

# For a Topology of Practices

## A Study on the Situation of Contemporary and Experimental Dance, Choreography and Performance Art in Europe (1990–2013)

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‘...we can learn to examine situations from the point of view  
of their possibilities.’

Isabelle Stengers: ‘The Care of the Possible’ (Erik Borde-  
leau in conversation with I. Stengers), *Scapegoat 1* (2011), 12.

### INTRODUCTION

*Der Künstler-Report* (The Artist Report) by Karla Fohrbeck and Andreas Johannes Wiesand, written in 1975, provides us with the first known comprehensive, method-bundling study examining both the self-conception of artists in the Federal Republic of Germany at the time and the interdependencies characteristic of their working conditions. Their object of investigation amounts, above all, to the social and economic situation, or ‘the legal and market situation’, with concentration on self-employed and freelance workers.<sup>1</sup>

In this report, the professional scope of the dancer and/or ballet ensemble member is equated with the following professions: ‘dancer, ballet dancer, ballet stage manager, ballet master/mistress, ballet director/choreographer, artistic director for ballet, dance educator’.<sup>2</sup>

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**1** | Karla Fohrbeck and Andreas Johannes Wiesand, *Der Künstler-Report: Musikscha-  
fende, Darsteller, Realisatoren, Bildende Künstler, Designer* [The Artist Report: Musicians,  
performers, realisers, visual artists, designers] (Munich & Vienna: Carl Hanser, 1975),  
p. 421. Gender differentiation was part of this study’s data collection, although the lan-  
guage of the study itself employs the general masculine form, reflecting common usage  
of the time.

**2** | Ibid.

The professional tasks performed by this employment group are outlined as follows:

‘Dancers interpret the content and form of ballet music and/or musical dances through the design of dance roles; in this capacity, they contribute to the scenic design of performances of opera, operetta or musicals as well; in some cases they present and/or perform ballroom dances (‘Classification of Professions’). Fields of activity can include classical ballet, jazz dance, freestyle dance and Ausdruckstanz, among others. The work of ballet masters and assistants, dance educators etc. is focussed primarily on activities of an instructional/scholastic, planning-oriented and organisational nature; choreographers invent, design and/or work on artistic dances and the staged performances thereof. The labour of ballet dancers is divided into training, rehearsal and performance activities (with the usual course of development from the increasingly automatised control of individual movement sequences to more differentiated artistic depiction and self-determined creative work). Four hours’ daily training as well as additional activities as background dancer in the opera and operetta are normal. The strenuous work dancers must execute as well as the stress they must endure is frequently underestimated.’<sup>3</sup>

In view of this description from 1975, it immediately becomes evident that the characteristics of the choreographic, dance and performance profession in the independent sector have since vigorously changed in ways that can be sketched out based on the following self-description of artistic practices, written in 2001:

‘Our practices can be described by a range of terminology, depending on the different cultural contexts in which we operate. Our practices can be called: ‘performance art’, ‘live art’, ‘happenings’, ‘events’, ‘body art’, ‘contemporary dance/theatre’, ‘experimental dance’, ‘new dance’, ‘multimedia performance’, ‘site specific’, ‘body installation’, ‘physical theatre’, ‘laboratory’, ‘conceptual dance’, ‘independance’, ‘postcolonial dance/performance’, ‘street dance’, ‘urban dance’, ‘dance theatre’, ‘dance performance’ – to name but a few...

Such a list of terms not only represents the diversity of disciplines and approaches embraced within our practices, but is also symptomatic of the problematics of trying to define or prescribe such heterogeneous and evolving performance forms. However, today more than ever, the drive by cultural institutions and the art market alike to fix and categorise contemporary art practices is often in conflict with the fluid and migratory nature of much of our work, as much as with its needs.

Our practices are synonymous with funding priorities in terms of innovation, risk, hybridity, audience development, social inclusion, participation, new cultural discourses and cultural diversity, cultural difference. They offer new languages, articulate new

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**3** | Ibid.

forms of subjectivation and presentation to play with the cultural and social influences which inform us, to create new cultural landscapes. We address issues of cultural difference. [...]

We consider the borders between disciplines, categories and nations to be fluid, dynamic and osmotic.

We produce work that develops partnerships, networks and collaborations, disregards national borders and actively contributes to the local, European and trans-national contexts.<sup>4</sup>

I have cited this catalogue of contemporary practices endemic to the field of performance art and dance so thoroughly here due to the significance of its source: the *Manifesto for a European Performance Policy*, published in 2002, a declaration addressing the European Commission and their cultural-political representatives. This document was sparked by an initiative by Jérôme Bel, Maria La Ribot, Xavier Le Roy and Christophe Wavelet to hold a self-organised meeting of artists from 13–18 October, 2001 at Tanzquartier Wien, where the manifesto was written and subsequently signed by numerous European artists.<sup>5</sup>

As the text's title conveys, significant changes in the attributes of these professions are to be traced to the qualitative changes the field itself is undergoing (changes which apply to modes of perception or aesthetics, and to organisational structures), the concomitant expansion and transformation of each individual area of activity, and – quite decisively – the internationalisation of relationships in the performing arts, especially those related to dance and choreography.

In today's day and age, the core benchmark which this artist-written, future-oriented self-description endeavours to set can no longer and in no shape or form be equated with the institution of ballet, which seems, should one accept the socio-empirical data, to have been widely instrumental in shaping the profession in Germany in 1975. Indeed, something else lies at the heart of this present-day artistic self-conception: a diversity of varying contemporary and international practices.<sup>6</sup>

4 | *Manifesto for a European Performance Policy* (2002), retrieved 21 July, 2013, from <http://www.freietheater.at/?page=kulturpolitik&detail=61304&jahr=2002>. The manifesto appears in its entirety in Annex 1 of this study, p. 173. Annex 1: Manifesto for a European Performance Policy.

5 | For a list of the manifesto's first signers, see Annex 1, p. 173.

6 | These are likely to overlap only in the rarest cases with the descriptions of the German Stage Association (Deutscher Bühnenverein), whose characterisations of occupational profiles for choreographers and dancers are to be considered outmoded. Cf. <http://www.buehnenverein.de/de/jobs-und-ausbildung/32.html?view=7>, retrieved 27.7.2013. Practices of freelance choreographers are insufficiently mirrored in this

The practices named include ‘innovation’ and ‘risk’, ‘hybrid’ forms, the engagement with and development of audiences, and the cultivation of new discourses. Participation, social cohesion, differential diversity and the creation of work likewise appear as manifest features of contemporary practices. Of central importance, however, is the desire voiced in the document’s introduction: to be self-determined in regard to production resources, and to be instrumental in decisions related to the transparent setting of criteria for, and awarding of, funding grants:

‘Contemporary performance artists are increasingly concerned with being able to decide on their means of production independently. As citizens, they also actively take part in decision-making affecting cultural policies. Their demands aim first and foremost at transparency in support policy, and call for such policy to address artists’ extremely varied forms of production today.’

What follows is a lucid catalogue detailing different kinds of support:

‘We are calling for innovative artistic structures, but also a new social status that would acknowledge new concepts of work that have altered the distinction between so-called ‘productive’ and ‘non-productive’ periods.

We claim recognition for our professional artistic activities, including those that will be visible in the future and which will give voice to that which has not yet been articulated. This increased recognition of the social status of the artist will contribute to and emphasise the quality of the social impact of artistic activities, which is the core of any democratic cultural policy.

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description of activities, prerequisites and educational backgrounds, whilst the developments in international contemporary dance, were one to follow the Association’s text, have yet to be devised. For more on this topic, see also Gabriele Schulz’ indication that the German Stage Association has not adjusted its fifty-three occupational profiles to societal realities as named in the list of 114 occupational groups employed by the KSK (artists’ social insurance) or to the 178 media professions identified in the AIM-MIA portal. Gabriele Schulz, ‘Bestandsaufnahme zum Arbeitsmarkt Kultur’ [Survey of the cultural labour market], in Gabriele Schulz, Olaf Zimmermann and Rainer Hufnagel, *Arbeitsmarkt Kultur: Zur wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Lage in Kulturberufen* [Cultural labour market: On the economic and social situations in the arts professions] (Berlin: Deutscher Kulturrat, 2013), 29–201, here p. 46–47.

We want the European Community to:

- resource artists as much as art
- invest in the ongoing needs and long-term growth of independent performers
- actively support artists in research, development and in the ongoing process of their practices, in equal measure to the generation and placement of new works
- recognise and enhance the relationships between and across innovative contemporary practices
- facilitate strategies for cross-disciplinary dialogues, collaborations and funding initiatives
- support new strategies for increasing audience awareness and appreciation,
- demonstrate a genuine commitment to innovation, risk and hybridity,
- actively develop, recognise and support a more important number of active, flexible and inventive artistic structures and infrastructures
- and to engage in a dialogue, set up the conditions for a new debate regarding these questions.'

If one places both statements side by side – on the one side, *The Artist Report*, a document of an engaged, comprehensive empirical study containing recommendations for action, and on the other, *The Manifesto for a European Performance Policy*, an artist-initiated appeal voiced by a number of engaged European performing artists – then the question arises, precisely what has actually changed over the course of the thirty years that lie between them, or of the forty years since the writing of the former until today?

Which structural changes have been made concerning a European performance status, concerning innovative cultural politics and the support of the arts, and finally concerning participatory involvement in crucial decision making processes?

The study before you aims to investigate this question, first, by evaluating the situation of freelance artists in the field of European dance and performance art, and second, by doing so against a backdrop of pivotal stations where research and cultural politics have been organised over the past twenty years.

Since, to date, there has yet to exist any systematic, European exploration of the reality of the *artistic working life* of freelance dancers, choreographers and performance artists, such an evaluation can only be understood, as this study's title attempts to articulate, as an initial contribution to the consolidation of European research studies emerging from dance- and performance-specific standpoints.

In view of the exigencies of the artist's present-day situation, however, it seemed crucial to me that I undertake this attempt, which hopefully, despite unavoidable gaps, can play a part in continued discussions. Overall, my evaluation tries to take into account the most recent research literature in particular.

Although one of my concerns was to include many perspectives from varying countries, the first part of this work surely reflects my own sphere of experience as a freelance choreographer and philosopher who has for the most part resided in France and Germany for long stretches of time. This fact, voiced with a desire to frame my own perspectivity in a transparent manner, finds its cause in the necessity I felt to aim for example-based concretisations of essential discussion points and problematic circumstances in specific localities.

A second step shall develop and hone this study's core question, as illustrated in the above, in critical engagement with the current state of research and the evaluation of the situation of artists in the field of dance, choreography and performance, with a focus on structural and aesthetic shifts.

Allow me to anticipate here the direction this question will take: how does the complex interplay between artistic production, work modes and aesthetics in the field of independent, international, experimental and contemporary dance present itself? What does it look like? The background against which this question is posed lies in the – from the viewpoint of an art practice geared to the production of meaning – baffling matter of fact, that most studies break the irreducible interplay of these three areas down into mono-disciplinary islands; a matter of fact that is clearly reflected in the research literature and that reduces the process of art making to a dissociated aesthetic sector. This leaves us with a sum of discrete parts instead of an analysis of the affective relations between and specific intertwining of conditions, approaches and aesthetics.<sup>8</sup> One consequence of this category-specific procedure is a methodologically induced reduction of the agency of the aesthetic dispositive to the 'pure' field of artistic representation.<sup>9</sup>

In contrast, this study seeks opportunities for the more precise analysis of this interplay. To this end, it pursues the hypothesis that aesthetic representational forms of art are not only influenced by material circumstances,

**7** | Cf. Chapter 1.2 Critique and formulation of the problem, especially pp. 75-90.

**8** | At the turn of the millennium, Jacques Rancière thematised this distribution and ascription of that which is considered sensible, or capable of being sensed, and is also perceived as such, cf. Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, trans. Gabriel Rockhill (London & New York: Continuum, 2006). (Original work *Le Partage du Sensible: Esthétique et politique* published 2000).

**9** | The interesting recently published study *Artistic Lives* argues in a similar vein. Here Kirsten Forkert attempts to demonstrate the influence of material conditions on opportunities and possibilities for practising art, using the example of artists in London and Berlin: 'There has been a long-standing tendency within the art field to ignore the social and economic conditions of cultural production, because these issues are seen to be irrelevant to aesthetic discussions.' Kirsten Forkert, *Artistic Lives: A Study of Creativity in Two European Cities* (Farningham: Ashgate Publishers, 2013), p. 3.

resources and methodologies, but that they also play a role in shaping them.<sup>10</sup> As such, an aesthetic, understood here as the intertwining of perception and representation, could be a direct intervention into these circumstances, or else a proposal for their reordering. Only with a suchlike hypothesis in our toolbox can we allow heretofore underexposed modes of inter-affectivity between artistic, social and economic structures to enter our field of vision.

A third chapter will reflect on the 'practice' as an object of research, on its terminological and methodological implications; it will also expound this study's concrete procedure, which is intrinsically based – in addition to document analysis and a statistics on the internationality of the practices discussed – on qualitative interviews conducted in the frame of this study.<sup>11</sup>

The second part of this study addresses the question of relational conditions of affectivity by means of a concrete analysis of five selected practices, or case studies, that correspond to the delimitation of our field of examination to include international, experimental, contemporary, discourse- and context-generating and artist-initiated (or in other words, artistic development-oriented) practices.

As a result, the complexity of these affective relationships shall be unfurled with the help of examples such as Special Issue in France and later on throughout Europe, the Madrid festival In-Presentable (2003–2012), the Double Lecture Series (2011) in Stockholm, the Performing Arts Forum in France (2005–ongoing) and the sommer.bar in Berlin (2006–2011).

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**10** | The role of the aesthetic as a shaping force is also discussed by Andrew Hewitt: 'The historical claims I make in this volume [...] are claims for the historical agency of the aesthetic as something that is not merely shaped but also shaping within the historical dynamic.' Andrew Hewitt, *Social Choreography: Ideology as Performance in Dance and Everyday Movement* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2005), p. 2.

**11** | The extensive interview material compiled in conjunction with this study offers a diversified, albeit language-based, insight into individual aesthetic manifestations, tendencies and manipulations of style. In my forthcoming companion project, *A Topology of Practices – The Book of Interviews*, these individual perspectives are contextualized and condensed into a fragmentary cultural history of dance in Europe from the nineties until today.

# 1. ON THE SITUATION OF INTERNATIONAL INDEPENDENT DANCE, CHOREOGRAPHY AND PERFORMANCE ART IN EUROPE

## 1.1 Current State of Research

### What has happened in European cultural politics?

When we consider the difference sketched out in the introduction, namely, the difference between practices in the professional independent field of dance and choreography from 1975 until today (2013), one becomes aware that diverse European conventions have been instituted, cultural-political studies have been commissioned, and cultural-political recommendations for actions and responses have emerged, not excluding an array of scholarly problematisations regarding the general situation of the artist, especially their social and economic status. In this section, a short overview of the current research will briefly relate some important studies and data collection programmes that have had implications for the field of dance, choreography and performance in the European region.

Of all the international studies on the general standing of the artist in society, UNESCO's wide-ranging proposals in its *Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist*, adopted in 1980, is particularly worth mentioning.<sup>12</sup> It recognised the arts as an integral component of life in society, whose freedom of expression should not only be encouraged, but also whose material conditions, requisite for the enabling of artistic work, should be brought into being.<sup>13</sup> I shall call to memory some of these extensive demands, which recognised the special nature of artistic practices and demanded changes in existing policies on workers' rights:

*'Recognizing that the arts in their fullest and broadest definition are and should be an integral part of life and that it is necessary and appropriate for governments to help create and sustain not only a climate encouraging freedom of artistic expression but also the material conditions facilitating the release of this creative talent,*

*Recognizing that every artist is entitled to benefit effectively from the social security and insurance provisions contained in the basic texts, Declarations, Covenant and Recommendation mentioned above,*

**12** | On European debates and statements on art in Europe, see the website of the European Parliament, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P6-TA-2007-0236&format=XML&language=EN>, retrieved 9.4.2014.

**13** | UNESCO, *Recommendation Concerning the Status of the Artist*, adopted by the General Conference at its 21st session, Belgrade, 27.10.1980, [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=13138&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13138&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html), retrieved 9.4.2014.

*Considering* that the artist plays an important role in the life and evolution of society and that he should be given the opportunity to contribute to society's development and, as any other citizen, to exercise his responsibilities therein, while preserving his creative inspiration and freedom of expression,

*Further recognizing* that the cultural, technological, economic, social and political development of society influences the status of the artist and that it is consequently necessary to review his status, taking account of social progress in the world,

*Affirming* the right of the artist to be considered, if he so wishes, as a person actively engaged in cultural work and consequently to benefit, taking account of the particular 'conditions of his artistic profession, from all the legal, social and economic advantages pertaining to the status of workers,

*Affirming further* the need to improve the social security, labour and tax conditions of the artist, whether employed or self-employed, taking into account the contribution to cultural development which the artist makes,

*Recalling* the importance, universally acknowledged both nationally and inter-nationally, of the preservation and promotion of cultural identity [...].'<sup>14</sup>

The General Conference put forward these recommendations with an appeal that they be submitted to all authorities, institutions and organisations in member states whose resources and circumstances permitted the taking of measures aimed at improving the status of artists and promoting participation in cultural life and cultural development.<sup>15</sup>

Although the UNESCO recommendations were officially embraced by fifty-five member countries by 2011, and although they led to data collection programmes in many of those countries' individual states as well as to unique improvements in social-security law (as in Germany, for example, where the *Künstlersozialkasse* [Artists' Social Welfare Fund] was established, primarily as a response to the *Künstler Report*) – despite all this, many of the recommendations, such as the qualitative improvement of the artist's occupational situation or the participation of artists in decision-making processes affecting their professional field, remained unfulfilled.<sup>16</sup>

**14** | For part one of the UNESCO recommendations, see Annex 4, p. 180.

**15** | 'The General Conference recommends that Member States bring this Recommendation to the attention of authorities, institutions and organizations in a position to contribute to improvement of the status of the artist and to foster the participation of artists in cultural life and development.' UNESCO, *Recommendations*, p. 4.

**16** | UNESCO, *Consolidated Report on the Implementation by Member States of the 1980 Recommendation Concerning the Status of the Artist* (Monitoring Report of the General Conference in Paris) (2011), <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001140/114029e.pdf#page=144>, retrieved 29.7.2013.

This desideratum received widespread attention in France as the result of a 1997 working conference in Kerguéhennec (Brittany) where ca. fifty dancers, choreographers and researchers belonging to the association *Signataires du 20 août* joined and articulated their complaints against France's implemented cultural policies in an open letter to the French Ministry of Cultural Affairs, under the name of Dominique Wallon, the then-director of the DMDTS.<sup>17</sup> This letter criticised the institutional practices of French cultural policy with regard to dance, focussing on its 'choreographic nepotism', its 'sclerotic' rigidity, its increasingly questionable notions vis-à-vis artistic works (e.g., hierarchy of working relationships) and above all its structurally, recurrently non-participatory approach to affected choreographic artists when it comes to discussions surrounding the working conditions in their own professional fields.<sup>18</sup> The disproportionality of the apportionment of funds between dance and theatre was likewise thematised, as was the fact that dance was being subsumed under theatre.<sup>19</sup> The root question – what can be undertaken when

**17** | This association included Patrice Barthès, Alain Buffart, Thierry Bae, Marion Mortureux-Bae, Christian Bourigault, Laure Bonicel, Hélène Cathala, Boris Charmatz, Julia Cima, Nathalie Collantès, Catherine Contour, Dimitri Chamblas, Fabienne Compet, Fabrice Dugied, Jeannette Dumeix, Laura De Nercy, Matthieu Doze, Hella Fattoumi, Olivia Grandville, Emmanuelle Huynh, Dominique Jégou, Latifa Lâabissi, Catherine Legrand, Eric Lamoureux, Isabelle Launay, Anne Karine Lescop, Samuel Letellier, Bertrand Lombard, Alain Michard, Véra Noltenius, Alice Normand, Julie Nioche, Rachid Ouramdane, Pascale Paoli, Laurent Pichaud, Cécile Proust, Sylvain Prunenec, Annabelle Pulcini, Pascal Quéneau, Fabrice Ramalingom, Dominique Rebaud, Christian Rizzo, Loïc Touzé, Donata d'Urso, Christine Van Maerren, Marc Vincent, Christophe Wavelet, Claudine Zimmer. Previously known as the DMDTS (Division de la Musique, de la Danse, du Théâtre et des Spectacles) until 2007 – the DGCA (Direction Générale de la Création Artistique) is under the control of the French Ministère de la Culture (and former Minister of Culture Cathérine Trautmann).

**18** | See Les Signataires du 20 août, 'Lettre ouverte à Dominique Wallon et aux danseurs contemporains' [Open letter to Dominique Wallon and to contemporary dancers], *Mouvement* 3–4 (1999–2000), <http://reas.zinclafrique.org/controverses/ressources/99/wallon.html>, retrieved 29.7.2012; idem., 'Etat de grève à Kerguéhennec' [A state of strike at Kerguéhennec], *Mouvement* 2 (1999), <http://www.mouvement.net/critiques/critiques/etat-de-greve-a-kerguehennec>, retrieved 29.7.2012. For an account of these debates, see also Céline Roux, *Danse(s) performative(s): Enjeux et développement dans le champs chorégraphique français 1993–2003* [Performative Dance(s): Stakes and development in the field of French choreography] (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2007), pp. 55–78.

**19** | Jean-Marc Adolphe: 'Des moyens pour mieux faire' [Means for doing better], *Mouvement* 4 (1999), 8: 'Entre le théâtre et la danse, les différences restent toujours aussi flagrantes. Là où 45 Centres dramatiques nationaux reçoivent 326,5 millions de

the gap between the logic of institutional structures and the logic of artistic practices develop in increasingly opposing directions – was answered as follows:

'If the democratic state and its elected officials have the responsibility to nominate functionaries as well as those in charge of structural decisions, then the responsibility of the profession [dance] is to debate the content of those officials' respective projects. The profession is in fact sufficiently structured, has sufficient expertise at its disposal and is self-aware enough for such contradictory discussions to take place. How can one accept a sort of legitimacy that is based only on political or communicative know-how rather than on contemporary dancers' adhesion to an artistic and political project? Why are opportunities for discussing content-related issues absent to such a high degree from the French dance milieu?'<sup>20</sup>

The open letter by Les Signitaires du 20 août provided a platform, using different words than the *Manifesto for a European Performance Policy*, which it preceded by more than a year, for voices who were demanding a participatory democratisation of the field and who were questioning the legitimacy of purely political, non-content-motivated and non-competency-oriented decision-making processes affecting the field's evolution.

Additionally, in 1997 the UNESCO Observatory on the Status of Artists, conceived as a practical monitoring tool and databank, was set up in connection with the World Congress on the Implementation of the Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist.<sup>21</sup>

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francs (soit 7,25 MF en moyenne), les 18 Centres chorégraphiques doivent se contenter de 60 millions de francs (en moyenne 3,3 MF).'

**20** | Les Signataires du 20 août: 'Lettre ouverte'. Original French: '*Si l'Etat démocratique et les élus ont la responsabilité des nominations de leurs fonctionnaires et responsables de structures, la responsabilité de la profession est de débattre des contenus de leurs projets respectifs. Elle est en effet devenue suffisamment structurée, suffisamment experte et consciente d'elle-même pour que de tels débats contradictoires puissent avoir lieu. Qu'est-ce qu'une légitimité si elle n'est fondée que sur un savoir-faire politicien et communicationnel, et non sur l'adhésion des danseurs contemporains à un projet artistique et politique? Pourquoi la possibilité de débattre des contenus est-elle à ce point absente du milieu de la danse en France?*'

**21** | See <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/index.php> and [http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=38716&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=38716&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html), retrieved 23.7.2013. See also the informational portal, launched in 1998, of the *Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe*, created by the European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research (ERICarts). With its eighth edition appearing in 2013, the portal describes measures and statistics, profiles individual countries and

In 2001, UNESCO adopted the *Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity*, which was complemented in 2005 by the binding *Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression*.<sup>22</sup> Both of these emphasised the central issues of cultural diversity, cultural and natural heritage, manoeuvrable intellectual property, and contemporary modes of artistic expression. Those principles and definitions which held – in contrast to the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreement on the liberalisation of the markets, which makes no distinction between everyday goods and artistic activities – that cultural works should *not* be viewed as purely economic goods turned out to be quite crucial to matters of art and culture:

*'Being convinced that cultural activities, goods and services have both an economic and a cultural nature, because they convey identities, values and meanings, and must therefore not be treated as solely having commercial value.'*<sup>23</sup>

Another novelty of the convention text lies in the unambiguous key role it ascribes to cultural diversity in the furtherance of peace, security and social cohesion,<sup>24</sup> not to mention the importance it places on those protagonists who work towards cultural development as a catalyst for progress in society.<sup>25</sup> It was also resolved that in times of globalization, the responsibility of guaranteeing a 'free flow of ideas and works' should rest on member states, resulting in the apparent fact that international agreements and cooperation are indispensable and worth supporting.

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surveys overarching topics in cultural politics, <http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/compendium.php>, retrieved 9.4.2014.

**22** | See [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=13179&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13179&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html), retrieved 23.7.2013. UNESCO, *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*, Paris, adopted 20.10.2005 (33rd session), <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/cultural-diversity/diversity-of-cultural-expressions/the-convention/convention-text/>, retrieved 23.7.2013.

**23** | UNESCO, *Diversity of Cultural Expressions*, p. 2.

**24** | *'Recalling that cultural diversity, flourishing within a framework of democracy, tolerance, social justice and mutual respect between peoples and cultures, is indispensable for peace and security at the local, national and international levels. [...] Emphasizing the importance of culture for social cohesion in general, and in particular its potential for the enhancement of the status and role of women in society'*, *ibid*.

**25** | *'Emphasizing the vital role of cultural interaction and creativity, which nurture and renew cultural expressions and enhance the role played by those involved in the development of culture for the progress of society at large'*, *ibid*.

On the European level, this call for an international dimension was met with a number of measures. In 2006, the *Green Paper: Modernising labour law to meet the challenges of the 21st century* was released by the Commission of the European Community.<sup>26</sup> Under the heading ‘flexicurity’, this report declares the need for a combination of flexibility and social security and indicates the urgency of innovations and changes towards supportive, inclusive and dialogically responsive policies:

‘In the context of globalisation, ongoing restructuring and the move towards a knowledge-based economy, European labour markets need to be both more inclusive and more responsive to innovation and change. Potentially vulnerable workers need to have a ladder of opportunity so as to enable them to improve their mobility and achieve successful labour market transitions. Legal frameworks sustaining the standard employment relationship may not offer sufficient scope or the incentive to those on regular permanent contracts to explore opportunities for greater flexibility at work. If innovation and change are to be successfully managed, labour markets will need to address three main issues: flexibility, employment security and segmentation issues. The purpose of this Green Paper is to promote a debate about whether a more responsive regulatory framework is required to support the capacity of workers to anticipate and manage change regardless of whether they are engaged on indefinite contracts or non-standard temporary contracts.’<sup>27</sup>

*The Status of Artists in Europe*, a study commissioned by the European Parliament published in 2006, is of central significance for artists’ living and working conditions.<sup>28</sup> The paper’s principal claim is that even though artists do, in fact, constitute a ‘considerable share of Europe’s labour force’, they do not, despite thriving economies, enjoy sufficient guarantees of their social and economic security, let alone participation in the attendant (decision-making) processes:

**26** | Commission of the European Community, *Green Paper: Modernising labour law to meet the challenges of the 21st century* (2006), [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2006/com2006\\_0708en01.pdf](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2006/com2006_0708en01.pdf), retrieved 12.8.2013.

**27** | Commission of the European Community, *Green Paper*, p. 9.

**28** | European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research (ERICarts), Suzanne Capiou and Andreas Johannes Wiesand, in cooperation with Danielle Cliche, with additional contributions by Vesna Čopič, Ritva Mitchell and a network of European experts, *The Status of Artists in Europe* (Brussels, 2006), [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2006/375321/IPOL-CULT\\_ET%282006%29375321\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2006/375321/IPOL-CULT_ET%282006%29375321_EN.pdf), retrieved 2.6.2013. Study requested by The European Parliament’s Committee on Culture and Education. Original language: English; for German translation see <http://edz.bib.uni-mannheim.de/daten/edz-ma/ep/06/pe375.321-de.pdf>, retrieved 18.8.2014.

'Despite flourishing culture/creative industry markets, their activities are generally carried out in far more precarious circumstances than other occupations. Atypical (project-based) and casual employment, irregular and unpredictable income, unremunerated research and development phases, accelerated physical wear and tear and high levels of mobility are among the key features not taken account of in the existing legal, social security and tax structures.'<sup>29</sup>

Within a context characterised by the 'diminishing role of the State' and the 'globalisation of market economies' along with extensive privatisations, *The Status of Artists in Europe* examines existing (national) parameters and envisages 'innovative national measures' geared to improving artists' circumstances regarding their 'individual working and contract relations; professional representation; social security; taxation; and aspects of transnational mobility'.<sup>30</sup>

Although *The Status of Artists in Europe* inspects the concrete circumstances of artists quite knowledgeably and critically, it de facto comes to the conclusion, based on the results of scenarios it develops as discussion aids, that the recommendation of the European Parliament (2003) to introduce a comprehensive artists' statute in the form of an EU directive should be dismissed on the following grounds: 'This investigation deemed the proposal somewhat unrealistic', due to 'the complexity of the issues, the widely varying work conditions of the two main professional groups studied (i.e., authors and performing artists) and the innovative solutions existing in several EU member states'.<sup>31</sup>

At the same time, the preservation of the current status quo – in other words, atypical, precarious working conditions within a 'project economy' with structural insecurity – is ruled out by the study as an impracticable option,

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**29** | Ibid., iii. According to the 2004 EUROSTAT study (cross-tabulated combined datasets from NACE – statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community – and ISCO – the International Standard Classification of Occupations – *The Status of Artists in Europe* puts the amount of workers employed in the cultural sectors of the EU's 25 countries (in 2002) at 4.2 million, which amounts to 2.5% of the entire workforce. 30% of these are self-employed, freelance 'cultural operators' and 'entrepreneurs/employers (in comparison to 15% for the overall labour market)', ibid., p. 10. See also Gabriele Schulze's analysis of KSK (Artists' Social Welfare Fund) data, which are vastly more informative and precise as regards the classification of artists in cultural occupations: Gabriele Schulze, 'Arbeitsmarkt Kultur: Eine Analyse von KSK-Daten' [Cultural labour market: An analysis of KSK data], in Schulze, Hufnagel and Zimmerman, *Arbeitsmarkt Kultur*, pp. 241–323, here p. 308.

**30** | On the critique of the current discourse on mobility, see p. 82.

**31** | *The Status of Artists in Europe*, p. iv. The study's terminological differentiation between 'authors' and 'performing artists' is, in my assessment, problematic.

and pleas are made for a new European Parliament resolution together with a pragmatic package of measures (which would provide for a community charter, a white book on mobility, and the establishment of a central online contact point).<sup>32</sup>

Considering the current state of research, some fundamental remarks are necessary here: it can be generally determined on the basis of data gathered from across Europe that a certain amount of statistics is available by this point, yet one is often met with an abyss when seeking comparative material on the past, which makes the long-term, meaningful analysis of socioeconomic developments in artistic occupations relatively impossible.<sup>33</sup>

It must also be noted that a continuous European monitoring in keeping with a differentiated and comprehensible partitioning into specific professions, or occupational areas, is lacking.<sup>34</sup> The inconsistently handled classifications of

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**32** | 'In recent years, the employment status of many groups, including professional artists, has been influenced by a diminishing role of the State and by a globalisation of market economies. For example, the economy of culture in countries of West Europe has been, over the past 20 years, marked by the privatisation of the audiovisual sector, the reduction of State cultural budgets, the opening up and extension of the European public space and the predominant concentration of imported products transmitted via radio, TV, cable, etc. This has deeply altered the conditions for creation and production. Artistic creation finds itself settled into an economy of projects which are more often than not managed by small and medium-sized enterprises whilst, in the distribution sector, large-scale national and international groups dominate the market. While some groups, e.g. literary authors, may be less affected by such changes, others, such as performing artists, experience them as grave interferences with their ideas and professional practices and may even consider changing their work or working status altogether.' Ibid., p. 13. See also ibid., p. 14: 'The majority of artists nowadays share a structural instability in their conditions of engagement, and this instability is generally not compensated.'

**33** | Ibid. p. 10: 'Despite this attempt, there remain no European comparative statistics which aggregate the range of artistic professions...'

**34** | Despite the fact that the classification of occupations is no easy task, UNESCO's typology is more than unsuitable, from a dance-scholarly perspective, for providing information about activities in the field of dance. On page 26 of the 2009 *Framework for Cultural Statistics* (FCS), written by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Montreal, Canada, UNESCO defines the 'cultural domain' *Performance and Celebration* as follows: '*Performance and Celebration* include all expressions of live cultural events. *Performing Arts* includes both professional and amateur activities, such as theatre, dance, opera and puppetry. It also includes the celebration of cultural events – *Festivals, Feasts and Fairs* – that occur locally and can be informal in nature. *Music* is defined in this domain in its entirety, regardless of format. As such, it includes live and recorded musical

occupational groups leads firstly to an inability to fashion precise socioeconomic statements on dance in Europe, since in Europe dance is electively assigned to the occupational group 'performance' (on the same level, according to UNESCO, as music, as well as any sort of 'celebration' or 'festival' whatsoever), and often, on the national level, to 'performing arts' (thus being equated with theatre).<sup>35</sup>

As a result of country-specific investigations and empirical values that confront, for example, variations in gender differentiation between dance and theatre, or levels of internationalisation and mobility, one can immediately discern acute distortions in the representation of both fields (dance as opposed to theatre, or dance as opposed to music or celebration).<sup>36</sup>

Despite the fact that narrow typo-ontological delimitations seem incommensurate not only with the expansion of practices in dance (code phrase:

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performances, music composition, music recordings, digital music including music downloads and uploads, and musical instruments.' The combination of two art forms, here music and performance – the former being a category that enjoys a strong industry and the latter being entirely without an industry – is in dire need of explanation, as is the paper's determination of professional as opposed to nonprofessional activities. Beyond this, however, the simple tossing together of 'creative, arts, and entertainment activities' (in CPC2 and ISIC4; (see p.52) together with the celebratory aspect of festivals and fairs is noteworthy, and undoubtedly the fault of the economic perspective, from which most of the classifications are derived (p.51). For the narrower area of actual art production, the absurdity of the varying classificatory systems becomes apparent, for example, in the codes of the 2007 'harmonised system' (HS), whereby the selling of bells, for instance (p. 65), falls into domain B, Performance and Celebration, as does any kind of selling of Christmas decorations, according to the current UNESCO classification (p. 70). This renders the actual artistic activities de facto invisible.

**35** | For more on this topic, see Céline Roux, who describes the same turn of events in France, events which she links, among other things, to the consolidation of the departments of music, theatre and dance into the DMTDS, in spite of the 'Dix nouvelles mesures pour la danse' [Ten new measures for dance] demanded by Jack Lang in 1984. Céline Roux, *Danse(s) performative(s)*, p. 56.

**36** | In contrast to dramatic theatre forms that are bound to a text, nonlinguistic forms of dance and choreography can at least be circulated internationally – without wanting to reduce dance performances to nonverbal practices. Historically speaking, this feature of choreography and dance may have contributed to a portion of the independent dance scene becoming internationally networked and mobile. Another significant reason for the internationalisation of dance lies, in my opinion, in the quite low percentage of venues for the independent dance scene in Europe, which isn't the case with theatre, and the resultant necessity of positioning oneself internationally and thereby financing oneself through tours.

dissolution of boundaries in the arts, or *choreography as expanded practice*<sup>37</sup>) but also with the aesthetic freedom of artistic alliances, there has nevertheless been a need for years for an even roughly suitable differentiation between, firstly, artistic agents and their more broadly culturally associated activities and, secondly, between dance and theatre or dance and music; a need that has left specific evolvments of and concrete interconnections between these fields untraceable and unanalysable.<sup>38</sup>

Due to this absent difference, or in other words because of dance's subsumption under theatre, the deep disparities between dance and theatre in terms of resource endowment become invisible, which becomes evident when considering the fact that Germany boasts little more than a handful of publicly funded houses that more or less exclusively show dance, performance and international guest performances and that do not show only one company.<sup>39</sup> This figure, which should be spelled out more precisely in individual theatres' budgets, can be contrasted to 140 municipal and state theatres funded by the public hand, which often feel in no way obligated, not even by a percentage, to support or show independent dance.<sup>40</sup>

**37** | On the concept of choreography as expanded practice, see p. 73.

**38** | See also the definition of the performing arts as any and all spectacles that contain a live event, including celebrations and fairs, and even music downloads, found in the purely qualitative monitoring, commissioned by UNESCO, in Michael Söndermann: *Kultureller Beschäftigungsmarkt und Künstlerarbeitsmarkt: Kulturstatistische Analyse zum Anhang des Staatenberichts* [The cultural employment market and the artists' labour market: Cultural-statistical analysis for addendum to the States' Report], requested by the German UNESCO commission, [http://www.kulturwirtschaft.de/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/DUK-KB-Endfassung\\_20121104.pdf](http://www.kulturwirtschaft.de/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/DUK-KB-Endfassung_20121104.pdf), retrieved 2.8.2013, p. 8. As the function of Söndermann's monitoring is to test suitability for standard use, its terminology must herewith be objected to urgently. See also executive summary of study in English, [http://www.kulturwirtschaft.de/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/DUK-executive-summary\\_20120330.pdf](http://www.kulturwirtschaft.de/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/DUK-executive-summary_20120330.pdf), retrieved 2.8.2013.

**39** | To name some examples: Pact Zollverein in Essen; Tanzhaus NRW in Düsseldorf, which is momentarily threatened with cuts; K3, Zentrum für Choreographie at Kampnagel Hamburg, which offers a residency programme for young choreographers; and Tanzfabrik Berlin.

**40** | The Deutscher Bühnenverein [German stage association] sets the number of German stages at 140 publically funded theatres; 200 private theatres; around 130 opera, symphony, and chamber orchestras; ca. 70 festival houses; around 150 theatres and venues without a fixed ensemble; and approximately 100 stages for tours and guest performances without fixed houses. See the Deutscher Bühnenverein's homepage, <http://www.buehnenverein.de/de/theater-und-orchester/19.html>, retrieved 4.8.2013.

As a contrasting example, there are 18 choreographic centres as well as the Centre National de la Danse in France. And yet even in France, if we read the 2004 report on the future of the 'spectacle vivant', the status of dance is on no equal footing with that of the other arts: 'Dance still lacks the power to establish a relation of equality, and no longer one of dependence – however well-intentioned the latter may be – vis-à-vis the other arts.'<sup>41</sup>

In view of my point regarding specialised venues for dance, one can, in Germany, indeed question whether there is any recognition of the autonomy of dance as an art form of its own.<sup>42</sup>

On the general situation of artists with regard to gender differentiation, I shall here mention the two-phase study by Reine Prat, commissioned by the French Ministère de la Culture, which examines the implementation of the constitutionally anchored equality between genders in the art field in France between 2006 and 2009, with upsetting results.<sup>43</sup>

**41** | Report by Bernard Latarjet, *Pour un débat national sur l'avenir du spectacle vivant* [For a national debate on the future of the performing arts], Mission report commissioned by the Ministre de la Culture et de Communication, Jean-Jacques Aillagon (2004), [http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/actualites/rapports/latarjet/rapport\\_7mai2004.pdf](http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/actualites/rapports/latarjet/rapport_7mai2004.pdf), retrieved 7.5.2004, p. 111.

**42** | France as well is experiencing a need for further spaces, especially for working and research. See Delphine Bachacou, 'De nouveaux espaces pour la danse contemporaine d'aujourd'hui' [New spaces for today's contemporary dance], diploma dissertation, Université Lumière Lyon II/ARSEC, <http://pre-fassp.univ-lyon2.fr/IMG/pdf/doc-592.pdf>, retrieved 10.7.2012, p. 50: 'We could thus think that the new spaces, Ramdam, le TNT, Les Laboratoires and others not yet cited, such as L'Espace Pier Pasolini in Valenciennes, L'Echangeur à Fère en Tardenois (Aisne) or else Mains d'Oeuvres in Saint Ouen, are about to create a new dispositif for creation, parallel to the existing and predominant one. These spaces were established to equalise the general lack in France of work spaces allocated to contemporary dance and contemporary creation. They were also created in order to establish different kinds of functioning, to launch different axes of work than those developed in the institutions, which, according to them, might lead to "sclerotic practices".'

**43** | Reine Prat, *Mission ÉgalitéS. Pour une plus grande et une meilleure visibilité des diverses compo-santes de la population française dans le secteur du spectacle vivant* [Mission ÉgalitéS: For bigger and better visibility of diverse constituents of the French population in the performing arts sector], esp. Ch. 1: 'Pour l'égal accès des femmes et des hommes aux postes de responsabilité, aux lieux de décision, à la maîtrise de la représentation' [For equal access for women and men to leadership positions, to decision-making processes and to representation] Interim report 1, under the auspices of the Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication (MCC) / Direction de la Musique, de la Danse et des Spectacles (DMDTS)' (2006), <http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/actualites/rapports/>

Regarding Germany, the gender-differentiating analyses on income and participation in leadership roles, as well as social security (including retirement provisions) still look equally devastating.<sup>44</sup>

### **Studies on the socioeconomic conditions of dance-makers in Germany**

The current state of data collection for the socioeconomic conditions of artists in the field of dance, choreography and performance art appears a bit more precise on the national level – not until recent years, however, as regards data on Germany.

In 2007, Germany saw the publishing of the *Abschlussbericht der Enquête Kommission Kultur*, which, in difference to the *Künstler-Report*, did not place its primary focus on art and the social situation of the artist, but rather on the entire cultural realm.<sup>45</sup> Despite this general concept of culture, here dance is

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prat/egalites.pdf, accessed 6.8.2012; idem., *Arts du spectacle: Pour l'égal accès des femmes et des hommes aux postes de responsabilité, aux lieux de décision, aux moyens de production, aux réseaux de diffusion, à la visibilité médiatique* [Performing arts: For equal access of women and men to leadership positions, to decision-making processes, to means of production, to distribution networks and to media visibility] 2: De l'interdit à l'empêchement [From interdiction to prevention], Interim report 2, under the auspices of the MCC/DMDTS, (2009), <http://www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/var/storage/rapports-publics/094000235/0000.pdf>, accessed 6.8.2012. See also Petra Sabisch, 'Changing Matters in the Performing Arts – A feminist Quasi-Survey', in Sigrid Gareis, Georg Schöllhammer, Peter Weibel (Eds.), *Moments: Eine Geschichte der Performance in zehn Akten*, German-English exh. cat., ZKM Karlsruhe / Museum für Neue Kunst (Cologne: Walther König), pp. 331–338.

**44** | According to Gabriele Schulz, the annual income for women in the occupational division 'performing arts' was thirty-two percent lower than that of their male colleagues in 2012, a disparity which intensifies with increasing age. This gap is moreover the widest of all the arts: 'Arbeitsmarkt Kultur: Eine Analyse von KSK-Daten' [Cultural labour market: An analysis of KSK data], in Schulz, Hufnagel, Zimmermann, *Arbeitsmarkt Kultur*, pp. 241–322, here esp. pp. 292–294, as well as 'Bestandsaufnahme zum Arbeitsmarkt Kultur' [Survey of the cultural labour market], pp. 27–201, here p. 45. See also Susanne Keuchel, 'Die empirische Studie' [The empirical study], in Fonds Darstellende Künste & Kulturpolitische Gesellschaft (Eds.), *Report Darstellende Künste: Wirtschaftliche, soziale und arbeitsrechtliche Lage der Theater und Tanzschaffenden in Deutschland. Studien – Diskurse – Internationales Symposium* [Performing arts report: Economic, social and labour-legal situation of theatre and dance makers in Germany. Studies – discourses – international symposium] (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2010), pp. 29–174, here pp. 52–53.

**45** | See Deutscher Bundestag [German Federal Parliament], *Kultur in Deutschland: Schlussbericht der Enquête-Kommission des Deutschen Bundestages* [Culture in

considered an autonomous artistic profession in a brief chapter on the 'special circumstances of dance'. The chapter begins by stating that 'dance was and is an indispensable component of our cultural life, an art form of its own, without linguistic or national barriers'.<sup>46</sup>

The Tanzplan Deutschland programme, launched in 2006, for instance, is mentioned, as well as the problem of professional transition. Additionally, the growing gap between the growth of the cultural sector and the recessionary, absolutely desolate income development in the performing arts is highlighted:

'In the eyes of intermediaries and users alike, the art market makes itself out to be stable and prosperous. [...] In the performing arts, actors and dancers have had to tolerate an income loss of ca. 30 to 40 percent, according to the experts. Data shows that the labour market is constricted for everyone, but particularly for those who were not permanently employed by the 'large houses' of the theatre establishment. Assessments of the developments in this area ranged all the way to their characterisation as a 'ruinous clearcutting'.<sup>47</sup>

Also published in 2007, in conjunction with a symposium on funding structures (January 2006, Berlin), the volume *Freies Theater in Deutschland* took up current problems experienced by internationally active artists, though it did not go into the situation specific to dance.<sup>48</sup>

In 2010, the *Performing Arts Report (Report Darstellende Künste)*, initiated by the ITI and the Fonds Darstellende Künste, published empirical inquiries into the economic, social and labour law-related circumstances of theatre and dance makers in Germany, including, among other resources, an overview of documents focussed on the rise of internationalisation in the field.<sup>49</sup>

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Germany: Closing report of the enquête commission of the German Bundestag] (Regensburg: ConBrio, 2008). See also Olaf Zimmermann, 'Arbeitsmarkt Kultur: Einführung und methodisches Vorgehen' [Cultural labour market: Introduction and methods of procedure], in *Arbeitsmarkt Kultur*, pp. 9–27, here p. 11.

**46** | Deutscher Bundestag, 'Sondersituation Tanz', in *Enquête*, Ch. 4.5.4., p. 474.

**47** | Ibid. *Enquête*, p. 428–429.

**48** | Fonds Darstellende Künste (Ed.), *Freies Theater in Deutschland: Förderstrukturen und Perspektiven* [Independent theatre in Germany: Funding structures and perspectives] (Essen: Klartext, 2007). The article which appears under my name in this volume was developed collectively by a group of Berlin artists including participants such as Xavier Le Roy and Thomas Lehmen, to name just two. Unfortunately I no longer hold the complete list of names, after my appeals for collective authorship fell victim to the blue pencil for 'space reasons', despite repeated protests.

**49** | Fonds Darstellende Künste & Kulturpolitische Gesellschaft (Eds.), *Report Darstellende Künste*. See especially Konrad Bach, Thomas Engel, Michael Freundt and

Keuchel's empirical study likewise reaches the conclusion, once again, that the self-employed performing artist's income has worsened intensely, lying significantly lower than that of the general population – and on no account due to the economic crisis, but instead as a steadily regressive factor.<sup>50</sup> Genders are treated differently as regards income in Germany too – an extremely well-known fact – and even in spite of high rates of academic degree completion: women earn 30 to 42 percent less than men; for women, old-age poverty is a preprogrammed reality.<sup>51</sup>

Finally, I would like to address the very recently published quantitative study, released by the German Cultural Council (Deutscher Kulturrat), *Arbeitsmarkt Kultur* (2013), which undertakes a deliberate baseline study of the cultural labour market (Schulz), demonstrates the opportunities presented by socioeconomic panels (Hufnagel), and offers an evaluation of (Schulz) – while furthermore methodologically as well as historically situating (Zimmermann, and Schulz/Zimmermann) – data from the Artists' Social Welfare Fund (KSK).<sup>52</sup>

The merit of this comprehensive report lies not only in its demonstration of the complexity of the cultural labour market, but also in its critical commentary on the position of the arts within the cultural sphere.<sup>53</sup> Here Olaf Zimmermann

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Dieter Welke, *Der Status der Künstler im Bereich der Darstellenden Künste: Recherche des deutschen Zentrums des ITI* [The status of the artist in the performing arts: Research of the German chapter of the ITI], in *Report Darstellende Künste*, pp. 243–272.

**50** | Keuchel 'Die empirische Studie', pp. 49–51.

**51** | *Ibid.*, p. 52.

**52** | Hufnagel, Schulz, Zimmermann, *Arbeitsmarkt Kultur*. For Schulz' baseline study, however, the elaboration of an interior differentiation between dance and theatre is urgently required, since the category 'performing arts' allows the singularities of dance and choreography to be overlooked. This becomes particularly noticeable with regard to the proliferation of courses of study in recent years within the fields of dance/choreography and Dance Studies, which Schulz does not designate as such; with regard to the inclusion of Dance Studies as a discrete profession (Schulz seems to view Dance Studies as a subcategory of Theatre Studies) and, most importantly, with regard to disparities in gender differentiation – see p. 120. The KSK data evidences a 173% rise over the last 20 years in individuals insured under the KSK in the performing arts category: [http://www.kuenstlersozialkasse.de/wDeutsch/ksk\\_in\\_zahlen/statistik/versichertenbestandsentwicklung.php](http://www.kuenstlersozialkasse.de/wDeutsch/ksk_in_zahlen/statistik/versichertenbestandsentwicklung.php), retrieved 12.8.2013. Instead of verbalising them, Schulz calculates the following results in tabular form: from 1995 to 2010, in the 'direction and choreography' category, the increase in insured parties was 199% for men and 342% for women (p. 287). These figures beg for clarification.

**53** | 'Catalysts for a more intensive engagement with issues surrounding the cultural labour market can be found in the form of simultaneously pursued and partially quite conflictive cultural-political debates. On the one side, the economic importance

describes the differentiation between art and culture as a matter that behoves the German Cultural Council, although such distinctions may not seem entirely reconcilable with the report's title:

'When we talk about the cultural labour market, differentiation is crucial. The cultural labour market per se does not exist; the branches and legal structures, the educational programmes and employment circumstances are too varied for this to be the case. One essential objective is to illustrate that the cultural labour market is more than just a labour market for artists. Such an approach would in no way diminish the significance artists have for this market; on the contrary, artists are its precondition. Without artists no contemporary works would be created; without artists no new performances, recordings or interpretations would be possible. Artists constitute the core of the cultural labour market; all further circles therein form around their works and around their labour. An essential objective of this book is thus to differentiate between artistic labour and the artistic professions, on the one hand, and workers who teach, communicate, sell and circulate art, on the other.'<sup>54</sup>

The study before you emphatically underlines the crucial importance of this differentiation, especially for enabling the examination of structural changes and reallocations between the branches of art production, the communication of art, cultural education and other cultural employment milieus.<sup>55</sup>

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of this branch is accentuated by the "Initiative Kultur- und Kreativwirtschaft der Bundesregierung" (Federal Initiative for Cultural and Creative Economies), which grants it a value ranking between the chemical and automobile industries. It is viewed as a so-called sunrise industry – a comparatively young, fast growing industry with good prospects for future growth – whose competitiveness should be strengthened. On the other side, among committees in the German Cultural Council, the word is that far too many people are being educated for the cultural labour market, and only a fraction of graduates with art-related degrees will actually have a chance in their desired labour market segment. Here, people are talking about a scarcity of educational capacities. And yet, on a third side the significance of cultural literacy is foregrounded with expectations that new chances for artists and others active in cultural professions will arise here. This expectation collides, in turn, with the fourth side: the already existing and partially upcoming financial cuts in municipal (local) budgets affecting the basic state funding of cultural and educational institutions. And posing a contrast to this are temporary large-scale projects like "Kulturagenten für kreative Schulen" (Cultural Agents for Creative Schools) that have a lighthouse effect.' Hufnagel, Schulz, and Zimmermann, *Arbeitsmarkt Kultur*, p. 20.

**54** | Ibid., p. 328.

**55** | An example that should be named here is the strike by the French Intermittents, which led to the shutdown of the theatre festival in Avignon in 2003. This strike showed

In her critique of neoliberal conceptions of creativity, the New Yorker art critic Claire Bishop draws attention to this ceaseless non-differentiation and the accompanying, more or less practised indifference towards artistic practices within a generalised concept that lumps together culture, entertainment and creativity, as is evidenced, for example, in the 2005 Dutch right-wing cultural-political report *Our Creative Capacity Hollands*. As Bishop states, ‘we find that the authors of this paper acknowledge no difference between “creative industry”, the “culture industry”, “art” and “entertainment”’.<sup>56</sup>

The *Creative Europe Report*, completed in 2002, should also be viewed with scepticism in this regard: the report presents European government measures and modes of partnership for the support of creative concepts. Admittedly, art’s ‘atypical’ employment conditions are acknowledged in the report, and considerations are made regarding the extent to which exceptional legislation may be passed to accommodate. The focus, however, lies on the *governance* of the so-called creative industry, despite all engaged ‘voices from the field’.<sup>57</sup>

the extent to which the general labour market (not only the cultural labour market) really profits from art production; the estimated financial losses in gastronomy and tourism clearly revealed the severity of non-participation on the part of artists in this ‘supply chain’. For more on discussions of this period, see also the journal *Mouvement* (revue indisciplinaire des arts vivants), which itself is also momentarily threatened by cutbacks: ‘Qu’ils crèvent les artistes’, *Mouvement* 23 (2003); ‘L’art d’en sortir’, *Mouvement* 24 (2003).

**56** | Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (London & New York: Verso, 2012), p. 15.

**57** | Danielle Cliche, Ritva Mitchell, and Andreas Wiesand, in cooperation with Ilkka Heiskanen and Luca Dal Pozzolo (ERICarts Report to the NEF, Network of European Foundations for Innovative Action), *Creative Europe: On Governance and Management of Artistic Creativity in Europe* (Bonn: ARCult Media, 2002), p. 30: ‘In comparison with the “typical” groups of professionals and other wage earners or entrepreneurs, professional artists may need – and deserve – special support systems and special legal provisions within the economic and social frameworks protecting their professional rights and guaranteeing social security to employees and entrepreneurs which reflect their “atypical” status. Related and crucial questions are: *how should these special support systems and legislative provisions be designed in a manner that is responsive and impartial to their varying sectoral (art form) needs, local and regional conditions? Could they be easily altered to respond to wider economic and social changes that effect the position and status of the artists/creators throughout Europe?*’ <http://www.creativeurope.info/>, accessed 27.6.2013. For more about the critique of such creative management, see also Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Gregory Elliott (London & New York: Verso). (Original work *Le nouvel esprit du capitalisme* published 1999). See also Olaf Zimmermann and Gabriele Schulz with the

The sustainable promotion and development of open structures and autonomous landscapes for art and culture, even the opportunity for specialised co-determination and participation on the part of workers – essential for any democratic society – is being overridden, disappearing into a market-compatible, creative potpourri.

Bishop describes the ideology behind the ‘discourse of creativity’ as an extraction of art’s genuine tasks, such as critique and the unfurling of ambivalences:

‘What emerges here is a problematic blurring of art and creativity: two overlapping terms that not only have different demographic connotations but also distinct discourses concerning their complexity, instrumentalisation and accessibility. Through the discourse of creativity, the elitist activity of art is democratised, although today this leads to business rather than to Beuys. The dehierarchising rhetoric of artists whose projects seek to facilitate creativity ends up sounding identical to government cultural policy geared towards the twin mantras of social inclusion and creative cities. Yet artistic practice has an element of critical negation and an ability to sustain contradiction that cannot be reconciled with the quantifiable imperatives of positivist economics. Artists and works of art can operate in a space of antagonism or negation vis-à-vis society, a tension that the ideological discourse of creativity reduces to a unified context and instrumentalises for more efficacious profiteering.’<sup>58</sup>

Among further instances of critical and active advocacy for the improvement of the situation of the artist are the activities of the German Cultural Council, which find shape in numerous critical and politicised papers, in a bibliography devoted to the cultural labour market, and in the making of numerous recommendations for action.<sup>59</sup> It is also worth mentioning some initiatives and statements made by professional (development) associations, which are still relatively new to Germany, such as the Dachverband Tanz Deutschland – Ständige Konferenz Tanz (nationwide since 2006)<sup>60</sup>, Zeitgenössischer Tanz

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collaboration of Stefanie Ernst (eds.), *Zukunft Kulturwirtschaft: Zwischen Künstlertum und Kreativwirtschaft* [The future of cultural economy: Between being an artist and a creative economy] (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2009).

**58** | Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, p. 16.

**59** | See <http://www.kulturrat.de/text.php?rubrik=4>, retrieved 4.8.2013.

**60** | I would, however, like to critically remark that the Dachverband Tanz, which considers itself a non-profit organisation and resides, like the International Theatre Institute, in Kunstquartier Bethanien in Berlin-Kreuzberg, feels obliged first and foremost to a network of unions and institutions. According to bylaws, individuals such as dance makers are only to be admitted if they are ‘personalities’ who have rendered outstanding services to dance, which is decided by the governing body following written

Berlin (founded in 2000)<sup>61</sup>, and last but not least the Koalition der Freien Szene (2012).<sup>62</sup>

At the time of this study's completion, the Berlin initiative Koalition der Freien Szene was engaged in vehement criticism of cultural politics in Berlin, fighting against 'structures that hinder rather than foster artistic labour and productivity'. Concretely, what the Koalition is referring to here is the 'concentration on institutional survival', which goes hand in hand with the gravely insufficient distribution of funding among independent agents, with the nonexistence of planning security and sustainability', and with a 'robber economy' based on the exploitation of artistic labour power and productivity'.<sup>63</sup>

### **European studies and documentary resources on dance, choreography and performance**

Dance, choreography and performance-related reports, studies and documentary resources from neighbouring European countries will also be included in the scope of this survey, although the spectrum's sheer breadth presents difficulties for any systematic or complete overview.<sup>64</sup> My selection has emphasised recently published literature and studies on structural changes in the arts of dance and performance; furthermore, attention was given to those reports which were compiled with continuous determination in the long-term.

A very good summary of the current landscape of dance in Flanders, Belgium, can be found in the 2013 report *Performing Art Flanders: Perspective Dance*, published by VTI (Flemish Theatre Institute) and the Institute for

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application and payment of contribution. See [http://www.dachverband-tanz.de/pdf/Satzung\\_DTD\\_2010-03-06.pdf](http://www.dachverband-tanz.de/pdf/Satzung_DTD_2010-03-06.pdf), retrieved 12.8.2013.

**61** | For more on the Dachverband Zeitgenössischer Tanz Berlin – also located on Mariannenplatz in Berlin-Kreuzberg – and comparatively more open structures, see the Dachverband's German-English homepage, <http://www.ztberlin.de/>, retrieved 23.7.2013.

**62** | The Koalition der Freien Szene campaigns in a pan-disciplinary capacity for a new cultural policy and criticises the 'blatant maldevelopment in Berlin's cultural budgeting'. It fights a policy that 'increasingly exposes the arts that exist within open structures to compulsory exploitation and accordingly reveals dynamics of suppression and displacement, thereby damaging the autonomy of the arts and marginalising the social meaning and societal significance of art'. See the Koalition's homepage, <http://www.berlinvisit.org/>, retrieved 22.8.2013, where the latest press releases and campaigns regarding the provocative 2014/2015 Berlin budget proposal are also published.

**63** | See [http://www.bbk-berlin.de/con/bbk/front\\_content.php?idart=2085&refId=199](http://www.bbk-berlin.de/con/bbk/front_content.php?idart=2085&refId=199), retrieved 28.8.2013.

**64** | See also the European resource Lab for Culture, a networking website that offers access to European funding opportunities: <http://www.labforculture.org/>, and the information portal on mobility *On the Move*, <http://on-the-move.org/>, retrieved 4.6.2013.

the Performing Arts in Flanders. It includes interviews, presents a selection of funded artists, lists educational and training opportunities, and profiles intermediary (in other words, dance-promoting) institutions.<sup>65</sup> The study by Joris Janssens and Dries Moreels, *Metamorphoses: Performing Arts in Flanders since 1993*, deals with qualitative changes in the field over the last twenty years.<sup>66</sup>

An important two-part publication for Serbia, the *Raster – Yearbook of the Independent Performing Arts Scene*, published by TKH/Walking Theory in 2008 and 2009 and funded by the Belgrade Cultural Secretariat, pays tribute to Serbia's independent performing arts scene, acknowledging it as a central protagonist in the Serbian cultural landscape, and employs critical thematic reports and an index of selected productions in order to talk about working conditions and problems the scene is facing now. It also contributes to the systematisation of data and the representation of changes in this field.<sup>67</sup>

Here I will also mention the international performing arts journals *Frakcija* and *Maska*, published in Zagreb and Ljubljana, respectively, both of which have been published bilingually for years (*Frakcija* in Croatian and English since 1996, *Maska* in Slovenian and English since 1990), offering a very good survey of international contemporary discussions and transformations in the fields of dance, theatre and performance.<sup>68</sup>

I would also like to mention – and highlight in particular – the attempt at an English-German online magazine titled *Corpusweb*, which grew into an interesting archive through years of individual thematic focuses and cultural-political critique as well as through a continual devotion to the publishing of discussions on individual performances, until cutbacks rendered it nonexistent.<sup>69</sup> Before it too perishes, the Spanish video and discussion platform *tea-tron*, which emerged from the *libre comunidad escénica* (a network-producing

**65** | See VTi / Institute for the Performing Arts in Flanders, *Performing Arts Flanders: Perspective Danse* (Brussels: VTi, 2013). See also the VTi's online platform, <http://vti.be/en>, retrieved 31.7.2013.

**66** | See Joris Janssens and Dries Moreels, *Metamorphoses: Performing Arts in Flanders since 1993* (Brussels: VTi, 2007), also available for free download at [www.vti.be/metamorphose](http://www.vti.be/metamorphose), retrieved 31.7.2013.

**67** | See TKH (Walking Theory), *Raster 2008#1 and Raster 2009#2 – Yearbook of the Independent Performing Arts Scene*, Belgrade, 2008 and 2009, <http://www.old.tkh-generator.net/en/Raster2008>, retrieved 2.8.2013.

**68** | See the websites of the performance journals *Frakcija*, <http://www.cdu.hr/frakcija/shop/index.php>, and *Maska*, <http://www.maska.si/index.php?id=161&L=1>, both retrieved 2.3.2013.

**69** | See Corpus's homepage, <http://www.corpusweb.net/>, retrieved 19.8.2013.

community), should be mentioned here, as should its dissemination of blogs, its performance announcements and its interviews and podcasts.<sup>70</sup>

In Austria, the most recent changes (Wiener Theaterreform 2003) are also relatively well documented.<sup>71</sup> In addition to insights into social circumstances, the most recent study on the life and labour of artists in Ireland also provides an in-depth delineation of working conditions and user-defined developmental needs.<sup>72</sup>

### **Dance Studies: On the situation of dancers and choreographers**

Reading Andrew Hewitt's 2005 text on *Social Choreography*, which he defines as the performance of ideology in dance; or Laurence Louppe, who in the second volume of her *Poétique de la danse contemporaine* [The poetics of contemporary dance] addresses the production methods proper to 'new tendencies' in contemporary dance since the nineties; or Bojana Cvejić and Ana Vujanović's 2010 discussion of the exhausting effects of immaterial labour in the performing arts sector, it soon becomes obvious that the vast majority

**70** | See TEATRON's homepage, <http://www.tea-tron.com/teatron/Portada.do>, retrieved 19.8.2013.

**71** | See Christian Schober, Andrea Schmidt and Selma Sprajcer, *Tanz- und Theaterszene in Wien: Zahlen, Daten, Fakten unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Effekte der Wiener Theaterreform 2003* [The dance and theatre scene in Vienna: Numbers, data and facts, with a special focus on the effects of the Viennese Theatre Reform of 2003], Commission given by the City of Vienna to the NPO Kompetenzzentrum der Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien (2012), [http://epub.wu.ac.at/3634/1/bestandsaufnahme\\_der\\_tanz-\\_und\\_theater\\_szene\\_in\\_wien.pdf](http://epub.wu.ac.at/3634/1/bestandsaufnahme_der_tanz-_und_theater_szene_in_wien.pdf), retrieved 3.7.2012. Sabine Kock, *Prekäre Freiheiten: Arbeit im freien Theaterbereich in Österreich*, [Precarious freedoms: Employment in the independent theatre field], Ed. IG Freie Theaterarbeit Wien (2009), [http://culturebase.org/home/igft-ftp/Prekaere\\_Freiheiten\\_IGFT.pdf](http://culturebase.org/home/igft-ftp/Prekaere_Freiheiten_IGFT.pdf), retrieved 8.3.2013; Susanne Schelepa, Petra Wetzel and Gerhard Wohlfahrt, in cooperation with Anna Mostetschnig, *Zur sozialen Lage der Künstler und Künstlerinnen in Österreich* [On the social situation of artists in Austria] Eds. Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur & L&R Sozialforschung (2008), [http://www.kunstkultur.bka.gv.at/Docs/kuku/medienpool/17401/studie\\_soziale\\_lage\\_kuenstler\\_en.pdf](http://www.kunstkultur.bka.gv.at/Docs/kuku/medienpool/17401/studie_soziale_lage_kuenstler_en.pdf), retrieved 3.3.2012. See also Karin Cerny, 'Die Evaluation der Theaterreform ist abgeschlossen' [The evaluation of the theatre reform is complete], *profile online*, 7.7.2012, <http://www.profil.at/articles/1227/560/333790/die-evaluation-theaterreform>, retrieved 7.3.2013; and <http://www.corpusweb.net/die-evaluation.html>, retrieved 7.3.2013.

**72** | See Clare McAndrew and Cathie McKimm, *The Living and Working Conditions of Artists in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland*, commissioned by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the Arts Council An Chomhairle Ealaíon (2010), [http://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/LWCA\\_Study\\_-\\_Final\\_2010.pdf](http://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/LWCA_Study_-_Final_2010.pdf), retrieved 8.3.2013.

of German Dance Studies displays a lack of attention towards the social and economic reality of dance makers, choreographers and performers.<sup>73</sup>

We are aware of a strong French school of art sociology<sup>74</sup>, but there is still no established dance sociology to speak of.<sup>75</sup> And yet a handful of recent approaches to research, often inspired by the choreographer Xavier Le Roy, are leading the way towards critical engagement with the concrete circumstances of artistic production while indicating the potential of artistic research as an autonomous, theory-generating alternative to what Husemann criticised in 2009 as a 'typically praxis-shunning academic discourse'.<sup>76</sup>

I would like to name three important symposiums here as examples selected from the meagre amount of positions in Dance Studies concerned with the conditions of production and, accordingly, with the precariousness of artists' circumstances. In 2010 the Cologne-based professor of Dance Studies Yvonne Hardt organised, in collaboration with Friederike Lampert, the symposium *Choreografie und Institution*, which discussed current challenges faced by choreography at the interface between numerous (dance)-market-defining institutional practices and explored possibilities for dance as an institution-critical praxis.<sup>77</sup> The 2012 anthology reader *Prekäre Exzellenz. Künste, Ökonomien*

**73** | See Andrew Hewitt, *Social Choreography: Ideology as Performance in Dance and Everyday Movement* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press); Laurence Louppe, *Poétique de la danse contemporaine, la suite* [The poetics of dance, vol. 2] (Brussels: Contredanse, 2007), p. 8.; and Bojana Cvejić and Ana Vujanović, 'Exhausting Immaterial Labour' (editor's note), *TkH Journal of Performing Arts Theory* 17 (2010), p. 4: In a special issue of *TkH* co-published by the *Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers* titled 'Exhausting Immaterial Labour', Cvejić and Vujanović describe the exhaustion of the performing arts freelancer scene in the face of transformations in the working environment and formulate a necessity for the concretisation and precise observation of processes of change in artistic production conditions: 'What kinds of transformations of labour and production have the performing arts undergone in the past decade and how specifically different are they from other institutional practices or media?'

**74** | See Laurent Thévenot, 'Die Person in ihrem vielfachen Engagiertsein' [The person in multilayered engagement], *Trivium* 5 (2010), <http://trivium.revues.org/3573>, retrieved 6.4.2013; and Laurent Thévenot and Luc Boltanski, 'Sociology of critical capacity', *European Journal of Social Theory* 2:3 (1999), pp. 359–377.

**75** | For a German-language introduction to art sociology, see Dagmar Danko, *Kunstsoziologie* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2012).

**76** | Pirkko Husemann, *Choreografie als kritische Praxis: Arbeitsweisen bei Le Roy und Thomas Lehmen* [Choreography as critical practice: The working methods of Xavier Le Roy and Thomas Lehmen] (Bielefeld: transcript, 2009), p. 246.

**77** | Yvonne Hardt and Martin Stern (eds.), *Choreografie und Institution. Zeitgenössischer Tanz zwischen Ästhetik, Produktion und Vermittlung* [Choreography and institution:

*und Politiken des Virtuosen*, edited by Gabriele Brandstetter, Bettina Brandl-Risi and Kai van Eikels – as well as the conference of the same name held in June 2010 in conjunction with the research project *Die Szene des Virtuosen* (SFB *Kulturen des Performativen*) at Volksbühne Berlin – probes issues surrounding the nexus of precarious virtuosity and economised strategies of excellence.<sup>78</sup>

In critical reflexion on the last ten years in contemporary dance, Stefan Apostolou-Hölscher and Gerald Siegmund initiated the 2011 international symposium *Dance, Politics and Co-Immunity* in Giessen. The symposium brought international Dance Studies and political philosophy to the same table. The recently published reader pursuing Paolo Virno's performance artist as a Post-Fordist virtuoso<sup>79</sup> inquires into the ways in which dance and politics can intertwine and how those links can be examined, without simply re-enacting neoliberal job profiles:

'Dance and its artistic communities have indeed become a model for neo-liberal flexibility and self-exploitation. Given these circumstances, how can we think about the relation between dance and politics today without repeating neo-liberal demands and constraints? This volume focuses on recent developments in contemporary dance and the production of new spaces for collaboration and exchange.'<sup>80</sup>

It would therefore seem fitting to stress the pivotal significance of investigations into forms of artistic labour, negotiated a great many times in recent years under key concepts like 'immaterial labour' or 'working methods and forms of collaboration'.<sup>81</sup>

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Contemporary dance between aesthetic, production and mediation] (Bielefeld: transcript, 2011). Meanwhile, it must be noted that the Zentrum für Zeitgenössischen Tanz, which was not reformed until 2009, is itself at the present under the acute threat of closing.

**78** | See Gabriele Brandstetter, Bettina Brandl-Risi and Kai van Eikels (eds.), *Prekäre Exzellenz: Künste, Ökonomien und Politiken des Virtuosen* [Precarious excellence: The arts, economies and politics of the virtuosic] (Freiburg, Vienna & Berlin: Rombach, 2012).

**79** | See Paolo Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude: For an Analysis of Contemporary Forms of Life* (New York & Los Angeles: Semiotext(e) 2004), p. 52.

**80** | Stefan Apostolou-Hölscher and Gerald Siegmund (eds.), *Communications: Dance, Politics and Co-Immunity*, vol. 1 of the series *Thinking Resistances: Current Perspectives on Politics and Communities in the Arts* (Berlin & Zürich: diaphanes, 2013), p. 8.

**81** | See the recently published habilitation by Kai van Eikels: *Die Kunst des Kollektiven: Performance zwischen Theater, Politik und Sozio-Ökonomie* [The art of the collective: Performance between theatre, policy and socioeconomy] (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2013);

In addition to these rather isolated explorations of issues related to artists' production conditions, Dance Studies and the aesthetic theory of choreography provide us with newer examinations of artistic working modes, publics and concrete performance analyses, not to mention with a substantial immersion in aesthetic thematics and historical aspects of dance.<sup>82</sup>

However, particularly in reference to this study's guiding question, it must be clearly noted here that works such as Daniel Buren's trailblazing text 'On the function of the studio' are lacking in the dance field, works that more systematically explore the *interrelationship* between forms of production and distribution, between working methods and aesthetics as a co-effective relation.<sup>83</sup>

as well as Stefan Apostolou-Hölscher's recently published dissertation *Vermögende Körper: Zeitgenössischer Tanz zwischen Ästhetik und Biopolitik anhand von Parabeln zu Sasa Asentic, Jérôme Bel, Mette Ingvartsen/Jefta van Dinther, Ivana Müller* [Bodies of potential: Contemporary dance between aesthetics and biopolitics in parables on Sasa Asentic, Jérôme Bel, Mette Ingvartsen/Jefta van Dinther, Ivana Müller] (Berlin: bbooks, 2014); and idem., 'Let's work differently! 6 MONTHS 1 LOCATION and the resonances between production, labor, thought, dance, and community', in Joanna Szymajda (ed.), *Communitas and the Other: New Territories of Dance in Europe after 1989* (London & New York: Routledge, 2012). For more on the project *6 months 1 location*, see p. 114.

**82** | For more on the question of publics, see Bojana Cvejić and Ana Vujanović, *Public Sphere by Performance* (Berlin: bbooks, 2012). For the question of work modes, see, for instance, Martina Ruhsam, *Kollaborative Praxis: Choreographie. Die Inszenierung und ihre Aufführung* [Collaborative practice: Choreography – the staging and its performance] (Vienna & Berlin: Turia & Kant, 2011); and Simon Hecquet and Sabine Prokhoris, *Fabriques de la Danse* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2007). For questions of perception, see Geisha Fontaine *Les danses du temps: Recherches sur la notion du temps en danse contemporaine* [Dances of time: Research on the notion of time in contemporary dance] (Pantin: Centre National de la Danse, 2004); Gerald Siegmund, *Abwesenheit: Eine performative Ästhetik des Tanzes* [Absence: A performative aesthetics of dance] (Bielefeld: transcript, 2006); André Lepecki, *Exhausting Dance: Performance and the Politics of Movement* (London & New York: Routledge, 2006); Susanne Föllmer, *Am Rand der Körper: Inventuren des Unabgeschlossenen im zeitgenössischen Tanz* [On the edge of the body: Inventories of the incomplete in contemporary dance] (Bielefeld: transcript, 2009); Gabriele Brandstetter, Franck Hofmann and Kirsten Maar (eds.), *Notationen und choreographisches Denken* [Notations and choreographic thought] (Freiburg, Berlin & Vienna: Rombach, 2010). On dance history, see Carrie Lambert-Beatty, *Being Watched: Yvonne Rainer and the 1960s* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2008).

**83** | For more on the questions posed by this study, see Ch 1.2 Critique and formulation of the problem, esp. p. 89; and Daniel Buren, 'The Function of the studio',

## Artistic discourse

An important change from the last ten to twenty years concerning literature on dance lies in the increasing number of published works by artists in the field of artistic research, or rather artistic discourse.<sup>84</sup>

Any adequate representation of this field would require a markedly broader frame; here too, unfortunately, I can only highlight an exemplary selection (rather than present a systematic survey) of some collectively written and published works with relevance for this study's area under examination.

One of these is the artist-initiated 2012 symposium *Choreography as Expanded Practice: Situation, Movement, Object*, which took place from 29–31.3.2012 at the Fundació Antoni Tàpies in Barcelona in conjunction with Xavier Le Roy's exhibition "*Retrospective*".<sup>85</sup> Curated by Mårten Spångberg in collaboration with Le Roy and Cvejić, this conference undertook a revision of the concept 'choreography' against the backdrop of present-day contemporary artistic practices:

'In the last few years the term 'choreography' has been used in an ever-expanding sense, becoming synonymous with specific structures and strategies disconnected from subjectivist bodily expression, style and representation. Accordingly, the meaning of choreography has transformed from referring to a set of protocols or tools used in order to produce something predetermined, i.e. a dance, to an open cluster of tools that can be used as a generic capacity both for analysis and production.

Choreography is today emancipating itself from dance, engaging in a vibrant process of articulation. Choreographers are experimenting with new models of production, alternative formats, have enlarged the understanding of social choreography considerably

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trans. Thomas Repensek, *October* (fall 1979), 51–58, first published in French in 1971. For a choreographic critique of such functions, see also p. 134.

**84** | This can surely be attributed to new, digital tools and print-on-demand procedures, which have become significantly less expensive and more accessible. At the same time, one must note here that these publications unfortunately receive no funding from Germany, because the temporary publication funding instrument put in place by Tanzplan Deutschland, whose target group was dance makers and dance scholars, was unfortunately neither extended nor replaced by another funding programme.

**85** | For more on the symposium *Choreography as Expanded Practice*, see the website <http://choreographyasexpandedpractice.wordpress.com/>, retrieved 28.8.2013. This event was supported by the Stockholm University of Dance and Circus, MACBA, Fundació Antoni Tàpies, Mercat de les Flors, the Swedish Research Council and the Swedish Arts Grants Committee. Participants were Bojana Cvejić, Dorothea von Hantelmann, Graham Harman, Ana Janevski, André Lepecki, Xavier Le Roy, Maria Lind, Isabel de Naverán, Luciana Parisi, Goran Sergej Pristas, Mårten Spångberg, Francisco Tirado und Christophe Wavelet.

and are mobilizing innovative frontiers in respect of [sic.] self-organizing, empowerment and autonomy. Simultaneously we have seen a number of exhibitions concerned with choreography often placed in a tension between movement, situation and objects. Choreography needs to redefine itself in order to include artists and others who use choreographic strategies without necessarily relating them to dance and, at the same time, it needs to remain inclusive of choreographers involved in practices such as engineering situations, organization, social choreography and movements as well as expanding towards cinematic strategies, documentary and documentation and are rethinking publication, exhibition, display, mediatization, production and post-production.'

Another – collectively edited – publication that should be mentioned is *The Swedish Dance History I-IV* (2009–2012), initiated by Mårten Spångberg and Inpex (International Performance Exchange), as well as the resulting internationally influential *Romanian Dance History I-V*, which is characterised in particular by its features on performative interventions.<sup>86</sup>

The Spanish-English journal *Cairon* edited by José Antonia Sánchez, includes contributions by artists as well as works that discuss the problems of artistic research.<sup>87</sup> The works in performance and book form by the international platform *Everybody's* have endeavoured since 2005 to further develop exchange, making it accessible both performatively and discursively.<sup>88</sup>

**86** | Cf. Inpex, *The Swedish Dance History*, Vols. I–IV (Stockholm: Inpex), whose four issues (2009–2012) were realised in an honorary capacity by a wide rotating board (Inpex) and were often supported by the Swedish Arts Council (Konstnärsnämnden) and the Stockholm University of Dance. These volumes, sometimes in excess of a thousand pages, with black-and-white photos from the field and containing numerous texts by artists, have become a first-rate discursive European platform that is, remarkably, distributed free of charge, yet without receiving sufficient financial support on the international level. For more on *Romanian Dance History*, the 'scandal' of their disruption of the courtly programme at the ImpulsTanz Festival in Vienna, their receipt of the 2012 Berlin Art Prize, and their invitation to the Venice Biennale, see the homepage, <http://rodancehistory.blogspot.de/>, retrieved 24.8.2012. On the history of *Romanian Dance History*, see also Manuel Pelmus in the interview with Tom Engels that was conducted as part of this study, esp. MP36–37TE.

**87** | For more on this, see the bilingual issue of the Dance Studies journal *CAIRON Revista de Estudios de Danza* 14, Ed. Victoria Pérez Royo and Cuqui Jerez, Special issue 'to be continued – 10 textos en cadena y unas páginas en blanco' (2012). For the topic of artistic practice as research, see also the issue edited by Victoria Pérez Royo and José Antonio Sánchez titled 'Practice and Research', *CAIRON* 13 (2010).

**88** | Cf. the website and numerous performative dispositifs of the open international platform, founded in 2005, at <http://everybodystoolbox.net/>, as well as the *Everybody's* publications by Alice Chauchat and Mette Ingvarstsen (eds.), *Everybody's Self Interviews*

This field is of course much more expansive than can be detailed here; it encompasses artists' monographs, discussions on work and working methods, and the increasingly significant resource sector comprising digital platforms, video databanks, social networks and archives.<sup>89</sup>

In general, it can be said that many artists in the field of dance, choreography and performance publicly articulate their individual practices, research orientations and specific working modes, despite the Europe-wide lack of funding for publications in the fields of dance, choreography and performance.<sup>90</sup>

Compared to the catalogue culture of the visual arts, for example, the quantity of artistic publications and research projects in dance and performance is minimal, which, in view of the transitory, evanescent nature of presentational forms of performance, ultimately entails a quite meagre state of affairs as far as documentation is concerned.

## 1.2 Critique and Formulation of the Problem

This concise insight into the situation of those working in professional independent dance, choreography and performance throws into sharp relief the especially precarious circumstances that span a broad institutional field of European conventions, national and federal legislation, cultural idiosyncrasies, cultural-political institutions, curators and coproducers, funding programmes, venues, scholarship, press and medial documentation, (continued) education, autodidactic learning and, not least, artists' respective scope of possibilities for organising themselves and their work legally (for example, as a small business, a nonprofit, freelance, or with characteristics particular to a jobholder's position).

Not only has the precarious situation of artists' lives been known for years; it has – were one, for instance, to evaluate income development in Germany since the 1970s – even worsened catastrophically in spite of any efforts to achieve the opposite.

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(lulu: books on demand, 2008); idem. (Eds.), *Everybody's Group Self Interviews* (lulu: books on demand, 2009); idem. in cooperation with Zoë Poluch, Kim Hiorthøy, Nadja Hjorton and Stina Nyberg, *Everybody's Performance Scores* (lulu: books on demand, 2010); and Mette Ingvarsten, *6 months 1 location (6M1L)* (lulu: books on demand, 2009).

**89** | Cf., for example, the videoportal and digital network, founded by Marlon Barrios Solana, at <http://www.dance-tech.net>, and the project PERfMts (Performance More Than Special) by Jan Ritsema and Valentina Desideri, cf. p. 142.

**90** | One very positive exception was the publication funding provided by Tanzplan Deutschland – which, however, no longer exists. Yet it should be noted here that this funding structure too, despite its short life, was institutionalised, so that access to funding originally intended for authors shifted towards publishers.

Wolfgang Schneider, Professor of Cultural Politics in Hildesheim, Germany, pointedly describes the situation as disdainful of (human) rights:

‘The conditions regarding income levels have dramatically deteriorated, and this has occurred even though public funding has increased many times over. Where is the more than 2.5 million euros that German taxpayers invest annually trickling down to when we talk about the preservation of a world cultural heritage site known as the theatre-scape? Why do we pay for a system that holds the social in such contempt, for a system shaped and characterised by self-exploitation, that is preached by proponents of the ‘art of living’ while its living conditions make it unworthy? A system where politicians schmooze about our society’s creative potential on every soap box, but where the everyday actions they take seem to kick around artists’ (human) rights?’<sup>91</sup>

Despite all constitutional anchorings, profound gender-inequality with regard to both income and the holding of leadership positions in dance and art has been a reality for years, especially in Germany.<sup>92</sup>

We could be incisive by this point: The facts are clear – but nothing has happened – for years.

In view of this disastrous socio-economic inventory and the very real failure of adequate protective measures safeguarding art and culture, measures that would *tangibly, structurally* and *sustainably* improve the situation of the artist in society while encouraging artists’ development, fundamental questions arise in regard not only to the efficacy and will of policymakers and politicians, but also to the concomitant urgent need for inspection and review of competencies

**91** | Wolfgang Schneider, ‘Es geht um die Zukunft unserer Theaterlandschaft. Eine kulturpolitische Polemik aus gegebenem Anlass’ [The future of our theatre-scape is at stake: A cultural-political polemics in light of recent events], in *Report Darstellende Künste*, pp. 21–25, here pp. 21–22.

**92** | For more on gender discrimination in the arts in Germany, see Ulrike Knöfel, “Geschlechtertrennung“ [‘Gender segregation’], *Spiegel* 12 (2013), pp. 138–140, here p. 140: ‘Ninety percent of the works purchased by German museums are produced by men, and ten percent by women – which is how Anne-Marie Bonnet, a professor of art history teaching in Bonn, appraises the situation. Bonnet is French. She says Germany is stuck in the fifties when it comes to gender issues. The majority of directorial posts are still occupied by men.’ Cf. also Susanne Burri and Sacha Prechal, *EU Gender Equality Law*, Commissioned by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Justice, [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/dgjustice\\_eugenderequalitylaw\\_update\\_2010\\_final24february2011\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/dgjustice_eugenderequalitylaw_update_2010_final24february2011_en.pdf), retrieved 8.8.2013; and Marie-Luise Angerer, Yvonne Hardt, and Anna-Carolin Weber, *Choreographie, Medien und Gender* [Choreography, media and gender] (Berlin & Zurich: diaphanes, 2013).

and responsibilities as well as administrative structures and structures for institutional action [Handlungsstrukturen].

This seems all the more advisable when even the legally adopted measures – such as the German Artists' Social Welfare Fund (KSK) or regarding much needed protections safeguarding artistic products from the planned free trade agreement with the USA – are, de facto, continuously called into question regarding lack of effectiveness in their concrete execution. Currently, such a situation is being faced in the case of the KSK. The German Federal Pension Fund's obligation to regularly review businesses for whom payment into the fund is potentially mandatory is simply not being carried out.<sup>93</sup> Far-reaching consequences are also, however, to be feared in the wake of the transatlantic free-trade agreement TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) between Europe and the USA, which now finds itself in the fifth round of behind-the-scenes talks, because it threatens to lift protections on artistic products and expose them to being declared commodities. (At the current moment, for instance, the topics up for renegotiation include cultural funding policy and fixed book prices.)

If elected national caucuses continue to be left out of what can be referred to as no small free-trade agreement, and if businesses are able to file lawsuits against governmental decisions in the future concerning endangerment of their own profit margin, then we have a situation, according to the *Deutscher Kulturrat*, where the 'foundations of democracy' are called into question.<sup>94</sup>

In what sort of regard should one hold a constitutional state when certain bills are passed without question while others die? How can it be that artists pay

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**93** | In an article on the current discussion, Klais Staeck, the re-elected president of the Akademie der Künste in Berlin, comments on this negligence: 'This throws the KSK out of balance and is a signal to all those who may wish to evade their obligation to pay into the insurance. People who needn't fear sanctions any longer, despite unlawful conduct, can even more easily opt out of solidarity with society.' Klaus Staeck, 'Neue Kämpfe um kulturelle Vielfalt' [New struggles for cultural diversity], *Berliner Zeitung*, 20.6.2013, p. 5.

**94** | Olaf Zimmermann and Gabriele Schulz, 'Keine Liberalisierung um jeden Preis. TTIP – Ausnahme für den Kultursektor notwendig' [No to liberalisation at any cost: TTIP – needed exceptions for cultural sector], background report by the *Deutscher Kulturrat* (2014), <http://kulturrat.de/pdf/2840.pdf>, retrieved 21.5.2014. Cf. also the continuous and well researched coverage by Deutschlandradio Kultur found, for instance, in the article 'Freihandelsabkommen: Kultur als Ware? Was die TTIP Verhandlungen für die kulturelle Vielfalt bedeuten' [Culture as commodity? What the TTIP negotiations mean for cultural diversity], [http://www.deutschlandradiokultur.de/freihandelsabkommen-kultur-als-ware.1895.de.html?dram:article\\_id=285820](http://www.deutschlandradiokultur.de/freihandelsabkommen-kultur-als-ware.1895.de.html?dram:article_id=285820), retrieved 21.5.2014.

into an unemployment insurance and nevertheless have no claim to services?<sup>95</sup> How can it be that professional development and ways of securing one's existence in the field of independent dance, choreography and performance in Europe are so significantly reliant on the short-term legislative periods of national politics? And how can a state of affairs prevail where the development of the future of art and culture – as per TTIP – is determined by businesses rather than by democratic procedures?

At the aforementioned conference *Dance, Politics and Co-Immunity*, Randy Martin, Professor of Art and Public Policy and Associate Dean at the New York Tisch School of the Arts, summed up the current relationship between dance and politics as follows: 'Politics today suffers a crisis of evaluation.'<sup>96</sup>

Yet what could the reason be for policymakers' and politicians' lack of adequate compliance with their responsibilities and their mandate regarding art and culture? This question should in no way be misunderstood as a critique of legitimate democratic debates, and that these debates seldom prove to be the *ultima ratio* of a streamlining process is another issue. If democracy, however, is to be constantly used to justify the non-implementation of existing laws or binding conventions, then we must once again urgently take up the question posed by the Signataires du 20 août in their call for an evaluation of the *modi operandi* of institutions as well as all intermediary entities:

'Put differently, if it isn't the *creation process in contemporary dance* that's doing badly, if instead *contemporary dance's mode of functioning* is the thing that's ailing (a mode prevalent since the early 80s), then what actions should be taken in order to close the gap between the logic of institutional structures and artistic dynamics?'<sup>97</sup>

**95** | Cf. Zimmermann, 'Arbeitsmarkt Kultur: Einführung und methodisches Vorgehen' [Cultural labour market: Introduction and methods of procedure], in *Arbeitsmarkt Kultur*, p. 13; and the Deutscher Kulturrat's statements 'Resolution: Rahmenfrist zum Bezug für Arbeitslosengeld I den Anforderungen des Kulturbereichs anpassen' [Resolution: Tailor the time frame for receiving Unemployment Benefit I to the cultural sector's requirements], 31.05.2006, <http://kulturrat.de/detail.php?detail=780>, retrieved 8.8.2012; and 'Resolution: Der Deutsche Kulturrat fordert die Bundesregierung zu einer schnellen Änderung der entsprechenden Regelungen des § 123 SGB III (Arbeitslosengeld I) auf' [Resolution: The Deutsche Kulturrat demands of the federal government swift changes to the corresponding provisions in § 123 SGB III (Unemployment Benefits I)], 21.12.2011, <http://www.kulturrat.de/detail.php?detail=2186&rubrik=4>, retrieved 8.8.2012.

**96** | Randy Martin, 'Mobilizing Dance: Toward a Social Logic of the Derivative', in Stefan Apostolou-Hölscher and Gerald Siegmund (Eds.), *Dance, Politics and Co-Immunity* (Zurich & Berlin: diaphanes, 2013), pp. 209–25, here p. 209.

**97** | Les Signataires du 20 août, 'Lettre ouverte à Dominique Wallon et aux danseurs contemporains', *Mouvement* 3–4 (1999–2000), p. 2.

At the moment, one can only surmise the outcome, and the question of whether a certain correlation indeed does exist here must also remain open, a correlation with that 'rigidity' particularly locatable in the cultural labour market. That same rigidity which the *Deutscher Kulturrat* has identified especially in public cultural institutions, and which stands in sharp contrast to the profile that is imposed upon artists: nonstop flexibility.<sup>98</sup>

In a similar vein, Therese Kaufmann and Gerald Raunig of the European Institute for Progressive Cultural Policies criticise European cultural policies' regressive tendency towards 'institutionalisation', or towards the predominant support of institutions (versus independent artists), and they counterpose to this tendency their own attempt at devising European cultural policies with concrete perspectives for the future:

'But while the aforementioned forms of concrete cultural initiatives are based on principles of temporality and change, the corresponding cultural policies seem to be concentrating on the opposite, namely, by tending, regressively, to support institutions and institutionalise initiatives, to bring movement to a standstill. Even though 1968 was often mystified as a momentous shift in (cultural) politics, the changes that have occur-

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**98** | Gabriele Schulz and Olaf Zimmermann, 'Arbeitsmarkt Kultur: Hoffnungsträger oder Abstellgleis – Bewertung und Schlussfolgerungen' [Cultural labour market: Bearer of hope or back burner? – evaluation and argumentation], in Hufnagel, Schulz and Zimmermann, *Arbeitsmarkt Kultur*, p. 330: 'The cultural labour market is partially rigid – a collective ageing among personnel is the result: in some subareas of the cultural labour market, the numbers of young as opposed to old participants are diverging. The portion of workers over fifty years of age is rising. [...] The number of employees from younger-aged cohorts is sinking proportionately. This immediately suggests the supposition that only a small amount of hiring has been done in recent years. As a result, a staff of personnel ages as one. In addition to the rigidification of the labour market in these fields, another outcome results – hardly any transfer of know-how from older and experienced colleagues to later generations of decision makers is possible. At the same time, the institutions lack the proverbial 'fresh air' that young employees bring. In the long run, this circumstance starts to detract from an institution's future viability. This development is especially to be observed in the public cultural sector. The slashing of posts has made itself felt for some time, as has the failure to fill posts anew when employees vacate them. Since many employees will reach retirement age during the next decade and consequently vacate their posts, the crucial test regarding how institutions will handle this change in generation is already underway. In this context, it must also become apparent whether or not sufficiently trained professionals are standing, so to speak, in the 'second row', professionals who are well suited and willing to assume a leadership position. It is possible that the cultural labour market could, despite a brisk influx of university students, see a shortage of qualified personnel, at least in some regions.'

red since then have been of a mere cosmetic nature, as far as public support of cultural nonprofit organisations as opposed to big public institutions is concerned.”<sup>99</sup>

The study before you aims to take steps using the knowledge gained from this debacle of implementation whilst making no further attempt to refresh the evidence in a case of recognized facts. It does not aim to be a follow-up corrective for flawed policies only to execute a task by raising objections and measuring deficits that should be executed by policymakers themselves, and only to remain unheard even in this capacity.

Instead, its goal is to explore artistic practices in the field of dance and choreography that have, despite such a flagrant situation, espoused a content-oriented continued development of the field. These explorations shall include the observation of structural and aesthetic changes, the illustration of contexts and networks, and a deeper exploration of the relational parameters constituting meaningful action in the professional field of dance and choreography.

In the process, this study intends to discursively blaze a trail for a constructive, artist-oriented professional development that is able to participatively co-create its professional field. To this end, an attempt will also be made to locate and watch present-day, concrete problems that are occurring in connection with certain interdependencies specific to artistic professions, and to recognize these problems as challenges.<sup>100</sup>

Before I spell out this particular horizon of research more precisely, I should, with an eye towards the material available to me, first explain the background for my selection of this distinct field, and also illustrate what demarcates this study.

At the beginning of this chapter, I named the relations of tension within which artists move, but what really strikes the eye here are the complex diversity and varying qualities and forms of relation.

This complexity of the fabric of relations within which dance takes place is in no way sufficiently comprehended (e.g., by means of socioeconomic key data and parameters regarding labour law or business law) in its concretisation and – I explicitly underline this – in its effect of concrete, qualitative change for those who participate in it.

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**99** | Therese Kaufmann and Gerald Raunig, *Anticipating European Cultural Policies, Europäische Kulturpolitiken vorausdenken*, commissioned by the European Institute for Progressive Cultural Policies (Vienna: eipcp, 2003), p. 75. For more on the European Institute for Progressive Cultural Policies, see the institute’s homepage, <http://eipcp.net>, retrieved 13.8.2013.

**100** | On the concrete approach of this study, cf. Chapter 1.4 On the method of this study’, pp. 98-101.

Even though the gathering of socioeconomic data is necessary, it can only be *one component* of an analysis of the current state of labour. The sketching out of determining factors is also imperative. But determining factors shouldn't be mistaken for production conditions, and production conditions aren't congruent with the current labour reality, not to mention with the continued development of the profession.

If there is a (surely incomplete) and yet still partially available body of data on the cultural sector's social and economic situation, then what is it (apart from numerous aesthetic performance analyses) that is so urgently needed?

A short and schematic look at the methodical procedure known as 'static' data collection, or *Augenblicksentnahme*, which is used across a range of socioeconomic analyses, could be revealing: according to definition, practitioners of *Augenblicksentnahme* perform isolated, blink-of-an-eye extractions of data about two different points in time and dismiss (or at least block out) both the period of time lying between those two points and the multifarious relationships between individual parameters that exist therein (and more often therein than thereout); and this ignoring of the in-between is done with the intention of being able to focus more precisely on the relationship between both points in time. In this sense, such 'static' collection of data insufficiently accounts for qualitative relationships between parameters, the emergence of relationships, and the practices that lead to these relationships and parameters.<sup>101</sup> This methodology of sporadic data collection focalizes and pins down a diversity of relationships while reducing the field to search criteria.

**101** | In my dissertation, I discussed, by reference to the 'static' analysis of movement, the comprehensive critique of the methodology known as *Augenblicksentnahme* (literally 'blink-of-an-eye sampling') and this critique's philosophical background in, for example, Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy and Bergson's concept of duration (itself a critique of the 'méthode cinématographique'). Cf. Sabisch, *Choreographing Relations: Practical Philosophy and Contemporary Choreography in the works of Antonia Baehr, Gilles Deleuze, Juan Domínguez, Félix Guattari, Xavier Le Roy and Eszter Salamon* (Munich: epodium, 2011), p. 184 et al. The critique operates according to the claim that qualitative change cannot be adequately grasped in this way. Brian Massumi has also criticised this subtraction of qualitative change as, in his case, the logical result of a positional analysis, advancing his arguments in the context of the representation of bodily movement: 'The very notion of movement as qualitative transformation is lacking. There is "displacement," but no transformation; it is as if the body simply leaps from one definition to the next. Since the positional model's definitional framework is punctual, it simply can't attribute a reality to the interval, whose crossing is a continuity (or nothing).' Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2002), pp. 3–4.

This means newly appearing circumstances cannot be as adequately detected as given kinds of regularly retrieved search data (like marital status, income, employment situation, etc.). That being said, what is needed – if we're talking about conducting adequate qualitative inquiry into the empirical reality of artists, in parallel, of course, to the regular monitoring of selected search criteria – is an equally regular, continuous examination of new aspects and parameters: one that is geared to the requisites of artistic production. A mere continuation of the customary search criteria would lead to distortions in the depiction of socioeconomic situations and in the focus of the research itself.

One example of this type of distortion by means of adhesion to search criteria can be sketched out here under the keyword 'mobility': in recent years, numerous studies have tried to explore international mobility, particularly in the performing arts sector; to name obstacles and problems; and thus to promote this mobility.<sup>102</sup> This extremely meritorious undertaking, however, transformed into the often unquestioned equating of mobility with a positive value in itself, a value that nowadays turns in part against those agents who were oftentimes pioneers of international professional mobility and a lived Europe.

This turning against happens at precisely the same instant when protagonists are no longer able to co-define and co-steer such developments, and when mobility in a certain sense becomes a dictate: it can be assumed that almost every funded project includes travel as a production condition, whether due to the location of coproducing theatres or to residencies; and what was once a *means* of artistic exploration and cooperation has nowadays become an unavoidable *condition* for involvement in the *métier*. In turn, this ultra-mobile *workforce* existence naturally affects artists' social, economic and political situation.

Only the evaluation of affected persons' views could prevent future studies from limiting their inquiry in a way that promotes mobility and could prompt them to inquire as well into the extent to which working in a location of one's choice, or in one's city of residence, is even possible at all (which is a situation that produces bizarre kinds of spin-off, such as the fact that it might prove much cheaper and less time-consuming to rehearse in one's town of residence). Such an evaluation would require appropriate instruments that would, firstly, allow for the introduction of a principle of proportionality, secondly, allow

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**102** | Cf. the study by Richard Polacek, *Study on Impediments to Mobility in the EU Live Performance Sector and on Possible Solutions*, published by PEARLE, Ed. Performing Arts Employers Association League Europe (Brussels: Finnish Theatre Information Centre Mobile Home, 2007); and the study by Theatre Info Finland, *Mobility Infopoint Mapping in Finland*, Helsinki (2011), [http://on-the-move.org/files/Mobility\\_Infopoint\\_Mapping\\_Finland\\_loupullinen.pdf](http://on-the-move.org/files/Mobility_Infopoint_Mapping_Finland_loupullinen.pdf), retrieved 8.3.2013.

scientific scrutiny of professional forced migration, thirdly, enable socially and economically conscious pro-worker adjustments to migrational structures and, fourthly, open those structures to redefinition by those who participate in them.

In addition to its reductiveness – which includes the reduction of complex relational conditions to still images and the hardening of search criteria – one can make out the ‘static’ method’s immanent narrowness, which constitutes the basis for much empirical data collection and statistical procedure, and which is also reflected in the kind of available data on artists’ socioeconomic situations. This isn’t meant as an across-the-board roast of one method, but rather as a simple fact, namely, that every method holds its own perspective and thereby transports specific limits as well.<sup>103</sup> Expressed differently, the merit of the ‘static’ method lies in its ability to make developments in measurable and quantifiable parameters like income representable.

Finding ourselves before this methodological background, it would seem the appropriate moment to establish that data collection regarding relational fabrics in the professional field of dance, choreography and performance has heretofore only insufficiently reflected co-relational lines of connection and qualitative changes of *complex* relationships. Moreover, the collected data has not, as per its collection method, helped to uncover any previously unknown data arrays.

Qualitative inspection of the research quite concretely reveals that the available data, even when correlating individual datasets, gives hardly any indication of co-dependencies, affective relations or power balances, not to mention of decision-making processes or organisational structures. Even if this surely cannot be traced to the ‘static method’ alone, one must still bear in mind that the guarantee of freedom of expression must also always include the freedom to organise this expression. The real problems become discernible precisely in organisational processes and decision-making processes, as Félix Guattari established long before the recent upswing of organisation theories.<sup>104</sup>

**103** | See also Chapter 1.3 Why practices? On methods, p. 90.

**104** | Félix Guattari, ‘On Capitalism and Desire’, in Gilles Deleuze, *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953–1974*, Ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Michael Taormina (Los Angeles & New York: Semiotext(e), 2004), p. 264: ‘The same goes for traditional political structures. It’s always the same old trick: a big ideological debate in the general assembly, and the questions of organization are reserved for special committees. These look secondary, having been determined by political options. Whereas, in fact, the real problems are precisely the problems of organization, never made explicit or rationalized, but recast after the fact in ideological terms. The real divisions emerge in organization: a particular way of treating desire and power, investments, group-Oedipuses, group-super-egos, phenomena of perversion...’ On institutional analysis and critique in 1970s France, see also Félix Guattari, *L’intervention institutionnelle* [Institutional intervention] (Paris:

From a scientific standpoint, this omission of the temporal in-between is astonishing, especially regarding the already corroborated socioeconomic grievances and (cultural-)political implementation setbacks. It is, at the very least, in need of explanation. But from the perspective of a democratic society, it raises more wide-ranging questions.

The foremost question is ‘what kind of shape is democracy in within the professional field of dance?’ If we plug into this central question, the following issues are brought into the arena: What possibilities for participation exist for professional dancers who wish to constructively co-create and co-influence ongoing decision-making processes? What degree of responsiveness exists between freelancers and institutional practices? What interdependencies, what hierarchies exist in the field? How are they organised? To what competencies, to what level of transparency are they tied? What forms of critique are possible? What does the autonomy of dance look like *de facto*? Who are the interlocutors to whom one can submit suggestions regarding content and structure?

In a colloquium conducted in Hamburg as part of this study, Amelie Deuffhard, artistic director at Kampnagel Hamburg and prior to that director of the Sophiensaele in Berlin, positioned herself clearly regarding the question of structural changes in the field by distinguishing a pronounced hierarchisation in comparison to the nineties, which she illustrated by explaining (among other things) how artists submitting applications for project funding are required to provide written confirmation from theatres who pledge to support, show and/or coproduce the project, and how curatorial concepts have increasingly been exercising content-related influence on art.<sup>105</sup> Whereas the theatre was once tasked with caring for individual projects, today the theatres are the ones who not only decide on the selection of projects for a given season, but who also preside over the general allocation of production means.

The growth of these dependencies is treated by the Swedish choreographer Márten Spångberg in his book *Spångbergianism* (which first appeared as a blog), particularly when he describes the relationship between artists and curators:

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Payot, 1980); and idem., *Psychotherapie, Politik und die Aufgaben der institutionellen Analyse* [Psychotherapy, politics and the tasks of institutional analysis] (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1976). For an historical overview of institutional analysis, see Marta Malo de Molina, ‘Common Notions, Part 2: Institutional Analysis, Participatory Action-Research, Militant Research’, Trans. M. Casas-Cortés & S. Cobarrubias (2004), <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0707/malo/de>, retrieved 3.2.2011; and Stefan Nowotny and Gerald Raunig, *Instituierende Praxen: Bruchlinien der Institutionskritik* [Instituting practices: Faultlines in institutional critique] (Vienna: Turia & Kant, 2008).

**105** | 27.1.2012, *Kampnagel*, Hamburg.

'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'.<sup>106</sup>

Spångberg goes on to explain that the 'restrictive budget' argument, which programmers in the dance field usually employ to redirect critics of their programmes towards the extenuating circumstances, doesn't apply equally to artists:

'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 [...], hire faster dancers, anything - anything - [...]. 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.'<sup>107</sup>

Besides dance makers' one-sided dependencies on venues, artistic directors and the awarding of guest performance contracts in Germany, one should also mention that the academicisation of art, described by Didier Lesage as a result of the 1999 Bologna Accord, should be more precisely evaluated. Lesage describes this development as the 'obligation to become academic':

'Arts academies were being requested neither to engage in critical self-analysis nor to recall the highlights of their histories. The academies were instead required to listen to their big other, the universities, who in some countries and regions in Europe proposed to tell academies how to become academic. Universities which had no experience of teaching practice-based arts in the many decades or even centuries of their venerable existence supposed that they could assess whether art academies had reached an acceptable academic level in teaching art. Though the universities stressed that the evaluation of teaching and research can only qualify as academic if it is undertaken by peers, they failed to see that university academics without any experience of practice-based arts education or artistic research could not properly be considered as 'peers' of academies on their own terms. The universities, though unqualified as peers, were not about to disqualify themselves as the proper institutions to evaluate the academization

**106** | Mårten Spångberg, *Spångbergianism* (Gargzdai: Print-It, 2011), p. 21.

**107** | Ibid., pp. 22-23.

of academies. Indeed, universities were very happy to be able to evaluate academies, and to play a decisive role in the procedural machine which in time would accredit programmes at academies as being academic. In some countries, universities also took it upon themselves to deliver the newly created doctoral degree in the arts.<sup>108</sup>

The conditions and results of further content-based development in the performing arts would also have to be examined here, especially in the wake of the implementation of the Bologna Process.

According to Marijke Hoogenboom from the Amsterdam School of the Arts, herein can be detected a major setback for contemporary content-based development, leading to the suppression of innovative art forms rather than to the incentivisation of structural support:

‘Beyond Bologna, these research groups have been a response to a worrying development at art schools and universities of applied sciences, which are increasingly defining themselves according to the current labour market and dedicating too much of their application-oriented teaching to concrete vocational training. In theatre, for example, this means that courses in stage direction, acting, dance or dramaturgy become stuck in traditional occupational images, barely contributing to contemporary developments, let alone provoking innovative art forms.’<sup>109</sup>

Looking at these fundamental, still scientifically unresearched, content-based restructurings of the professional field of dance and performance art, as well as at the dependencies expressed therein, it becomes clear that a more comprehensive evaluation is needed – one that, instead of merely examining market viability and the value-added chain of a ‘creative’ Europe, also examines organisational structures and decision-making structures in all their (inter) dependencies, permeable freedoms and participatory forms.<sup>110</sup> To date, I believe one can say that not a single study looking more systematically in this direction exists in the dance field.

In an article published by the Austrian Cultural Council (Österreichischer Kulturrat), Therese Kaufmann underlines the urgency of the question of democracy, codetermination and participation:

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**108** | Didier Lesage, ‘PaR in Continental Europe: A Site of Many Contests’, in Robin Nelson (Ed.), *Practice as Research in The Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances* (Houndsmill Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 142–51, here pp. 142–143.

**109** | Marijke Hoogenboom, ‘If artistic research is the answer, what is the question?’, in *CAIRON, Revista de Estudios de Danza* 13, pp. 115–124, here p. 117.

**110** | On the critique of discourses on creativity, see p. 65.

'The central – hardly addressed – question in this context concerns the relation between culture and democracy, or more concretely, between cultural policy and democratic policy in the EU. What role befits the cultural field as Europe undergoes democratisation? How can we develop strategies against the current tendency to turn cultural policies exclusively into venues for neoliberal governmentality where hippy-ish terms like 'intercultural competence' denote nothing more than business tools on the international market or contemporary mechanisms of control and regulation? What can be undertaken against the reduction of the cultural sector to an experiment-field for the 'creative competitiveness' of post-industrial workforces where artists serve as models for the flexible, self-reliant, independent, project-oriented and trend-setting subject of the New Economy?'<sup>111</sup>

In an interview on his book *Moments politiques*, Jacques Rancière criticises the transformation of representative institutions into complacent agents of free market logic, which, according to Rancière, opens up a double option regarding democracy: either one declares democracy to be a failed mirage, or else it must be exercised anew with another kind of participation in decision-making processes:

'In Europe we have got used to identifying democracy with the double system of representative institutions and those of the free market. Today this idyll is a thing of the past: the free market can be seen increasingly as a force of constriction that transforms representative institutions into simple agents of its will and reduces the freedom of choice of citizens to variations of the same fundamental logic. In this situation, either we denounce the very idea of democracy as an illusion, or we rethink completely what democracy, in the strong sense of the word, means. Democracy is not, to begin with, a form of State. It is, in the first place, the reality of the power of the people that can never coincide with the form of a State. There will always be tension between democracy as the exercise of a shared power of thinking and acting, and the State, whose very principle is to appropriate this power. Obviously states justify this appropriation by citing the complexity of the problems, the need to the long term, etc. But in truth, politicians are a lot more subjected to the present. To recover the values of democracy is, in first place, to reaffirm the existence of a capacity to judge and decide, which is that of everyone, against this monopolisation. It is also to reaffirm the necessity that this capacity be exercised through its own institutions, different from those of the State. The first democratic virtue is the virtue of confidence in the capacity of anyone.'<sup>112</sup>

**111** | Therese Kaufmann, 'Strategies of (Self-)Empowerment and Spaces of Resistance' (2006), <http://eipcp.net/policies/dpie/kaufmann2/en>, retrieved 10.8.2013.

**112** | Cf. interview by Paula Corrott with Jacques Rancière on the occasion of the publishing of his book *Moments politiques: Interventions 1977-2009* (Paris: Editions La Fabrique, 2009): 'Democracy is not, to begin with, a form of state', Trans. democracies (2013),

The overall evaluation of the dance field that the existing research currently lacks, and that is so urgently needed, requires an all-encompassing and consistent empirical investigation into European actualities and practices, and it also necessitates focussed examinations (most likely several) on real interdependencies, uni- and multilateral relations and possibilities not only for codetermination, but also for artistically autonomous innovation in dance and performance art.

Against this background, this study can only be a first approach to this desiderat, an approach that characterises the diverse and dynamic interplay between interactions in their complexity as other than purely 'static', and that also expands the socioeconomic search field to include questions of art and the perception of art, artistic working modes and dispositifs, aesthetics and operative relations.<sup>113</sup>

A first step, therefore, is to investigate realities of artistic work. I will pursue the hypothesis that a complex interlinkage between artistic production, artistic working modes and individual modes of perception (aesthetics in the sense of *aisthesis*) exists in artistic labour in dance, choreography and performance, an interlinkage that has heretofore not been systematically explored. This investigation will attempt to make the socioeconomic parameters determining the artist's situation become readable as important additional stones that must be laid in the path towards an account of the primary factor: production conditions. But these parameters are inextricably related to their respective working modes as well as to the intricacy of sensible processes of perception.

In an article on the publication of the *Everybody's* self-interview book, Martina Ruhsam points to this inextricable interconnection, for which she justifiably looks to the ground-breaking significance of Xavier Le Roy:

'The making visible of production conditions and processes in choreographies themselves has become a big issue since performance as an – audience-based, exhibited – artistic end product lost the status of the extra-contextual and the closed, and since it was, as a result, recognised as a staging and as the conditions of a specific working process that leads to certain results while excluding others. The working process seems to be at least as interesting as the result it gives rise to. The widest possible variety of

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<http://democracies.com/2013/08/18/jacques-ranciere-interview-democracy-is-not-to-begin-with-a-form-of-state/>, retrieved 23.7.2013. Originally published 2012: 'Hablar de crisis de la sociedad es culpar a sus víctimas', *Publico.es*. (2013), <http://www.publico.es/culturas/416926/hablar-de-crisis-de-la-sociedad-es-culpar-a-sus-victimas>, retrieved 23.7.2013.

**113** | Cf. Claire Bishop's study, which made similar findings: *Artificial Hells*, p. 16. See also Bishop's critique of the instrumentalisation of art as 'social engineering' in British New Labour politics.

methods with which production conditions and processes can be displayed in choreographies have been tried out. To mention an artist who has dedicated many projects to this question, Xavier Le Roy's self-interview (which was originally geared to reflection on E.X.T.E.N.S.I.O.N.S., a research project he initiated; and which could almost be described in today's performance scene as classical), allowed a sort of auto-questioning of self-designed practices to become operative within choreographic processes.<sup>114</sup>

More precise exploration of this context would require an aesthetic discourse that is capable of understanding and depicting the singularities of the artistic practices of dance, choreography and performance in their sense-building qualities as well as in their contexts, which themselves inevitably exceed the aesthetic; in their methodological, organisational and technical relations; in their historical traditions, and in their political and social dimensions.

The ground being built here should provide a beginning for a – necessarily incomplete – topology of international artistic practices with its gaze firmly fastened onto the concrete *doings* of artists who in recent years have backed the development of the professional field of dance, performance and choreography.

In contrast to a deficiency-seeking inventory of what couldn't be implemented in (cultural) policy and to the numerous unwritten track records in dance history, the motif of this investigation thus consists in demonstrating what has actually come into existence regarding international, contemporary and experimental artistic works and research over the last twenty years.<sup>115</sup> A more exact description, including deliberations on the method and on the concrete field of my investigation, will be set forth in the next chapter.

But to begin with, allow me to concretize the question: how does the relational interplay between artistic production (and distribution), working

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**114** | Martina Ruhsam, 'Everybody's Selbstinterviews: Ein Buch als nutzerfreundliche Kartografie choreographischer Gegenwartspraktiken' [Everybody's Self Interviews: A book as a user-friendly cartography of contemporary practices], *Corpus* (28.12.2009), <http://www.corpusweb.net/everybodys-selbstinterviews-4.html>, accessed 6.7.2013. See also Everybody's Publications by Alice Chauchat and Mette Ingvartsen (Eds.), *Everybody's Self-Interviews* (lulu: books on demand, 2009).

**115** | Due to the much-discussed ephemeral or immaterial nature of dance and choreography work on the one hand and the increasingly short lives of projects and structures on the other, it should be noted here that no exhaustive history of dance can be written through retrospective document analysis alone. Instead, such a history must begin by documenting present-day currents. Today it is possible to state that a divergence in content between artistic documentation and a scientifically composed dance history does exist, a divergence in which the latter risks leaving contemporary changes to be forgotten by overlooking them.

modes and aesthetics within independent, international, experimental and contemporary dance, choreography and performance operate?

Other questions are implicit: What affective relations and interdependencies constitute artistic labour? Which ones allow the development of artistic work? What decision-making structures, responsibilities and possibilities for codetermination exist in the field? What conflicts and concerns? What needs? Is there a responsiveness among individual institutional work practices? How is artistic labour actually organised, and in what relation do these organisational forms stand with institutional structures? Can the existing institutional funding instruments support innovative impulses from dance and performance art, and can they do it promptly, flexibly and unbureaucratically? What meaning do continuity, structure and development hold for contemporary artistic creation processes? How can they be effectively produced, even in view of the increasing exploitation that not only artistic practices are facing? To what extent is critique possible in all levels of decision-making processes? How can concerns and concrete problem areas be located *by artists*?

The aim is therefore to present a qualitative exploration of sense-building practices that enables the relational and dynamic observation of complexity without separating perceptive processes from actions and their surroundings, and without reducing affective relations to cause-and-effect snapshots and thereby advance the instrumentalisation of art.

### 1.3 Why Practices? On Methods

Aiming the focus of observation at practices is, with regard to method, an urgently advisable, critical corrective to the static method, as it allows us first and foremost to comprehend the concrete dynamics of kinds of doing in their complexity.

Such a practice-oriented method interrogates existing situations as to their *madeness* (as opposed to default, or natural, existence) and thereby as to their changeability. The place where we should analyse those practices that lead to the everyday, repeated maintenance and reproduction of this state of affairs lies exactly where certain things – such as socioeconomic conditions or the partly inadequate adoption of categories by socioempirical data collection – seem unchangeable.

Precisely this impetus for critical reflection also confirms Robert Schmidt's 2012 book *Soziologie der Praktiken*, which, inspired by Bourdieu, Goffmann and Kant, among others, emphasizes the mutual entanglement of theory and empiricism, which has since been nourished by a variety of approaches:

'Practice sociologies claim a unique form of theory. It should be built to meet the empirical with unsureness, irritation and self-revision. This type of theory tries to make sure

that theoretical suppositions (not least those that are included in the collection of data and, consequently, those that determine what at all can even appear as data) are not treated, by means of empiricism, as if they were above question.<sup>116</sup>

When we examine the institutional practices of an array of *agencies* from the dance and performance field, such a practice-theoretical background proves long overdue, a background that would construct transparent decisions when it comes to the distribution of means, representation, and the appointing of public offices, and that would be capable of making processes of institutionalisation, deficient (or lacking) administration, bureaucratisation, academicisation and gender discrimination visible in the first place. Such an undertaking, however, would vastly exceed the boundaries of the present study.

This study concentrates on artistic practices in the field of dance, choreography and the performing arts in order to lend a counterweight to the imbalance in research on the work reality of dance makers, and in order to push sense-building, complex and dynamic interlinkages between artistic production, work modes, and aesthetics farther into the centre of focus.

In the style of a succinct resume, I shall here provide an overview of my points of access to artistic practices, to practice-oriented and art-oriented theory construction, and to its relevance for a contemporary and critical social analysis, all of which I have discussed more comprehensively as part of my international teaching activities, as part of the *Practice Symposium* (Stockholm, 2012), which I initiated and co-curated, and as part of my current lecture series, *Art and Practical Philosophy*.<sup>117</sup>

**116** | Robert Schmidt, *Soziologie der Praktiken: Konzeptionelle Studien und empirische Analysen* [Sociology of practices: Conceptual studies and empirical analyses] (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2012), p. 31. Cf. also Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1977); and idem., *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action*, Trans. Randal Johnson (Palo Alto, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1998); Erving Goffman, *Relations in Public: Microstudies of the Public Order* (New York: Basic Books, 1971); and Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). Noteworthy among the various approaches existing today are, according to Schmidt, the synthesis-achieving special research project (SFB) named *Cultures of the Performative* at the Freie Universität Berlin, and the 'sub'-project on the performance of society in games, directed by Gunter Gebauer. See Schmidt, *Soziologie der Praktiken*, p. 274.

**117** | See the *Practice Symposium*, Stockholm 29–30.9.2012, which I carried out together with Stina Nyberg (Sweden), Zoë Poluch (Canada) and Uri Turkenich (Israel), thanks to the invitation given me by the International Dance Programme of the Swedish Arts Grants Committee (Konstnärsnämnden), or more specifically, from Anna

If the performative turn already suggested a shift in the analysis towards a temporalisation, which according to John Langshaw Austin also brings the conventions of the performative (speech) act onto the scene, then Judith Butler has been able, using the example of gender and materiality, to show how essentialised societal circumstances constitute and perpetuate themselves through performative repetition.<sup>118</sup> However, beyond the simple, ritualised or routine repetition of discursive ascriptions, the power of performative reiteration lies not only in the perpetuation of given circumstances; performative reiteration *generates* reality. Dorothea von Hantelmann stresses this fact in her book *How to Do Things With Art* in order to show, via examples from artworks by Tino Sehgal and James Coleman, the extent to which the artistic avant-garde's classical break with conventions was transformed into the performative utilisation of the same conventions.<sup>119</sup>

If the performative turn directs attention towards the effective carrying out of societal conventions and makes these conventions once again available to society through (re)stagings, then the practice turn, in which Marx's concept of practice and Hannah Arendt's differentiation between labour, work and action resonates, amplifies the focus on concrete relational, material, and societally situated practices through which know-how and practical ability (implicit knowledge) are transferred and shared.<sup>120</sup>

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Efraimsson. For more on my lecture series, see Petra Sabisch, 'What Can Practice Mean Today?', lecture 2 in the series 'Art as Practical Philosophy', delivered 23.4.2012 at the Danish National School of Performing Arts. My teaching activities include a substitute professorship in dance studies at the Justus-Liebig Universität Gießen ('Mapping Practices' and 'Experimental Practices', to name two seminars) and my work with students of the B.A. Programme in dance at the Danish National School of Performing Arts in Copenhagen.

**118** | Cf. John Langshaw Austin, *How To Do Things With Words* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1997); Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (New York & London: Routledge, 1990); and idem., *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York & London: Routledge, 1993). See also Petra Sabisch, 'Was kann performative Philosophie in Zeiten des artistischen Turns in den Geisteswissenschaften tun?' [What can performative philosophy do in times of the artistic turn in the humanities?], lecture 1 in the series Art as Practical Philosophy, delivered 6.4.2012 at Uferhallen, Berlin, as part of the Performative Philosophy Conference.

**119** | See Dorothea von Hantelmann, *How to Do Things With Art: On the Significance of the Performativity of Art* (Zurich & Berlin: diaphanes, 2007).

**120** | For a thorough overview of the practice turn and current debates in contemporary theory, see Theodore R. Schatzki, Karin Knorr-Cetina and Eike von Savigny (Eds.), *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory* (London & New York: Routledge, 2001). See Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999); and

To that extent, the practice turn comprises an empirical turn and allows us to gain focus on embodiment-phenomena and material aspects as well as the 'situative contingency' of practices.<sup>121</sup> A critique of the classical concept of action and reason also applies here in that – owing, for example, to actor-network theory – it includes nonhuman agencies as well (e.g., artefacts and object relations), reflecting on them with regard to their *affordances*.<sup>122</sup>

Practice theory thus combines such highly differing theoretical directions and research approaches without following a unified, standardized basis programme or formulating a common denominator; it instead appears as a heteroform quintessence of differing research orientations.

Although Schmidt lays out an interesting overview of practice sociologies, my access to artistic practices discloses itself more through art itself, as well as against a backdrop provided by the theories of pragmatism (Peirce, James, Dewey), of process philosophy (Whitehead, Stengers) and of assemblage theory, especially that of Deleuze and Guattari.<sup>123</sup> Echoes of Deleuze and Guattari's thought flow into Schatzki's anthology *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory*, while in many instances Schmidt's *Soziologie der Praktiken* does not reflect on its consequences for classical sociological formulations of concepts (such as Bourdieu's).

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Karl Marx, 'Theses on Feuerbach', Ed. F. Engels, trans. W. Lough, in *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, ed. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1845), pp. 13–15.

**121** | Schmidt, *Soziologie der Praktiken*, p. 59. Schmidt defines the three basic characteristics of social practices as temporality, bodilyness and materiality. Of particular interest here is the '*Unumkehrbarkeit der Aufeinanderfolge von Geschehnissen*' (the irreversibility of a succession of occurrences) that follows a certain '*sinnbildenden Richtung*' (sense-building direction), *Ibid.*, p. 52.

**122** | *Ibid.*, p. 23, 65; and Andrew Pickering, 'Practice and Posthumanism: Social Theory and a History of Agency', in Schatzki, Knorr-Cetina and von Savigny (Eds.), *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory*, pp. 163–74, here p. 165; Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); and the work of Jane Bennett on the material agencies of things, Bennet, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2010).

**123** | For insights into Alfred North Whitehead's process philosophy, see Whitehead, *Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology*, Eds. David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne (New York: Free Press, 1979). For more on the concept of assemblage in Deleuze, Parnet and Guattari, see for example Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London & New York: Continuum, 1987); 'The Actual and the Virtual' trans. Eliot Ross Albert (London: Continuum, 2006), p. 52; and Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Vol. 2, trans. Brian Massumi (London: Continuum, 2004), pp. 97–98.

The orientation of a concept of the practice that is carried out within an assemblage of relations towards a pragmatic analysis does, however, have far-reaching implications. The many discussions on whether practices are either collective or individual, whether they are necessarily social (shared practices) or whether they define habit as more of a habitus, routine, ritual or as a productive and transformative force are all questions that such a conception of analysis would not decide in advance.<sup>124</sup> Instead, the fabric made out of heterogeneous parameters and relationships within which practices situate themselves is proposed as a dynamic fabric in which the varying emphasis on, and variation of, individual parameters already has evident effects on how practices manifest themselves.

In 1878, Charles Sanders Peirce wrote that any true distinguishing of the meaning of thought gauges itself by the practical difference that thought makes.<sup>125</sup> From this evolved his famous pragmatic maxim from 1905, which he identified in the following as pragmatism: ‘Consider what effects that might conceivably have practical bearings you conceive the objects of your conception to have. Then, your *conception* of those effects is the whole of your *conception* of the object.’<sup>126</sup>

In *What pragmatism means*, the second lecture in his lecture series *Pragmatism*, William James took this idea up in the sense of a pragmatic method:

‘The pragmatic method in such cases is to try to interpret each notion by tracing its respective practical consequences. What difference would it practically make to anyone if this notion rather than that notion were true? If no practical difference whatever can be traced, then the alternatives mean practically the same thing, and all dispute is idle.’<sup>127</sup>

**124** | See Barry Barnes’s argumentation in ‘Practice as collective action’, in Schatzki, Knorr-Cetina and von Savigny (Eds.), *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory*, pp. 17–28; and Joseph Rouse’s differentiation between the regular (mainstream) and normative characters of practices in ‘Two concepts of practices’, *Ibid.* pp. 189–198.

**125** | Cf. Charles Sanders Peirce, ‘How To Make Our Ideas Clear’, *Popular Science Monthly* 12 (January 1878), pp. 286–302, CP 5.400: ‘Thus, we come down to what is tangible and conceivably practical, as the root of every real distinction of thought, no matter how subtle it may be; and there is no distinction of meaning so fine as to consist in anything but a possible difference of practice.’

**126** | Charles Sanders Peirce, ‘Issues of Pragmatism’, *The Monist* 15:4 (1905), pp. 418–499; *idem.*, ‘What Pragmatism Is’, *The Monist* 15:2 (1905), pp. 161–181.

**127** | William James, *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking* (New York: Dover Publications, 1995), originally published 1907; and *idem.*, *Essays in Radical Empiricism* (New York: Dover Publications, 2003), originally published 1912.

John Dewey develops this pragmatic understanding further in his *Essays on Experimental Logic*, which is instrumental for our examination of artistic practices and shall therefore be sketched out in the following:<sup>128</sup> To begin with, a practical proposition (or, in our context, the artistic proposal, and not only the philosophical-conceptual) is characterised as an answer to an ‘incomplete situation’ for the adequately pragmatic reason that ‘it wouldn’t have to be undertaken otherwise’. Here the *proposition* is simultaneously a determining factor for that which ends up taking place as the result of the completion of this situation. According to Dewey, this proposition implies that *how* the situation is carried out, how it is executed, makes an obvious difference to the completion of the situation, so that the *objective utilisation* of the proposition becomes comprehensible.<sup>129</sup> In view of the wide range of possible consequences the proposition may have, the adequacy of the relation between means and goal are weighed. At the same time, however, the validity of the proposition does not become verifiable until empirical evidence becomes available. In that sense, the proposition remains hypothetical until it is tried out.

This backdrop provided by pragmatic theory-formation and method-formation has been a formative influence on the descriptions, accounts and analyses of artistic practices that are to unfold in the following chapters because, methodologically speaking, it stands alone as the only approach that is capable of capturing that inceptive moment when experimental practices have to be *made* in the first place. Methodologically speaking, this moment can be seen with the help of the principally different dimensions of two questions: While the first question (What is available?) aims for a backwards-looking inventory of whatever current ‘is’-condition, the benchmark for the second and pragmatic question is the future and development potential. Correspondingly, it asks: *What can be done to enable constructive developments?*<sup>130</sup>

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**128** | John Dewey, *Essays in Experimental Logic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1916), esp. pp. 335–349. On the significance of this work, see also Petra Sabisch, ‘What Can Practice Mean Today?’

**129** | John Dewey, *Essays in Experimental Logic*, p. 39: ‘The subject-matter implies that it makes a difference how the given is terminated: that one outcome is better than another, and that the proposition is to be a factor in securing (as far as may be) the better. In other words, there is something objectively at stake in the forming of the proposition.’

**130** | For more on this methodological difference, which Deleuze worked out with Spinoza, see Petra Sabisch, ‘What Can Choreography Do?’ in Inpex (Ed.), *Swedish Dance History III* (Stockholm: Inpex, 2011), pp. 82–103.

Peirce refreshed precisely this moment that rebinds perception of the situation to a potential action, and thereby methodologically implies that action as an option, as the force that drives the changing of habits and behaviour.<sup>131</sup>

This proactive moment of initiating and being involved, of sustainable engagement, and not of uninvolved indifference, allows the pragmatic method to gather and comprehend the situative, process-oriented and production-aesthetical, as opposed to reception-aesthetical, perspectives of artistic situations.<sup>132</sup>

In a similar vein, Chrysa Parkinson, dancer and professor of dance at the Stockholm School of Dance and Circus, characterises the concept of practice in her illustrated video essay *Self-Interview on Practice* as, among other things, 'active thought' through which information is processed as if through a filter. At the same time, the practice is the thing you have to try out, the thing that forms habits.<sup>133</sup>

Only this perspective can shed light on artistic practices as sense-building, meaning-generating and engaged navigations throughout a fabric made of the parameters, conditions, relations, decisions, obstacles and possibilities, perceptions and effects found in each respective situation.

As regards artistic practices, there is no alternative to Deleuze and Guattari's challenge '*penser par le milieu*', for how else other than in the interwoven nature

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**131** | Peirce, 'How To Make Our Ideas Clear', CP 5.400: 'What the habit is depends on *when* and *how* it causes us to act. As for the *when*, every stimulus to action is derived from perception; as for the *how*, every purpose of action is to produce some sensible result.' Cited here from a version available online, <http://www.cspeirce.com/menu/library/bycsp/ideas/id-frame.htm>, retrieved 2.2.2013.

**132** | On the concept of engagement, see also Laurent Thévenot, 'Pragmatic regimes governing the engagement with the world', in Schatzki, Knorr-Cetina and von Savigny (Eds.), *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory*, pp. 56–73; L. Thévenot and Luc Boltanski (Eds.), *Justesse et justice dans le travail* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de Paris/Centre d'Etudes de l'Emploi, 1989); as well as the conference *Artistic Practices*, organised by the *Research Network Sociology of the Arts* at the Universität für Musik und Darstellende Kunst Wien (5.–8.9.2012), where primarily sociologists came to an understanding regarding art. Lectures included Nathalie Heinrich, 'Practices of Contemporary Art: A Pragmatic Approach to a New Artistic Paradigm', delivered 5.9.2012; and Laurent Thévenot's lecture about a work by Yves Mettler, 'Artists Engaging the Public in Participation: A View from the Sociology of Engagements', delivered 7.9.2012.

**133** | Chrysa Parkinson [chrysa parkinson], *self interview on practice* [video file], text, illustrations and performance by Chrysa Parkinson (2008–2009), <http://vimeo.com/26763244>, retrieved 3.3.2013. See also the print version at the Belgian platform *Sarma* (Laboratory for criticism, dramaturgy, research and creation), <http://sarma.be/docs/1336>, accessed 21.8.2013.

of the relational fabric, of the milieu, can the actions of different protagonists and the deployment of different kinds of agency – not to mention the obstacles posed through, and effects generated by, other practices – become in any way visible?<sup>134</sup>

In the following five case studies, the issue at stake shall be precisely this *visibility of artistic practices* and their constant involvement in plural publics, critical discursivity and the extra-disciplinary growth of practices.<sup>135</sup>

Having already demonstrated in the above – by reference to the ‘static method’ of cultural-political (statistical) research approaches regarding the situation of the artist – the extent to which a certain perspective is suited to a certain scientific method, we can proceed to reformulate this pragmatically: *applied methods are research practices*.

Methods are *modi operandi* of research which, as scientific modes, intersubjectively reflect their own unique, specific perspectives and make them comprehensible. Herein lies yet another advantage of practice theory, one which Michael Lynch aptly describes in favour of the ‘logic of practice’, in refutation of Garfinkel’s description of the problem of practical objectivity, against the horizon of ethnomethodological research:

‘The lesson I derive from this example is that it is pointless to seek a general methodological solution to ‘the vexed problem of the practical objectivity and practical observability of practical actions and practical reasoning,’ because any abstract account of the logic of practice immediately reiterates the problem. The investigative task for ethnomethodology is therefore to describe how the logical accountability of practice is itself a subject of practical inquiry; an inquiry that can involve struggles and fragile agreements.’<sup>136</sup>

**134** | For more on Isabelle Stengers’ concept of environment and involvement, see Stengers, ‘Introductory Notes on An Ecology of Practices’, *Cultural Studies Review*, 11:1 (2005), pp. 183–196, here p. 187: ‘In the same way, I would venture there is no identity of a practice independent of its environment. This emphatically does not mean that the identity of a practice may be derived from its environment. Thinking ‘par le milieu’ does not give power to the environment. The obstinate work and research of ethologists to discover what kinds of relations with their apes would be the right ones for those apes to learn, whatever they learn is sufficient to lend support to the point that the issue is not one of power but of involvement.’

**135** | See Kaufmann and Raunig, *Anticipating European Cultural Policies*, p. 74: ‘What counts is not the demand for or the conceptualisation of an individual public [...] but rather the permanent constituting of many publics that are imagined not as static but as Becomings of articulatory and emancipatory practices.’

**136** | Michael Lynch, ‘Ethnomethodology and the logic of practice’, in Schatzki, Knorr-Cetina and von Savigny (Eds.), *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory*, pp. 131–48, here p. 147.

## 1.4 On the Method of this Study

Basing my approach on a practice-based method, I shall here describe how the precise field for study was staked out, which selection criteria were used with regard to the practices examined in the following, and what procedure existed in reference to data material and data collection. Before all else, it must be indicated that this study's focus on artistic *practices* (and not, for instance, performances) is due to the consideration that a performance analysis would only be able to adequately analyse a small number of individual works and would thus run the risk of reproducing the punctual framing and capturing of the 'project economy'. Such an approach would immediately lose focus on those practices that were consciously developed in *difference* to predominant forms of staged presentation, or in other words, that since their very inception have experimented with new formats and have made content-related processes into the object of their work.

That being said, our field of investigation is limited to international, contemporary, experimental and inventive practices in the dance, choreography and performance field which have articulated, reflected and developed (including in a sense-building capacity) the heretofore insufficiently explored connection between production conditions, work modes, and aesthetics.

Additionally, however, this study has striven to comprehend the collective dimension of such artistic practices that – beyond the evolution of one's own oeuvre, and yet with and on the foundation of performances – initiate debates on the sense of choreography and performance art and thereby generate contexts.<sup>137</sup> At the same time, another essential parameter was that these practices were initiated by artists, meaning they oriented themselves according to the requirements and necessities of artistic practice.<sup>138</sup>

In sum, the selection parameters presented themselves to me as a framework composed of international, contemporary, experimental, inventive as well as discourse- and context-generating practices that were initiated by artists or that are closely geared to artistic practice.

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**137** | The idea, therefore, was to find that 'moment of initiation' for each practice, that moment that analyses the situation in the dance field looking from the inside of the practice outward, and that inquires into concrete, sense-building needs and requirements. With Dewey, these practices are definable as *propositions* to whom the way they are executed makes a sensible difference, see p. 95.

**138** | Accountability towards the factual circumstance of the self-determination of art should be hereby shown, but without producing narrow identitarian ascriptions. It would be impossible to create fixed labels in any case, especially in view of the multilayered character of artistic practices discussed at the beginning of this study and reflected in the constant change and simultaneous occurrence of roles, not to mention in the intermittent working relations.

Five case studies with varying diachronic and geographic scopes were sought out: first, *Special Issue* in Aubervilliers, France, which began as a performative weekend presented as a 'special issue' and subsequently became a Europe-wide format (2011–2013); second, the Spanish festival *In-Presentable* (2003–2012), which was initiated and directed by the choreographer Juan Domínguez and has been held annually for ten years; third, the one-week *Double Lecture Series* in Stockholm, which was organised in autumn 2011 by Mårten Spångberg and Mette Ingvarsten; fourth, the *Performing Arts Forum*, founded by Jan Ritsema and others in 2005, in St. Erme, France; and fifth, the *sommer.bar*, which took place from 2006 to 2011 as part of the festival *Tanz im August* and was curated by Kerstin Schroth.

An indispensable methodological prerequisite for the scientific evaluation of the content-related relevance of artistic practices was the participatory observation of each practice and its *modus operandi*. The risks that accompany my perspectivity in its perception of the situation, which apply equally to all sciences geared to the empiricism of life (this is the aesthetic dimension of empiricism) are, in my opinion, sufficiently thematised. Yet, a pragmatic science, besides fostering an intersubjective comprehensibility and transparency with regard to its own perspective, should also add for consideration the fact that these risks should be put into proportion with the risk of a science that musters no attempt to make a practical difference.

In the case of the following, the explorations of the practices depicted is based on the analysis of documents, on prepared statistics concerning the internationality of each practice, and a qualitative questioning process.<sup>139</sup> For the purpose of the latter, intensive, qualitative interviews with these practices' five initiators (Alice Chauchat, Juan Domínguez, Mette Ingvarsten, Jan Ritsema, and Kerstin Schroth) were conducted and then reflected on within five 'mirror interviews' with artists from the dance, choreography and performance field who participated in said initiatives (Blanca Calvo, Paz Rojo, Christine de Smedt, Valentina Desideri, Hermann Heisig).

Furthermore, another six planned interviews attempted to direct attention towards other regions in Europe – which indeed occurred for the Scandinavian terrain as well as for Romania and Italy. Four of these interviews took place (with Halla Ólafsdóttir, Emma Kim Hagdahl, Manuel Pelmus and Cristina Rizzo). Further planned regions of investigation were the Balkans and Portugal.<sup>140</sup>

**139** | Cf. Annex 2, 'Statistics on the internationality of the case studies', p. 175.

**140** | For the method of citation of these interviews, see the index 'Interviews & abbreviations', p. 172. In this study, manuscript versions of the interviews are the basis for reference.

Instrumental in the explorative interviews was the question of how the complex interplay between artistic production, working mode, and aesthetics in independent, international, experimental and contemporary dance, choreography and performance operates according to the interviewees' perspectives.

The interviews are non-standardised, open, partially structured, and focussed expert interviews that were devised on the basis of a matrix of main questions and that were respectively connected with individual research processes delving into the experiential scope and backgrounds of each particular initiative and person.<sup>141</sup>

Correspondingly, inquiries were made into the specificity and attributes of each project, into its fundamental concerns and resulting decisions, into its connection with respective institutions, into the interlinkage of forms of production and forms of presentation, into concepts of the relation between artistic practices and audience – but also into the specific problems and difficulties, differentiations and personal definitions of the categories applied to my selection; into the state of education and possibilities for continued education; and into the structural and aesthetic changes that have occurred over the last twenty years.

My method for conducting the time-intensive interviews (usually two-and-a-half hours long) consisted of live or Skype-based interviews, written interviews held in the presence of both interviewer and interviewee (ca. eight hours), and the subsequent transcription and editing of a continuous text in consultation with interviewees. The originally spoken interview material transports thoughts and perspectives that are rooted in their respective temporalities.

Faced with its sizeable temporal and material proportions, I decided to conduct this study together with Tom Engels and Bettina Földesi, both of whom I got to know as master's students in the programme *Choreografie und Performance* during my substitute professorship in Dance Studies at the Institute for Applied Theatre Studies at the Justus-Liebig University Gießen. A week of collective work and discussion served to introduce the study and as a time to establish a common footing.

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**141** | Cf. Annex 3, 'Matrix of central questions for the codification of the interviews', p. 178.

The interviews, which the following depictions of practices feed on, turned out to pose such rich, meaningful and convincing material regarding our questions that I decided to produce, in connection with and as a consequence of this study before you, a follow-up study (*A Topology of Practices: The Book of Interviews*) that extends the plural articulations of concrete affective relations in artistic practices that are begun in this work and makes these articulations available for explorations to come.<sup>142</sup>

## 2. PRACTICES: CASE STUDIES

### 2.1 *Special Issue/Édition Spéciale* in Aubervilliers and elsewhere (2011–2012)

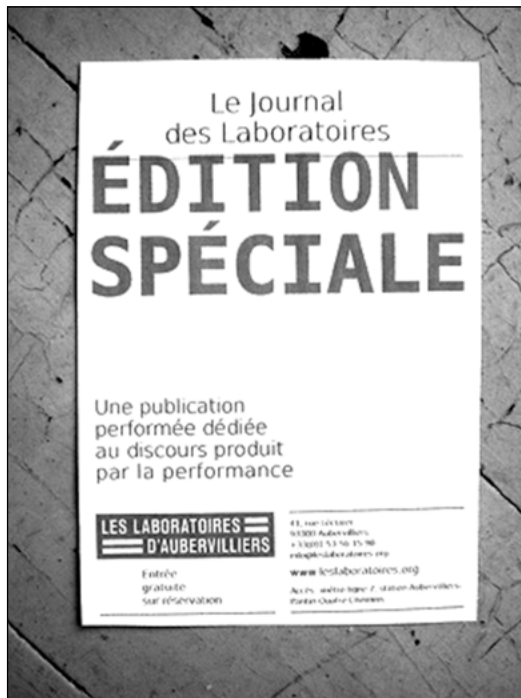


Figure 1: Program 'Édition Spéciale', 2011. Photograph: Petra Sabisch

**142** | Cf. Petra Sabisch (Ed.), *A Topology of Practices – The Book of Interviews* (forthcoming, 2016).

***Edition Spéciale/Special Issue # Aubervilliers: 29.41.5.2011***

*Special Issue # Aubervilliers* was a weekend initiated by the Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers<sup>143</sup> (France) which took place from 29 April until 1 May in the north of Paris in the town of Aubervilliers. It showed international contemporary performative practices as a 'special issue' in the sense of a printed journal whose paper is replaced by live works.<sup>144</sup>

Initiated by the 'Labo's' team of directors – Alice Chauchat, Grégory Castéra and Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez – this weekend festival emphasised discursive practices and dispositives conceived as performative engagements with artistic labour and as experimental and ongoing developmental processes.

Invitations were accepted by international artists whose professional provenance often lies in the fields of dance and choreography, such as Jennifer Lacey<sup>145</sup>,

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**143** | The Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers, located in the northeastern suburbs of Paris, were established in 1993 by the French choreographer François Verret and a group of artists as an answer to the invitation extended by Aubervilliers' mayor to utilise the site. From 2001 until 2006 the Laboratoires were under the shared directorship of the art critic Yvane Chapuis, François Piron and the choreographer Loïc Touzé, all of whom jointly designed the project as an artistic laboratory for research and experiment that would include several arts. From 2007 to 2009 Yvane Chapuis assumed directorship together with the choreographer Joris Lacoste; from 2010 to 2012, it was Grégory Castéra, Alice Chauchat and Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez. Until ca. 2015 (and since 2013) the Labos will continue to be directed by a team: Alexandra Baudelot, Dora Garcia and Mathilde Villeneuve. For more history on the Labos, see <http://archives.leslaboratoires.org>, retrieved 23.10.2013. The dancer (and at the time of *Edition Spéciale* also co-director of the Labos) Alice Chauchat describes the conception of the laboratories like so: 'Les Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers is a very particular arts centre in the north of Paris. It is non-disciplinary (hosting projects stemming from whichever artistic practice), and it is constantly reorganising itself around the necessities of the artistic projects hosted there (thereby excluding conventional programming systems or the setting of any standard concerning budget, duration, mode of visibility, or concerning any other preconceived parameter for the projects hosted). It was founded by an artist (French choreographer François Verret) and is always directed by several people at a time, including an artist.' Alice Chauchat interviewed by Petra Sabisch, AC1PS.

**144** | For the programme of the first edition of *Edition Spéciale* in Aubervilliers, see <http://www.specialissue.eu/special-issue-0-program>, retrieved 28.6.2013.

**145** | Jennifer Lacey invited people to participate in dramaturgical consultation: *Guided Consultations in the Archives of Amateur Dramaturges To Resolve Problems of Life and Creation*.

the group W<sup>146</sup>, Everybodys<sup>147</sup>, Laurent Pichaud and Rémy Héritier<sup>148</sup>, Krööt Juurak<sup>149</sup>, Márten Spångberg<sup>150</sup>, Noé Soulier<sup>151</sup>, Juan Domínguez<sup>152</sup> as well as Natascha Sadr Haghighian<sup>153</sup>, Bojana Cvejić<sup>154</sup> and art university students (from ENSA Paris Cergy, and the CNEAI).

An essential component of *Special Issue # Aubervilliers* was the series of moderated *tables rondes* during which all participants could discuss specific aspects of this practice. The round tables covered the following topics: ‘conception of discursive set-ups’, ‘performance of discursive dispositives’, ‘forms of participation in discourse production (listening instead of reading)’, ‘technique and virtuosity (a space for practices?)’, ‘a toolbox for discourse production’, and the discussion of the documentation of discursive practices.

The concerns and motivations of the presenters are whittled to a fine point in the announcement of this zero-number of *Edition Spéciale*, which describes

**146** | The discursive practice *The Bloc* consists of a rule-governed, yet improvised real-time conference; see <http://www.1110111.org/>, retrieved 10.7.2013.

**147** | Everybodys was represented through many practices, including the form of collective lecture known as *Co-lecture*, devised by Alice Chauchat, Mette Ingvarsten and Petra Sabisch. Beyond that, the *Impersonation Game* was executed for Juan Domínguez’s performance *Blue*, and *Générique* was shown; see <http://www.everybodystoolbox.net/>, retrieved 12.4.2013.

**148** | Inspired by *OuLiPo*, the *Choreographic Games* by Héritier and Pichaud provoke the discursivisation of styles and aesthetics with the aid of excerpts from performance works.

**149** | *Scripts for Smalltalk* is a performance in which the audience reads readymade texts that performatively set thought processes and live interferences into motion.

**150** | *Double Speak O Field* focuses the discursive uniqueness of the party (*fête*).

**151** | *Idéographie in progress* showed an in-progress version of a performance that filters, analyses and performs philosophical lines of thought.

**152** | The performance *Blue* (2009) by Juan Domínguez, produced in collaboration with the performers Luis Miguel Felix, Maria Jerez, Arantxa Martínez, Naiara Mendioroz and Emilio Tomé, was relevant for *Special Issue # Aubervilliers* in several respects: it was the point of reference for the *Impersonation Game* by Everybodys as well as for the *Running Commentaries*. For more on the performance, see also Juan Dominguez’s website, <http://juandominguezrojo.com/?p=44#more-44>, retrieved 12.5.2013.

**153** | In *Looking Awry*, the German artist Natascha Sadr Haghighian creates the experience of being cross-eyed as a performative perceptual dispositive. For more on the works of Haghighian, see [http://www.johannkoenig.de/6/natascha\\_sadr\\_haghighian/selected\\_works.html](http://www.johannkoenig.de/6/natascha_sadr_haghighian/selected_works.html), retrieved 10.7.2013.

**154** | The format known as *Running Commentaries* is a simultaneous live commentary of performances that have been documented in video form, where the audience is free to choose from multiple commenting voices, each audible on individual headphones.

it as a culmination of a collective need to give existing artistic practices a frame in which they can articulate themselves, reflect on their own work, and pay serious attention to performative practices as instruments of theory-building and artistic research:

‘While the performative dimension of artistic practices is currently one of the main subjects of theoretical and critical investigation, numerous artists do not always recognize the models of analysis that are applied to them. They end up constructing their own theoretical tools, by means of performance. [...] These observations are at the origin of *Special Issue*, a publication that brings together a series of dispositives for the production of live discourse. It is performed from time to time in varied contexts, is produced by performance practitioners and is dedicated to discourse as produced by performance.’<sup>155</sup>

In an interview, Alice Chauchat described to me the concerns of *Edition Spéciale # Aubervilliers* as an answer to the increasingly voiced artistic need for performative discursivisation, which has received inadequate visibility or institutional support to date:

‘My co-directors Grégory Castéra and Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez and I were very sensitive to the existence, in the performing arts field, of various practices that artists were developing out of necessity and without institutional support. These practices are discursive and performative; they structure performance in order to foster discourse as much as structure discourse for the sake of performance. We wanted to find a way of supporting these practices *as an institution*.

The first step was to make them visible, to create an event or a mini-festival where we invited about thirty artists to show and discuss this phenomenon and ways of supporting it further. In order to insist on its function as a place of discourse, we decided to call it a magazine. For three days, about 623 people took part in about fifteen performative setups.’<sup>156</sup>

In the wake of this small festival, in which international discursive performative practices were presented and reflected upon in this way for the first time, the zero-number of *Special Issue # Aubervilliers* spread quickly to become a European project. Upon the initiative of the presenters, further artists and structures were invited to tackle the proposal and to develop new and local formats for expression based on one question: ‘How do the performing arts make discourses public today?’

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**155** | <http://www.leslaboratoires.org/projet/edition-speciale-0>, retrieved 21.5.2013.

**156** | AC1PS.

These discussions matured into an EU-funded project with six more Special Issues that included the participation of the following – mostly artist-initiated – structures: the Spanish festival *In-Presentable* in Madrid<sup>157</sup>, the *Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers* (France), *Station* (Belgrade), *Mugatxoan* in Donostia (Basque country), *Hybris Konstproduktion* (Stockholm), *BIS* (Istanbul) and once again the *Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers*.<sup>158</sup>

These *Special Issues* took place primarily between June and December 2012. Allow me to briefly introduce each of them here and provide details about the participating structures and their respective practical emphases:

- **20.–22.6.2012 # In-Presentable festival, Madrid, Spain: Emissiones Cacatúa.** *Emissiones Cacatúa* is a radio show with thirteen field recordings by Arantxa Martínez and Nilo Gallego, which first took place as part of the festival *In-Presentable*, created and (co)curated by Juan Domínguez, until it was transformed into *Open Mic Istanbul* as part of *Special Issue # Istanbul (Santiye)*, which was coordinated by Eylül Fidan Akıncı and was organised by Body Process Arts Association. On 1.2.2013, *Open Mic Istanbul* was broadcast as a livestream from the Institut Français.<sup>159</sup>
- **10.–22.9.2012 # Les Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers, France: The Mountain of Aubervilliers,** initiated by Laurent Pichaud and Rémy Héritier, was made up of a fourteen-day performed magazine that produced daily reports from the viewpoint of the research practice in the form of a blog.<sup>160</sup>

**157** | For more on *In-Presentable*, see the next case study, and Juan Domínguez in conversation with Petra Sabisch. See also the Spanish dancer and choreographer Paz Rojo in conversation with Tom Engels. From 2013 onward, Rojo put together a new frame in Madrid titled *Y si dejamos de ser (artistas)...?* [And if we let go of being (artists)...?], a collective, nonhierarchical event which calls the festival format into question, PR3TE.

**158** | See also AC7PS. For a detailed description of both the history and the current situation of the interdisciplinary project *Mugatxoan*, led by Blanca Calvo and Ion Munduate, see Blanca Calvo in conversation with Bettina Földesi, BC3BF, BC9BF, BC11BF, BC22BF. For the festival *Desviaciones*, under the direction of Blanca Calvo with Maria La Ribot and José A. Sánchez, see also p. 116.

**159** | The following artists participated: Arantxa Martínez, Nilo Gallego, Eylül Fidan Akıncı, Basak Günak, Volkan Ergen, Seçil Demircan, Erdem Gündüz, Erol Babaoğlu, Berna Kurt, Defne Erdur, Korhan Erel, İlyas Odman, Dilek Champs, Steven Champs, Ekim Öztürk, Gizem Aksu, Mustafa Kaplan, Damla Ekin Tokel, Hande Topaloğlu, and Aslı Bostancı. See <http://specialissue.eu/editions/emisiones-cacatua>; to download the livestream, go to <https://archive.org/details/Emisionescacatuaistambul>, retrieved 11.6.2013.

**160** | The invited artists were Mathieu Bouvier, Marcelline Delbecq, Anne Kerzerho, OfficeAbc, and Gilles Saussier. See <http://specialissue.eu/daily-publications-in-laboratoires-daubervilliers>, retrieved 11.6.2013.

- **4.–11.10.2012 # Mugatxoan, San Sebastián, Spain: A Disembodied Voice, Towards Love**, initiated by Blanca Calvo and Ion Munduate, questions the live aspect of performances and inspects how the perception of a performance can be transferred to an absent viewer.<sup>161</sup> *Special Issue # Donostia/San Sebastián* was made up of a radio broadcast, a publication and two workshops (with Peio Aguirre and Manuel Cirauqui).<sup>162</sup>
- **15.–27.10.2012 # Magacin, Belgrade, Serbia**: A collaborative laboratory on 'The Choreography of Attention' by *Station Service for Contemporary Dance*, a collective initiative by artists and cultural workers that promotes the production and visibility of knowledge in dance.<sup>163</sup>
- **12.–16.11.2012 # Dilettant, Stockholm, Sweden: The Public Office**, initiated by the choreographers Anders Jacobson and Johan Thelander from the group Dilettant (formerly Hybris Konstproduktion), with Myriam Mazzoni

**161** | See <http://www.specialissue.eu/editions/a-disembodied-voice-towards-love>, accessed 11.6.2013. As regards the idea of the absent viewer and the expansion of the performative milieu, Calvo describes her interest: 'How to shift the perception of performance to another milieu, on how the absent spectator can share from another place (e.g., the radio) what is produced live.' Blanca Calvo (Ed.) *Cuaderno 1: Una voz sin cuerpo, hacia el amor / A Disembodied Voice, towards Love* (Donostia / San Sebastian: Mugatxoan, 2012), p. 106.

**162** | See also Blanca Calvo's description of *Special Issue # Donostia/San Sebastián* and the idea of radio, BC6BF: 'Emission 1. A Disembodied Voice, Towards Love is a radio broadcast that includes performances, lectures, conversations and interventions that are simultaneously performed in San Telmo Museoa and on a free radio station via presentations by the invited artists. [...] What do we perceive from a performance when we don't see it, when we only hear it? [...] We believe that when the displacement between what happens and what one perceives, which normally occurs through sight, is only perceived by way of the sound it makes, it poses interesting questions to the notion of performance. The idea for the radio programme emerged from interviews with the artists who have passed through *Mugatxoan* over the last ten years. These interviews sought to reflect on the places, the positions and the autonomy from which they were working ten years ago up to where they are now. The vocabulary of an encounter quickly emerged, and the terminology was used to depict and express situations. The working processes undergone in each situation were also defined and discussed. This caused us to turn our attention and purpose towards the sound medium, due to its intangibility, while setting up a line of publications tackling the problem of "translating" an artistic process into the written word.'

**163** | This laboratory was initiated by Isin Onol, Marko Milic, Katarina Popovic, Maja Ciric, Ljiljana Tasic, Ana Dubljevic, Malin Elgan, Roger Rossell, Larraitz Torres and Mathilde Chénin. See <http://www.dancestation.org/> and <http://specialissue.eu/laboratory> as well as <http://specialissue.eu/editions/choreography-of-attention#>, all retrieved 11.6.2013.

and Victor Saiz. In this five-day meeting, questions of publicity, discourse and commons were discussed as part of the long-planned 'public offices'.<sup>164</sup>

- **September 2011 to January 2013 (BIS, Istanbul, Turkey)** *Santiye* (translation: construction area) was initiated as an event series by the choreographer Özlem Alkış and the theorist Eylül Fidan Akıncı in order to evaluate performing arts practices in Turkey, further existing discourses (in the festival iDANS, for example), gain practical experiences in workshops, and explore the nexus of production and critique in the still-young history of contemporary dance in Turkey.<sup>165</sup>

Regarded through the lens of this study's main query, it becomes particularly clear that Special Issue displays a unique interlocking of production modes, work modes and aesthetics. The perception (*aisthesis*) of an increased production of discursive practices led, combined with the simultaneous invisibility of this artistic engagement in conventional dance festivals, to the attempt to give those practices a context and visibility in the form of a discourse-generating performative festival (*Edition Spéciale # Aubervilliers*) through which they can publicly coalesce in their uniqueness in exchange with one another.

Thus, out of numerous artistic work modes emerges a specific presentational format that enables a content-related, performative evolution through the (financial) facilitation and production of these practices, a format whose circulation (to France, Sweden, Serbia, Spain, and Turkey) includes concrete engagement with local audiences.

The presentational format *Special Issue* is not, however, based on the repetition of a once-tested standard in yearly festivals. Its basic idea is circulated internationally in diverse forms and with different emphases. It is often linked to independent artistic initiatives, often in cooperation with existing structures, with an orientation to each specific place's contextual requirements, which themselves are, in turn, searching for an experimental mode of expression, for open-content and formally open, artistically sense-building work formats.

Alice Chauchat describes the procedure:

'The way we worked together was rooted in the demand to realise a format that didn't exist, in order to give a concrete answer to an abstract problem. It meant agreeing on a common object, recognising it as potent for our field, and at the same time discarding the first format that had been proposed for its realisation (the three-day showcase) in

**164** | Cf. <http://www.specialissue.eu/editions/the-public-office> and <http://thepublicoffice.se>, retrieved 11.6.2013.

**165** | Cf. <http://specialissue.eu/editions/santiye#>, as well as the website of the dance and performance festival iDANS in Istanbul, which has been in existence since 2007, <http://www.idans.info/>; and the festival blog: <http://idansblog.org/>, both retrieved 11.6.2013.

order to try out other forms. This way, it was more or less impossible to repeat something we already knew. Trying and experimenting was more important than success or confirmation.’<sup>166</sup>

In conversation with Bettina Földesi, Blanco Calvo – who directs the project *Mugatxoan* in San Sebastián together with Ion Munduate, and who in this function, subsequent to her participation in *Special Issue # Aubervilliers*, hosted *Special Issue # San Sebastián* – points out the quite open and autonomous construction of the task of holding a Special Issue:

‘More than a format, *Special Issue* was, in our eyes, an invitation. It was open, and it was a dialogue starting from the following question: how does performance produce discourse today? It is for this reason that each guest structure – knowing how *Special Issue* developed the number zero as an unconditioned starting point – could answer this question from their own way of doing and formulate a programme. So each frame was implicitly inscribed into the social and cultural context. I mean, there were no rules for fitting a format. From my point of view, this evokes a very rich diversity concerning the results of each programme. We are interested in this diversity of responses, because you learn a lot from watching, from practice and from the conceptual resolution of each collaborating artist in their own context. This is the interesting thing about networking.’<sup>167</sup>

In this way, an international platform evolved that gave space to cooperation with potential structure-building effects amongst highly diverse approaches to artistic work, a platform that takes local needs into account for each new Issue and that generates new contexts and discourses in the interweaving of performative development, specific work modes, perceptual modes and forms of audience address.

How a discourse- and context-generating European platform grew out of a festival is explained by Alice Chauchat:

‘By announcing a form that is not yet determined, although it might seem paradoxical, the project of a performed publication allows artists to leave aside, for a moment, the question of medium. For example, the suspension of parameters often understood as constitutive elements of performance, such as co-presence, the visibility of bodies or the determination of a finite temporal framework, makes way to the constitution of custom-made spaces for specific interrogations and affirmations. Indeed, motivations rather than form redefine practice. The very nature of *Special Issue* demands a constant crossing over different scales. The artists engaged with *Special Issue* work across countries and form together a transnational community. This community develops a dis-

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**166** | AC10PS.

**167** | BC2BF.

course, a set of questions, notions and articulations that feed and constitute it. In the same time these artists live 'somewhere' and each one's political, economic, social, professional and personal context differs greatly depending of the place they inhabit. The public of each issue, with its expectations and concerns, varies as well. The meeting of practices and concerns that are shared on a transnational level with the particularity of each context informs the very nature of the issue that it hosts.

This back-and-forth movement between forms and stakes of discourse, between local and transnational engagements is the very matter of the experimentations that *Special Issue* puts at play. For we are not interested in stabilizing a structure or assuring the permanence of a new frame; we strive to maintain in a state of questioning the possible lives of a discourse that is produced in public.<sup>168</sup>

Orientation to artistic development is crucial for *Special Issue*, as are the perception and understanding of artistic practices in the field of dance, choreography and performance; the generation of a specific framework for the production and development of artistic practices that reflects upon its own format and differentially redistributes itself after the event under local and self-determined auspices.

While in other situations artists must fit into existing formats, with *Special Issue* a frame was produced that focuses attention on engagement in artistic debates surrounding individual questions, needs and wishes concerning discursive performative practices:

'Maybe the most important impact of the project was to frame, defend and finance on a larger scale these contemporary forms of performance and discourse production as the main dish, instead of as a by-product or sideshow activity for more 'conventional' productions. Such an attention and support gave artists and structures the capacity to rethink in a radical way what they want to be doing, freeing them from the usual necessity to adapt to existing frameworks and enabling them instead to invent the frameworks that fit their work.'<sup>169</sup>

While in customary production venues the presentational format is often relatively rigid and prescribed (an evening's programme lasting forty to ninety minutes), and thereby quite obviously affects the parameters of aesthetics, work modes and production modes, *Special Issue* took a closer look at current practices and the associate concerns felt by contemporary artists in order to set

**168** | <http://www.leslaboratoires.org/en/projet/edition-speciale-projet-europeen/edition-speciale-projet-europeen>, retrieved 22.8.2013.

**169** | AC8PS.

the frame according to those practices: 'We all strive to maintain this relation through which the frame derives from a practice rather than the opposite.'<sup>170</sup>

This different orientation to the horizons of artistic sense and to the already-diagnosed need for the development of discursive, performative practices through exchange, performance and presentation and through collective discussion in context and the resulting furtherance of the presentational format – with several Special Issues circulating throughout Europe – explains how *Special Issue* was able to become an inspiring and stimulating example of discourse- and context-generating practices and experimental formats in the international dance and performance art field. Ultimately, Institutions from five European countries as well as artists from fourteen European countries (Brazil, Germany, Estonia, France, Italy, Iran, Croatia, Norway, Austria, Serbia, Sweden, Spain, Turkey, and the USA) were involved in the European project.<sup>171</sup>

## 2.2 The Festival *In-Presentable* in Madrid (2003–2012)



Figure 2: Program 'In-Presentable', 2012. Photograph: Petra Sabisch

*In-Presentable* is an international festival initiated by the dancer and choreographer Juan Domínguez Rojo that took place for ten consecutive years, from 2003–2012, in La Casa Encendida, which belonged to a bank in Madrid.<sup>172</sup>

<sup>170</sup> | <http://www.leslaboratoires.org/en/projet/edition-speciale-projet-europeen/edition-speciale-projet-europeen>, retrieved 2.4.2013.

<sup>171</sup> | Cf. Annex 2: 'Statistics on the internationality of the case studies', p. 175.

<sup>172</sup> | For more on Juan Domínguez's work, see the website <http://juandominguezrojo.com/> as well as the interview with Domínguez conducted as part of the research project *Escenas Discursivas* by Ana Vujanović and Marta Popivoda (TkH: Walking Theory) on

The embarkment of *In-Presentable* was marked by Domínguez's receiving an invitation, extended by the programme coordinator for performing arts at La Casa Encendida, Laura Gutiérrez Tejón, to show his performance *All Good Spies Are My Age* (2002) and to contextualise this work through a one-week programme of further experimental practices.<sup>173</sup>

While considering this invitation, Domínguez decided at first to invite the project *P5*, which was made by five artists with a background in dance who met regularly to establish an exchange of information about their respective work processes, and then examined the topic of process-as-result in the choreographic context.<sup>174</sup>

Thus, in 2003, under the name *Procesos (Coreográficos)*, the first 'edition' of the festival *In-Presentable* took place, accompanied by a theoretical programme by the dance critic and director of the Aula de Danza Estrella Casero at the University in Alcalá, Jaime Conde-Salazar. Because of the special situation experienced by dance, choreography and performance in Madrid, Domínguez set forth with this – at first unplanned – freelance curatorial work in order to ultimately create a continuous context for artistic practices in Madrid in the form of a festival.<sup>175</sup>

One could get a sense of the essentials of *In-Presentable's* programme by describing it as an uninterrupted field of interest and engagement in a

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critical discourses in the Madrid contemporary performing arts scene, held 22.4.2011: <http://escenasdiscursivas.tkh-generator.net/2011/04/interview-juan-dominguez/>, retrieved 22.6.2013. The festival's website <http://www.in-presentableblog.com/> was unfortunately discontinued in June 2013. Regarding the venue of *In-Presentable* in La Casa Encendida, which belonged to a Spanish bank, one should mention here the special history of the Spanish *cajas*, which were obligated, before the banking crisis and the dissolution of Caja Madrid, by a programme known as *obra social* to invest forty percent of their income in social infrastructure, daycare and education, and culture and the environment; see also Domínguez in conversation with Petra Sabisch JD26PS; and La Casa Encendida's current event programme following the transformation of Caja Madrid into a foundation: <http://www.lacasaencendida.es>, retrieved 2.5.2013.

**173** | The 2002 solo performance *All Good Spies Are My Age / Todos los buenos espías tienen mi edad* by Juan Domínguez was coproduced by Espace Pier Paolo Pasolini in Valenciennes, France, and La consejería de Cultura de la Comunidad de Madrid, with the support of *in situ productions*. The piece was part of the *P5* project, which was supported by Tanzwerkstatt (Berlin), Podewil (Berlin), Vooruit (Ghent), and Stuk (Leuven). Writings on the piece can be found in Lepecki, *Exhausting Dance*, pp. 36–7; and Sabisch, *Choreographing Relations*, pp. 209–235.

**174** | *P5* included works by Eva Meyer Keller, Mette Edvardsen, Cuqui Jerez, Alexandra Bachzetzis and Juan Domínguez. See also JD1PS.

**175** | Ibid.

yearly and changing, or continually re-questioned, format. In an article in the performance journal *Movement Research*, Christiane Bouger writes:

‘Since then, every year a different program is conceived. The programs created have no specified content or theme, but a concept that deals with the artistic necessities Domínguez identifies in Madrid and abroad. Even though, Juan Domínguez does not consider himself to be a curator, since *In-Presentable* does not count on budget to cover travel expenses for him to visit festivals in other countries. For this reason, he considers it to be more accurate to think of himself as a programmer. The independence of the European conventional market is another central characteristic of *In-Presentable*.<sup>176</sup>

With *In-Presentable* Domínguez turned an artistic concern into a programme by allowing artistic issues, necessities, wishes, questions and discourses to take the fore and shape the point of departure and focus for what would be shown in the festival. In connection with a direct dialogue with the artists, *In-Presentable* thus attempted to enable and support each piece, creating a kind of ‘support policy’, as the Spanish lecturer, dance scholar and cofounder of the independent research group ARTEA, Isabel de Naverán, describes it.<sup>177</sup>

It was also essential to establish this practice-enabling understanding in relation to the audience and to make the artists’ concerns accessible through their presentation, as Domínguez outlines:

‘I try to be in a constant dialogue with the artist, not only about the production of the work, but about the content, about the research, about where the work fits, about what that work means nowadays and how it can be accessible, about the repercussions of the work... This dialogue was very important. Of course, I also invited people with their finished work, but I tried to be very close to the discourse of the artist. I was inviting artists rather than their works.’<sup>178</sup>

**176** | Christiane Bouger, ‘In-Presentable: Where Cross-Cultural Artistic Practices Meet in Madrid’, *Movement Research* 34 (2009), p. 31.

**177** | See also Isabel de Naverán, ‘Reproducing before adulthood. Support policies at *In-Presentable*’, in Juan Domínguez (Ed.), *In-Presentable 03–07* (Madrid: La Casa Encendida, 2007), pp. 63–73, here p. 67: ‘This policy is not based on establishing specific procedural models, but on promoting encounters between artists, intellectuals, students, spectators and passers-by.’ See also Domínguez, JD8PS: ‘...onsidering the festival as a platform that could help...’ For more on the independent research group ARTEA, which is made up of artists and researchers alike and aims not only at the further exploration of art, but also at creating a correspondingly suitable field for the arts, see <http://www.arte-a.org>, retrieved 15.8.2013.

**178** | JD5PS. Cf. JD6PS: ‘It was more about the artist’s needs and how to make them accessible.’

In opposition to the product-oriented curatorial ‘shopping’ practices of conventional festivals, the intention here was to generate contexts between artistic practices and between the audience and those practices, to promote a collective exchange and to reflect upon working conditions and modes of operation.<sup>179</sup>

The Spanish dancer and choreographer Paz Rojo, who after being based in Amsterdam for many years participated in the last edition of *In-Presentable*, and who was also interviewed as part of this study as curator of the ‘offspring’ project *Y si dejamos de ser (artistas)...?*<sup>180</sup>, reflects in the following:

‘Throughout these ten years, [*In-Presentable*] really built up an audience, and a kind of community of practitioners, performance artists and people from various disciplines I would say. It addressed questions about artistic modes of production. It also facilitated a framework that supported local artists, creating exchanges with contexts from abroad. There was an engagement with experimental practices of various sorts and tools and methodologies that were till then not known by the local scene.’<sup>181</sup>

This shift in emphasis from product to internationally effective and networked practices, from pure distribution to a more complex experimental and discursive occurrence, did not, however, lead to a situation in which performances weren’t produced or shown or where the very non-completion of a choreographic process became the aim. Instead, the focus lay on opening up, and, accordingly, on producing, a broader experiential field which Domínguez explains – with astounding simplicity, from my point of view – with regard to the existing practices of a multitude of conventional European dance festivals: ‘...pieces are not at all the only format of producing experience in the performing arts’.<sup>182</sup>

In addition to this fundamental concern regarding the perception of artistic questions and the different strategies of the festival, Domínguez cites three essential parameters, or vectors, for his curatorial concept: firstly, revealing diverse local and international practices that have not been shown in Madrid before *In-Presentable*; secondly, the formation of contexts and discursive exchange as well as special support going especially to young artists from Madrid (as many older artists have emigrated away from Spain); and thirdly, the significance of the audience, the exploration of different publics and the programme’s accessibility for them.<sup>183</sup>

**179** | Cf. JD6PS.

**180** | For more about *Y si dejamos de ser (artistas)...?* cf. also p. 117.

**181** | PR2TE.

**182** | JD9PS.

**183** | Cf. JD1PS. For more on this, see also Domínguez looking back on the festival’s first five years in Domínguez, ‘Introduction’, in *In-Presentable* 03–07, pp. 9–27, here p. 15:

Paz Rojo describes this approach to revealing local artistic practices as an essential factor in the success of *In-Presentable*: 'What *In-Presentable* did was to gather and give visibility to artists that would have otherwise been unknown, invisible and isolated from each other, which is more than enough actually.'<sup>184</sup>

The nine years that followed were very different and made good on Domínguez's programme of another festival format 'that is flexible enough to change constantly, in relation to what we think is needed'.<sup>185</sup> To help with the collective evaluation of these needs and the distribution of responsibilities, and as part of a movement away from the solitary decision-making role of the curator, Domínguez was supported by the collective El Club, whose 'members' include Amalia Fernández, Bárbara Bañuelos, Cristina Blanco, Emilio Tomé, Fernando Quesada, Ismeni Espejel, Laura Bañuelos, Maral Kekejian, María Jerez and Tania Arias. Many of the artists from El Club were supported during the festival's formative years and cooperated as such, in a 'heterogeneous' way and yet with a collectively shared responsibility in terms of content and organisation.<sup>186</sup>

As examples, I would like to focus on the last editions of *In-Presentable*, such as in 2009, when Domínguez brought Xavier Le Roy's project *6M1L* with a total of seventeen participating artists to Madrid.<sup>187</sup> In 2010, the emphasis

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'Over these five years, the festival's main activities have focused on: Contextualising and exhibiting small- and medium-format works whose authors bring new tools and possibilities of applying projects to the advancement of understanding and reflection, and who generally have a difficult time entering the market in our country; Creating a space where artists working in different areas (dance, visual arts, performance, theatre, architecture, etc.) can coexist and connect with the intention of creating a critical and generative discourse. Supporting the works of young artists. Establishing workshops that combine the artistic processes of invited artists with those of the participants, while also serving as working references for both. Collaborating with other organisations and festivals that generate projects, encourage exchanges between artists and facilitate resources for creation and promotion. Involving the public in the entire project through seminars and colloquia and encouraging the active participation of spectators/artists in different activities, drawing everyone into the creative processes, thus facilitating an understanding of the new codes and vocabularies and consequently of the contents presented.'

**184** | PR6TE.

**185** | JD8PS.

**186** | See, for example, the interview with Maral Kekejian, conducted as part of *Escenas Discursivas*, <http://escenasdiscursivas.tkh-generator.net/2011/04/interview-maral-kekejian/>, retrieved 22.7.2013.

**187** | The project *6M1L* (*6 Months 1 Location*), initiated by Xavier Le Roy und Bojana Cvejic, took place between July and December at the Centre Chorégraphique National in

was on local Spanish artists. In 2011, an exception was made in favour of the choosing of a theme – ‘humour’ as a political and innovative perceptual tool – where the very act of choosing a theme was reconsidered, re-questioned and then implemented as a transversal undercurrent that shaped the framework of the festival.

The very last edition of *In-Presentable* took place in June 2012 according to the concept ‘100 artists, 10 days’. These ten days saw an extraordinary form of international exchange that featured daily artistic practices and numerous events (exhibitions, performances, discussions, lectures) and that actively raised the question of continuity and development in art, which was for many artists quite urgent. The festival ended with the *Black Market for Useful Knowledge and Non-Knowledge*, a format devised by Hannah Hurtzig, licensed here to Juan Domínguez, which gave expression, through months of preceding email discussions with the one hundred involved artists, to a feeling characterised by crisis, a feeling of fundamental structural change and lacking future prospects: ‘An encounter at the end of the world as we know it.’<sup>188</sup>

The historical background of contemporary dance, choreography and performance in Spain at the beginning of the twenty-first century is surely also essential to the tension between local and international practices, but also between artistic works and audience relations, between working conditions and forms of exchange and cooperation. Here I’m alluding to the still young Post-Franco Spain, where it wasn’t until the eighties that contemporary dance and

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Montpellier, France, and included seventeen invited artists, of whom nine were in the programme *EX.E.R.CE*. The participants were Sasa Asentic, Younès Atbane, Eleanor Bauer, Kelly Bond, Inès Lopez Carrasco, Juan Domínguez, Luis Miguel Félix, Thiago Granato, Mette Ingvarsten, Gerald Kurdian, Neto Machado, Chrysa Parkinson, Nicolas Quinn, Eszter Salamon, Jefta van Dinther. In her compilation of participants’ contributions, Eleanor Bauer describes this project’s specific working mode, where each participant ‘led one project and participated in at least two others. The working model was designed to challenge the known paradigms in artistic production and education simultaneously. The usual mobility and time efficiency of a performance-making process in the international coproduction scheme was altered by working on several projects at once over an extended period of time in one place’, Eleanor Bauer, ‘6M1L/ EX.E.R.CE 08’, in Alice Chauchat and Mette Ingvarsten (Eds.), *Everybody’s Group Self Interviews*, p. 34. See also the book by Mette Ingvarsten, *6 months 1 location (6M1L)* (lulu: books on demand, 2009).

**188** | For more on the concept and archive of the *Black Market*, see [http://www.mobile-academy-berlin.com/englisch/copyleft/madrid\\_2012.html](http://www.mobile-academy-berlin.com/englisch/copyleft/madrid_2012.html), retrieved 22.7.2013.

choreography emerged, in the wake of an absolute caesura (i.e., without being able to re-engage with points of reference or existing lines of tradition).<sup>189</sup>

Domínguez has recourse to this ‘nothing’ and to the concomitant isolation of Spain with regard to the artistic development of dance and choreography, and he tells how – after a first generation of some contemporary choreographers in the eighties who often emigrated due to the scarcity of opportunity for practicing one’s profession in Spain – a younger generation emerged who, in their lack of relational contexts, were confronted with this absence of structures directly after their education.<sup>190</sup>

Paz Rojo, herself having left Spain, reflects on this act of generating a specific sense-building context with regard to both the educational situation and *In-Presentable*’s audience as being of historical relevance:

‘Although [*In-Presentable*] was limited to a specific audience, it made sense historically. It makes sense that there was such an audience, because there was not such an audience before anyway. People in Madrid would study at the conservatory or the drama school, where all of these issues were not treated. This context had to be created, and in that sense *In-Presentable* was necessary and relevant to happen.’<sup>191</sup>

This historical background allows us to measure the significance of both *In-Presentable* and the earlier, equally international and contemporarily oriented festival *Desviaciones*.

*Desviaciones* was founded in 1997 by Maria La Ribot and Blanca Calvo and continued for five years, until 2001, in collaboration with José A. Sánchez.<sup>192</sup> In the 2007 book *In-Presentable*, a retrospective look at the festival’s first four years, Blanca Calvo sketches out the aims of *Desviaciones* as an international

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**189** | JD1PS: ‘So there was no real institutional history of contemporary dance and choreography in Madrid. There was a very strong tradition in flamenco, Spanish classic dance and traditional Spanish folk dance.’

**190** | JD1PS. See also Paz Rojo’s perspective, PR5TE.

**191** | PR4TE.

**192** | For more on *Desviaciones* and Calvo’s simultaneous work with the interdisciplinary Basque residency and artistic project *Mugatxoan*, directed together with Ion Munduate, see Blanca Calvo in conversation with Bettina Földesi (BC13BF, BC14BF) as well as the virtual archives of the artes escénicas [scenic arts], <http://arteseszenicas.uclm.es/index.php?sec=conte&id=7>, retrieved 25.8.2013. The researcher, professor and author José A. Sánchez was also director from 1999 to 2002 of the festival *Situaciones* in Cuenca, Spain; see also Domínguez in conversation with Petra Sabisch, JD3PS. See also José A. Sánchez and U.V.I. (Eds.), *Desviaciones* (Madrid: La Inesperada y Cuarta Pared, 1999); and idem. and Jaime Conde-Salazar (Eds.), *Cuerpos sobre blanco* (Cuenca: UCLM-Desviaciones / Comunidad de Madrid, 2003).

contextualisation and implementation of new forms of perception in the wake of changed, contemporary working modes:

'*Desviaciones* was designed with an international focus, primarily because we felt isolated and invisible and we knew that our individual practices were an experience shared by others, although the places and functions in Madrid were all pre-determined. The codes that we proposed were not fully understood, because people did not identify them with dance, and we had to invent a context that would promote a change in the orders of perception.'<sup>193</sup>

*Desviaciones* was ended in 2001 due to lack of funds.<sup>194</sup> Two years later, *In-Presentable* began making new signs for the future and continued to do so for the next ten years, and in June 2013 Paz Rojo initiated the first 'series of experimental milieus' under the title *¿Y si dejamos de ser (artistas)...? (YSDDSA)*.<sup>195</sup>

Even though each festival's approach encompasses different artistic and curatorial strategies, all three programmes have at least one thing in common: they were initiated and carried out by choreographic artists, and they have actively furthered, in an inventive spirit, the societal position of contemporary dance and performance art in Spain.<sup>196</sup>

Beyond all this, *In-Presentable* can be understood – and I can say the following at least with regard to *In-Presentable* – as a highly specific response to breaks in tradition and the accompanying isolation of Spanish dance makers

**193** | Blanca Calvo, 'Nine', in Juan Domínguez (Ed.), *In-Presentable 03-07*, p. 53.

**194** | For more on the financing of *In-Presentable* through La Casa Encendida, see Domínguez in conversation with Petra Sabisch, JD3PS and JD22-23PS.

**195** | The intention of *Y si dejamos de ser (artistas)...?*, which means 'and if we let go of being (artists)?', lies, according to Rojo, in 'broadening the special, temporal and structural as well as representational borders of a festival for the scenic arts', <http://www.ysidejamosdeserartistas.com/pagina-ejemplo/>, retrieved 12.6.2013 (website discontinued). On the title's vocabulary, see <http://www.ysidejamosdeserartistas.com/vocabulario/>; on Paz Rojo and Manuela Zechner's 2008 workshop *Vocabulaboratories* at the Amsterdam School for the Arts, see Sher Doruff, 'A Vocabulary of Doing' (27.6.2008), <http://old.researchcatalogue.net/upload/data/A%20Vocabulary%20of%20Doing.pdf>, retrieved 12.6.2013. For more on Paz Rojo's reflections on YSDDSA, which has happened once in this form, see her interview with Tom Engels, PR17TE.

**196** | In the interview, Domínguez emphasises that the allocation of funds for *Desviaciones* differed from that of *In-Presentable* (JD3PS) and that this resulted in varying artistic strategies which he differentiates as 'claiming' and 'affirming'. This also evokes a relation vis-à-vis critique, a relation that insists on the insufficiency of critique as mere 'deficit analysis', pleading instead that it be practiced as 'alternative proposal'. See also the interview held with Juan Domínguez on 22.4.2011 as part of *Escenas Discursivas*.

in its rethinking and continuous development of the spectrum of dance, choreography and *artes escénicas* through its context- and discourse-generating programme while attempting to overcome isolation by means of international networks and work-mode-specific contextualisations, without losing sight of the special local situation.<sup>197</sup>

When asked about the significance of the festival with regard to its ten years' continuity, Rojo underlines the following:

'In the last festival's edition he invited many people, and I decided to take part. In Madrid's context it was quite remarkable that an artistic proposal like his could last for such a long time. I must admit that this never had happened before.

*In-Presentable* supported local artists, especially in the first editions. It introduced the relationship between theory and practice and the understanding of critical artistic practices and discourse. I think one of the most relevant things *In-Presentable* generated was a discursive and artistic research development and experimentation, which at the time was not present in Madrid's performing arts context.'<sup>198</sup>

If in this respect the importance of *In-Presentable* as well as the extent of its reach lay in a discursive, opening, experimental approach that offered descriptions of uncharted territory and also mapped out research-oriented growth for artistic practices, then the importance of the requisite interconnection between continuity and development of artistic practices becomes all too clear.<sup>199</sup>

In our conversation, Domínguez points out this connection repeatedly, explaining that he would have enjoyed – as part of his constant engagement with the festival's form towards the end of its ten-year course – developing it further into another format, a continuous, non-stop laboratory with constant possibilities for development and a different kind of visibility structure. Ultimately, however, this was not possible.<sup>200</sup>

**197** | On the act of interdisciplinary – and undisciplined – opening, see also Paz Rojo in conversation with Tom Engels, PR8TE: 'For me [*In-Presentable*] belongs to the scheme of other festivals or initiatives in Europe. But in the context of Madrid, of course, it had different resonances, such as the impact of certain methodologies that were unknown, and the crossings between disciplines, theory, practice, visual arts, choreography and performance were made possible. Until then, the dance and theatre community were completely separated and *In-Presentable* could broaden up and entangle these disciplines. Juan also stayed in close relationship with his own artistic processes, for example by inviting fellow participants of *6Months1Location* to join him in the curatorial team.'

**198** | PR1TE.

**199** | See also the idea of renaming the festival every year: JD34PS, JD35PS.

**200** | For more on Domínguez' idea of the laboratory, see JD8PS, JD9PS, JD17PS.

Domínguez refers to the limits of the sporadic nature and ‘event’ orientation of a festival:

‘But for me, the problem lies in the concept of the festival itself. A festival is great, but what happens during the rest of the year? When this knowledge and experience is generating continuity? And when, in a way, this continuity can grow? Festivals have these dynamics: they are goal-oriented, although they can also be trying to give access to other parts of the process. But in the end – even when they offer this openness to the process or other kinds of experience or knowledge that the process can produce – it takes place only in this moment of the festival. That is also what happened with *In-Presentable*. So, the audience also goes there to consume this in a very sporadic way, I think.’<sup>201</sup>

As a response to this emphasis on the isolated moment (which also co-defines a certain form of the perception of art), a plan surfaced in which a working-place<sup>202</sup> that is active all year long would disseminate the visibility of experiments, lectures and artistic practices differently.<sup>203</sup> Such a continuity, according to Domínguez, would have also been capable of generating a change in the habits of aesthetic engagement. In this context, Domínguez, in astonishment, criticises the way many festivals behave in a primarily reactive manner towards existing social customs instead of changing them or wanting to reshape them: ‘I think festivals follow social patterns more than proposing new ones. A festival should be part of how we contract reality, not affirming how reality is.’<sup>204</sup>

Especially against the background of the crisis in Spain, where art and culture (and of course other areas of society) have been dealt the harshest of blows through the collapse of the culturally obligated *cajas* (banks), where inconceivably unsocial cutback measures have been aimed at public moneys and where project funding offered by the ‘public hand’ has become completely inaccessible and untouchable in the category of performance due to absolutely unachievable stipulations; against the background of the fact that the government’s entire research budget was scratched and that the value added tax (sales tax) on cultural goods has been raised to three times its former rate of seven percent so that almost all art cinemas in Madrid have had to close their doors; against the background of this unbelievable rationing away of art and

**201** | JD16PS.

**202** | Translator’s note: The term ‘working-place’ has been opted for here in contrast to ‘workplace’ as connotative of full-time, hierarchy-based employment where decisions are taken on a top-down rather than bottom-up basis.

**203** | Cf. JD67PS.

**204** | JD17PS.

intellect, it's no accident that Domínguez continually stresses the urgency of continuity in discourse.<sup>205</sup>

In keeping with its programme, *In-Presentable's* last edition revolved around one point of emphasis – 'What now?' – be it through its almost crazy endeavour to conduct, in advance of the festival, an email debate with one hundred people; or be it in its numerous discussions with just as many people on site at the festival, discussions in which at least the attempt was made, with unbroken simultaneous Spanish/English translation, to fan out and understand the diverse perspectives of individual artistic positions.

This was not, however, only a question addressed to the future. Instead, for ten years it was a future-oriented dimension of Domínguez' curatorial practice. And this dimension seems still to be reflected in the programme and in the pieces' titles included in *In-Presentable's* last edition, such as when Xavier Le Roy, after *Project* and *6M1L*, shows his "*Retrospective*"; when in several *Last Minutes*<sup>206</sup> artists such as Amaia Urrea, Cuqui Jerez, Ismeni Espejel, Emilio Tomé, Sergi Faustino, Uri Turkenich, Rebecca Stillman, Mårten Spångberg, Dario Facal and Lilia Mestre take a stance on the question 'What now?' and on the discontinuity of the situation; when Bea Fernández, Silvia Sant Funk, Aimar Pérez Galí and Jorge Dutor thematise *Paradigma & Crisis*; when Cristina Henríquez presents the *Materia Cris*; when María Jerez shoots *The Movie*, which practiced a continuous passing on of dialogue from one participating artist to the next; when Arantxa Martínez, Lola Rubio and Eduard Mont de Palol perform *The Present*; when Valentina Desideri asks *So What* and Neto Machado shows his piece *Agora*; when Jorge Alenca thematises the *Souvenir* and Mette Edvardsen presents her 'books' in *Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine*; when Isabel de Naverán and Victoria Pérez Royo perform a dialogue by unlikely means; when Jorge Dutor and Guillem Mont de Palol present their performance *And why Juan Celda?: Globoflexia, Body Painting y Transformismo*; when BADco asks *Is There Life On Stage?*; when Luís Miguel Félix and Sidney Leonie instigate the *War of Fictions* and Eleanor Bauer in her eponymous 2005 solo depicts the contemporary artist's profile as a 'Post-Fordist art-prostitute'; and when – in addition to many other events that I could not attend – Eszter Salamon and Christine de Smedt perform their brilliant *Dance #2*.

*In-Presentable* opened the genre borders between choreography, dance, performance, film, radio, discursive practice, dialogue, intervention, black market, and so forth, as seen in many works such as the Prado tours by Jaime

**205** | JD11PS, JD17PS, JD18PS, JD63PS.

**206** | Many presentations in *In-Presentable's* 2012 programme bore the title 'Last Minute', which can refer on the one hand to the ceaseless rush and the 'just-finished-by-a-hair' feeling in performative work processes, and on the other hand – literally – to the experience of a 'last minute' before the end of performing arts.

Conde-Salazar, the works *Sky lab* by Leo França and *Experimentación con una misma* by Alejandra Pombo Suárez, and not least the public radio broadcasts *Emisiones Cacatúa*.<sup>207</sup>

Surely the question of continuity has long since transcended the borders of Spain in case-specific and differently weighted parameterisations of the triad ‘production means, work mode, and aesthetic’.

How, in such a situation, can one continue to make art at all?<sup>208</sup>

How can the evolution of issues and the positionings of critique take place also, and especially, against the background of internationally rather disparate production and living conditions?

What interplay between perception and representation, material conditions and working modes would be adequate in view of today’s obviously bleak present and future prospects for art resources in Spain?

Since completing his activities with *In-Presentable*, Domínguez has been carrying on with this form of continuity and continued development in choreographic discourse- and context-generating practices, as in the series *Clean Room (Season 1)* and in the *Picnic Sessions* series.<sup>209</sup>

Looking back on ten years of *In-Presentable*, one can easily recognise, however, the magnitude of this one-of-a-kind festival’s contribution to the development of content and continuity.

The question of what kinds of continuous structures will grow to maturation out of *In-Presentable* certainly still remains to be seen. A first step toward continuity was made in 2013 by Paz Rojo, together with a group of thirty local artists, when she collectively re-posed these questions about discursive continuity through the experimental frame of *Y si dejamos de ser (artistas)...?*, connecting, researching and displaying them towards an undisciplined development of art based on the collective’s own notions of ‘festival as practice’.<sup>210</sup>

**207** | See also p. 105.

**208** | JD40PS, JD43PS.

**209** | On the idea of the series *Clean Room, Season 1*, part of *Tanz im August*, 2012, see <http://juandominguezrojo.com/?p=646>; see also the weekly series organised by Domínguez *Picnic Sessions (La Odisea del Deseo)*, 23.5–11.7.2013 at the Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo, <http://www.ca2m.org/es/picnic-sessions>, retrieved 27.4.2013. Cf. also JD63PS.

**210** | For the concept of YSDDSA see PR13TE, and for the concept ‘festival as practice’, see PR33TE.

### 2.3 The Double Lecture Series, Stockholm (28.9–2.10.2011)



Figure 3: MDT-Poster 'The Double Lecture Series', 2011. Photograph: Petra Sabisch

*The Double Lecture Series* is a five-day international event initiated by Mårten Spångberg and Mette Ingvarsten that took place 28.9–2.10.2011 at MDT Stockholm as an extra issue of *Special Issue*.<sup>211</sup>

**211** | Under the direction of Danjel Andersson, the Stockholm theatre MDT, founded in 1986, has established itself as a leading coproduction platform for contemporary choreography and performance that is open to new artistic practices and, furthermore, offers residencies and facilitates networking according to its own open policies. See <http://mdtsthlm.se/>, retrieved 15.4.2012.

As an immediate answer to the zero number of *Special Issue* in Aubervilliers, *The Double Lecture Series* once again picked up on the situation of discursive performative practices in dance and choreography. Objects of interrogation included the importance of contemporary dance discourses within today's knowledge society as well as the possibilities and perspectives of discursive and performative dispositives. The programme text introduces this problem:

'Has dance and choreography any place in the knowledge society? Are these practices that operate in parallel with so-called cognitive capitalism? Can performative practices produce specific kinds of knowledge or even disrupt established modes of knowledge production and issue alternative forms of experience? Five evenings with related seminar program, where meetings between movement and production of knowledge will be explored in relation to representation and expression.

Dance in the first place in respect of production of knowledge in front of, or in conjunction with the spectator, i.e. in and through experience. Five internationally renowned choreographers will present their perspectives on what has been called 'performative discursive dispositives', a still weak style that emerged in tandem with phenomena such as artistic research and practice-based choreography.'<sup>212</sup>

The concept of *The Double Lecture Series*, which is the smallest, that is, shortest programme covered by this study, consisted in the invitation of five artists, each of whom in turn invited one other person for the second part of the evening: the *Double Lecture*: 'For each evening, the choreographers have invited an autonomous voice that in the form of a lecture will replicate, comment, continue, listen to the performances and speak from their own discipline.'<sup>213</sup>

In this sense, the type of relation that existed between the two events per evening would remain open, as open as each invited artist's understanding of 'lecture' was (see programme overview, p. 67), not to mention what they wanted to try out based thereon. More decisive was the invitation to approach the lecture format as a choreography and to explore the performativity and movements of discursive parameters.

The Double Lecture Series was rounded out by daily seminars (with, among others, the Berlin Theatre and Cultural Studies scholar Kai van Eikels; Julian Reid, professor of international relations at the University of Lapland (Finland); Petra Sabisch; and also Mårten Spångberg.

**212** | Excerpt from the programme text, see <http://mdtsthlm.se/artists/the-double-lecture-series-curated-by-mette-ingvartsen-and-maarte/>, retrieved 17.8.2013.

**213** | Ibid.

Program overview: The Double Lecture Series

|           |                                                                                                                            |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 28.9.2011 | Xavier Le Roy: <i>Product of Other Circumstances</i><br>Kai van Eikels: <i>What does Xavier Le Roy make easier for me?</i> |
| 29.9.2011 | Christine de Smedt: <i>Untitled 4 – Jonathan Burrows</i><br>Olav Westphalen: <i>Lecture</i>                                |
| 30.9.2011 | Mårten Spångberg: <i>Spangbergianism</i><br>Julian Reid: <i>Curious Orange: Paranoid</i>                                   |
| 1.10.2011 | Mette Ingvarsten: <i>Thoughts for the Future</i><br>Reza Negarestani: <i>Skype direct Lecture from Kuala Lumpur</i>        |
| 2.10.2011 | Eleanor Bauer: <i>Severe Tripping in Context/Space Time Continuum</i><br>Pierre Rubio: <i>SPELLBINDINGSPELLBREAKING</i>    |

In an interview held as part of *The Double Lecture Series*, Mette Ingvarsten explains her artistic-curatorial interest in experimentation with frameworks: ‘Within the lecture-series, we were experimenting with what this format of a *Double Lecture Series* is and I think, that we’re in some sort of second or even third generation of how people approach the idea of lecturing about movement.’<sup>214</sup>

When asked, in response, why producing discourse is important to her, Ingvarsten answers:

‘Well, I think there are several reasons why this is important. One reason is of course to insist on discourse production in the community, which is extremely important for the field to go further. But then in proposing it as a series and as a festival, there is another reason, one that’s about giving visibility to these practices as performative practices and not as something you do next to the real performances. To actually say that this is a form of performance that should be as accepted and normal as any other type of performance. Because even when discourse-performances are shown in other festivals, they’re very often shown as an appendix to the main program, like the small thing that is shown in the little theatre – or not even in a theatre, but rather in the foyer. Thus, they are not properly understood as works. You could say, that this type of work that has been developed over the last fifteen years has started to form a sort of movement where language is used and plays an important role without falling into the trap of being dramatic theatre. And the line between discursive and theatrical is a very delicate line to draw.’<sup>215</sup>

From a contemporary dance-historiographic perspective, this engagement with discursive practices and with the performative exploration of their modes of operation is most understandable, especially considering that dance

**214** | MI21PS\_2011.

**215** | MI15PS\_2011.

has often been defined as nonverbal movement art and that any accusation of conceptuality has often been tantamount (not only in the nineties, and to an extent unrivalled in any other art field) to ontological expulsion from the guild.<sup>216</sup>

Experimental art forms, however, play with the boundaries that have been ascribed to them, questioning them and altering them, and have been doing so since long before Austin's speech act arrived on the scene, illuminating the (embodied) conventions of meaning-production and the effectiveness of its performances. For dance history at the end of the twentieth century, the lecture-performance *Product of Circumstances* (1999) by Xavier Le Roy certainly marks a crucial break that characterises the representational modes of the lecture-performance to date.<sup>217</sup> This break is put into perspective through Le Roy's new choreography *Product of Other Circumstances* (2009), which reassumes, after the artist gained ten years' worth of distance to the preceding performance, this explicit engagement with production conditions and methods. *Product of Other Circumstances* was also shown in *The Double Lecture Series* in Stockholm.<sup>218</sup>

I would like to recall Foucault's definition of 'discursive practice' here, which in no way means just the spoken act, but rather the very conditions for the operation of expressive functions:

'Lastly, what we have called 'discursive practice' can now be defined more precisely. It must not be confused with the expressive operation by which an individual formulates an idea, a desire, an image; nor with the rational activity that may operate in a system of inference; nor with the 'competence' of a speaking subject when he constructs grammatical sentences; it is a body of anonymous, historical rules, always determined in the

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**216** | See also Sabisch, *Choreographing Relations*, pp. 157–166, and for the delayed arrival of this debate to Sweden, see Halla Ólafsdóttir in conversation with Bettina Földesi H040BF: 'Not only is the discussion happening twenty years later than in the rest of Europe, but it feels like such a restrictive and uninteresting categorisation. The discussion of 'conceptual choreography', which apparently isn't dance, versus 'dance dance', which apparently is dance, is in my opinion quite descriptive of dividing the field into two teams.' For a broader engagement with the concept in art, see the conference *The Art of the Concept*, which took place as part of Nathan Brown's and Peter Milat's *Conjuncture* series on June 2012 at MaMa, Zagreb: 'The Art of the Concept', in *Frakcija* 64/65 (Winter 2012) and [artofconcept.mi2.hr/](http://artofconcept.mi2.hr/), accessed 22.3.2013.

**217** | See the website of Xavier Le Roy, <http://www.xavierleroy.com/>, retrieved 20.7.2013.

**218** | Ibid.

time and space that have defined a given period, and for a given social, economic, geographical, or linguistic area, the conditions of operation of the enunciative function.'<sup>219</sup>

Demonstrating these conditions for linguistic articulation and experimenting with their conventions, their expressiveness and effectiveness as well as with the simultaneity of saying and showing, or with language and staged occurrence, are examples of *The Double Lecture Series*' deployment of the discursive practices with which it was concerned.

In Mette Ingvarsten's choreography *Thoughts for the Future*, which later was given the title *Speculations* and which plays, in the form of a performance, with projections of a future performance, Ingvarsten utilises reality-generating statements by describing situations and making them performatively coincide in part with the present moment of the performance and then by simultaneously doubling the statement's presence into the fiction of another space and hence another time. In this way, the scenic present opens itself up when Ingvarsten's descriptions of the scene conflict with the real occurrences on stage, inviting the viewer to imagine other scenes and speculate about the future of the performance.

'It's a show that was thought as a preparation for another show, but with the idea of working on it as a public presentation in itself. So, to think of it as another materialisation of the ideas that I am working on for the future, rather than as a work in progress or a less elaborate version of the show to come.

What I did was work a lot on sources and materials that I'm anyway busy with since a while. There are a lot of book references, also references to images from the media, and references to other artworks and so on. The whole performance is built through three different modes of expression: describing, speculating and imagining situations that are not actually there. Most of the situations come from real sources, like a film scene and a book, or from a concrete place. I try to create a fiction with these preexisting materials.'<sup>220</sup>

The second part to Ingvarsten's *Thoughts for the Future* was a Skype-delivered lecture by the contemporary author and philosopher Reza Negarestani, whose 'speculative realism' and especially his theory-fiction *Cyclonopedia* brought him renown.<sup>221</sup> Negarestani's powerfully eloquent theory of nature and his remarks on the function of universalia today created a choreography of theoretical

**219** | Michel Foucault, *Archeology of Knowledge* (London & New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 131.

**220** | MI1PS\_2011.

**221** | Reza Negarestani, *Cyclonopedia: Complicity with Anonymous Materials* (Melbourne: re.press, 2008).

references and meaning-constructions in its own right, while – when set in relation with Ingvartsen's choreography – making the differences between Ingvartsen's and Negarestani's respective 'scenic concepts' and presentational formats discursivisable.<sup>222</sup>

This 'setting in relation' performed by the *Double Lecture* gave rise to a third level of reflection, which had very specific retroactive effects on each of the two pieces, discursively displaying their heterogeneous relation.

A further example from *The Double Lecture Series* was Christine de Smedt's then-named portrait *Untitled 4 – Jonathan Burrows*, one of a series of four portraits of the choreographers Jonathan Burrows, Xavier Le Roy, Alain Platel, and Eszter Salamon. Today this portrait series is titled *Four Choreographic Portraits*, and all four performances are preferably to be shown together in one evening. Each has a specific title: *I would leave a signature* (for Alain Platel), *The son of a priest* (for Jonathan Burrows), *A woman with a diamond* (for Eszter Salamon) and *Self-Reliance* (for Xavier Le Roy).<sup>223</sup>

In my conversation with Christine de Smedt, it became clear just how much discursive engagement with highly differing choreographic practices and working modes was going on in this series. Although each individual process was originally motivated by the idea of a self-portrait, as time passed each process led to interviews with the choreographers where each artist's personal thinking methods are made visible as a choreography (and thereby also as a staging):

'For me, *Untitled* was a research on the relation between choreographic practices, methods and artistic interests which I explored by having a dialogue or a conversation with colleague choreographers. This research questioned the relation with the concept of the personal. What do you consider as personal? What is related to your history or biography and how do you relate your own artistic work to the idea of the personal? Or don't you do so?

This investigation came along with the understanding that the personal is a very blurry concept to use, but it's also very important, it's related to this idea of authorship, the identity of a person, the author, and the identity of the work itself. The research started from a statement: "No to" biographic elements in my work'.<sup>224</sup>

**222** | Cf. MI27-28PS\_2011.

**223** | See also the following book on performance, with contributions by Christine de Smedt, Pieter Van Bogaert, Ana Vujanović and Sarah Vanhee: Christine de Smedt (Eds.), *Four Choreographic Portraits: "I would leave a signature", The son of a priest, A woman with a diamond and Self-Reliance* (Brussels: Les Ballets C. de la B., 2012).

**224** | CDS5PS.

In her work on Jonathan Burrows, de Smedt applies, for example, the principle of counterpoint (used strongly in Burrows' work) to her own diction as she reads text fragments from the interview so that a mode of thinking is extended into a choreographic rhythm. De Smedt says that 'the whole research is precisely about the liminal point between the choreography and the personal; how the personal is choreographed and how choreography is individuated in ways of thinking.'<sup>225</sup>

What is interesting here is the interplay between production, work mode and aesthetic. In the following, Ingvarsten explains deliberations from the preparative phases of *The Double Lecture Series* in which both curators took the mutual decision to make their own artistic interests the point of departure for the format:

'When Mårten and I spoke about the *Double Lecture Series*, we noted that it responds to a need we both have, also in our practice. It was not only about thinking what other people need to see, but also about what WE would actually like to experience as a curatorial form.

Eventually we both took part in the *Double Lecture Series*, which, at a certain point was, of course, under discussion (as to whether or not it's good when the organisers also take part in the event). But we decided that this engagement in the material in the making is also a good argument for our participation, since the concerns also come out of our own practices and the practices that we observe around us, with colleagues and friends who are closely connected to that kind of approach.

Even though the idea of the whole project was to open up our own approach and think about this relation between two lectures, becoming sensitive towards the field of theory, for instance, or towards other fields (in one case, the second part was done by the visual artist, Olav Westphalen), it was important on the one hand to solidify aspects of our own practices, and on the other hand to consider how we could actually propose a context that could expand our own practices.'<sup>226</sup>

The side programme of *The Double Lecture Series* hence became the production of a difference that connects individuals' own artistic practices with the production of other works in this context; that invents a format that enables a specific, perspective-generating experimentation; and that attracts new ways of working and new engagements and examinations, thereby becoming a discourse- and context-generating programme. Christine de Smedt talks about this complex and sense-constitutive procedural method: 'Of course, that's why I think this *Double Lecture Series* was such a great project. Because it was creating

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**225** | CDS11PS.

**226** | MI1PS\_2013.

a context, where then, of course in a concentrated way, these formats or these ways of discourse-generating practices could be shown.<sup>227</sup>

It is crucial here not only that *The Double Lecture Series* was an artist-initiated event, but also that its format constructed a frame that simultaneously opened new perspectives for existing work modes and evoked new experimentations to be performed on one's own practices.

Ingvartsen describes this with regard to the stimulation of new production:

'Sharing doesn't only happen when we do a production in which we need help or comments from friends to realise it; it's also something that we produce. For instance, among the works that were shown in the *Double Lecture Series*, some choreographers had actually made performances within the same type of understanding of lecture performance or expanded lecture performance, whereas others really made up their propositions especially for this context. In that sense, the *Double Lecture Series* was also a way of thinking together about whether this format of lecture performance properly exists, whether it's still relevant, whether there is a common understanding or completely different ones and whether that triggers new works.'<sup>228</sup>

Both Ingvartsen and de Smedt consider exchange with peers as an essential for artistic development, not only discursively but also in the fully concrete physical meeting and creating of a present-day milieu of engagement.<sup>229</sup>

The exchange that the *Double Lecture Series* initiated pointed in this respect far beyond normal festivals, because through its specific frame it provoked a sort of collaborative 'continued thinking' in situ. On a related note, however, the sense-building dimension of the *Double Lecture Series* also attests, with

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**227** | CDS21PS.

**228** | MI3PS\_2013.

**229** | For the significance of the not-only-virtual context, see CDS23PS: 'The context is there, but it's kind of virtual, but if we do these festivals, as you did the *Double Lecture Series*, the fact that you physically come together, is also the fact that you can physically think together. Whether it's reflecting on what you are doing or on what you should do, or will do, or want to do. And that reflects different, political, cultural issues with which you are confronted in the work.' For the experience of an exchange-generating environment, see CDS24PS: 'So, it's also a social thing. A social gathering with artistic intention, which I think produces new thoughts and new developments. You see, this *Double Lecture Series*, the fact that you have seen *Untitled* there, that we are doing this interview now... Yes, for me, these context-generating situations, they produce experience, and not only the experience of looking at a show, but an experience of an environment in which exchange can happen on different levels, in many different ways. And I think that this exchange of thoughts and experience is very important, especially in a life that is so individual and locally disconnected.'

respect to discursive performative practices, to a more open work mode and form of address, which, as Christine de Smedt underlines, reaches far beyond the significance of individual projects, and which could probably never be produced at all by means of such projects alone:

'I think it's important to think about ways of bringing certain works together. Not as festivals are usually composed and programmed – a series of big shots beside some more risky or experimental work and some 'younger' work. Many festivals are of course a presentation of what is available on the market at that moment. But still, differentiation is good. To link different works based on a particular content or format or concern and to allow a discourse to develop in the space between the works – that's interesting. For the work as well as for the viewer. It allows one to go beyond the limit of the singular work and produces thoughts that a singular work maybe cannot produce. Through this mode of exchange between the works, new perspectives and ideas can develop. In visual arts this is more common, and the medium allows for that. With live performances you are confronted with the limitation of time and space. [...] The importance is of showing these pieces together to create reflection in between and to create opportunities for artists to meet and exchange.'<sup>230</sup>

This sort of specific opening up towards a field means contributing to the constitution of that field.



*Figure 4: PAF, 2006. Photograph: Petra Sabisch*

## 2.4 Performing Arts Forum (PAF, St. Erme, France, since 2005)

The *Performing Arts Forum* (PAF) is housed in a former women's convent in northeastern France (St. Erme) which was purchased in 2005 by the Dutch theatre director Jan Ritsema, who, with approximately thirty invited artists and theorists, brought an open, artist-run forum for performing arts into being.<sup>231</sup> The convent consists of a 6,400 m<sup>2</sup> building and is surrounded by 1.2-hectare grounds and a garden with five peacocks.

In a recently published article in the Austrian magazine *Springerin: Hefte für Gegenwartskunst*, Nicolas Siepen, professor of visual arts at the Academy of Contemporary Art at the University of Tromsø, Norway, describes the experiment of PAF:

'In the *Performing Arts Forum* (PAF), not far from Paris, Ritsema started a risky social experiment in 2005, sharing his entire worldly fortune with a collective that didn't even exist at the time. A virtual investment in the future, a derivative in the form of a beautiful yet run-down convent. Over the course of the last eight years, the gamble and desire of one person has transformed into a temporary autonomous zone, an almost completely self-organised, independent, international, and astonishingly workable structure—a structure which, although one can name its operational rules and the needs it satisfies, cannot be said to guide PAF's current and future sociographic form. In the international art world in general, and on the performance scene in particular, a patently dire need for such a place is observable, a place where the art business's usual laws apply to a limited extent only, a place where it's worth it to collectively invest a share of internationally hard-earned capital. [...] Here we instead have very different and contradictory approaches that combine to form a complex working-place, a place one would have to invent were it not already in existence, a place from which a model could only be derived with reluctance.'<sup>232</sup>

The magnitude of the need, expressed by Siepen in the above, for this sort of independent, non-art-market-oriented structure can only be confirmed with the help of a statistical review, compiled as part of this study, of user development in PAF from 2006 to 2013: over 5,000 people from sixty-four countries have visited PAF since 2006.<sup>233</sup>

**231** | On the history of PAF's inception, see Jan Ritsema in conversation with Bettina Földesi, JR1BF.

**232** | Nicolas Siepen, 'Free Popular Avantgarde: Die ewige Unruhe des Kunst-und-Politik-Zusammenhangs', *die springerin. Hefte für Gegenwartskunst* XIX 2 (2013), pp. 48–51; available online, <http://www.springerin.at/dyn/heft.php?id=80&pos=0&textid=0&lang=de>, retrieved 22.6.2013.

**233** | See Annex 2: 'Statistics on the internationality of the case studies', p. 175.

This worldwide, constantly growing demand proves that spaces like this are needed. When faced with these numbers, one can hardly speak of *one* 'scene'. And yet these numbers seem even more informative when one considers that PAF is neither production house nor subsidy recipient, meaning that the costs for staying at PAF, including travel costs, are often paid out of pocket by visitors themselves:

'Initiated and run by artists, theoreticians and practitioners themselves, PAF is a user-created, user-innovative informal institution. Neither a production-house and venue, nor a research-center, it is a platform for everyone who wants to expand possibilities and interests in his/her own working practice.'<sup>234</sup>

So what makes up this structure? What experiment are we talking about?

A trait highly constitutive of PAF is that it was started and is maintained and run by artists, theorists and practitioners and that it offers a platform for any and all agents who want to reconsider their own working conditions and practices.<sup>235</sup> Even though the referential framework for many participants had to do with dance, choreography and performance in the project's beginnings, PAF has since functioned according to an idea of genre-openness, and has done so steadfastly in the company of constantly expanding categorisations and crossovers among the practices it hosts.<sup>236</sup>

PAF's website describes the forum's self-conception as follows:

**234** | <http://www.pa-f.net/basics>, retrieved 22.3.2006. The current cost of over-nighting at PAF is fifteen euros per night, a rate that sinks as the stay lengthens and that is included in accommodation costs during times when large-scale meetings take place.

**235** | Cf. *ibid.*: PAF 'is a place for the professional and not-yet professional practitioners and activists in the field of performing arts, visual art, literature, music, new media and internet, theory and cultural production, and scientists who seek to research and determine their own conditions of work. PAF is for people who can motorize their own artistic production and knowledge production not only responding to the opportunities given by the institutional market'.

**236** | For the increasing influence of PAF in the visual arts and in contemporary philosophy and science, see also Valentina Desideri in conversation with Tom Engels, VD2TE, VD5TE. See also Jan Ritsema in conversation with Bettina Földesi: 'The different art fields are slowly coming closer together. It's a very nice development that the boundaries between the arts are dissolving. This might also be a reason why PAF can exist, because PAF isn't only there for dance, although I came from dance. But it has always been there for all the arts, and in addition to that, for scientists and media activists as well. We work in the direction of an increasing overlapping of the arts, which is far more interesting', JR20BF.

‘PAF is, firstly, a forum for knowledge production in critical exchange and constant discursive practice; secondly, a place for temporary autonomy and undivided concentration on one’s work; thirdly, a machine for the manufacture of means to develop methods, tools and processes in not-necessarily-product-oriented practices; and fourthly, a place for experimentation with otherwise unknown modes of production and modes for the organisation of work, such as open source procedures’.<sup>237</sup>

Before immediately going into the special operational and functional modes of PAF, the more basic question of how this need and this massive self-organised structure is to be explained must be posed. How did this desire to frequent PAF come about, this wish to keep it running and to repeatedly re-form it, even though Europe is replete with residency locations that are often cost free for the artist?

The Belgian author and research coordinator of *a.pass* (Advanced Performance and Scenography Studies) in Antwerp, Elke van Campenhout, sees in PAF a temporary answer to the ‘malaise of an entire generation’:

‘In a way the self-description above echoes the concerns of the performing arts scene in the past ten years, which has little by little found itself squeezed between governmental compartmentation (through often ill-fitting and politically-motivated subsidy systems) and the seductive call of the enterprise-funded ‘creative industries’, paving the way for an understanding of the artist as either a well-prepared and policy-aware dossier-writer, or a self-proclaimed entrepreneur totally in line with the neo-liberal ethics of self-realisation, mobility and economic common sense.

Countless artists have expressed the need and the urgency to escape these corsets of survival by pointing out their toxic by-products: the subsidy system in the well-founded European scene has started to create a way of working and an aesthetic that is not primarily based on artistic choice and necessity, but on the possibilities of touring (and reaching your minimum quota of presentations), networking (getting as many as possible prominent arts centres to back up your project), and formatting (ideally a performance should fit as many venues as possible, not be too costly, and be adaptable to the regular programming strategies of the field). The kind of work that escapes these constraints is often overlooked or doesn’t find its way into the regular programming.’<sup>238</sup>

Not only does the above text demonstrate the complexity of parameters and forces across which an artistic praxis stretches; it also brings to light a clear critical stance towards conventional institutional organisational forms in the choreographic arts that tailor artistic modes of production, work and

**237** | <http://www.pa-f.net/basics>, retrieved 22.3.2006.

**238** | Elke Van Campenhout, ‘Spaces as Tools’, *sh 2011*, programme book for the performance festival Steirischer Herbst, 23.9-26.10.2011 (2011), p. 88.

expression to their own profiles, selecting those modes that fit well rather than becoming disruptive to one's own modes of functioning and one's structures; formatting them for market-compatibility, connecting them to the corresponding administrative procedures and representational structures, and thereby homogenising artistic work in terms of content and aesthetics, without ever consulting artistic decisions, wishes or ideas that live beyond the artistic product.<sup>239</sup>

The vast degree to which any simple adoption of institutional 'givens' is indeed formative for artistic work modes and aesthetics has been pointed out not only by Daniel Buren, referring in his case to the function of the studio;<sup>240</sup> a contemporary example for a choreographic 'reprint' of this critique of the self-evident 'nature' of conventions can be found in the decision taken by both the choreographer Halla Ólafsdóttir and Emma Kim Hagdahl (curator of the 2012 Reykjavík Dance Festival: A Series of Event) to fully dispense with the renting of theatres for their dance festival.<sup>241</sup>

Even though knowledge regarding the problematics of the influence of institutionalised conventions on art goes back to the sixties at the latest, institutional forms of organisation seem nevertheless to promulgate a kind of engagement with sense-building developments in professional work and with the life realities of artists, as opposed to their products, that rarely constitutes any truly relevant reference parameter for their own respective institutional

**239** | In her interview with Tom Engels, Paz Rojo offers an interesting description of the structural communication problems that even occur with artist-hosting institutions, cf. PR1TE.

**240** | Cf p. 26, fn 83.

**241** | For more on this, see Halla Ólafsdóttir in conversation with Bettina Földesi, H01BF: 'As in most cases, our budget was too small for actually creating a festival, but we decided to rethink the ways of distributing the money that we actually had and then connect it to how we wanted to engage with each other and with an audience. For example, we decided not to spend money on renting a theatre. A theatre always has its own conditions: you are not free to come in and out as you want.' For more on understandings of the festival as a choreography, see also Emma Kim Hagdahl in conversation with Bettina Földesi, EKH5BF: 'We were interested in choreographing an experience and setting a situation in motion where artists and audience activated and became activated by it at the same time. Calling it choreography is a claim and attempt at expanding ideas and perspectives of choreography relating to organization of bodies in a time space. It was also really an attempt to question the assumptions of aesthetics that an audience might have about how a festival looks like, what a performance looks like, how it starts, how it ends, and so on. We tried to alter this perception and start to reconsider a social situation and rethink the interplays happening through the lens of movement and choreography.'

self-conceptions (which isn't the case when one examines their substantial efforts in audience development, in enlarging theatre operation capacity, in honing their theatres' profiles and so forth).

Precisely these work environments and living realities of nomadic project-makers operating on an application-to-application basis are, however, not only existentially formative for many internationally active artists, but also part and parcel of their own experimental artistic engagement, where the means and methods of production are set in proportion to each respective work, to its *modus operandi* and *modus fingendi*.

That being said, perhaps this movement towards the self-initiated shaping of other kinds of dynamics and organisational forms, this searching for new and self-organised forms of association, is not, from an artistic (and especially from a choreographic) perspective, such an astonishing matter; although the contexts that emerge from such connections, as Christine de Smedt illustrates in our interview, are mostly of a virtual nature, more like a kind of 'mental space' without physical form. Asked about the significance of contexts in which artistic practices enter into exchange with one another, de Smedt answers:

'The first thing that comes into my mind is that we are travelling all over the world. Actually, our context is not our neighbourhood. Our context actually is a kind of invisible international scene. Somehow, I think, if we make art these days, and in terms of performance, we live in a virtual space: you are in Berlin; this person is in Vienna. I mean, we are living so much apart, geographically, but actually our mental space, in which we relate to other people in our life, is international and virtual. These festivals, they are also not only context-generating, but I think they allow for a physical meeting somewhere, in one place, by gathering, by allowing for the physical meeting of different pieces together in order to reflect on the practices; to meet and allow exchange to happen but also in order to be part of this community.'<sup>242</sup>

With regard to PAF, van Campenhout explains this connection between artistic engagement in production modes, the increasing importance of exchange and practices, and the necessity for artistically and autarkically definable spaces:

'Also, as makers, artists have expressed the need to think of other production systems than the 'typical' career model proposed to the artists in the 1980's. The model of the sole author-artist, inventing his or her own aesthetics, has been replaced by a much more critical and historically-anchored view on how these artists themselves very quickly become commodities in a system that is in constant search for the 'new'. [...]

Whereas the practice of the sole self-created artist was largely concerned with the uniqueness of his production, creating his value on the artist market on the basis of scarcity, newness and shock-value, the artists discussed in this text are rather concerned with the practices of sharing, of questioning themselves as the centre of gravity, of relating to other (historical, political, economic, discourse) realities. In these contexts, the practice becomes as important as the outcome, the way of organising the work as important as the work itself, the way of dealing with collaborators a significant part of the trajectory leading up (or not) to a public moment.

But for this to become a viable artistic practice, another kind of space has to be created: spaces that are no longer governed by subsidy policies or economic (un)common sense, but by artists themselves. Places that are not under the reign of profiling and networking, not dubbed as subsidiary placeholders for artistic merit, but simply places to work, that take into account the simple but pressing needs of the artists and thinkers concerned.<sup>243</sup>

Against this background, not only does one stand to be impressed by the experiment of PAF in its scale, in its constancy of engagement and in the changeability of its forms of initiative; one must also recognise that it appears to be the only place of its kind worldwide thanks to its relation to a certain idea – and its constant concretion – of openness.<sup>244</sup> Valentina Desideri describes this uniqueness as an opportunity to take part in unplanned exchange:

‘There are many places that offer the opportunity to meet, share and exchange, but what’s unique about PAF is that it’s not an institution. Other institutions would maybe offer the same possibility, but you would have to apply for a program with a project in which you plan to exchange. In terms of having the possibility to have unplanned exchange, I think PAF is unique.’<sup>245</sup>

This scarcity resonates, however, with the difficulty of breaking new ground experimentally when aiming at a collective production of desire.<sup>246</sup>

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**243** | Van Campenhout, ‘Spaces as Tools’, pp. 89–90.

**244** | Jan Ritsema in conversation with Bettina Földesi, JR28BF: ‘I know a lot of artist residencies from Royaumont to Schloss Solitude. I have contacts with organisations, like the Association Centres culturels – Monuments historiques. There are eighty-five European artist residencies in monasteries, in chateaus or in industrial monuments, but they are all these instituted ones where you have to write an application and go through a selection process. So I don’t know a place with an idea like PAF [...]’

**245** | Valentina Desideri in conversation with Tom Engels, VD8TE.

**246** | For the engagement between desire-production and institution in the example of PAF, see Petra Sabisch, ‘Zur Choreografie der Organisation: Zeitgenössische

So how is PAF specifically composed? What are this ‘informal institution’s’ functional modes?

When pondering how to name PAF’s future addressees/users, Jan Ritsema at first spontaneously coined the phrase ‘art that thinks’, a formula that was soon transformed into three rules: ‘Don’t leave traces. Make it possible for others. The doer decides.’<sup>247</sup>

These rules, whose concrete application is not always free of contradiction, enables – in interplay with the three further principles of reversibility, exchange and ‘fluidisation’ of hardened assessments, habits and structures – a space of thought as responsible as it is playful, which one can describe as open, dynamic and mutable.<sup>248</sup>

This open changeability or fluidisation of property lines finds expression, for example, in Valentina Desideri and Jan Ritsema’s fundraising project *Objects Without Property*, which enables the purchase of 10,000 catalogued objects that reside in PAF, such as a teaspoon, the lid to a tin, an old urinal or a piano, all of which, however, are to remain in PAF.<sup>249</sup>

Precisely this open alterability of autonomous organisation is important for the continual re-testing and re-questioning of one’s own habits and organisational structures in matters ranging from private property to the maintenance of an international platform, not to mention for the repeated inquiry into how these habits and structures measure up in terms of

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künstlerische Praktiken’, in Yvonne Hardt and Martin Stern (Eds.), *Choreografie und Institution*, pp. 35-52, esp. pp. 48-50.

**247** | Jan Ritsema in conversation with Bettina Földesi, JR4-5BF. Valentina Desideri elaborates on this in the interview, indicating the fact that PAF is a ‘self-sustaining’, and thus self-borne structure, VD13TE.

**248** | Jan Ritsema, ‘The gravity of PAF, or how to be fluid’, in *sh 11*, pp. 89-90.

**249** | Valentina Desideri in conversation with Tom Engels: ‘We were thinking about how to translate this principle of making property liquid, with PAF as property. The property of the house was too complicated, so then we thought we could stick to it on a symbolic level by selling all the objects in PAF. But then the owners were required to leave the bought object in PAF, so that it could be used by everybody. We took pictures of 10,000 objects, described 10,000 objects and categorised them [...] It raised some funds, but there are still so many objects to be sold (*laughs*). There are a couple of rooms we managed to renovate with that money. But there’s so much more potential left, if you think that there are 10,000 objects and every object costs around ten euros. [...] It’s a gesture towards PAF. Because if you bought a spoon, how do you know which spoon is yours? It’s always nice because then when you go to PAF, you might be eating with your spoon. There are a lot of jokes about this.’ VD37-40TE.

elasticity.<sup>250</sup> Beyond that, this alterable openness in organisation is, however, also decisive in every artistic and intellectual development, because it generates an indeterminate formability that is neither decided in advance nor governable in any real sense.<sup>251</sup> Mette Ingvarsten thematises this link between artistic development, transformative qualities, and unpredictability in self-organised processes:

‘The uncontrollability of such types of projects – I think this is a very important aspect of how the art field is developing. It’s important that collective artist-organised projects are given a space that is neither about accountability, nor about who’s doing what, but that is more about the needs of the people and how they can be fulfilled by the different strategies that have already been developed. And I think that PAF is another example of this: having been initiated in the beginning by just a small group of people, now – though I haven’t been there for quite some years – it’s flourishing, as I understand. And currently a lot of people from all over refer to it: “Ah but, I heard about that thing during PAF”. You know, like, five years later it still exists and it’s still going on. I think the transformative qualities that self-organised projects can have, more so than institutional projects, are very valuable. Such an unpredictability is very difficult to achieve in institutional structures, precisely because in institutional structures you have accountability and you have the name who has to sign it. You also have responsibility and budgets that put the pressure in a different direction.’<sup>252</sup>

The spatial dimensions of PAF allow such a form of organisation in which exchange, development and the trying out of projects, of forms of cooperation are possible. Hence, besides the many guest rooms, the numerous studios, the media lab with the priceless archive of PAF users’ performance and film DVDs, PAF also houses a comprehensive library reaching far beyond the (performing) arts.

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**250** | For the connecting of private property with self-organisation, see Valentina Desideri in conversation with Tom Engels, VD27TE, VD31TE.

**251** | Asked about what the end of the experiment PAF would mean for exchange and cohesion in the independent scene, Jan Ritsema emphasises the necessity of constant continued development: ‘Yes, [it has a huge impact on how artists can meet]. But in order to make it interesting it has to develop. If PAF would just continue for ten years and not renew itself, it will be over by then. But we also have to keep the principles up all the time, which are not principles that have to be permanent. We can change our principles, we can even do something against them.’, JR19BF. And further: ‘Maybe PAF is also a symbol for this direction, that the boundaries are unnecessary – another element of openness here,’ JR20BF.

**252** | MI5PS\_2013.

It's also interesting how this spatial generosity – in connection with PAF's remote location and with the otherwise hardly existent link between living and working as a collective experience in one place – creates time. Where the motto 'time is money' has long since regulated the artistic everyday, PAF is like an unbelievably rich oasis precisely because time for working, exchanging and trying out is engendered there, not least thanks to its collective organisation; a time that may take the form of work meetings, yoga sessions, screenings, techno-practices, evening-long discussions, feedback sessions or collective dinners.

The feeling of having time to try something out and explore something beyond immediate valuation relations and market calculus is of inestimable worth for the development of artistic and theoretical work. In interview, Jan Ritsema clearly lays out this connection:

'You have so much time in PAF, that you can try all kinds of things. You can try to do something with someone else you don't know, or you can try to go for a direction with an uncertain result in your own work. But you have the time to try. Therefore you dare to face many more problems instead of escaping them and looking for quick solutions. People dare and have the freedom to try something whose outcome they aren't sure of. You don't have to calculate as much as you usually do when you make a project. Usually, when you enter a working process, you rent a studio for a few hours, you have to bring people together, you have to have results and you have to end the day well – because people leave. Since people have to work efficiently, they have to think things like 'I should not say this, I'd better not try that because I'm not sure enough.' Here you can have a fight, go away for some hours and continue. You can easily go to the studio and work, then stop, maybe take a walk, and re-think what you are doing. There is much more space for real solutions. Not for short-term solutions, but for finding other ways than the one you thought you would take. When you have a problem, you have the chance to talk with others outside your group, which might also open up your work; or you just hear other people saying something that helps or interests you. Consequently the work becomes more substantial.'<sup>253</sup>

Besides these spatiotemporal parameters with their effects on work, PAF's central characteristics are exchange and discourse. From the beginning, one of PAF's points of emphasis has always been on the formation of self-organised, specific forms of knowledge production and the experimental continued development of theories and practices of doing. These forms find activation in events like the Spring Meeting, the Summer University and the Winter Update Meeting.

These events, often themselves experimental in form (the Spring Meeting consists of a seminar marathon initiated by Márten Spångberg), not only enjoy international attention; they have also discursively produced and concretely fused cross-disciplinary lines of connection between art, philosophy, ethics, new(er) organisation studies, feminism, Cultural Studies, activism, informatics and so forth. They offer forms of independently determined engagement and continued education – such as the Public School in the local village of St. Erme, which was founded soon after PAF's birth, or the 'call for self-education' – within a precise programme of knowledge production that seeks out, in this free environment, its own peers in the wake of Bologna.<sup>254</sup>

Valentina Desideri, who has lived for longer periods of time in PAF, explains clearly in our interview the kind of influence PAF had on her own educational journey:

'First of all, I consider PAF my real education. It's the place where I met most of the people I work with, the place where I first met all the thinking and reading that has influenced me. For me it was very clear. I was shocked that nobody else was living there, since we all share some sort of nomadic existence. Maybe I am a bit hyper-social, but being in this place where you can just go and stay is fantastic. It's a place where it never stops. At that time I had just finished dance education in London, and I didn't want to make dance pieces because I thought I would just copy-paste everything I learned and perpetuate that pain! I wasn't sure what I wanted to do, but I was sure I didn't want to do that. I didn't want to go and work for companies. At that point, I was living in London, so a dance company job was about working with diagonals, or fall on the floor repeatedly and all these sorts of things. Not very interesting to me. I had seen a little bit of European dance, and I wanted to see and get to know it more. And I could develop professionally in PAF and at the same time learn a lot as a person as well.

PAF is like a micro-society, so you really are confronted with yourself and your motivation for doing things all the time. And on top of that, you meet a lot of new people. For me it was an education on all levels. There I found the people that introduced me to certain thinkers, concepts and other collaborations. And I was free to do projects with or without all these people; everything was possible and exciting. Maybe it was a very selfish motivation to live there. It was a fantastic place to be at that moment. It transformed me into something else; during these first years everything was unclear and then slowly it became clearer what I wanted to do.'<sup>255</sup>

Even in hindsight, as a student in the Master's programme for visual arts at the Sandberg Institute in Amsterdam, Desideri realises that no European programme in the field of dance and choreography would have been able to

**254** | <http://www.pa-f.net/program/call>, retrieved 22.8.2013.

**255** | VD24TE.

offer her anything comparable to her education at PAF: 'I'm pretty sure there's nothing that I could have got out of an MA program that I wouldn't have gotten in PAF. All these programs actually go to PAF.'<sup>256</sup>

And Desideri is right about this: P.A.R.T.S. in Brussels, *ex.e.r.c.e* in Montpellier, the MA in Choreography and Performance in Giessen, the many renowned European educational programmes as well as other art institutions and university-based scientific projects – all of these have long since been regular PAF users.

Since its inception, PAF has been interested in the articulation and production of experimental, emancipatory and critical forms of knowledge in art and society, also focussing on developing, sharpening and continually re-challenging the discourse and artistic exchange going on in the field.<sup>257</sup> This idea of discourse as an engagement with varying positions works differently than a consensually regulated or dogmatic understanding of discourse:

'We think more about politics, philosophy and society in relation to the arts. We don't want to talk vaguely about art, but rather processually, analytically and critically. In these terms PAF has an influence. We provide a notion of discourse and we keep it alive. In the dance world there has always been a separatist discussion between the intellectuals and the 'dance-dancers', which has become much more smoothed out. I think PAF has an influence in these ways, because we're not an organisation that takes a position or secludes itself from others in the sense of being an intellectual bastion. PAF is very smooth, which makes it more absorbable for other people. Another huge influence PAF has is that people build networks here. Coming and meeting each other is much easier here. People who never thought they would work together do so. If you're really engaging in relating in PAF, you can make a lot of connections and that can be very profitable.'<sup>258</sup>

As Ritsema's statements convey, here the overlappings of discourse production, exchange and education are fluid. The decisive factor is that they are oriented to the heterogeneity of forms of expression, to positions regarding content and aesthetics, and that they distinguish themselves from run-of-the-mill creativity jargon. As early as the first meeting in PAF in December 2005, this heterogeneity was a central point of engagement, accompanied by the decision that if the collective platform of the experiment PAF were to lead to a standardisation of aesthetics, it would have to be declared a failed project. From

**256** | VD25TE.

**257** | Cf. Petra Sabisch, 'Die Zone und ihre Shareware: das Performing Arts Forum (PAF)' [The zone and its shareware], in Kirsten Maar and Yvonne Hardt in cooperation with Sabine Kaross (Eds.), *Tanz – Metropolis – Provinz*, Jahrbuch Tanzforschung Vol. 17 (Hamburg: Lit Verlag, 2007), pp. 205–212.

**258** | JR13BF.

today's perspective this initial worry seems groundless, which is undoubtedly traceable to the proliferation of differentiations in the discourse.<sup>259</sup> Christine de Smedt demonstrates the primeness of PAF's discourse-generating role: 'I feel that, for instance, by not going to the [...] Spring Meeting or the Summer University in PAF – each time that I don't go there [...] I miss half of the discourse happening in the scene. Because I'm not physically there, I will never be able to catch up the potential of such a meeting.'<sup>260</sup>

Another dimension of this 'discourse on eye level' lies in its engagement for mutual exchange and its tangible engagement with a physical counterpart, including the creation of differing publics for such purposes.

As has been implied several times in the text passages I have extracted from the interviews conducted as part of this study, this dimension can only gain importance in times of increasing individualisation qua nomadically and thereby locally disconnected modes of production and existence. As part of this bigger picture, Jan Ritsema describes the idea of PAF as a kind of refuge, one he deems parallel to mountain cabins as places of shelter and escape for wanderers:

'(...) it's a kind of refuge (...) If things don't work in your profession, when you have difficult times, you can always go to PAF and re-tank. Without PAF you would be much more alone. So the professional field is less alone with PAF. This very much works on the level of a mental state. It's not tangible and you are not aware of it. The existence of PAF gives some base.'<sup>261</sup>

It is in this point that artistic discourses, the critique of market-feasible modes of production and treatment, and the challenges of a 'social choreography' overlap. Alice Chauchat also marks this aspect:

'I think free-lance project-hopping activity produces loneliness and dependency on superficial relationships that one needs to multiply and maintain in order to keep constantly as many doors (work opportunities) open as possible. The conventional company model has been criticised for its hierarchical structure, and since its loss of glamour, artists have continuously strived for possible models of solidarity, commitment and sharing. These attempts are located in the tension between market necessities and human/artistic necessities; *PAF* is an example, *Everybody's* is another, and there are many more.'<sup>262</sup>

**259** | Cf. VD23TE.

**260** | CDS23PS.

**261** | JR12BF.

**262** | Alice Chauchat in conversation with Petra Sabisch, AC18PS.

Exactly this kind of content-oriented and context-generating network is part of the plan for the recently begun project *PERFmts* (*Performance More Than Special*), which disseminates, in a language beyond the market, worldwide event tips for irregularly occurring performances, symposiums, practices and events that could be of interest for an extensive notion of performance.<sup>263</sup>

Taking into consideration this context of worldwide connection, internationality and mobility, Jan Ritsema adds another aspect to the mix when he spontaneously disrupts and redistributes, with reference to the global village, the tripartite order of internationality, city and travel on the one side, and locality and settledness on the other:

‘PAF is in the countryside and most people in the arts want to live in a city. But PAF is not a village; it’s an international village. It’s more exciting than when you live in the big city and go to the same bakery or the same pub everyday. One often makes a village out of the city one lives in. Here it changes all the time. New people come who define PAF differently. In principle, it’s very exciting. You don’t travel, but the world travels through PAF to you.’<sup>264</sup>

Through this changing interconnection between people and practices, the identity of PAF remains in flux. Or, as Jan Ritsema says, ‘The creation creates itself’.<sup>265</sup> This, at the very least, is what the experiment of PAF is about.

**263** | VD35TE: ‘After that project we started to think about *PERFmts*. We thought it would be nice to have some sort of e-flux newsletter for performing arts. We wanted to create a platform where we can develop a way to talk about the performing arts and add a certain language to it. Since PAF has been a crossing place for so many countries and locations, it would be great if we could update each other on different events that are taking place. It took us many years to develop this. [ . . . ] The things we announce aren’t part of a regular program of institutions like, let’s say Théâtre de la Ville in Paris; they are events that are more special, that could challenge our understanding of what performance is. So there’s also the possibility for announcing something that’s probably not a performance as performance. I think it’s great to have a tool that lets people know that somebody is organising a symposium. Maybe you’re not able to go there, but at least you get a text whose content is full enough and that gives you the feeling of being informed properly. In that sense it’s not like regular advertising or newsletters. We can situate the context more specifically.’

**264** | JR34BF.

**265** | Ibid.: ‘I try to make it so that when you have to go home, you cannot easily say what PAF is. That also keeps the openness, and it keeps us away from the question of who the ‘we’ or the ‘I’ is. It is more the creation that creates itself. That’s also what’s going on here; that’s what everybody does. Everybody, from the friends in the beginning [...] to the newcomers – they all contribute, maintain and change PAF by doing something.’

## 2.5 *sommer.bar* (Berlin, 2006–2011)



Figure 5: Shoulder bag from ‘*sommer.bar*’, 2011. Photograph: Petra Sabisch

The *sommer.bar* is a programme conceptualised by Kerstin Schroth which served as a magnet for Berlin’s contemporary, international and local choreography and dance scene during the month of August. Administratively positioned within the framework of Germany’s largest dance festival, *Tanz im August*, where Schroth had previously spent four years working as a producer, the *sommer.bar* was in a certain sense a festival within a festival that during its six years not only presented artists from thirty-three countries,<sup>266</sup> but that would also soon develop into a sustainably influential, open and networked site for work and exchange at Podewil in Berlin.<sup>267</sup>

**266** | For statistical figures, see Annex 2: Statistics on the internationality of the case studies, p. 175.

**267** | The Berliner dancer and choreographer Hermann Heisig, who as part of this study looks back in conversation with Bettina Földesi on the *Spiegel* interview (mirror interview) that took place at *sommer.bar*, describes the importance of Podewil from his perspective: ‘In its beginnings Podewil was a very important place, near the end of the nineties, above all for a string of artists like René Pollesch, Thomas Lehmen

In interview, Kerstin Schroth describes the starting point of her deliberations on the concept:

‘When in 2005 I proposed the *sommer.bar*’s concept to the festival Tanz im August, I had already worked four years for the festival and five years in Berlin. Enough time to analyse the festival’s structure and to realise that it lacks a centre. A place where exchange can happen between the invited artists, the audience and the Berlin scene. One often wouldn’t see the artists unless one went to their presentation, since the festival, strictly speaking, has no venue of its own, but instead enters into collaborations with the different theatres throughout the entire city. Another aspect interested me: why are artists from all over the world flown to a two-week festival in a great city with its own lively dance scene without placing an emphasis on interaction between the international artists and the Berlin scene? The artists stayed in the city for a maximum of four days; arriving, setting up, performing, departing seemed to me to be a rhythm that allowed only very superficial exchange and communication.’<sup>268</sup>

*Sommer.bar* was important in several respects, especially in view of the interplay between production conditions, artistic working methods, modes of perception and aesthetics. Its first formative characteristic consisted in orienting itself to artistic practices. This manifested right from the start, when the first *sommer.bar* in 2006 featured several dance makers, choreographers and artists who examined the performative aspects of the concert. In addition to the opening performance by the American, Paris-based choreographer Mark Tompkins, *Lost and Found*, together with Nuno Rebelo, there were concerts by The Musts as well as the *After Sade* concert by *aisikl* and Mårten Spångberg.<sup>269</sup>

In 2007, this examination of concert-like forms of performance continued in a work by Eszter Salamon and Arantxa Martinez titled *Without you I am nothing*; in *Molly and the Lunchboxes* by Paul Gazzola, Molly Haslund and

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or Xavier Le Roy, and other visual artists and musicians who worked a lot there. Then Podewil’s role was downsized, and it was actually long-since dead by that point. But with *sommer.bar* this spirit was awoken a bit, time after time’, HH2BF. The history of Podewil, which is very closely interlocked with the history of independent dance as well as that of art and music, and which was also a work place for choreographers such as Xavier Le Roy and Thomas Lehmen, cannot be explored in detail here. Suffice it to say that Podewil has today become a sad symbol of an unprecedented ousting of independent art production, which was recently the case with the closing of Tesla. For the history, compare the website of Kulturprojekte GmbH, the company which is now inhabiting the building, see <http://www.kulturprojekte-berlin.de/ueber-uns/podewil/geschichte-des-hauses.html>, retrieved 28.8.2013.

**268** | Kerstin Schroth in conversation with Petra Sabisch, KS1PS.

**269** | Cf. the 2006 programme pamphlet from 2006.

Catherine Hoffmann; in *Volume* by Vincent Dupont and Thierry Balasse; in *Remake* by Peter Lenaerts, Eszter Salamon, Ephraim Cielen and Your Van Uffelen; and others – not to mention in the minimal, object-narrative-trip-in-concert-form titled *The Monster* (a.k.a. *This is the hello monster*) by the Parisian avant-pop solo band Gérald Kurdian.<sup>270</sup> This aspect of the concert remained until the end with continually changing perspectives, a constant dimension of *sommer.bar*.<sup>271</sup>

In interview, Schroth talks about how she discovered

‘that choreographers do not by default only concern themselves with choreography in the form of stage pieces. Instead, they build bridges and link their interests and knowledge with all the other performative, visual and literary arts combined. What’s more, every artistic working process has its leftovers, by-products and themes that couldn’t be processed any further in a particular piece, although they are present in the space while continuing to haunt people’s minds. Mostly by-products for which no space is to be found in a normal festival context or in an ordinary theatre programme. I began getting really interested in these small pieces because they allowed me a totally different view into the artistic work. I had the impression that they completed (in combination with the stage pieces, and beyond conventional artists’ talks after performances) my opinion and knowledge of a specific artist’s work. All of these aspects considered in connection woke my interest, and so I developed the concept for *sommer.bar*.’<sup>272</sup>

These artistic engagements with concerts and the presentational modes, compositional elements and dramaturgy thereof explored the genre – meaning the perceptual framework and horizon of expectations of the ‘concert’ – which in turn threw a refreshingly new light on the common perceptual conventions of performances.

Alongside this example, there were many other works – for instance, the by-products presented almost every year in different ways by Manon Santkin and Leslie Mannès at the intersection of fashion and performance, the installation *Abstractions* by Emilio Tomé, the 2010 video installation *Neverland* by Andros Zins-Browne – whose presentational forms consistently managed to defy the format of classical stage performances. This moment stirred an immediate interest among many artists, however, because the usual conventions for showing work were called into question.<sup>273</sup>

**270** | Cf. the programme pamphlets from 2007 to 2011.

**271** | Cf. *The Boys in Concert* by Pieter Ampe and Guilherme Garrido, 2010; Tania Carvalho’s, *Mud Lyrical*; and Gérald Kurdian’s *Experimental Amateur Choir*, 2011.

**272** | KS1PS.

**273** | It should be noted that indeed performances did take place in addition to the other events I have mentioned here, such as Tove Sahlin’s *Dancing Barefoot* from 2009

Closely connected with this aspect is a second feature that was particularly formative of *sommer.bar*: not only was it devised on the basis of artistic practices; a frame was also created in which experimentation with the format was welcomed. Schroth comments on this point:

'In my opinion, 2006 saw very few festivals that gave space to alternative formats. It's not just about reflecting on the classical stage space. It's also about the more expansive thoughts that apply to factors from the piece's length all the way to the number of viewers. A piece that is, for example, twenty minutes long isn't recognised as being full-length; instead, one always ends up with a double-feature evening. So most often pieces by different artists get combined, frequently very pragmatically and with no attention to content-related considerations. I've always asked myself why people can't simply let twenty good minutes stand alone. Personally, I often much more happily go home after twenty intensive minutes as opposed to sixty half-baked minutes. One-to-one formats, pieces for three viewers, for six viewers, are a rarity in festivals or theatre programmes – from a purely economic standpoint. These pieces can only be seen by a handful of people, which is why programmers would prefer not to show them at all instead of giving a few of them an opportunity.

And a very interesting part of artistic work is thereby made invisible, meaning the artists are indirectly ordered to produce their piece according to theatres' and festivals' conventional, often purely economic perspectives. This excludes any reflection on formats from the very outset, above all among young, still unknown artists whose working lives resound with the fear that the piece won't be shown if it doesn't serve the classical stage format or if it has been produced for a limited number of viewers. Festivals and theatres breed classical formats this way; as a young artist, one is better advised to make solos, or trios at the very most, for a stage space that accommodates one hundred viewers and with a maximum length of sixty minutes. Then the major, long pieces for the large stage spaces with big casts of dancers (lots of dancers please!) come with becoming a well-known artist. The others are the exotics and are often handled as such.'<sup>274</sup>

Hermann Heisig, who was present in *sommer.bar* several times starting in 2008, gives an account of how this concept was showcased:

'So *sommer.bar* definitely made open spaces available and created a context that allowed artists to frame their works differently for a change. In this respect I would say that it was definitely also contemporary in the sense that people don't see only the product

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and *Roses and Beans*, together with Dag Anderson, 2010; *Undertone* by Sidney Leoni with many guests, 2010; *Shichimi Togarashi* by Juan Domínguez and Amalia Fernández, 2009; *All the way out there* by Guillem Mont de Palol and Mette Ingvartsen, 2010; and *What they are instead of* by Jared Gradinger and Angela Schubot, 2010.

**274** | KS4PS.

itself as the artwork; they understand the product's framing as part of it. And *sommer.bar* definitely encouraged artists to take in other ways of seeing or experiment with the framing of their work, which wasn't really a main focus of the main festival, I think. It was also like that when you think of the terms 'centre' and 'periphery'. The *sommer.bar*'s interest in by-products can really also be attributed to the fact that we tried to cancel out the hierarchies a bit, like the hierarchy between artist and audience, who are shown, say, a virtuosic work and are expected to sit there and watch it in amazement. Or also hierarchies between the greater and lesser known artists. Or enabling other presentational formats. It's indeed already the case – although this has changed a bit, too – that the market for dance and performance calls for a certain model of piece, for a certain length, for example. Which is why one does become half-consciously trained to produce products that can also fit into that market. In that sense, *sommer.bar* produced a space for manoeuvring where one can – as part of one's 'opening night', for example – either make a performance that goes for six or seven hours, or a five-minute performance that repeats twenty times.<sup>275</sup>

This account also elucidates just how successful Schroth's concept, which, as must be noted, took place in combination with performances, proved to be *in realo*.

In addition to this reflection on formats, a third – discursive – factor served as an essential element of *sommer.bar*. Whether it was the *Dialog Demonstrationen* by Janez Jansa, Olga Pona, Xavier Le Roy, Meg Stuart and Gisèle Vienne or the games *Générique* and the *Impersonation Game* by Everybodys, which in the following year took place also in *Tanz im August* subsequent to almost all performances; whether it was an artist's talk, book presentation, the book stand Books on the Move or showings with aftertalks, engagement and discourse were always a crucial component of *sommer.bar*.<sup>276</sup>

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**275** | Hermann Heisig in conversation with Bettina Földesi, HH28BF. For the performances, see the 2008 programme pamphlets; the 2009 opening event *Baden* with Frank Willens; a contact impro in mud (with text) in 2009; or *Just Around the Corner*, together with Elpida Orfanidou, 2011.

**276** | See the 2008–2011 programme pamphlets. Books on the Move is a mobile book shop initiated and run by Agnès Benoit that specialises in dance and movement and that made English, French and German books and DVDs more accessible on site at the festival and on the Internet. Artistic books or DVDs in particular, often self-published and/or printed in limited editions, found their audience here. In the presence of its owner, herself well-versed in dance, the bookstand offered several occasions for obtaining information or discussing the history of dance, <http://www.booksonthemove.eu/>, retrieved 15.8.2013.

Asked about this, Hermann Heisig states, '*sommer.bar* was definitely one of the motors that pushed another kind of speaking about artistic products in Berlin.'<sup>277</sup>

In the following statement, Heisig has recourse several times to *sommer.bar*'s long-since exceptional role:

'*sommer.bar* was important for the contemporary dance and choreography scene. So I do think that it was, and still is, necessary to provide a place where engagement can take place. I mean this in the sense that *sommer.bar* also included quite a lot of conversations and discussions, on the one hand, and quite a few experiments and games with audience discussions. To play, one had to put oneself in the shoes of another choreographer and answer, from the perspective of that choreographer, questions from the audience. One of these was *Générique* by Everybodys, but there was a whole series of these affairs, and *sommer.bar* was a good turf for experimenting with this. [...] I've been in Berlin for quite a while now, but I was also in Montpellier at the Centre Chorégraphique for a year somewhere in there. There was just a completely other form of discourse there, a different kind of engagement with and about pieces, different from what was happening in Berlin at the time. And I think the idea of *sommer.bar* did come from the need to bring the discourse once again onto another level.'<sup>278</sup>

What characterised *sommer.bar* with regard to discursive qualities was that these engagements with performed pieces or other themes didn't stop at the theatre door. They instead proceeded, without any dividing line, to the bar. Intensive conversations and new encounters emerged in a busy and popular meeting place that the Berlin scene had lacked, a lack that went unnoticed by many of the city's presenters. Often many artists also came directly to the bar to utilise the opportunity to partake in exchange on all levels.

Here Kerstin Schroth describes the fourth aspect – the context-generating character of the bar – and how this is linked to her approach of reflecting on the artistic situation:

'It was also really especially about reflecting on our scene – the dance scene is very mobile; we travel to work, almost always; we live in Berlin, Brussels, Paris, work in Rennes, Essen, Zagreb, and perform all over Europe. We seldom meet our colleagues and friends, except when we're working together, which makes any constant exchange impossible. It's a luxury to be able to meet in person, converse and spend an evening together. *sommer.bar* spearheaded this luxury of meeting every evening for two weeks and

**277** | HH22BF.

**278** | HH10BF. See also HH3BF.

placed a high value on the social. Art lives from exchange and communication rather than being something disconnected, outmoded and mothballed.<sup>279</sup>

*sommer.bar* and its parties were shaped by the idea of context as a sense-cohesion for the professional field and as a collective exchange inclusive of the possibility for coincidental encounters.

A fifth aspect which already resonates throughout the interview passages in all the case studies included in this report – and yet it may be necessary to cite its importance for *sommer.bar* in particular – was the establishment of networks that spanned international and local scenes. This idea lent the festival its colour and temperature as well.

Extremely revealing in this regard are Heisig's evaluations of the structural changes that have unfolded over the last twenty years and their effects on the dance field in Berlin: shifts in the understanding of internationality that guided the international character of *Tanz im August* during the festival's first years evolved more through a tendency to import dance and choreography, while today – and not least because of dropping air travel costs and increasing

**279 | KS6PS.** See also KS5PS: 'I really foregrounded the bar idea, the idea of celebration, of partying. But I also zoomed in primarily on finding a frame in which relaxed encounters are possible. I think a bar's the best place for this. My enthusiasm was in creating a frame in which people trip over each other's feet, so to speak, where people are simply able to enter dialogue after the performances. But I also thought of the bar as a frame that provides another atmosphere for talking about pieces that people were seeing. You could encounter the artists there. People keep telling me now that this kind of set frame is lacking. *sommer.bar* was well known in Berlin as a *place*. You could come watch something or just meet for a beer, and you could always bump into people with whom you could converse about pieces you'd seen or were going to see. Everybody went there, local artists, the 'internationals', presenters, the press, the audience. Something like a family reunion with an extremely wide following came into existence over the years, and I had envisioned it that way, too. I like unforeseeable encounters, and it was my goal to create a frame where people don't talk only with ones they know, but with everybody. It was also important to me to create a connector for the widely dispersed venues of *Tanz im August*. One couldn't catch a glimpse of many of the artists, even as an employee of the festival, if one didn't make it to their performances. The bar was intended to change that. I think a bar like this can be the heart of the festival, and every festival could use this sort of heart in order to anchor itself in the city and in order to anchor individuals in the festival, to be there, be present, to show oneself and offer more than shows. We are, after all, involved with people who come to our city and show something without being in one and the same film together. So in the broadest sense it's also about community, the formation of community, of togetherness, of the collectively experienced and the communication of experience.'

mobility – the Berlin scene has not only experienced international growth, but has also already been working internationally for some time:

‘I think this has also changed the role of Berlin drastically over the last fifteen to twenty years. A much more international art community came into existence in Berlin in – not exclusively, but to no small degree – the dance field. Now there are a lot more dancers from many more countries in Berlin. This has led to the milieu of Berlin’s contemporary dance scene becoming more and more heterogeneous. This also has to do with Berlin’s being cheap back then (now rents are on the rise, of course) and simultaneously with the fact that Berlin offered a rich cultural environment. This has attracted a huge amount of people over the last ten to fifteen years. If I were to imagine a party at Tanz im August in 1995, then surely more German would be spoken there than in 2010. Also, the role of Tanz im August in the 80s or early 90s certainly lay more in the tendency to bring contemporary or modern dance from elsewhere to Berlin. It was definitely also very much a matter of getting the big names from Belgium, the US or from a lot of other countries, ultimately so that we could have an international festival, but one for which productions from outside of Berlin were invited in order to enrich the scene. This differentiation has become more and more fluid. And meanwhile, maybe a lot of artists and participants in the festival have moved to Berlin. So there’s no longer such as strong opposition between global and local, and I think these processes are reflected in *sommer.bar*.’<sup>280</sup>

The sometimes explicit formulation of a dissociation from the Berlin scene that has been expressed in recent years by the festival curators of Tanz im August, which caused much confusion and discussions within Berlin’s independent dance scene, found willing ears in Schroth’s programme:

‘I’ve always considered it important to understand *sommer.bar* as a place of exchange between international artists and the Berlin scene, especially also because the local Berlin artists in the festival Tanz im August played more of an supporting role, and because I thought it was absurd that a festival of this size simply leaves the highly colourful and lively Berlin scene standing out in the cold.’<sup>281</sup>

Scores of connections were established, and new alliances emerged. Schroth’s merit lies in her having supported and initiated processes that lend artistic practices a dimension of continuity and development as distinguishable from the shop-till-you-drop model known from so many conventional festivals. Heisig also touches upon this dimension when he outlines how *sommer.bar* became a recurring, structure-generating point of reference that not only

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**280** | HH17BF.

**281** | KS2PS.

sustainably affected the scene, but also altered the user-habits of the audience (artists included):

‘As I’ve said, it wasn’t so much about competing with the festival *Tanz im August* as it was about complementing it with a new platform. And I had the feeling that this worked very well in most cases. I mean, the format certainly has its limits somewhere. It’s also sometimes important to say that a specific work that one wants to do also needs the presence of a large stage or the attention brought by a festival. That can, of course, be the case. Despite that, however, I think the *sommer.bar* was a sort of incubator. By that I mean that many ideas which were tried out there for the first time later flowed into processes in other pieces. In that sense, *sommer.bar* was definitely visible or perceptible not only when it was happening in Podewil; it also gave impulses that were visible beyond.’<sup>282</sup>

The sixth aspect of *sommer.bar* – this engagement towards the development and continuity of artistic practices – becomes remarkable when viewed in the context of *sommer.bar*’s extremely scant budget, which from year to year never enjoyed any sort of security.<sup>283</sup>

Schroth’s own background as a producer, working with Mette Ingvartsen, among others, guides her precise knowledge of the state of affairs from an artistic perspective. When asked about the security she experiences in her

**282** | HH14BF. See also HH26BF: ‘The audience’s knowing that a kind of daily programme existed in *sommer.bar* certainly changed the use-habits of the festival, I would say. [...] This is why sustainability definitely helps, in the sense of a repetition – definitely.’

**283** | The *sommer.bar*’s budget, which vacillated over the years, amounted to 12,000–15,000 euros. Schroth’s personal curatorial and organisational salary amounted to 5,000 euros. For more on continuity, development and sustainability, see KS8PS: ‘To me, artistic development possibilities – manoeuvring room and continuity – are, in addition to trust, the most important terminologies as regards the *sommer.bar* as well as my other work. When I decide to work together with an artist, the clincher is of course usually a piece that I saw, or an idea that I heard, a conversation we had. But rather than being interested in this particular work by the artist, I’m quite interested in the development, in what comes after, what came before. For me it was important to build on this continuity with a group of artists in *sommer.bar*, to invite them time and again and follow their development, to continually ask them, ‘what do you want to do in this frame? What ideas do you have? I think this is also interesting for an audience; this is how you build audience visibility for an artist. [...] One could say that *sommer.bar* was a place for development. Projects were created here concretely and specifically for *sommer.bar*. There was often only one idea, one thought, one by-product, one wish whose life was developed for *sommer.bar*. Trust played a major role in this context. I had never before seen most of the projects that I showed in the *sommer.bar*. I had only spoken about them with the artists. So I bought the idea, in a manner of speaking.’

own planning as a curator and independent producer, she answers that she understands the main task of her work to be the production of such a planning-security for artists. Here Schroth provides her own sketch of the problems she repeatedly runs into while composing structural plans:

'It's not easy, and I'm flabbergasted time and again how little theatres understand that it is not only important to support projects, new pieces by artists, but that they should also invest in the 'structure'. To date I've found hardly any theatres that want to think with us in this direction. Presenting, yes. Building, sustainability, planning-security, no. What I find interesting is that it indeed always is about interlocutors who, on the one hand, have steady jobs and assume, on the other, that I will jump to answer them any time they want something from me (i.e., Mette Ingvartsen) rather than answering them in regards to individual projects alone.'<sup>284</sup>

One example of *sommer.bar*'s focus on the inseparability and development potential of artistic processes lies in the residencies that Schroth offered increasingly during the festival's final years (and beyond its actual framework) and that complemented and thematised the rather sparsely as opposed to fairly paid visibility through quite concrete possibilities for working, developing and encountering.

One should surely view the development of small, special formats for festivals with a healthy amount of criticality, especially considering the general trend of pushing the selling-out of small artistic extra-products in an off-format instead of structurally promoting a qualitatively high-grade work that chooses its own format. The scarcity of resources often turns into a one-sided argument for the crippling of an artistic production that merits serious attention, without any proportionate constriction of theatre profiles or downsizing of festival operations. When the choice in favour of one's own visibility is accompanied by the abandoning of defining one's own working conditions autonomously, this one-sided redistribution of burden often makes independent artists into a kickball for the theatre business.

The boundaries between an initiative that makes something possible with available means and the forcing of a worsening of working situations are oftentimes difficult to draw and to test on a case-by-case basis. Kerstin Schroth was acutely aware of this balancing act:

'Working with an unchanging budget for six years while curating a festival that grew every year and attracted more and more audience became like a shackle at some point. How do you explain to artists that you can only pay them a fee of 250 euros, especially when you're asking them to be housed with friends during the festival? At the same time, however, you would like to show their project three times, and then it turns out that each of the three

events is completely overfilled and that many spectators aren't even able to see them. How is this explainable? *sommer.bar* grew immensely during its six years. [...] At some point its budget was out of proportion with its size and constantly growing success.'<sup>285</sup>

In response to another invitation by the curatorial team of Tanz im August to hold *sommer.bar* again in 2012, Schroth laid out moderate conditions for the increase of the artists' budgets as well as her own honorarium.<sup>286</sup> After a certain amount of procrastination and in openly visible misjudgment of the actual problem, a succinct personal offer was sent to Schroth's which seemed scandalous, considering the far-reaching importance of *sommer.bar* for contemporary dance and the magnitude of Tanz im August's funding.

Logically, Schroth rejected this proposal on political grounds:

'As I already explained, the budget was no longer in proportion to the size and success of *sommer.bar*. Tanz im August is a very well funded festival, and *sommer.bar* became a very lively, very important component of the festival. Yet the festival curators assumed that I would indeed convince the artists to show their work as part of *sommer.bar* for little or no remuneration. 2011 was a really hard year, because shortly before the creation of the programme was completed, one thousand euros were cut from my budget, money that I really needed in order to make good on the invitations I had sent out. So I begged friends and various institutions for a bit of money to get the one thousand euros back. That was an absurd situation, if you visualise the size of Tanz im August. I work with a choreographer, and my main job consists of negotiating good fees for our guest performances so that we can make a living and also make it clear to the theatres that we're not in possession of a regular income from somewhere else, that we in fact live from what we're earning there. With that in mind, 2011 was the year that I swore to myself – never again. I can't fight for an artist on one side and pay artists either badly or not at all for my own events on the other, playing with the fact that they're doing it for me or for *sommer.bar* in exchange for being visible on the other side. For me, 2011 was the last edition of *sommer.bar*.'<sup>287</sup>

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**285** | KS20PS.

**286** | KS21PS: 'When I was asked whether I wanted to do another edition in 2012, I said sure, but only under the following conditions: I asked for a 5,000 euro increase in budget for the artists (plus the 1,000 that was cut) and 2,000 euros more for my honorarium – all in all, for good reason. No problem for a festival of this size, right? The curatorial team thought about my proposal for one and a half months and then decided to offer me zero euros more for the artists and 500 euros more for my honorarium. I did not accept. I thought then and I still think that it was right to draw the line and end it then and there. It just can't be – continuity and artistic creation can't be held in such low regard.'

**287** | KS21PS.

Independent of which curatorial intentions on the part of the festival direction were originally linked with inviting *sommer.bar*, there was a complete lack of any professional sound judgment regarding the estimation of the qualitative significance and far-reaching implications *sommer.bar* had for the local and international dance scene – a fact that would have necessitated a public cultural-political discussion, but that instead became mute, as is so often the case in the art milieu, in the realm of the private.

The few articles in Berlin's dance press mentioning *sommer.bar* showed a complete ignorance towards the conditions that differentiated it from Tanz im August: the fact that both festivals had different concepts, different curators and two very disparately outfitted budgets.

Against the background of the generally scant situation of documentation in dance, I would like to add that today, two years later, the whole archives of *sommer.bar* as well as that of Tanz im August have already disappeared from online view.<sup>288</sup> A transition period?

In view of this meagre availability of information, which for the ephemeral art of dance and choreography spells nothing less than the disaster of being forgotten, this study can only insist upon the urgency of a contemporary criticism and a dance historiography oriented to the here and now. However, this can only be a second step succeeding a sustainable, experimental, discourse- and context-generating fostering of independent dance and choreography.

### 3. CONCLUSION IN THE FORM OF A PROLEGOMENON

A crucial outcome of this first approach to and critical survey of the present situation of internationally active, independent artists in the field of dance, choreography and performance in Europe consists, aside from the disastrous findings on their socioeconomic condition, in the carving out of a desideratum for an innovative and contemporary cultural-political discourse that is oriented to the sense-building complexity of artistic working realities.

Even though all efforts to prepare European data on the underlying socioeconomic conditions of dance and performance makers is to be greeted unanimously here, such data collection cannot replace a cultural policy that aims at professional artistic *development* and is oriented to the current structural needs of vastly diverse artistic productions.

**288** | Cf. <http://www.tanzimaugust.de/2010/seiten/sommerbar.html>, website discontinued on 1.9.2013. A part of the *sommer.bar* archive can still be viewed on its eponymous Facebook page, see <https://www.facebook.com/pages/sommerbar/307078842271>, retrieved 30.8.2013.

In light of this dire situation, I was led by the facts to undertake a new, example-based inquiry into the complex interplay of production conditions, working modes and aesthetics in the context of international, experimental and contemporary dance and choreography, and to portray this interplay in its complexity.

This inquiry unfolded on the basis of analyses of five different case studies that were selected from the consciously delimited field of contemporary, experimental and international dance. These included the initiatives *Special Issue* in France and later throughout Europe; the Madrid festival *In-Presentable* (2003–2012); the *Double Lecture Series* (2011) in Stockholm; the *Performing Arts Forum* in France (2005–ongoing), and *sommer.bar* in Berlin (2006–2011).

The background of this selection lay in my objective not only to discuss a small amount of performances, but also – and more importantly – to take into account those collective dimensions of artistic practices that have been dedicated to the sense-building as well as discourse- and context-generating development of dance and choreography, in spite of current circumstances. Furthermore, a mindfulness of the sheer diversity of spatiotemporal forms and formats was instrumental in this analysis; a diversity that ranges from isolated programmes to pan-European projects, from a structure-fostering forum on the countryside to long-standing festivals in European capital cities.

For this examination, fifteen intensive interviews with artists from Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, Italy, Iceland, the Netherlands, Romania, Sweden and Spain were conducted in cooperation with Tom Engels and Bettina Földesi. The following people participated in this rich and time-consuming process: Blanca Calvo, Alice Chauchat, Christine de Smedt, Valentina Desideri, Juan Domínguez, Hermann Heisig, Mette Ingvarlsen, Emma Kim Hagdahl, Halla Ólafsdóttir, Manuel Pelmus, Jan Ritsema, Cristina Rizzo, Paz Rojo and Kerstin Schroth.

While the interviews brought to light the wide spectrum of the qualitative multiformity of artistic practices in dance and performance, the practices analysed in this report can also be understood as structure-generating initiatives and complex responses to the current state of affairs. Taking into special consideration the increasingly reduced time periods that artists must face when working amidst a project economy within the freelance organisational structures of dance and performance art, where practices pass from sight before they even truly come into being, I am struck by the need for follow-up projects that will not only research the situation but also change it one day.

In this regard, the report before you is to be understood as a prolegomena and plea for a necessarily open topology of practices that takes contemporary experimental choreography and performance art as its point of departure, without exempting itself from opportunities for new alliances and transversal quantum leaps.

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Interviews and abbreviations

|                                                                   |           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Alice Chauchat in conversation with Petra Sabisch, June 2013.     | ACPS      |
| Blanca Calvo in conversation with Bettina Földesi, May 2013.      | BCBF      |
| Christine de Smedt in conversation with Petra Sabisch, May 2013.  | CDSPS     |
| Cristina Rizzo in conversation with Bettina Földesi, May 2013.    | CRBF      |
| Emma Kim Hagdahl in conversation with Bettina Földesi, June 2013. | EKHBF     |
| Juan Domínguez in conversation with Petra Sabisch, May 2013.      | JDPS      |
| Jan Ritsema in conversation with Bettina Földesi, April 2013.     | JRBF      |
| Hermann Heisig in conversation with Bettina Földesi, May 2013.    | HHBF      |
| Halla Ólafsdóttir in conversation with Bettina Földesi, May 2013. | HOBF      |
| Kerstin Schroth in conversation with Petra Sabisch, May 2013.     | KSPS      |
| Mette Ingvarsten in conversation with Petra Sabisch, October 2011 | MIPS_2011 |
| Mette Ingvarsten in conversation with Petra Sabisch, June 2013    | MIPS_2013 |
| Manuel Pelmus in conversation with Tom Engels, June 2013.         | MPTE      |
| Paz Rojo in conversation with Tom Engels, July 2013.              | PRTE      |
| Valentina Desideri in conversation with Tom Engels, April 2013.   | VDTE      |

Explanation of citation method

Alice Chauchat in conversation with Petra Sabisch, June 2013.

AC5PS = answer 5 by Alice Chauchat.

ACPS3 = question 3 by Petra Sabisch

Annex

Annex 1: Manifesto for a European Performance Policy

Annex 2: Statistics on the internationality of the case studies

Annex 3: Matrix of central questions for the codification of the interviews

Annex 4: UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of the Artist (excerpt) – 27 October, 1980

## **Annex 1: Manifesto for a European Performance Policy**

### **Manifesto for a European Performance Policy**

**We are European**  
**We are citizens**  
**We are workers**  
**We are artists**  
**We are performers**  
**We are independent**

Our practices can be described by a range of terminology, depending on the different cultural contexts in which we operate. Our practices can be called: “performance art”, “live art”, “happenings”, “events”, “body art”, “contemporary dance/ theatre”, “experimental dance”, “new dance”, “multimedia performance”, “site specific”, “body installation”, “physical theatre”, “laboratory”, “conceptual dance”, “independance”, “postcolonial dance / performance”, “street dance”, “urban dance”, “dance theatre”, “dance performance”—to name but a few...

Such a list of terms not only represents the diversity of disciplines and approaches embraced within our practices, but is also symptomatic of the problematics of trying to define or prescribe such heterogeneous and evolving performance forms. However, today more than ever, the drive by cultural institutions and the art market alike to fix and categorise contemporary art practices is often in conflict with the fluid and migratory nature of much of our work, as much as with its needs.

Our practices are synonymous with funding priorities in terms of innovation, risk, hybridity, audience development, social inclusion, participation, new cultural discourses and cultural diversity, cultural difference. They offer new languages, articulate new forms of subjectivation and presentation to play with the cultural and social influences which inform us, to create new cultural landscapes.

We address issues of cultural difference. Our practices have proved to be an articulate platform from which to challenge the dominant post-colonial narratives and traditional representations of the “other”.

We consider the borders between disciplines, categories and nations to be fluid, dynamic and osmotic.

We produce work that develops partnerships, networks and collaborations, disregards national borders and actively contributes to the local, European and trans-national contexts.

We are aware of shared anxiety over the loss of “cultural identities” in the European context today but have no fear of the “homogenisation of cultures”:

operating on a trans-national level, our artistic practices dismantle such concepts or logics.

We consider dialogue, thinking, research and making as equal constituents of our labour. These activities are not only the search engine for our art and related practices, but also for our societies, for our cultures. We are calling for innovative artistic structures, but also a new social status that would acknowledge new concepts of work that have altered the distinction between so-called “productive” and “non-productive” periods. We claim recognition for our professional artistic activities, including those that will be visible in the future and which will give voice to that which has not yet been articulated.

This increased recognition of the social status of the artist will contribute to and emphasise the quality of the social impact of artistic activities, which is the core of any democratic cultural policy.

We want the European Community to:

- resource artists as much as art,
- invest in the ongoing needs and long-term growth of independent performers,
- actively support artists in research, development and in the ongoing process of their practices, in equal measure to the generation and placement of new works,
- recognise and enhance the relationships between and across innovative contemporary practices,
- facilitate strategies for cross-disciplinary dialogues, collaborations and funding initiatives,
- support new strategies for increasing audience awareness and appreciation,
- demonstrate a genuine commitment to innovation, risk and hybridity,
- actively develop, recognise and support a more important number of active, flexible and inventive artistic structures and infrastructures,
- and to engage in a dialogue, set up the conditions for a new debate regarding these questions.<sup>289</sup>

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**289** | This manifesto was originally signed by Jérôme Bel (Paris, France), Steven de Belder (Antwerp, Belgium), Annabelle Hagmann (Paris, France & Berlin, Germany), Xavier Le Roy (Berlin, Germany), Philippe Riéra (Vienna, Austria), Georg Schöllhammer (Vienna, Austria), Sabine Sonnenschein (Vienna, Austria), Oleg Soulimenko (Vienna, Austria & Moscow, Russia), Christophe Wavelet (Paris, France).

## Annex 2: Statistics on the internationality of the case studies

### Special Issue

=> institutions from 5 countries  
 (France, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey),  
 => artists from 14 countries  
 (Austria, Brazil, Croatia, Estonia, France, Germany, Italy, Iran, Norway,  
 Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United States)  
 in two years

### In-Presentable

=> artists from 30 countries in total, over the course of 10 years

2003 from 4 countries (Germany, Norway, Spain, Switzerland)  
 2004 from 5 countries (France, Italy, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom)  
 2005 from 11 countries (Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, France, Germany,  
 Hungary, India, Israel, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom)  
 2006 from 9 countries (Austria, Brazil, Germany, France, Japan, Spain,  
 Sweden, South Africa, United Kingdom)  
 2007 from 8 countries (Brazil, France, Hungary, Lebanon, Palestine, Spain,  
 United Kingdom, Venezuela)  
 2008 from 8 countries (Brazil, Croatia, Norway, Portugal, Serbia, Spain,  
 Taiwan, United States)  
 2009 from 11 countries (Brazil, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary,  
 Netherlands, Portugal, Serbia, Spain, United States, Morocco)  
 2010 all from Spain  
 2011 from 7 countries (Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Spain,  
 United Kingdom)  
 2012 from 18 countries (Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Croatia, France,  
 Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal,  
 Romania, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United States)

### Double Lecture Series

=> artists/lecturers from 8 countries  
 (Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Iran, Sweden,  
 United States, United Kingdom)  
 in one year

### Performing Arts Forum

=> artists from 64 countries in total, over the course of 7 years

- 2006 from 20 countries  
(Australia, Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, India, Lebanon, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States)
- 2007 from 26 countries  
(Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, South Korea, Spain, Taiwan, United Kingdom, United States)
- 2008 from 34 countries  
(Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Macedonia, Mexico, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Poland, Serbia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States)
- 2009 from 37 countries  
(Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Paraguay, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States)
- 2010 from 42 countries  
(Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay)
- 2011 from 37 countries  
(Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, Uzbekistan)

- 2012 from 42 countries  
 (Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Peru, Lithuania, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States)

### **sommer.bar**

=> artists from 33 countries in total, over the course of 6 years

- 2006 from 11 countries  
 (Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Denmark, France, Germany, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States)
- 2007 from 11 countries  
 (Denmark, Belgium, Croatia, France, Hungary, Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, United States)
- 2008 from 12 countries  
 (Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, France, Denmark, Germany, Indonesia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States)
- 2009 from 14 countries  
 (Argentina, Congo, Estonia, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States)
- 2010 from 17 countries  
 (Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Macedonia, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States)
- 2011 from 12 countries  
 (Australia, Croatia, France, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States)

### Annex 3: Matrix of central questions for the codification of the interviews

|            |                                                                                                                                                |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>100</b> | <b>Specificity of the project at the intersection of production conditions, work mode and aesthetics</b>                                       |
| 100.1      | specificity of the project/practice at the intersection of production and aesthetics (including motivation, history and (personal) background) |
| 100.2      | concern                                                                                                                                        |
| 100.3      | format of presentation                                                                                                                         |
| 100.4      | specific core aspects of the project/practice                                                                                                  |
| 100.5      | decision-making structures/organising structures                                                                                               |
| <b>101</b> | <b>Categories/concepts/definitions for work modes</b>                                                                                          |
| 101.1      | exchange/sharing/role of the social                                                                                                            |
| 101.2      | discourse-generating (sense 1)                                                                                                                 |
| 101.3      | context-generating (sense 2)                                                                                                                   |
| 101.4      | artist-initiated, artist-led (self-organised)                                                                                                  |
| 101.5      | continuity & sustainability/development & construction (sense 3)                                                                               |
| 101.6      | experiment & innovation (sense 4)                                                                                                              |
| 101.7      | contemporary                                                                                                                                   |
| 101.8      | international                                                                                                                                  |
| 101.9      | (open in format) generating new formats of presentation                                                                                        |
| 101.10     | forms of collaboration                                                                                                                         |
| 101.10a    | collective                                                                                                                                     |
| 101.10b    | collaborative                                                                                                                                  |
| 101.10c    | changing                                                                                                                                       |
| 101.11     | development/construction                                                                                                                       |
| <b>102</b> | <b>Context of production/interplay between aesthetics and forms of presentation in curatorial concepts and concepts of the audience</b>        |
| 102.1      | budget                                                                                                                                         |
| 102.2      | form of contract                                                                                                                               |
| 102.3      | curatorial concept + aesthetics                                                                                                                |
| 102.4      | audience                                                                                                                                       |
| 102.5      | plannability of the project/practice                                                                                                           |
| 102.6      | plannability/planning security as artist?                                                                                                      |

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**103 Problems encountered**


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**104 Social conditions, conditions of production, aesthetics, and work modes**

- 104.1 interrelation between production conditions, aesthetics, work modes
  - 104.2 work mode/method
  - 104.3 research
  - 104.4 aesthetics
  - 104.5 social security
  - 104.6 relations/comparison (art and science)
  - 104.6a in comparison to science
  - 104.6b in comparison to politics
- 

**105 Education (emancipation/accessibility/remuneration)**

- 105.1 current situation of dance education
  - 105.2 concerning learning the profession
  - 105.3 concerning impact of qualifications
  - 105.4 role of research
  - 105.5 teaching as a means of sustaining/developing professional life
- 

**106 Participation in decision-making structures – critique and power – dependencies**

- 106.1 Who are addressees when dealing with problems in the field?
- 106.1a as artist
- 106.1b as curator
- 106.2 possibilities to give constructive critique to processes and practices (addressees/dialogue partners)
- 106.3 evaluation of the impact of a separate contribution to the field in terms of articulation/critique and strengthening of positive effects (possibilities to articulate)
- 106.4 agency/effects related to artistic status (Do you think that you can have a say as an artist in the professional field/in society?)
- 106.5 shaping circumstances of production in your professional field
- 106.6 shaping aesthetic outcome of artistic work process
- 106.7 evaluation of funding structures
- 106.8 evaluation of your role in society
- 106.9 time spent on applications in a year

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|       |                                                                                                                             |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 107   | <b>Change/diachrony/genealogy</b>                                                                                           |
| 107.1 | structural changes (changes in the circumstances of production) in the professional field over the last ten to twenty years |
| 107.2 | aesthetic changes in the professional field over the last ten to twenty years                                               |

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|       |                                                                                     |
|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 108   | <b>Desire/professional needs/future</b>                                             |
| 108.1 | Speculating about the future: What would you like to change/improve (if you could)? |
| 108.2 | Which needs of your profession do you think are not yet met?                        |

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|     |                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 109 | <b>Other practices with the named categories</b> (artist-initiated/led, contemporary, experimental, discourse-generating, context-generating, international, self-organised, etc.) |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

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**Annex 4: UNESCO-Recommendation Concerning the Status of the Artist (excerpt) – 27.10.1980**

*“The General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, meeting in Belgrade from 23 September to 28 October 1980 at its twenty-first session,*

*Recalling that, under the terms of Article I of its Constitution, the purpose of the Organization is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or relation, by the Charter of the United Nations,*

*Recalling the terms of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and particularly Articles 22, 23, 24, 25, 27 and 28 thereof, quoted in the annex to this Recommendation,*

*Recalling the terms of the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, particularly its Articles 6 and 15, quoted in the annex to this Recommendation, and the need to adopt the necessary measures for the preservation, development and dissemination of culture, with a view to ensuring the full exercise of these rights,*

*Recalling the Declaration of the Principles of International Cultural Co-operation, adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its fourteenth session, particularly its Articles III and IV, which are quoted in the annex to*

this Recommendation, as well as the Recommendation on Participation by the People at Large in Cultural Life and their Contribution to it, adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its nineteenth session,

*Recognizing* that the arts in their fullest and broadest definition are and should be an integral part of life and that it is necessary and appropriate for governments to help create and sustain not only a climate encouraging freedom of artistic expression but also the material conditions facilitating the release of this creative talent,

*Recognizing* that every artist is entitled to benefit effectively from the social security and insurance provisions contained in the basic texts, Declarations, Covenant and Recommendation mentioned above,

*Considering* that the artist plays an important role in the life and evolution of society and that he should be given the opportunity to contribute to society's development and, as any other citizen, to exercise his responsibilities therein, while preserving his creative inspiration and freedom of expression,

*Further recognizing* that the cultural, technological, economic, social and political development of society influences the status of the artist and that it is consequently necessary to review his status, taking account of social progress in the world,

*Affirming* the right of the artist to be considered, if he so wishes, as a person actively engaged in cultural work and consequently to benefit, taking account of the particular conditions of his artistic profession, from all the legal, social and economic advantages pertaining to the status of workers,

*Affirming further* the need to improve the social security, labour and tax conditions of the artist, whether employed or self-employed, taking into account the contribution to cultural development which the artist makes,

*Recalling* the importance, universally acknowledged both nationally and internationally, of the preservation and promotion of cultural identity and of the role in this field of artists who perpetuate the practice of traditional arts and also interpret a nation's folklore,

*Recognizing* that the vigour and vitality of the arts depend, inter alia, on the well-being of artists both individually and collectively,

*Recalling* the conventions and recommendations of the International Labour Organization (ILO) which have recognized the rights of workers in general and, hence, the rights of artists and, in particular, the conventions and recommendations listed in the appendix to this Recommendation,

*Taking note*, however, that some of the International Labour Organization standards allow for derogations or even expressly exclude artists, or certain categories of them, owing to the special conditions in which artistic activity takes place, and that it is consequently necessary to extend their field of application and to supplement them by other standards,

*Considering* further that this recognition of their status as persons actively engaged in cultural work should in no way compromise their freedom of creativity, expression and communication but should, on the contrary, confirm their dignity and integrity,

*Convinced* that action by the public authorities is becoming necessary and urgent in order to remedy the disquieting situation of artists in a large number of Member States, particularly with regard to human rights, economic and social circumstances and their conditions of employment, with a view to providing artists with the conditions necessary for the development and flowering of their talents and appropriate to the role that they are able to play in the planning and implementation of cultural policies and cultural development activities of communities and countries and in the improvement of the quality of life,

*Considering* that art plays an important part in education and that artists, by their works, may influence the conception of the world held by all people, and particularly by youth,

*Considering* that artists must be able collectively to consider and, if necessary, defend their common interests, and therefore must have the right to be recognized as a professional category and to constitute trade union or professional organizations,

*Considering* that the development of the arts, the esteem in which they are held and the promotion of arts education depend in large measure on the creativity of artists,

*Aware of* the complex nature of artistic activity and of the diverse forms it takes and, in particular, of the importance, for the living conditions and the development of the talents of artists, of the protection of their moral and material rights in their works, or performances, or the use made of them, and of the need to extend and reinforce such protection,

*Considering* the need to endeavour to take account as far as possible of the opinion both of artists and of the people at large in the formulation and implementation of cultural policies and for that purpose to provide them with the means for effective action,

*Considering* that contemporary artistic expression is presented in public places and that these should be laid out so as to take account of the opinions of the artists concerned, therefore that there should be close co-operation between architects, contractors and artists in order to lay down aesthetic guidelines for public places which will respond to the requirements of communication and make an effective contribution to the establishment of new and meaningful relationships between the public and its environment,

*Taking into account* the diversity of circumstances of artists in different countries and within the communities in which they are expected to develop their talents, and the varying significance attributed to their works by the societies in which they are produced,

*Convinced*, nevertheless, that despite such differences, questions of similar concern arise in all countries with regard to the status of the artist, and that a common will and inspiration are called for if a solution is to be found and if the status of the artist is to be improved, which is the intention of this Recommendation,

*Taking note* of the provisions of the international conventions in force relating, more particularly, to literary and artistic property, and in particular of the Universal Convention and the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, and of those relating to the protection of the rights of performers, of the resolutions of the General Conference, of the recommendations made by UNESCO's intergovernmental conferences on cultural policies, and of the conventions and recommendations adopted by the International Labour Organization, listed in the appendix to this Recommendation,

*Having before it*, as item 31 of the agenda of the session, proposals concerning the status of the artist,

*Having decided*, at its twentieth session, that this question should be the subject of a recommendation to Member States,

*Adopts* this Recommendation this twenty-seventh day of October 1980:

*The General Conference* recommends that Member States implement the following provisions, taking whatever legislative or other steps may be required—in conformity with the constitutional practice of each State and the nature of the questions under consideration to apply the principles and norms set forth in this Recommendation within their respective territories.

For those States which have a federal or non-unitary constitutional system, the General Conference recommends that, with regard to the provisions of this Recommendation the implementation of which comes under the legal jurisdiction of individual constituent States, countries, provinces, cantons or any other territorial and political subdivisions that are not obliged by the constitutional system of the federation to take legislative measures, the federal government be invited to inform the competent authorities of such States, countries, provinces or cantons of the said provisions, with its recommendation for their adoption.

*The General Conference* recommends that Member States bring this Recommendation to the attention of authorities, institutions and organizations in a position to contribute to improvement of the status of the artist and to foster the participation of artists in cultural life and development.

*The General Conference* recommends that Member States report to it, on dates and in a manner to be determined by it, on the action they have taken to give effect to this Recommendation.

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