

14th-17th June 2017

**OPENING NIGHT PROGRAMME
at Dansehallerne**

How to do things with Romance: a prologue

Choreography: Ellen Söderhult.

Danced by: Klara Sjöblom, Klara Utke Acs, Anna-Maria Ertl, Lisen Pousette, Anna Bontha, Elise Sjöberg, Lisa Schåman, Ellen Söderhult, Anna-Karin Domfors, Oda Brekke, Gry Tingskog, Susanna Ujanen, Ida Arenius, Michelle Persson and Minna Berglund.

On drums: Emilie Brandt and Sarah Kebedech Ziebe.

Costume design-embroideries: Chloe Chignell.

Light design: Ronald Salas.

the tectonics volume II

For this iteration of the piece, 9 from DANSEatelier will perform: Ingvild Bertelsen, Marlene Bonnesen, Meleat Fredrikson, Emilia Gasiorek, Snorre Jeppe Hansen, Sandra Liaklev Andersen, Olivia Riviere, Nanna Stigsdatter Mathiassen and Karis Zidore.

RUDY

Concept and direction: Ellen Söderhult.

Performed by: Same dancers as in 'How to do things with Romance: a prologue'.

Light design by Ronald Salas.

The text read during the show is written by Anna Bontha.

gel (dj+live-set)

Light technician: Flemming Jensen /// Sound technician: Daniel Fogh

**FOLLOWING FESTIVAL DAYS
at DANSEatelier**

Performances from Salka Ardal Rosengren & Andrew Hardwidge • Adriano Wilfert Jensen • Austėja Vilakitytė • Stine Frandsen • M'let, Snorre Jeppe Hansen • Emilia Gasiorek & Sandra Liaklev Andersen • DJ Kapow • VJ Asger Risborg Jakobsen.

Centering around
' c i r c l u d i n g '
dance, thecarrierbag festival is
a gathering of local and international dance
artists, hosted by DANSEatelier. This festival is a carrier
bag. A bag to carry knowledge (across bodies, texts, temporalities,
telepathies and more) in order to re-activate, re-use and re-develop new
knowledges. The festival as a bag proposes a way to 'circlude', encircle, gather,
wrap and curl around dance. It is a wish to use 'circlusion', this awesome and newly
invented word, to describe a relation to dance. Borrowing 'circlusion' from the
context of a sexual act, where it refers to the antonym to penetration, it
finds ways of relocating the term, in order to strengthen it.

thecarrierbag festival has been thought around two texts:

Ursula Le Guin's 'The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction'

and Bini Adamczak's ' On Circlusion'. It sets off

from feminist ways of being in relation to

dance and unfurls a plethora

of possibilities.

“A leaf a gourd a shell a net a bag a sling a sack a bottle a pot a box a container. A holder. A recipient.”

– ursula le guin

(thecarrierbagfestival)

“It matters what ideas we use to think other ideas”

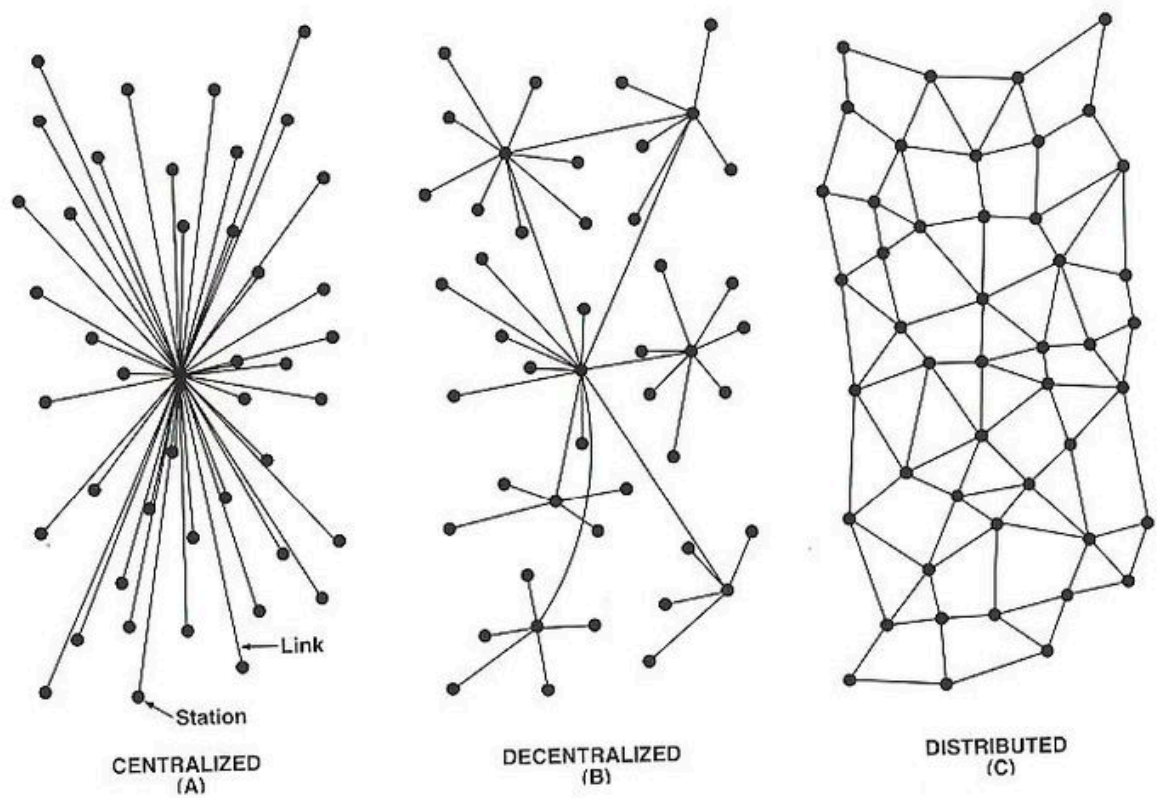
- marilyn strathern

“If it is a human thing to do to put something you want, because it's useful, edible, or beautiful, into a bag, or a basket, or a bit of rolled bark or leaf, or a net woven of your own hair, or what have you, and then take it home with you, home being another, larger kind of pouch or bag, a container for people, and then later on you take it out and eat it or share it or store it (..) then I am a human being after all.”

- ursula le guin

It matters how we carry our ideas to think other ideas.

This is the initial idea we use to think



through other ideas.

rethinking **practice**, **form**, **coexistence** and **structures** in dance and choreography.
practicing, thinking, conversing, reading, watching,
to share, invent and learn about **dance together**.

collectivity within a 'liquid space' -----

a decentralised space

that allows for multiple activities and h & s

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to co-exist

build upon knowledge together, support each other and develop the field, create alternative networks, dances and ideas.



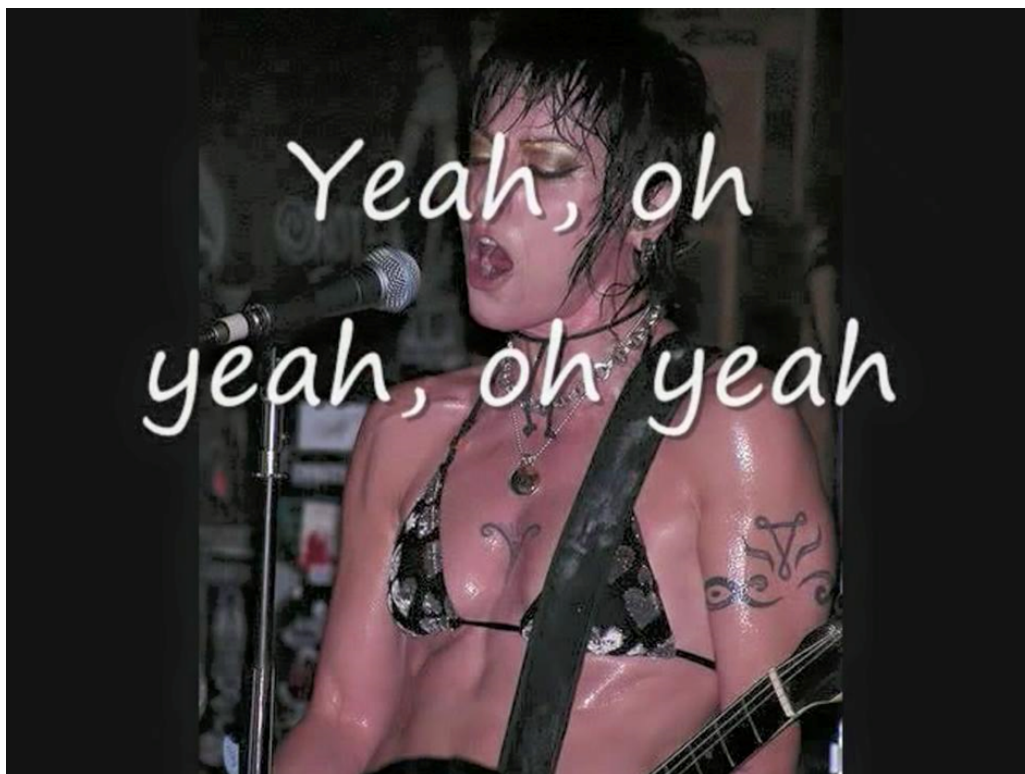
thecarrierbag festival is supported by Valby Lokaludvalg, Dansehallerne, A. P. Møller Fonden and Meny.

How to do things with Romance: a prologue

As a notion romance holds a spectra of feelings such as passion, affinity, affection, tenderness, empathy, compassion and devotion. But romance is also a socio-cultural construction. How to do things with Romance: a prologue is a sporty punk ballet that experiments with romance out of a cultural historical perspective. The love stories and sport movies from Hollywood's film history which have inspired the work with this piece have been shaped in a male dominated industry where women often have been objectified and represented as bearers of meaning but not makers of meaning. This dance by many is an attempt to propose, perform and speculate in other interpretations of the romantic.

Thinking of romance as portrayed in movies, ballets, music videos, TV-series, it appears as maybe not having as much to do with content, as with a use of effects to create or reinforce stereotypes, norms and produce specific desires and dreams, deeply grounded in consumerism and the idea of ownership. The piece rests on an interest in what could happen if the positive properties of romance were reinterpreted and used to other ends.

Also, how does romance relate to love, or to a less exclusive understanding of the notions such as this one: "Courtly love does not love the self any more than it loves the whole universe in a celestial or religious way" (Bodies without organs, A thousand Plateaus by Gilles Deleuze och Félix Guattari, 1987). This dance is a throw as in the etymological meaning of dance and ballet – ballein – ballistics – to throw as if to hit. It is a willful throw off balance to lose the meaning of romance and perform it anew. Welcome to something like a riot grrrl influenced sporty punk ballet.





Tonight this piece is danced by: Klara Sjöblom, Klara Utke Acs, Anna-Maria Ertl, Lisen Pousette, Elise Sjöberg, Lisa Schåman, Ellen Söderhult, Anna-Karin Domfors, Oda Brekke, Gry Tingskog, Tiia Kasurinen, Susanna Ujanen, Ida Arenius, Michelle Persson and Minna Berglund.

On drums: On drums: Emilie Brandt and Sarah Kebedech Ziebe

Costume embroidery: Chloe Chignell.

Light design: Ronald Salas.

Choreography: Ellen Söderhult.

Also extra thank you to other contributors and supporters: Moa Autio, Eliisa Erivalo, Anna Pehrsson, Sanna Söderholm, Nicoline Persen, Nicoline Neidert, Halla Ólafsdóttir, Anna Bontha, Carima Neusser, Emma Strandsäter, Vanessa Virta, Maia Means, Elise Brewer, Anna Grip and others.

Here comes and excerpt from: Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Film Theory and Criticism : Introductory Readings*. Eds. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen. New York: Oxford UP, 1999: 833-44.

B. Destruction of Pleasure is a Radical Weapon

As an advanced representation system, the cinema poses questions of the ways the unconscious (formed by the dominant order) structure ways of seeing and pleasure in looking. Cinema has changed over the last few decades. It is no longer the monolithic system based on large capital investment exemplified at its best by Hollywood in the 1930's, 1940's and 1950's. Technological advances (16mm, etc.) have changed the economic conditions of cinematic production, which can now be artisanal as well as capitalist. Thus it has been possible for an alternative cinema to develop. However self-conscious and ironic Hollywood managed to be, it always restricted itself to a formal *mise-en-scène* reflecting the dominant ideological concept of the cinema. The alternative cinema provides a space for a cinema to be born which is radical in both a political and an aesthetic sense and challenges the basic assumptions of the mainstream film. This is not to reject the latter moralistically, but to highlight the ways in which its formal preoccupations reflect the psychical obsessions of the society which produced it, and, further, to stress that the alternative cinema must start specifically by reacting against these obsessions and assumptions. A politically and aesthetically avant-garde cinema is now possible, but it can still only exist as a counterpoint.

The magic of the Hollywood style at its best (and of all the cinema which fell

within its sphere of influence) arose, not exclusively, but in one important aspect, from its skilled and satisfying manipulation of visual pleasure. Unchallenged, mainstream film coded the erotic into the language of the dominant patriarchal order. In the highly developed Hollywood cinema it was only through these codes that the alienated subject, torn in his imaginary memory by a sense of loss, by the terror of potential lack in phantasy, came near to finding a glimpse of satisfaction: through its formal beauty and its play on his own formative obsessions. This article will discuss the interweaving of that erotic pleasure in film, its meaning, and in particular the central place of the image of woman. It is said that analysing pleasure, or beauty, destroys it. That is the intention of this article. The satisfaction and reinforcement of the ego that represent the high point of film history hitherto must be attacked. Not in favour of a reconstructed new pleasure, which cannot exist in the abstract, nor of intellectualised unpleasure, but to make way for a total negation of the ease and plenitude of the narrative fiction film. The alternative is the thrill that comes from leaving the past behind without rejecting it, transcending outworn or oppressive forms, or daring to break with normal pleasurable expectations in order to conceive a new language of desire.

Minna Berglund metakritisk respons Drömmen om Svansjön

Jag intervjuade kritikerna Agri Ismaïl, Axel Andersson, Emelie Markgren, Danjel Andersson, Josefin Gladh, Liv Strand, Jimmy Offesson, och Árný Rún Árnadóttir efter att de sett Pär Isbergs "Drömmen om Svansjön" på Kungliga Operan 2017. Svaren är ett collage och personerna i fråga har inte fått någon chans att svara på frågorna. De medverkandes uttalanden är ryckta ur sitt sammanhang men materialet är autentiskt. All text är min egen svenska översättning av de engelska recensionerna med reservation för små ändringar. Texten ska ses som en tolkning/förskjutning av mening och inte som en representant för de enskilda personerna i fråga.

Hur var stämningen?

Árný: När jag hittar mitt röda plyschsäte i den vackra guldaccentuerade teatern får jag en känsla av hur jag som liten blev tillsagd att vara på mitt bästa humör.

Jimmy: I det Kungliga Operahuset i Stockholm har applåderna en viss karaktär. Jag kan inte sätta fingret på det men det är verkligen inte samma applåder på festivaler eller sporthändelser. Så många händer som klappar, varje hand på ett liknande sätt, men fortfarande med variationer i kraften och rytmen.

Danjel: Det är så många saker som far runt i mitt huvud när jag besöker Kungliga Operan. Operahuset i Stockholm är ett skrytbygge från 1700-talet. Den byggdes, som oftast, efter en fransk modell. Dessa byggnader attraherar en viss sorts publik. Jag, även om jag har en hög kulturell status, känner inte att jag passerat in här. Publiken klappar som på kommando.

Josefin: När jag gick hem efter föreställningen kände jag mig överväldigad, men mer av överflödet av visuella intryck än på grund av det vanliga surret om livet, konsten, kärleken, mytologin etc, som triggas igång av intressant konst.

Axel: Ganska snart måste frågan läggas fram; är den här paketeringen av Pär Isbergs Svansjön bara en samtida inslagning för att legitimera att åter-ge samma present. (?)

Emelie: Det var som att slumra in i en naturromantisk dröm, nästan lite för mycket, nästan för Vackert.

Vad har du att säga om musiken?

Danjel: Det är den samma gamla Pjotr Tjajkovskij från original Svansjön. Jag får en känsla av att orkestern kan spela den i sömnen.

Josefin: Du lyssnar på musiken och det är allt du behöver. Dansen illustrerar musiken och handlingen är inte ens intressant. Du kommer att höra alla dramatiska kurvor och skapa din egen berättelse.

Liv: Det är musiken som implicerar och för vidare de mesta av känslorna. Repetitiva passager i musiken implicerar ett övervägande, att någonting håller på att avslöjas.

Vad tyckte du om koreografin?

Árný: Ljudet av så många tåpetsskor som rör sig i unisona rader kittlar mina öron.

Jimmy: Utan att jag går in på styckets likhet med en militaristisk känsla av tid och ordning av kroppar, eller neddyker i liknande biopolitiker, eller för fram Foucault, så är min konklusion att min egen ignorans och fattiga arbetarklassbakgrund gör att jag inte är fullt kapabel, i termer av mitt ackumulerade kapital, att tycka om koreografin.

Josefin: Jag letar desperat efter ett glapp, någonting som kan slita upp den slumrande känslan.

Axel: I passagerna av massynkroniserade delar där hopar av kroppar gör samma sak, blir rörelserna transformerade till mekaniska under, mycket på samma sätt som formationer av arméer eller fabriksarbetare vid transportbanden. Omänskligt, men vackert.

Kan du säga något om scenografin?

Liv: Scenrummet kunde ändra storlek och även höjden på horisonten samtidigt som dansarna simultant utförde sina rörelser.

Axel: Allt börjar med en tom scen och ett tunt mekaniskt ljud.

Vad är balett?

Axel: Det är en idealiseringens konst (en konst om idealisering).

Liv: Balett är en specifik version av dans som har mindre att göra med musik än med ett regalerat sätt att röra kroppen. Rörelserna är ackompanjerade med ett maximum av stretchande, hoppande och böjande. Professionella dansare har tränat i år, min vän sa att man måste anpassa höfterna på en ballettdansare innan 15 års ålder, för att kunna ge mesta möjliga flexibilitet i benen.

Agri: Det finns en viss evig extas involverad i det att se kroppar göra saker som de inte borde kunna. Men ändå, innan föreställningen startade diskuterade vi balettens etik, den där idén om att ballerinnor lider av olika slags ätstörningar, att deras fötter är helt fucked up, allt för vårt nöjes skull.

Är detta konst?

Danjel: Detta är inte konst. Det här är ett sätt att bibehålla en genre som upprätthåller och omhändertar redan väletablerade konventioner, och för detta finns naturligtvis en stor publik.

[not från Danjels text; art is difficult to define, but for me it is an alternative meta layer of society where critical thinking, including self-reflection, in all its extremes, fit. För vidare info läs recensionen i fråga]

Kan du säga något om handlingen?

Agri: En prins går ut och jagar svan en dag – vilket inte skulle vara en OK grej att göra i Storbritannien, eftersom svanar är ägda av regenten som en konsekvens av The Act of Swans 1482 (...) – men upptäcker att svanarna han spårat till sjön har försvunnit och istället finns där vackra kvinnor i tutus, en av dem bär en krona. Hon introducerar sig själv som Odette.

Danjel: Här pratar vi om Meta. Det är en balett om att göra en balett. Handlingen blir ibland oklar för mig. Åh, emellan, händer många saker, de

stiger in i en drömvärld där den enorma ensemblen dansar förvrängda scener från klassikern. Ett slags "the best of". Dansarna får visa deras skicklighet, formade under årtionden för exakt det här.

Jimmy: Berättelsen i sig handlar om svartsjuka, transformation, det goda mot det onda. Den storyn finns överallt, mycket på Netflix.

Agri: OK, så, den kvinnliga dansaren väljer den elaka Rothbard för att who the fuck knows, kvinnor gillar bad boys eller nån annan reductive shit, och sen så är det en fest där de kvinnliga dansarna får koreografen att tro att hon fortfarande älskar honom och så börjar alla gästerna skratta åt honom för att han är en sån dummer och tycker att han förtjänar kärlek.

Axel: Det är svårt att veta hur seriöst en ska ta själva handlingen.

Liv: Berättelsen handlar om någon slags kamp i viljan till att bli ett lyckligt kärlekspär. Vikten av den hierarkiska ordningen syns i hur viktigt det är att bli DEN UTVALDA och detta dupliceras i historien om de tävlande dansarna i ett danskompani.

Vem är Rothbard?

Agri: Den onda baronen som i hemlighet är den onda trollkarlen som har förvisat Odette till hennes svantillstånd. I Fredrik Rydmans streetdance uppsättning var Rothbard t ex en pimp och svanarna drogmissbrukande sexarbetare.

Vad tyckte du om rörelsematerialet i föreställningen?

Emelie: Bland alla de repetitiva chasses, jetees och fouttes, kunde man ibland urskilja korta bitar av discodans, Beyoncémoves, high-fives, v-tecknet och korta frysta positioner.

Axel: Publikens kroppar är långt ifrån den fysiska form som de perfekta danskropparna har då de framför smärtsamma akrobatiska övningar med lättsamhet.

Liv: Om du är en man hoppar du genom ditt eget momentum, om du är en kvinna kommer en man allt som oftast att stödja dina elevationer men du förväntas att dansa och snurra mycket på spetsen av dina tår med sträckta

anklar. Genom en elitistisk kraft strävar dansarna alltid uppåt, som om de är kopplade till en tråd i taket.

Jimmy: Jag var ärligt imponerad av dansarnas disciplin och utförande. Jag applåderade. Många gånger.

Emelie: Rörelserna förmedlade en känsla av att kunna flyga, som i drömmar. Att vara lätt som en svan, att segla ned och landa på en förtrollad sjö. Det var som att dyka ned, simma och flyta i en ocean av symmetrisk harmoni och kontroll. Som att falla i sömn på ett trägolv med ett mjukt fluffigt duntäcke.

Josefin: Odettes (prinsessa/svan) rörelsespråk ändras inte alls när hon transformeras.

Har du något att tilläga?

Árný: Jag går ut ifrån teatern och tänker att det här har inte lämnat något spår i mig.

Agri: Generellt kan vi säga någonting om heteronormativiteten i det hela? Svanar är ändå kända för att vara i samkönade par. Att spendera all denna tid och kraft på att försöka återskapa/förnya Svansjön och fortfarande presentera en trött vinkel av maskulinitet och femininitet känns lite väl lat, eller?

Minna Berglund

“The future must no longer be determined by the past. I do not deny that the effects of the past are still with us. But I refuse to strengthen them by repeating them, to confer upon them an irremovability the equivalent of destiny, to confuse the biological and the cultural. Anticipation is imperative.”

Hélène Cixous, *The Laugh of the Medusa*, The University of Chicago Press, *Signs*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Summer, 1976), pp. 875-893

Dance as re-assessment as rebounding as representing

1. Crisis, critical, climacteric

Crisis is a word with interesting etymological neighbors. For once, there is climacteric, related to climax, and there is also “critical”. Climacteric is a word that seems close to climax, which is a word that in 1835 seemed to mean “to reach the highest point” and at another point in time was frequently used for orgasm. Climacteric comes from latin, *climactericus*, which comes from a Greek word meaning “of a critical period”. In the online etymological dictionary it translates as “A critical stage in human life, a period supposed to be especially liable to change. By some, held to be the years that are multiples of 7 (7, 14, 21, etc), by others the odd multiples (7, 21, 35, etc.), and by still others the multiples of 9. The Great Climacteric was the the 63rd year (7x9), supposed to be especially critical”. During periods of time critical have been translated as decisive or crucial. In Chinese the sign for crisis is a combination of the sign for opportunity and danger... In psychology, developmental crises are a part of a humans transitioning from child to grown up. The middle irish word *crích*, which etymologically is some kind of root for crisis, translates as “border, boundary”.

While I was in ballet class, a teacher said: “Re-assessing everything you do is what makes ballet infinitely interesting”. It reminded me that my relationship to ballet as a practice is often climacteric.

2. The dancer and the dance

Alice Chauchat wrote about the relationship between the dancer and the dance as follows: “I would like to posit dancing as the relationship between dance and dancer.”

3. Full body listening with all senses or a note on dancing and watching dance

These are some of my favorite dance quotes: “There is nothing to find, there is only work. Unless of course you are Planotist” and “Let your body be a river and not a pond”. They are both by Anna Grip. Here are some words that those quotes invite for me, while watching or dancing:

Re-assessing

Re-presenting

Re-considering

Re-bounding (knowing yourself through knowing things, edges and containers, implicated and porous bodies, spread out bodies)

The quotes proposes dancing as something like a now-fiction. A propositional practice. It seems close to “dance asks for or requires another kind of seeing, which does not start with recognition” (M. Spångberg). I feel like dance asks me to listen attentively with my full body and all of its senses, memories and capacities. I think dance has the potential to create conditions for new sensations, thoughts, experiences and emotions. I love to dance.

BY: Ellen Söderhult



the tectonics volume II by DANSEatelier

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The Spam of the Earth: Withdrawal from Representation

Dense clusters of radio waves leave our planet every second. Our letters and snapshots, intimate and official communications, TV broadcasts and text messages drift away from earth in rings, a tectonic architecture of the desires and fears of our times.¹ In a few hundred thousand years, extraterrestrial forms of intelligence may incredulously sift through our wireless communications. But imagine the perplexity of those creatures when they actually look at the material. Because a huge percentage of the pictures inadvertently sent off into deep space is actually spam. Any archaeologist, forensic, or historian—in this world or another—will look at it as our legacy and our likeness, a true portrait of our times and ourselves. Imagine a human reconstruction somehow made from this digital rubble. Chances are, it would look like image spam.

Image spam is one of the many dark matters of the digital world; spam tries to avoid detection by filters by presenting its message as an image file. An inordinate amount of these images floats around the globe, desperately vying for human attention.² They advertise pharmaceuticals, replica items, body enhancements, penny stocks, and degrees. According to the pictures dispersed via image spam, humanity consists of scantily dressed degree-holders with jolly smiles enhanced by orthodontic braces.

Image spam is our message to the future. Instead of a modernist space capsule showing a woman and man on the outside—a family of “man”—our contemporary dispatch to the universe is image spam showing enhanced advertisement mannequins.³ And this is how the universe will see us; it is perhaps even how it sees us now.

Rudy

‘What if we shift the question from ‘who do I want to be?’ to the question, ‘what kind of life do I want to live with others?’ Judith Butler

Understanding dance as a continuous negotiation between historical, collective and personal habits, norms, and desires, her question felt like an important, impracticable but inspiring starting point for a dance by many. It became clear that to support, submit to, and care for a proposal and to fill the verb “following” with agency was important. In a wish to unveil what norms and ideologies reside within dance performance. it started with questioning not the form dance takes, but for what reasons and what dance’s purposes potentially could be. This, out of the ambition to not take any purpose for granted.

In this performance individual dance histories, dreams, desires and memories reappear, to collide with other ones and be compiled to a new oneness. Taken out of contexts the separate dances constitute a new whole that make altered meanings appear, open for other readings and different understandings. Out of a view on creativity as collective and art as more than the production of artefacts RUDY proposes a calm moment where empathy, care, following, supporting, repeating and imitating are considered vital aspects of art.

Dance, composition, choreography: Klara Sjöblom, Klara Utke Acs, Anna-Maria Ertl, Lisen Pousette, Anna Bontha, Elise Sjöberg, Lisa Schåman, Ellen Söderhult, Anna-Karin Domfors, Oda Brekke, Gry Tingskog, Michelle Persson, Susanna Ujanen, Ida Arenius and Minna Berglund.

Text read during the performance: Anna Bontha.

Light design: Ronald Salas.

Concept and editing: Ellen Söderhult.

Contributing choreographers and supporting and contributing dancers in previous versions of RUDY: Tiia Kasurinen, Alex Nagy, Emma Strandsäter, Hampus Bergenheim, Jilda Hallin, Lisa Nilsson, Lisen Ellard, Max Wallmeier, Elise Brewer, Chloe Chignell, Frankie Snowdon, Carima Neusser, Austeja Vilkaityte, Greta Bernotaite, Imre Vass, Ainhoa Hernandez, Karis Zidore, Naya Moll, Olivia Riviere, Sandra Liaklev, Lea Vendelbo Petersen, Emilia Gasiorek, Ivey Wawn, Laura Ramirez, Tamara Algere, Leah Landau, Snorre Jeppe Hansen and Vanessa Virta.

The pieces are supported by: Nordisk Kulturfond, Kulturkontakt Nord, Kulturfonden för Sverige och Finland, Stockholms Stad, Ålands Kulturdelegation, Weld, Köttinspektionen Dans, Danseatelier and Nordens Institut på Åland.

LEONORA

They utilize what others throw away

When hearing the word hyena, what do you think of? A patchy furry thing with odd proportions? A long thick neck and a small pointy face on top of it.

Then there is the gender ambiguity, the genitals of the female hyena has an enlarged clitoris capable of an erection.

Maybe you think of the hyena as it is depicted in the movie the Lion king; dumb, cowardice and lazy.

A thief, and a scavenger. An animal linked to death.

Hyenas will gorge themselves whenever they can. A head of a gazelle isn't a prime cut, but the spotted hyena is adapted to making do with rougher fare.

They'll crunch up bone, digesting the organic content and excreting calcium. They utilize what others throw away.

PAUS

These are all facts and arranged in a chronological order

The surrealist painter and writer Leonora Carrington was born in England 1917 and died in Mexiko 2011.

Most written records about her begin with the debutante that ran away with the surrealist. It makes a good story.

It adds something, one like to think not only about the art, but also about the artist.

Her life story has all the ingredients; a wealthy upbringing, an illicit romance, bohemian escapades, psychological anguish, and a distant, exotic setting.

The story's we create from life, I mean it's not *not* true, these are all facts and arranged in a chronological order.

PAUS

Forward to 2010, here we have one more piece to the puzzle, one more ingredient in the artist soup.

93 year old Leonora is sitting in the kitchen of her home in Mexico City. It is being documented by film.

She asks the interviewer, who sits in front of her, what he wants to know. The interviewer wants her to begin, “to speak up”, as he says.

Leonora describes herself as an old woman who has worked her whole life, who has been a daughter, a sister, a lover, a mother and a wife, and an artist. It could be the lyrics of a catchy song perhaps; a daughter, a sister, a lover and a mother...

“What are you writing these days?” the interviewer asks.

“Now I mainly write to remember. I tend to forget things.” Leonora says.

In a clip in a film you can see small notes, being pinned to the wall or on technical devices in the kitchen. They are instructions. For example:

First power on.

Then push button.

The left button!

Press in number of seconds

30 or 40

Push the right button

wait for it to stop.

That is for remembering how to use the microwave.

“You were presented to the royal court? the interviewer continues.”

“Yes” Leonora simply replies.

“And in your story the hyena takes your place.”

“Yes”, Leonora says. “Because it was very boring, and I was taking revenge.”

PAUS

Cover

The story they are referring to is titled The Debutant, in it a young girl makes friends with a hyena at the zoo. The hyena agrees to take the girls place at a ball. It dresses up in the girls ball gown. Then the hyena kills one of the maids and takes her face off to cover it's own. The deception is discovered when one of the guests at the ball tells the hyena that she smells. The hyena rises from her chair, tears the face off, eats it before jumping out of the window.

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Carringtons work is full of these hybrids, part human, part beast. And the closer to the animal world, the wiser and more powerful they become.

The animal replaces the femme-infant, that is the female child, in the surrealistic symbolic order, where the women are made a link between the man and the Marvelous.

This replacement disrupts the male power position over woman, and allows the femme-infant to name the source of her creative power nature,

and enables the woman to take place as an active subject, rather than a passive object.

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Category

Carrington almost fits into several different categories, but cannot identify completely with any single category

Her body of work is refusing definition within existing frames

the question "What does she intend to do with her art?"

Was the madness a requirement for liberation?

Hubert discusses separateness as well, but in a more focused plane, namely separateness from Surrealism.

through negation, that is, by explaining what she is not

In other words, Carrington is not exactly a Surrealist in the same way she is not exactly a feminist.

Chadwick, like Helland, chooses to label Carrington as indefinable

but even indefinable is a category with boundaries.

PAUS

A critic at the Telegraph wrote:

Repetitive

Copying

Fairy painting

Moreover Meaningless

Mystery masks meaningless was the headline.

Moreover, too often she borrows tropes from other Surrealists without making them her own: De Chirico's sense of melancholy emptiness, the ant-like, distant figures we find in Dali, Miro's biomorphic forms, or a pelt-like, furry quality reminiscent of pictures by her lover Ernst.

Besides, her predominant finish is so at odds with the diabolical forces she claims to be channeling. If you want to see modern art doing demons with gusto, Google the Dutch artist Karel Appel.

How does it stack up, these paintings of the woman surrealist? How do they stand on their own legs?

The answer is Modestly. Synonyms:

humbly, plainly, quitly, simply

Besides, it could be a scene from a movie by the Mexican filmmaker Guillermo del Toro.

At her best she was a brilliant fabricator of memorable, poetic, dream-like images.

Synonyms to fabricator:

Coiner, counterfeiter, fabulist, faker, falsifier, fibber, liar

PAUS

Mini logic

In Carringtons work the white horse is a reoccurring figure. It becomes a site of transcendence. In a time when the horse, a Freudian horse, meant surging masculinity, she drew from ancient depictions of the horse as a powerful goddess. Carrington uses the horse as her feminine avatar.

Leonora says “you’re trying to intellectualize something desperately, and you’re wasting your time. That’s not the way of understanding, to make it into sort of a mini logic.

The visual world is totally different. The visual world is to do with what we see in space, which changes all the time.

How do I know how to walk, that’s one concept of knowledge, in this room, within these four walls, navigating among other bodies and objects, without running into them.”

PAUS

Three heavy breasts

The Inn of the Dawn Horse. Selfportrait, 1937. In the painting Carrington sits with her legs wide a part, with wild mane-like hair, and wearing a horse back riding suit. As a viewer your eye first goes to this figure, and she is looking right back at you. Carrington is pointing with her hand at the hyena in front of her. The hyena is posing, mirroring the gesture of Carrington with its paw raised. The hyenas eyes strangely human-like and a smirk in her face, she has three heavy breasts. Above the woman, there is a floating rocking horse, it has no tail, it is moving towards an open window in the background, outside the window a white horse galloping away, on its way into a deep forest.

BY ANNA BONTA

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"The World's Greatness"

I am a mountain
I am a tall tree
Oh, I am a swift wind
Sweepin' the country
I am a river
Down in the valley
Oh, I am a mother
And I am a friend

If anybody asks you who I am
Just stand up tall, look 'em in the face and say

[Chorus]

I'm a star up in the sky
I'm a mountain peak up high
I'm an ocean
I'm a birds neeest
And I'm that little bit of hope
When your back's against the ropes
I'm a choir mmm
I'm a glass of water

I am a pony
I am an eagle
I am a lion
Down in the jungle
I am a marchin' band
I am a chameleont
I am a helpin' hand
And I'm undefined

If anybody asks you who I am
Just stand up tall, look 'em in the face and say

[Chorus]

I'm a star up in the sky
I'm a mountain peak up high
I'm an ocean
I'm a birds neeest
And I'm that little bit of hope
When your back's against the ropes
I'm a choir mmm
I'm a glass of water

I am one but also several
I'm the humid dirt under the sand

I'm the morning mist and shining light

I'm the cellular fluid in between

I'm a star up in the sky
I'm a mountain peak up high
I'm an ocean
I'm a birds neeest
And I'm that little bit of hope
When your back's against the ropes
I'm a choir mmm
I'm a glass of water

[higher pitch]

I'm a star up in the sky
I'm a mountain peak up high
I'm an ocean
I'm a birds neeest
And I'm that little bit of hope
When your back's against the ropes
I'm a choir mmm
I'm a glass of water

Ursula K. Le Guin 1986

The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction

Source: Dancing at the Edge of the World;

Transcribed: by Cody Jones.

In the temperate and tropical regions where it appears that hominids evolved into human beings, the principal food of the species was vegetable. Sixty-five to eighty percent of what human beings ate in those regions in Paleolithic, Neolithic, and prehistoric times was gathered; only in the extreme Arctic was meat the staple food. The mammoth hunters spectacularly occupy the cave wall and the mind, but what we actually did to stay alive and fat was gather seeds, roots, sprouts, shoots, leaves, nuts, berries, fruits, and grains, adding bugs and mollusks and netting or snaring birds, fish, rats, rabbits, and other tuskless small fry to up the protein. And we didn't even work hard at it--much less hard than peasants slaving in somebody else's field after agriculture was invented, much less hard than paid workers since civilization was invented. The average prehistoric person could make a nice living in about a fifteen-hour work week.

Fifteen hours a week for subsistence leaves a lot of time for other things. So much time that maybe the restless ones who didn't have a baby around to enliven their life, or skill in making or cooking or singing, or very interesting thoughts to think, decided to slope off and hunt mammoths. The skillful hunters then would come staggering back with a load of meat, a lot of ivory, and a story. It wasn't the meat that made the difference. It was the story.

It is hard to tell a really gripping tale of how I wrested a wild-oat seed from its husk, and then another, and then another, and then another, and then another, and then I scratched my gnat bites, and Ool said something funny, and we went to the creek and got a drink and watched newts for a while, and then I found another patch of oats.... No, it does not compare, it cannot compete with how I thrust my spear deep into the titanic hairy flank white Oob, impaled on one huge sweeping tusk, writhed screaming, and blood spouted everywhere in crimson torrents, and Boob was crushed to jelly when the mammoth fell on him as I shot my unerring arrow straight through eye to brain.

That story not only has Action, it has a Hero. Heroes are powerful. Before you know it, the men and women in the wild-oat patch and their kids and the skills of the makers and the thoughts of the thoughtful and the songs of the singers are all part of it, have all been pressed into service in the tale of the Hero. But it isn't their story. It's his.

When she was planning the book that ended up as *Three Guineas*, Virginia Woolf wrote a heading in her notebook, "Glossary"; she had thought of reinventing English according to a new plan, in order to tell a different story. One of the entries in this glossary is *heroism*, defined as "botulism." And *hero*, in Woolf's dictionary, is "bottle." The hero as bottle, a stringent reevaluation. I now propose the bottle as hero.

Not just the bottle of gin or wine, but bottle in its older sense of container in general, a thing that holds something else.

If you haven't got something to put it in, food will escape you--even something as uncombative and unresourceful as an oat. You put as many as you can into your stomach while they are handy, that being the

primary container; but what about tomorrow morning when you wake up and it's cold and raining and wouldn't it be good to have just a few handfuls of oats to chew on and give little Oom to make her shut up, but how do you get more than one stomachful and one handful home? So you get up and go to the damned soggy oat patch in the rain, and wouldn't it be a good thing if you had something to put Baby Oo Oo in so that you could pick the oats with both hands? A leaf a gourd a shell a net a bag a sling a sack a bottle a pot a box a container. A holder. A recipient.

The first cultural device was probably a recipient Many theorizers feel that the earliest cultural inventions must have been a container to hold gathered products and some kind of sling or net carrier.

So says Elizabeth Fisher in *Women's Creation* (McGraw-Hill, 1975). But no, this cannot be. Where is that wonderful, big, long, hard thing, a bone, I believe, that the Ape Man first bashed somebody with in the movie and then, grunting with ecstasy at having achieved the first proper murder, flung up into the sky, and whirling there it became a space ship thrusting its way into the cosmos to fertilize it and produce at the end of the movie a lovely fetus, a boy of course, drifting around the Milky Way without (oddly enough) any womb, any matrix at all? I don't know. I don't even care. I'm not telling that story. We've heard it, we've all heard all about all the sticks spears and swords, the things to bash and poke and hit with, the long, hard things, but we have not heard about the thing to put things in, the container for the thing contained. That is a new story. That is news.

And yet old. Before--once you think about it, surely long before--the weapon, a late, luxurious, superfluous tool; long before the useful knife and ax; right along

with the indispensable whacker, grinder, and digger--for what's the use of digging up a lot of potatoes if you have nothing to lug ones you can't eat home in--with or before the tool that forces energy outward, we made the tool that brings energy home. It makes sense to me. I am an adherent of what Fisher calls the Carrier Bag Theory of human evolution.

This theory not only explains large areas of theoretical obscurity and avoids large areas of theoretical nonsense (inhabited largely by tigers, foxes, other highly territorial mammals); it also grounds me, personally, in human culture in a way I never felt grounded before. So long as culture was explained as originating from and elaborating upon the use of long, hard objects for sticking, bashing, and killing, I never thought that I had, or wanted, any particular share in it. ("What Freud mistook for her lack of civilization is woman's lack of *loyalty* to civilization," Lillian Smith observed.) The society, the civilization they were talking about, these theoreticians, was evidently theirs; they owned it, they liked it; they were human, fully human, bashing, sticking, thrusting, killing. Wanting to be human too, I sought for evidence that I was; but if that's what it took, to make a weapon and kill with it, then evidently I was either extremely defective as a human being, or not human at all.

That's right, they said. What you are is a woman. Possibly not human at all, certainly defective. Now be quiet while we go on telling the Story of the Ascent of Man the Hero.

Go on, say I, wandering off towards the wild oats, with Oo Oo in the sling and little Oom carrying the basket. You just go on telling how the mammoth fell on Boob and how Cain fell on Abel and how the bomb fell on Nagasaki and how the burning jelly fell on the

villagers and how the missiles will fall on the Evil Empire, and all the other steps in the Ascent of Man.

If it is a human thing to do to put something you want, because it's useful, edible, or beautiful, into a bag, or a basket, or a bit of rolled bark or leaf, or a net woven of your own hair, or what have you, and then take it home with you, home being another, larger kind of pouch or bag, a container for people, and then later on you take it out and eat it or share it or store it up for winter in a solider container or put it in the medicine bundle or the shrine or the museum, the holy place, the area that contains what is sacred, and then next day you probably do much the same again--if to do that is human, if that's what it takes, then I am a human being after all. Fully, freely, gladly, for the first time.

Not, let it be said at once, an unaggressive or uncombative human being. I am an aging, angry woman laying mightily about me with my handbag, fighting hoodlums off. However I don't, nor does anybody else, consider myself heroic for doing so. It's just one of those damned things you have to do in order to be able to go on gathering wild oats and telling stories.

It is the story that makes the difference. It is the story that hid my humanity from me, the story the mammoth hunters told about bashing, thrusting, raping, killing, about the Hero. The wonderful, poisonous story of Botulism. The killer story.

It sometimes seems that that story is approaching its end. Lest there be no more telling of stories at all, some of us out here in the wild oats, amid the alien corn, think we'd better start telling another one, which maybe people can go on with when the old one's finished. Maybe. The trouble is, we've all let ourselves become part of the killer story, and so we may get finished along

with it. Hence it is with a certain feeling of urgency that I seek the nature, subject, words of the other story, the untold one, the life story.

It's unfamiliar, it doesn't come easily, thoughtlessly to the lips as the killer story does; but still, "untold" was an exaggeration. People have been telling the life story for ages, in all sorts of words and ways. Myths of creation and transformation, trickster stories, folktales, jokes, novels...

The novel is a fundamentally unheroic kind of story. Of course the Hero has frequently taken it over, that being his imperial nature and uncontrollable impulse, to take everything over and run it while making stern decrees and laws to control his uncontrollable impulse to kill it. So the Hero has decreed through his mouthpieces the Lawgivers, first, that the proper shape of the narrative is that of the arrow or spear, starting *here* and going straight *there* and THOK! hitting its mark (which drops dead); second, that the central concern of narrative, including the novel, is conflict; and third, that the story isn't any good if he isn't in it.

I differ with all of this. I would go so far as to say that the natural, proper, fitting shape of the novel might be that of a sack, a bag. A book holds words. Words hold things. They bear meanings. A novel is a medicine bundle, holding things in a particular, powerful relation to one another and to us.

One relationship among elements in the novel may well be that of conflict, but the reduction of narrative to conflict is absurd. (I have read a how-to-write manual that said, "A story should be seen as a battle," and went on about strategies, attacks, victory, etc.) Conflict, competition, stress, struggle, etc., within the narrative conceived as carrier bag/belly/box/house/medicine

bundle, may be seen as necessary elements of a whole which itself cannot be characterized either as conflict or as harmony, since its purpose is neither resolution nor stasis but continuing process.

Finally, it's clear that the Hero does not look well in this bag. He needs a stage or a pedestal or a pinnacle. You put him in a bag and he looks like a rabbit, like a potato.

That is why I like novels: instead of heroes they have people in them.

So, when I came to write science-fiction novels, I came lugging this great heavy sack of stuff, my carrier bag full of wimps and klutzes, and tiny grains of things smaller than a mustard seed, and intricately woven nets which when laboriously unknotted are seen to contain one blue pebble, an imperturbably functioning chronometer telling the time on another world, and a mouse's skull; full of beginnings without ends, of initiations, of losses, of transformations and translations, and far more tricks than conflicts, far fewer triumphs than snares and delusions; full of space ships that get stuck, missions that fail, and people who don't understand. I said it was hard to make a gripping tale of how we wrested the wild oats from their husks, I didn't say it was impossible. Who ever said writing a novel was easy?

If science fiction is the mythology of modern technology, then its myth is tragic. "Technology," or "modern science" (using the words as they are usually used, in an unexamined shorthand standing for the "hard" sciences and high technology founded upon continuous economic growth), is a heroic undertaking, Herculean, Promethean, conceived as triumph, hence ultimately as tragedy. The fiction embodying this myth will be, and has been, triumphant (Man conquers earth,

space, aliens, death, the future, etc.) and tragic (apocalypse, holocaust, then or now).

If, however, one avoids the linear, progressive, Time's-(killing)-arrow mode of the Techno-Heroic, and redefines technology and science as primarily cultural carrier bag rather than weapon of domination, one pleasant side effect is that science fiction can be seen as a far less rigid, narrow field, not necessarily Promethean or apocalyptic at all, and in fact less a mythological genre than a realistic one.

It is a strange realism, but it is a strange reality.

Science fiction properly conceived, like all serious fiction, however funny, is a way of trying to describe what is in fact going on, what people actually do and feel, how people relate to everything else in this vast sack, this belly of the universe, this womb of things to be and tomb of things that were, this unending story. In it, as in all fiction, there is room enough to keep even Man where he belongs, in his place in the scheme of things; there is time enough to gather plenty of wild oats and sow them too, and sing to little Oom, and listen to Ool's joke, and watch newts, and still the story isn't over. Still there are seeds to be gathered, and room in the bag of stars.



on circlusion

what do you call the act of pushing a ring or a tube onto something, like a vagina encircling a dildo? the opposite of penetration? well, bini adamczak has a new term for us to denote just this: circlusion.

I wish to propose to you a new term, one that has been missing for a long time: "circlusion." It denotes the antonym of *penetration*. It refers to the same physical process, but from the opposite perspective. Penetration means pushing something – a shaft or a nipple – *into* something else – a ring or a tube. Circlusion means pushing something – a ring or a tube – *onto* something else – a nipple or a shaft. The ring and the tube are rendered active. That's all there is to it.

This word, circlusion, allows us to speak differently about certain forms of sex. We need it because the affliction of penetration still rules supreme over the heteronormative imaginary and its arbitrary division of bodies into "active" and "passive." The verb *to penetrate* evokes a non-reciprocal or at least unequally distributed process. The one who is penetrated is implied to be passive. More than that, being penetrated, like being screwed, is synonymous to being feeling disempowered.

To make matters worse, penetration exerts its disproportionate influence over the queer imaginary too. This is evident in contemporary mainstream porn but also in BDSM and so-called post-porn. The dildo and the penis function, almost unchallenged, as practical signs of power. Bewilderingly, this is also true among those of us who should be experts on power play. Dommies/doms of all genders tend to express their affinity with the figures of the dildo, the penis, and erect fingers of the hand. Subs associate themselves with the mouth, the vagina, the anus. Sometimes the vulva or the anus of a domme even appears as taboo. It's as if making use of these parts would have disempowering effects. Maybe not if they were confronted by a tongue, but definitely so if met with a dildo.

What matters, of course, is never a question of what parts a body possesses, rather, of which parts of that body are put into action. Practically everybody has an anus, but somebody who uses theirs sexually – in conjunction with a dildo, penis or hand – becomes a bottom, a sub, somebody passive. Almost everybody can afford a strap-on or a dildo, but a person who uses one *sexually*, as a rule, counts as a top or a dom – as active.

Stranger still is that a person who has genital sex, tensing their pelvic muscles all the while and vigorously rocking their hips, can nevertheless believe themselves to be the one who got fucked. This person is encouraged to think that they have 'bottomed' even if they were lying on top! Simply because they functioned as the bearer of the vagina or anus in relation to the possessor of the dildo/penis. The fantasy of penetration stays intact even when contradicted by all the facts.

It is contradictory feature of bourgeois ideology that effort gets causally associated with power precisely in a society premised on the opposite: power derives from the exploitation and appropriation of others' activeness. It's remarkable how quickly this supposed link between power and effort is forgotten where blowjobs are concerned... but that's beside the point. What concerns me here is that this direct link exists between penetrating and power. That's what has to go.

In our discourse about penetration we map its 'meaning' largely in connection with violence. The idea of penetration still dominates, unnecessarily, our understanding of what it means to *fuck*, and when we say *fuck the system*, for example, we don't have in mind a *nice* kind of annihilation or an experience of delicious plenitude. Penetration often conjures up forceful, conquest-related images – swords and sheaths, drills and holes, rods and sockets and suchlike. Mind you, circlusing isn't necessarily less violent, nor is it a guarantee of good sex. Thinking about fucking in a different way would simply mean that when we say *I'm being fucked by the system* we're saying we're getting *badly* fucked – badly circlused, for instance – or, more precisely, *not getting fucked at all*.

Technical as well as colloquial language tends to narrow penetration down to mean practices involving vaginas, anuses, penises, and dildos. Finger-in-butt and nipple-in-mouth play are often not referred to as penetrative sex. The word "circlusion" does not have to share this narrowness. On the contrary, it could cheerfully refer to the activity of a closed hand around a dildo, or of a vagina stretched over a fist, alike, as the act of "circlusing." But it doesn't *have* to serve us in this way. Since the meaning of a sign is only ever determined through its use, "circlusion" could equally take the place that "penetration" has hitherto occupied in culture, just without conjuring images that interfere so negatively with people actually having sex.

Think of the moment when you were taught in school how to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted infections. No one would ever think of trying to push the banana *into* the freshly unwrapped condom, would they? But the task of correctly applying a condom is easy when you think of it as unrolling the tube onto the banana. Indeed, circlusion is an extremely common experience of everyday life. Think of how a net catches fish, how gums envelop their food, how a nutcracker crunches nuts, or how a hand encircles a joystick, a bottle of beer...

In German, the word "penetrating" (*penetrant*) is a synonym of another adjective – *aufdringlich* (which means pushy or overpowering). But *aufdringlich* is made up of the idea of pushing-through (*dringen*) together with the prefix 'auf' (over/onto). To penetrate or be *aufdringlich*, then, is about pushing over/onto someone – that is, circlusion! *Penetrant* should really mean *eindringlych* instead, where the prefix *ein* stands for in/into.

O workers of the anus and the mouth, of the vagina and the hand, I say to you: be *aufdringlich*! Whoever so wishes can, needless to say, finesse the usage and practice of circlusion and put forward sub-distinctions. Say, rotating a bolt into a nut is penetration; rotating the nut onto the bolt, circlusion... In fact, both processes are happening at the same time.

The term "circlusion" enables articulation of experiences we have been living for a very long time. Adopting it is no hindrance to those of us who shall continue to employ our open hands, vaginas, anuses or mouths in the business of getting fucked. What'll be new is the fact that outstretched fingers, penises, dildos and fists can *also* be used for that very purpose. Not that we weren't all doing this already. The only element that was missing until now was the word to describe some of what we're doing. 'Circlusion', of course, is the official word we might reach for when talking to a lawyer or a doctor. In bed with a playmate, it may behoove us to develop something snappier and equivalent like 'gulfing,' 'circling,' 'gulfing,' or simply: 'nutting.'

We often think of feminist vocabulary and speech practice as a highly complicated matter. The word "circluse," however, is easy to learn and simple to use. Look: I circluse, you circluse, she/he/they/it is circlusing, we circluse, her dick is being circlused, his ass is circlusing their hand. And above all, it is much more handy than its counterpart. Penetration has four whole syllables; circlusion only three. We'll end up saving valuable time while talking. Time which we can invest in fucking.

Translation by Sophie Lewis. Sophie is a queer communist and sometimes politics teacher who has written things for Blind Field, Mute, Jacobin, New Inquiry, and Antipode. She co-translated Bini's *Communism for Children from German* (forthcoming 2017). She grew up in France and is currently a PhD student at Manchester University.



Bini Adamczak works (preferably not too much) as an author, performer and visual artist. Her book *Communism for Children* will be published in English by MIT Press in Spring 2017. She studied philosophy in Frankfurt and now lives in Berlin. Like many girls in her position, she dreams about doing something "real" or "with her hands" – for example, to make a revolution. You can find her on [Facebook](#).

a practice/

a score/

some moving thoughts/

some thoughts for moving/

Rebounding, as a practice, is to press your body against something. Something being anything that is, for at least the moment of pressing, not you (the something does not necessarily have to be Other). You press your body against something, this press locates the edge of both you and something (a temporary or not, not you), these edges give form to an outside and an inside. The rebounding practice uses proximity as the material, working with distance and intimacy, to compose a reality (and/or an unreality). The press comes first, the rebound second, yet the gap between the press and the rebound may slip depending on the something.

The rebounding action composes relations through simultaneous intimacy and resistance. Rebounding can be practiced within both concrete and imagined spaces, you can press yourself against a thought, or a wall, you can play with an indifference to the something's difference. Not everything will resist your body, not everything is an outside.

It is important that the rebounding and production of edges does not slide into a kind of practice of territorialisation. Instead the practice should insist on a dynamic participation of edges, and to encourage plasticity of the edges themselves. To question how different materials can both give and take form from those they rebound. The force required for the rebound is co-produced by you and the something, the body is not the only active agent. This plasticity offers a reactionary relationship between materials, through rebound, materials can become both discrete and relational. The rebounding gives form; through its production of edges, and it produces relation; through the force of meeting. It can be thought upon as a technique of mapping, or a method for collaboration; a working together not through compromise but through specificities and force meeting.

The rebounding makes it possible for different materials to co-produce experience without giving way to one another. It makes a dynamic relation.

A story/

A speculation/

I was recently visiting my family, my parents were in the process of moving house and had endless errands to run, so I accompanied them. I was noticing my father walking around knocking on things he passed by. We walked past a table in a café and with his hand he would knock onto it making it sound, walking past a wall in a shopping centre and the same with his hand, walking past a mailbox, a chair, another wall, a building, a signpost. At first this action was merely annoying. But somehow through the action's persistence I came to understand it was not so much of a habit, as it was my father's way of walking through the world. I asked him why he was always knocking on things around

him. Without so much as a moment's pause he responded: "I am just walking past and something is there."

It seemed to me that this gesture was not one of obsessive compulsion but a literal inaction of a process most of us partake in. Simply feeling the edge of yourself, locating an outside, an away, and thus constructing a reality. The resounding knock of my father's hand on a table, wall, whatever, is a practice of separation and connection. A gesture that both forms his world and forms his relation to his world. . It strikes me as a particularly tactile approach to meeting the world. He reconciles the distance and difference he experiences between his world and his body not through thought, but through his body. He repeatedly performs this knocking action, his body and the world at once meeting and rebounding.

My father passes a table, knocks on it firmly, it sounds, the table resists his press, it presses in fact back into his hand. His reality stabilised as he moves onto the next object he might pass by. As he walks he continues. The knocking is somehow mapping him into the world, anchors and lines of rebound that both follow and precede him. I started to imagine a tensile structure forming between each knock. An elastic formation connecting my father with his own outside, his reality. A taut web relying entirely on rebound and resistance. I thought for a moment what would happen if rather than the objects resisting, if his hand would slide right through a wall, his hand and the wall not separating and rebounding but meeting, enmeshing matter. How would he continue walking? I read somewhere that statistically (one in a very large number) it could be possible to press your hand through a table and pull it back out, both your hand and the table intact, something about gamma rays and solidity. I wanted to tell my father this fact, but it somehow seemed too violent. If he was to think about this possibility for the world to not resist his body, it could be that this once joyful and simple knocking may be infected with crippling anxiety.

I then spent the next week with my father noticing his knocking, feeling somehow also stabilised by it. I began to think of not exactly what this action produces but the qualities that it enacts. It was a complex action, initially I thought of it as violence, forcing his reality to resist his own body. But my assumption was naïve, the action comes with force, but it also enacts a particular intimacy with his world. He touches the world, for one moment his body contacting the world, letting the world press back into him and then moving on. When I came to this thought the sound of his knocking somehow also changed. In my first observations the sound of the body object rebound would cause a flinch, the sound of resistance and hard surfaces. But somehow without anything changing the sound was altogether different, the knocking sounded as a vibration, a signal of distinct connectedness.

I stayed thinking about the intimacy in this gesture, the contact my father needed. It was a gesture of both separation and meeting, the paradox of intimacy. Intimacy requires a kind of precise distinction between entities, to know where your body ends and the body of another might begin. To know what is inside and what is outside, to know where to press for resistance and what to fold into yourself. From these distinctions one may bring the edges close to one another, they may meet and stay that way, or not. But the edges are instrumental in the possibility for intimacy.

I went to the beach with my father and noticed he didn't knock on the mountain that led down to the shore; he didn't knock on the sand or the water. It was curious to me where and why his knocking stopped, or what it was that required his knocking. I wanted to make a list, an inventory of what composed my father's reality, but exhausted my attention too quickly. So instead I speculated: The objects my father knocked upon, were generally built by humans, or used by humans, would last a duration not incomparable to my father's own duration, and occupied space that my father could measure with centimetres and metres. This is his scale, the size and time of the world that he can empathise with, through touching. It could be possible that a mountain is too big and its duration too long to resist in the moment of my father's knock. The ocean's edges too distant for any possibility for his knock to form an anchor. The ocean instead would take his hand, water meeting his skin, pores opening, water slightly swelling his flesh. His hand could move within the ocean, as the ocean also moves into his hand. This relationship could not stabilise him. Neither my father nor I swam.

The mountain would not notice his knock and the ocean would not resist, how is it then that the mountain and ocean form my father's world as distinct from his own body? The rebounding he experienced from other entities (table, chair, wall etc) could not be found here. I wondered how my father could form the edge of his body in relation to the mountains and oceans. It was clear to observe that my father was not distressed by their lack of resistance, they still somehow composed an outside, a world. I could imagine that the kind of world that is composed by entities that do not resist the body, splits off from that which resists: a double world. A reality composed of multiple worlds; in which his body passes through and rebounds. I am somehow not making a split between nature and objects, for a mountain is also an object. Its thingness, for me, is not of question; moreover it is the way these entities open into the body which divides the worlds. The ocean moving into the hand makes composing an outside rather complicated. An interior outside, the ocean and other alike bodies form an exterior in which he is inside.

I didn't ask my father if anything changed after I asked him why he had been knocking. I was curious, but was then busy with speculation rather than research, or was just tired of observing him. My body practiced its own knocking, it was continually composing an outside, producing edges and distance from which intimacy and all other expressions could play out.

[wall/hand]

Press your hand against a wall, press really hard, feel the wall press back, this is not about violence, don't break the wall. Take your hand away, the wall is not you.

[hand/water] or [hand><water]

Prepare a bucket or a large bowl of water and place on a hard surface. Gently press your palm into the water, at first contacting the water with your whole palm, slowly press into the water. The rebound strategy of the water is to escape the space of the hand. Repeat this gesture, feel the water escaping around the hand. If you leave your hand in the water for some time, you may notice the rebound becomes weak, the water and the hand may become more similar, hand less not water and water less not hand. Take your hand out.

[writing/dancing]

Write something and then perform a dance move (some examples can be taken from youtube if needed).

Perform the dance move and then write the same something down.

Think you are writing the same something and perform the dance move, think you are performing the dance move and write the same something down. Repeat.

[writing/dancing] For two people:

Simultaneously one person writes something down and one person performs a dance move. The person writing thinks they are performing the dance move, and the person dancing thinks they are writing the something down.

Repeat until you can feel precisely the gap between each other, try to leap across this gap, repeat.

The gap may be imagined as a valley, if this is interesting to you, through the dancing and writing you can imagine also the edges and surfaces that have formed a landscape either side of the valley.

[forest/touch]

Walk into a forest or something similar, it is good if you know the area a little, but not too much. Find yourself in a place that feels like the centre of the forest, close your eyes and come out.

[you/not you]

Paint a room all one colour, include walls, floor ceiling, windows, doors. Paint yourself exactly the same colour. Fall asleep in the room. Wake up in the room.

BY: CHLOE CHIGNELL

SOURCE: THIS CONTAINER

About the costume...

Inspired by GREAT dance artists...



But also excellent for camouflaging into things like:





Also hinting towards...



Downloaded from www.ActivityVillage.co.uk - Keeping Kids Busy

consequently:

Does the study of technologies of the self only serve to inform us about the changing boundaries between the private and the public spheres of the social field? Let's answer these questions in succession.

Having discovered the discursive relation between the truth about sexuality and the constitution of the subject in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Foucault comes to the notion of "truth games" as specific techniques, guided by a set of rules that human beings use to understand themselves and produce truth. In comparison to ideology, technology is a rather neutral term, as it designates a set of procedures that lead to a certain result. For Foucault, the term serves to explain philosophical discourse about the living praxis in antiquity, wherein the self is cultivated by the imperative to take care of oneself. In the Greco-Roman age, this practice is defined as an art of living, an aesthetics of existence, where the "care" involves a sort of work, an activity, an attention to and concern with something, a knowledge and a technique. Unlike later Christianity, which instilled a religious system of prohibitions upon the self-renouncing subject who prepared for the afterlife, the Greco-Roman "problem" could be formulated thus: which *tekhne* do I have to use in order to live well and live as I ought to live?²³⁹ The answer to why this *tekhne* pertains to the individual is that in the times of Socrates and Athenian democracy, taking care of one's own life (*tekhne tou biou*)—for the free citizens who participate in direct democracy—was to take care of the city, of his (not her) companions, all of whom rule the city. Thus, in one of the three arguments of his defense in *Apology*, Socrates says that when teaching people how to preoccupy themselves with themselves, meaning when he teaches them wisdom, truth, and the perfection of the soul, he also teaches them to occupy themselves with the city, how to be useful for the *polis*. Foucault stresses that various practices of reading, writing, speaking, corresponding, counselling, walking in the city, and so on, weren't exercises in solitude, but a true social practice. Hence, technologies of the self aim, first and foremost, to shape the subject as both a private and a political

238 J. Foucault, *Ethics*, 200. According to some of Foucault's commentaries

person in one, a citizen in whom the distinction between the private and the political is overcome by participation in the public as a civic activity. The idea that the care of the self centralizes the self beyond the city, in withdrawal from political life and in movement toward a concern with the self alone, only begins with the Epicureans and then culminates in Seneca, himself a fine example from the Roman period. Foucault explains it as a kind of "individualism" that, owing to an increasing detachment from the city and the political life on the part of Roman citizens who lived isolated from one another and more reliant on themselves, accords more importance to the private sphere of life and to the values of personal conduct.

In what sense could these past technologies of the self be accounted for as "performances" of the self? Foucault avoids qualifying them as performances, although when he examines the Christian technique of "exomologesis," whereby one is obliged to disclose oneself either to God or to the community, he describes the penitential rite as a theatrical self-presentation involving a dramatic recognition of the sinner's status as penitent whose public confession of sins bears witness against herself. Although practiced in the private domain where one's care of the body includes physical exercise or food regimes, or meditation, the Greco-Roman technologies of the self involve communication with others, an obligation to reciprocally exchange "soul service." Yet, the reason for considering them as performances of the self lies elsewhere, in the very act of observance, in the reflection of showing that one is doing to oneself, in devising externally, through thought, the principles of action according to which the actions are then evaluated. Thus, Foucault's metaphor of the money changer in Epictetus brings to mind the proceduralist logic: "as soon as an idea comes to mind you have to think of the rules you must apply to evaluate it."²⁴⁰ What makes techniques of the self difficult to discern is their invisibility, conditioned by their lack of material apparatus, Foucault argues; but this doesn't make them less an issue of performance. The sense and function of the technology of the self as a performance of the self has changed over history, from the aestheticization of life in the ancient Greco-Roman cultivation of the self to self-mastery, self-renunciation, and self-sacrifice in Christianity, to the modern (nonascetic) subject of knowledge who accesses truth by way of direct evidence, or common sense (according to which she is the autonomous founder of knowledge), all the way to the psychoanalytic techniques of the twentieth century. However, a major shift is noted from the Greek care of the self as the city to the Roman concern with the self only, which prompted Foucault's interlocutors to ask him if the latter is just an "early version of self-absorption, which many consider a central problem in our society." Foucault denies this:

From: PUBLIC SPHERE BY PERFORMANCE by Bojana Cvejic and Ana Vujanovic

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