump right into the next residency, the next country. This touches on a political discussion about funding bodies of course. German funding is product-orientated, not process-orientated. How can you claim that the work you do all the time is a process? Regardless of whether it happens at home, or having meetings or writing, having a notebook practice or developing concepts - how can you claim that as work? This is where one of my collaborations started, which is called WOW - Women on Work. The subtitle is “We Work Here” - ‘here’ meaning Berlin. The difference between internationality and locality is that locality allows for process, whereas internationality, I would say, produces events. It is a completely different way of understanding one’s work if you come back to the process of it, to the practice of it, asking what is my daily or my monthly practice. How do you claim that as work, as opposed to the products that you put out there?
M - And what role does having children play in all this?

S - I think for me, it was a blessing to have this happen and to understand that I have to change the way I work. It actually became much more process-orientated, in the sense that I now try to understand every professional activity that I do as being within the frame of my artistic practice, which is not just a label. But it also changes how I do it.

For example teaching is not teaching but trying to think about that which is important to me in artistic work, which is collaboration with otherness. And collaboration even in solo appearances. What I mean is that I am not so interested in authorship but in othering as authorship. What does it mean to be influenced by and to become aware of the agency of others? It is not just influence either, it is the presence and the robustness of another proposal – be it a collaborator, be it a political situation in the city I live in, be it my children, be it the material I am working with. What is the actual presence and agency of this material, regardless of what I want to do with it? This has something to do with me becoming a mother because - I am doing this girl thing now of talking about children - I understand my kids as some form of otherness, they actually propose an otherness that produces contingency. I have to understand myself and the specific moment we are in in order to make sense of the situation. If I consider work as momentary meaning-production which is constantly in change and in development towards an unknown end, then I can learn from the everyday practice of being a mother as much as I can construct situations as framings of work. So in artistic work I chose to work in relationships of otherness, whether I work in collaboration, which allows otherness, or whether we work with material that is not controllable, like in the last performance with fog. Fog is not controllable, it is very specific to the atmosphere of the moment. It is specific to the architecture of the building, to the number of bodies in the space, to the temperature and the climate outside.

M - How then, does collaboration function for you on a concrete level?

S - For example, I am now collaborating on a text about collaboration with my friend and colleague, Alice Chau-chat. We chose a very strict, rigid format. You know the game of exquisite corpse? She writes a paragraph
but only gives me her last sentence, I start my paragraph with that sentence, write something and give her the last sentence of my paragraph and so on. It is an interesting process, because first of all you have to understand what you want to say yourself, how you want to articulate it in order to not get completely swamped by the collaborator’s proposal. You have to engage in a process of self-articulation. You get a sentence and rather than saying, ‘Yes, well, that’s fine, but...’, it is a process of saying, ‘Yes, and...’ The third process that happens is that you need to find a last sentence that you want to hand over. What is the present that I am going to give to the next paragraph? All of these procedures are actually very important to me. It is the self-responsibility, the responsiveness to the material, the self articulation and the generosity of giving a gift that is enticing.

M - The artists you are working with come from very diverse backgrounds, from film, music, from lots of different areas. How did that come about? How did it develop? I am also interested in that because I have started working with dancers, which gives me a completely new approach to art making. I wasn’t really connected to dance before.

S - In the SXS enterprise collective, we came together as representatives of three media, a documentary film maker, a musician, who is an electronic musician and a drummer with his own band projects, and me, coming from performance and working with texts and theory a lot. During our first project for example, we worked half a day separately, and then half a day where we presented and we just trusted the professional decisions and intuitions of the others and we went with it. When we collaborated with the fog however, we did a lot of material research into smoke fluids and machines, object meditations and shaking practices together. The process was very different.

M - Did you have an agreement before, like you did with the text project?

S - Yes, there is always a frame. I think artistic work is framed work, even if you just choose your locality, your materials, your question. There is always a frame.

M - I would like to come back to the question about the international and the local. As a Berliner, I am interested to know if there is anything specific about Berlin in regard to your work.
S - What matters to me at the moment is not so much the content of Berlin – even though there is plenty of content to engage with. But in the course of thinking of the other, I allow myself to be influenced, to trace the traces that Berlin leaves on my living. I live on Rosenthaler Platz and three years ago the last gap on Rosenthaler Platz, on Torstraße, was closed with new buildings. About seven new hotels have been built. I don’t make pieces about the hotels or streets but how it changes the way I work is that I now start off from a place of enclosure - a place of enclosure that seeks instabilities. I realise that a lot of my work is actually about finding frames to produce instability and to engage with the potential of contingency. In the city there is a process of closure and optimization which has a very specific aim - we all know what that is. So probably in reaction to that, I am questioning how to de-optimize work. How can you understand work not as an optimum, not as something that can be fully understood or be fully projected? I guess that can be applied to a lot of cities other than Berlin as well. But I only have 25 years experience in this city, how many years do you have

M - Good question, I came from the east first and now I live in this larger Berlin. That change was the greatest influence in my life. Before I was obviously living in another world. So I feel a little bit like you, that there is no open space in the city any more, especially the inner city. But I work a lot in other cities, my work is very international and I don’t have any Berliners I work with - except one guy in my band.

S - For me the question is more how Berlin changes the way you perceive your work and what the work does in a social context. I think that artistic work can be a laboratory for social practices. Is there a difference if you compare your work from 20 years ago to now?

M - This kind of optimization has made me more conscious of what I am doing. Before, I was playing around more, that is the difference. I sometimes feel I am losing that a bit: those moments of doing something without immediately focusing on the result. There is a lack of time and the financial situation counts too. I work as a freelancer as well, so most of the time I
accept new projects because I think the next one could be the last. Of course it isn’t true but it often feels like it is. That’s really what has changed. 20 years ago, there was much more time to play and to make experiments that perhaps seemed senseless at first. I really miss that, I would like to get some of that back. Now my work is much more controlled, there is an application, an idea or a task and you follow it.

S - But isn’t time something you take or you make? There is no time that dictates to you what you have to do, especially not in the artistic world – if we do work with time management systems they are usually self-created. What is interesting to me is that we can create time within pieces with timing devices – by stretching time for example – to change the perception of time. Another question is how do you create time in daily practices. What would be a practice that creates a different relationship to time? How can we become aware of behavioural patterns in relation to time and transform them into conscious practices? And finally, how can a conscious temporal practice become a socio-political tool?

M - I don’t have a solution yet. I was also thinking about how to deal with it and not to lose myself. Normally, if you work as a musician, time is a given, there is often a clear time constraint - also if I work with dancers. For me the question is how to find time for a type of work that is not immediately product-oriented and how much you allow yourself to find this time. The challenge is to find time for it within the work process itself, time to play a bit, for example.

S - In the past few years I also understood that I didn’t want different jobs to be on different timelines. I’ve always done at least three jobs at a time. And very often when I was doing one job I felt like I was wasting my time, because I should be or I wanted to be doing the other job. So I thought what can I do to not feel as if I am constantly wasting my time and that I should be somewhere else or doing something else.

My strategy is to consider a teaching job for example as being the same as working on a piece, in a collaboration, or as writing a text or working with a student. I understand that my artistic practice could actually incorporate everything. It makes a huge difference to me, I don’t have to put it in different hierarchical positions, I can be constant in how I perceive my work. The other way around the question is how does it change the teaching if I
consider it to be an ongoing practice
of mine - and I don’t just teach at art
universities, I teach at corporate
companies, so it is really another
world. This is why othering really
becomes a modus operandi for me. It
is to understand what or who can be
this other in the ongoing relationship.
The only way I can do it is by not trying
to guess in advance who or what it will
be. So I am not trying to know what it
is to train managers, or trying not to
know - that is even better, trying not to
know what it is to work with man-
gers, trying not to know what it is to
make performance pieces, trying not
to know what it is to write text.

M - And not to think about it too much.

S - Oh, I think about it a lot!
Advancing performing arts project is a European network which was founded in 2000 and has since then turned out more than 100 artistic projects. Its focus lies in the exchange between artistic activities, cultural workers and their know-how. Performing Europe (2011-2016) is a programme for the development of contemporary performing arts and its impact on European societies. It comprises the fields of production, presentation and distribution of artistic works and focuses on attaining new audiences and researching new ways of mediation. Theatre, dance, performance, visual arts, design, media and film are elements of new performing arts. Artists, curators from eight European organisations and experts from different work fields and cultural backgrounds meet to work on relevant questions in several laboratories.

apapnet.eu
Arts Centre BUDA is a workspace for artists, a presentation platform and an art house cinema. On a yearly basis, arts centre BUDA welcomes about 150 artists who come to live and work temporarily in Kortrijk. They have at their disposal five rehearsal studios in Budatower, two theatre venues in Budascoop, open spaces in Budafabriek, a boarding house to stay overnight and a ‘YES’-team to support them. The artists in residence either present their work during one of the festival formats - BUDA VISTA!, Kortrijk Congé and the international arts festival NEXT - or they have informal showings or try-outs for the “compañeros” - a group of people “in between professional eyes and audience”. Arts Centre BUDA is one of the biggest and most internationally oriented workspaces for performing arts in Belgium.

budakortrijk.be

BIT Teatergarasjen produces, co-produces and presents international and Norwegian contemporary art, theatre and dance, with specific emphasis on projects that stimulate international co-production and cooperation between different fields of art. BIT was established as a festival in 1983 and became an all-year theatre venue in 1990. It is one of the main producers and co-producers of international contemporary theatre and dance in Norway and cooperates with theatres and festivals worldwide. In addition to the seasonal programme, BIT Teatergarasjen is responsible for two alternating, biennial festivals: Oktoberdans, a dance festival, and Meteor, a theatre festival. They take place in October and are usually last for ten days. Both festivals have gained solid recognition internationally and are unique within the field of contemporary dance and theatre in Norway.

bit-teatergarasjen.no

Centrale Fies is a centre for the creation and production of contemporary art including performing art, exhibitions, site specific art, videos and any form of live performance and events such as festivals, expositions and shows. Moreover, it provides a very unique location for corporate meetings, round-table conferences and workshops. All of this is located in a still functional hydroelectric power station which never stops generating energy. Thus, Centrale Fies is both a physical location, capable of transforming itself as needed, and a concrete and ideal project for the development of artistic pursuits. In this frame, Centrale Fies is the organiser of the Festival Drolesera, one of the most important of the Italian theater scene, the initiator of the competition LIVE WORKS Performance Act Award and the founder of FIES CORE, the cultural Hub of the province of Trento.

centralefies.it

Fundacja Cialo/Umysl was established in 2007. The non-profit organisation is dedicated to the broadly defined art of contemporary dance. Its mission is to create professional conditions for manifesting, developing and promoting this discipline as well as creating a space for dialogue between artists and viewers. C/U produces works by Polish and other European artists, and organises conferences, educational projects and the annual international Cialo/Umysl Festival. It regularly presents Polish artists at the Warsaw Dance Scene and promotes young talents during the Warsaw Dance Night. One of the C/U program’s priorities is to work with and for the local communities and to encourage dance lovers. It presents around 60 events every year. The foundation supports daring and open minded artists, for whom body and mind are the starting point for creative action.

cialoumysl.pl
Maison de la Culture d’Amiens opened in 1966, its main goals are: being a strong place of production, presenting different forms of art: performances (dance / music / theatre / circus), cinema, visual arts, and working with the widest audience. It is an interdisciplinary place of production and presentation, with a yearly programme of around 50 productions and between 100 and 140 performances in the three venues. The Maison de la Culture d’Amiens is also a cinema presenting 150 movies every year, an exhibition hall, a music label (Label Bleu) producing around 250 jazz and world music records, and an open-air festival on the water in July. All this for an audience of 100,000 people a year. With its own productions, the Maison de la Culture d’Amiens is touring throughout France and Europe.

maisondelaculture-amiens.com

Student Centre Zagreb was founded in 1957 and now is a multi-functional space in the heart of the city. SC works on improving student living standard on all levels and in cultural activities, through its Department of culture / CULTURE OF CHANGE it organises and produces shows, performances, conferences and workshops in the fields of music, film, visual arts, theatre, radio. The main goal of SC is to create innovative, economic and educational frameworks of cultural production in order to influence cultural practices in Croatia and internationally. Theatre production is manifested in SC’s own theatre - Teatar &TD, founded in the 1960’s, as the opposition to the classical theatres. &TD is not limited by genres and stylistic criteria, which opens up the possibility of establishing new production aesthetics and contemporary forms of co-production, post production and collaboration.

sczg.unizg.hr

SZENE Salzburg has been a major factor in Salzburg’s cultural and public life cultural and public life for more than 30 years. The non-profit organisation is best known for its annual Sommerszene festival, taking place in June/July presenting international dance, theatre, performance, visual arts and music. Furthermore, SZENE runs the cultural center republic with more than 300,000 visitors and approximately 400 events per year. The full-year programmed venue brings concerts, theatre and comedy shows, club events and parties as well as contemporary performing art projects into the city. SZENE also supports artistic production processes. It offers artist residencies including working space and public showings and provides a studio for creative development and rehearsals. The European network advancing performing arts project was founded by SZENE.

szene-salzburg.net

Tanzfabrik Berlin is the base for diversity in dance and artistic research in Berlin, providing space for around 200 choreographers and hundreds of professional and amateur dancers per year - working and dancing at two venues in seven residence studios in different areas of Berlin. Several presentation formats and the biennial festival TANZNACHT BERLIN promote young and well-known artists and connect different artists and audiences as well as theory and practice. It collaborates locally with HAU, Sophiensaele, Tanztage Berlin and Tanz im August. Experienced with networking, Tanzfabrik Berlin is the main shareholder of the collective project Uferstudios GmbH, a structure responsible for the development of 14 dance studios including a stage for the performing arts in an old bus depot.

tanzfabrik-berlin.de
Who's who

who
Igor Göngrich was born in Madrid in 1980. After studying philosophy he moved to Berlin and since 2005 has been working as a freelancer across the fields of visual arts, choreography and pedagogy. He has recently published a handmade book called Dangerous Dances. www.diegoagullo.com

Diego Agulló lives in Berlin and works as a dramaturge, curator and mentor. She creates themed programmes, talks and research formats in collaboration with artists and institutions in the context of contemporary performing arts. Her focus is on the artistic, structural and geographic conditions of contemporary art production.

Silke Bake is a Serbian dramaturge active in the field of contemporary dance. Currently living and working between Berlin and Amsterdam, he teaches and develops collaborations in international contexts. In his practice he shares work with a number of choreographers (Christina Ciupke, Jenny Beyer, Meg Stuart, Keren Levi, Chris Leuenberger etc.) Table Talks is a long term research project of his.

Igor Dobričić is an artist working in the public domain using various methods of collaboration, exhibition, guided tour, building and cooking session. His projects are about creating a place of exchange and arise from a long period of research developing specific works for the place and finding collaborators for the actions. The work is about history, trust, political space, modern architecture, cooking and sculpture. Regardless of whether it is an exhibition, installation, publication or public pavilion, the starting point is the fascination with the given situation. www.goengrich.de

Peter Göngrich studied Comparative Literature, Philosophy, French and German in Tübingen, Berlin and Paris. His PhD (Esthétique des limites, Université Paris Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2009) deals with the role of aesthetic boundaries in the relationship between art and knowledge. Recently he has been working as a researcher, teacher of German literature, French and Philosophy as well as curator for several exhibitions in the field of visual art.

Krilles is a musician, sound designer and music teacher. With his band ALP he performs soundtracks for silent films. His label FORTSCHRITT MUSIK is a platform for associated bands. He has been teaching Polish, Czech and German students for fifteen years under the project title LANTERA FUTURI. For several years he worked as a theatre musician, mainly in the field of dance theatre and performance, with a substantial interest in the exploration and balance of technical possibilities and musical traditions. www.mattef.com, www.fortschritt-musik.de


Jacopo Lanteri works at the interface of performing and visual arts and has presented her work in 30 countries on 6 continents in a wide range of contexts and sites. She initially studied visual arts and then choreography, developing projects alone or with other artists. She performs for other choreographers and produces video work. She also works as a mentor, dramaturgical adviser and teacher. Her working method is always marked by a constructive disregard for maintaining any boundary between the visual and performing arts.

Eva Meyer-Keller
studied Philosophy and Literature with German at Sussex University (1993-1997) and has an MA in Feminist Performance from Bristol University (1998). She is the co-founder of plan b with Daniel Belasco Rogers. Since 2002 they have made over 25 projects for different cities, festivals, and galleries. Their work is often site specific and includes performance, GPS, sound and video. She regularly teaches Live Art and Performance at Folkwang in Essen and Bochum. She is currently a Guest Professor at the HZT on the MA Solo Dance Authorship programme.

studied at the Art Academy in Le Havre and History of Art and Archaeology at the University Panthéon-Sorbonne. She moved to Berlin in 1994, since when she has worked as a freelance curator. She has been the founder and member of several art projects, such as the gallery Visite Ma Tente and General Public. Beside that she designs websites for performing artists, musicians and institutions. She is fascinated by the city of Berlin and has offered cultural city walks since 2010.

is a theorist and researcher in Performance Studies. Her work is concerned with performance labour and free time, the archive, and materialist theories of artistic production. Her texts have appeared in several international journals and publications, and she has collaborated as a theorist in a number of critical and artistic projects (e.g. Affective Archives, Vercelli 2009; Taking Time, Helsinki 2013; Experimenta/Sur, Bogotá 2014; Flamme éternelle, Paris 2014). She co-edited Lexicon for an Affective Archive with Marco Pustianaz (Gdansk and Warsaw: slowo/obraz terytoria, 2015; Bristol: Intellect, 2016) and is the author of The Scene of Foreplay: Theatre, Labor and Leisure in 1960s New York (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2016).

works in the theory and the practice of performance. Her works develop templates for performances, installations and discursive formats. They deal with questions of human/non-human agency and collaboration, the contract of the willing suspension of disbelief and the critical substance it produces. She is the co-founder of SXS enterprise, a trans-disciplinary performance group, and WOW - we work here, a research and exchange platform for Berlin based artists. She is developing artistic research into the ecology of artistic practice. She teaches at DOCH Stockholm, DasArts Amsterdam, HZT Berlin and trains corporate worker representatives in rhetoric and negotiation.

is a fictional character with many talents and a criminal past, consciously appearing in a series of episodes inside the choreographic frame. Having given different kinds of theatrical forms a chance...
The series of talks Studio 13. Let’s talk about work (and life). How to work - now and in the future took place in Tanzfabrik in 2015 and was initiated and curated by Silke Bake and Jacopo Lanteri. The idea of publishing this volume arose from discussions between Ludger Orlok, Silke Bake, Jacopo Lanteri and Peter Krilles.

Monday, 23 February 2015
Igor Dobričić - Diego Agulló - Agata Siniarska - Sophia New

Monday, 23 March 2015
Giulia Palladini - Erik Göngrich - Marie-José Ourtilane - Eva Meyer-Keller

Monday, 27 April 2015
Siegmar Zacharias - Florian Feigl - Jörg Laue - Mattef Kuhlme

Monday, 1 June 2015
Florian Malzacher - Daniel Wetzel - Volkan T error - Alon Kraus

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