

Art of Begegnung*

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Performance Art as a picture of events that constitutes the society. The gesture of Black Market. In 1978 and 1979 I was inspired by some words and events that became essential for my activities and led me to the art of performance and to the Art of Begegnung : Antonin Artaud wrote : "... the principal rules behave like dolphins, they rise up, show themselves for a short moment to vanish again into the darkness of the waters" .. mais d'une autre realite dangereuse et typique, ou les Principes, comme les dauphins, quand ils ont montré leur tête s'empresent de rentrer dans l'obscurité des eaux. (A.Artaud:le théâtre et son double/ le théâtre alchimiste/ idees/ gallimard). This is for me the purest definition of Performance Art.

Geogre Brecht, Robert Fillou : "If you want to know something you should spend your time with somebody who knows something. The books of Martin Buber : "Ich und Du" and "Der Balschem". I met Fluxus, the bushmen speak of the dream that I myself am dreaming! The thought, or maybe the idea is that nothing in the world is intended or found by one person alone. This thought, which developed out of my occupation with alchemy and the theory of Buddhism was and still is the gravitation to all my activities.

The Art of Meeting can be shaped in performance art, in installation art, conferences, living sculptures, lectures, and any different forms in the field of life and art.

In 1975 with 5 others we set up the communication tube archive. This work entailed a maximum of mental energy and information, in exchange for a minimum of materialisation. It was a mistake, but it gave me a basic sense of, maybe a new definition of performance as art and the first step to set up a network in both a physical and mental form. I was cofounder of the Kunstlerhaus Hamburg in 1977 and in 1978 the Kleinen Ausstellungsraum, which we developed as a space to continually show installation and performance art in Germany at this time. In November and December, 1979 I organised a series of exhibitions, installations, concerts and performances with the title "Two months of experimental work". I carefully looked for different forms of co-operation, the behaviour of couples and groups and other possibilities of interaction.

The following questions interested me : What are the forms of invitation, what could be the framing conditions (padeluum & Rena Tangens) which do not create a hierarchy in the "Begegnung" and does not reduce it to conflicts in relationships, to interdependencies and normal group processes, but instead of this normal group problems create new pictures? (the condition is the picture). What pictures are really interactive? What is the real basis of Performance Art that shows itself as a picture, which is a picture, and how can Performance Art distinguish itself from normal daily actions? (Project: Allotropy of daily life).

I met the group Minus Delta T, Mike Hentz and Karel Dudesek, and I got to know the monthly Life-Project - Kunoldstr. 34, organised by J. O. Olbrich. I met Kees Mol and I met Carola Reiss. She founded the project Gastehaus (guest house) in the artists-run space which was located in the Kunstlerhaus Hamburg. Engelmann lived with us for three months and we created the concept for "Das Konzil", the concepts for the nomads and for

the emigration pieces. Reindeer Werk performed their piece Prediction in Hamburg and Hanover. Tordoir Narciss told me the story of Today's Place in Antwerpen, and I met Jacques van Poppel. In 1981 live situations between 10 and 30 days. In September together with the Kunstlerhaus Stuttgart, I organised "Das Konzil". 70 people (40 of them invited guests) were confronted with each other, sitting around The Table which had been specially created for this situation. The guests were chosen from people I had met during the previous three years organising in the Kleinen Ausstellungsraum in Hamburg. The most important influences in this Tool Group were Harrie de Kroon, Mike Hentz, Jacques van Poppel, Franklin Alders, Firma Bender & Nern, and Bernhard Schwarz. The Tool Group was an open, nomadic and chaotic system of Performance Art, existing in parallel to the Panoramagruppe (dealing with nomadic performances), the Stil-Gruppe (talking and speech performances) and open groups like Quasi Mythische Orte (Quasi Mythic Locations) who organised performance travels, for example to the Canalisation of Stuttgart, the jail of Stammheim and to the highway during the daily 'stop-and-go' in the rush hour.

In May 1982 I continued Das Konzil during a 30 day event. 10 days in the Kunstlerhaus, Hamburg in the Kleiner Ausstellungsraum, and, at the same place, 10 days of seclusion. After this followed an open live-situation with Marina Kern and the Theater Dankert with two containers from overseas in the street and in the theatre space.

The idea for a Performance Art network was first born there. In the same year Die Schwarze Lade of the Konzil was published for the first time. This sculpture of public interest has three sections (1997) :

- a. Information about alternative art spaces, projects with political works, interaction projects, and network ideas.
- b. Materials for developing ideas, definitions, pictures and objects, which are free for use in interactive projects.
- c. The archive of Performance Art with 500 dossiers, literature, reviews, articles etc.

In 1983 I gave up the artists'-run space in order to be more mobile. Together with the company Bender & Nern, Marina Kern, Kyoko Shimono and Bernhard Schwarz we founded the Projektkunst e.V. The most important work was the installation of MOBICOBU, containers which could be moved as mobile live-situations for various projects. Die Stifter was founded which organised the project Das Fest in Cologne in the autumn. I met Norbert Klassen and Zbigniew Warpechowski, I also met Raoul Marek, Res Ingold and Ralf Samens. During 1984 and after there were interactive projects with different people and changing interventions. The idea of an open group was growing. I thought of seven people, an association which should be more solid than the previous groups but also have the interactive moment of Begegnung.

In 1985 I saw the theatre group THEAT and the philosophical performance programme of the Aufmerksamkeitsschule of Zygmunt Piontowski and I met Tomas Ruller and also Jurgen Fritz, whom I invited for a performance. Then there were seven of us, and in the discourse with Piontowski we founded the name Black Market for these particular meetings. The name should not represent the group but the principal ideas of the work.

In 1986 I organised the first series of Black Market events. I also founded the performance association ASA. The structure of ASA is the opposite to that of Black Market but, like Black Market, refers to the idea of Das Konzil: the Service. The first presentation of ASA was at the festival NO WALL in Bologna and the first hosts together with padeluun were Rena Tangens, Raoul Marek, Peter Meier and Ute Meta Bauer. ASA and Black Market were invited to take part in Documenta VIII in 1987. ASA European was founded in 1990 and organised different performance meetings and events, and also developed the performance art network and different projects by the temporary members of ASA.

Nigel Rolfe and Roi Vaara first worked with Black Market as guests in Poznan, Poland in 1988, and then as members from 1989, it was now Black Market International. Also in 1988 Pio Trowski left the group and there were further changes in 1990 when Tomas Ruller left and Alastair MacLennan joined the group. There were many cooperations and meetings with for example Neue Horizonte and other guests.

In 1993 Black Market International invited 15 international artists for the performance piece Empedokles in the framing programme of Documenta IX. ASA organised the project 100 days of service, the Quantenpool Koln, with Peter Farkas, Bernd v.d. Brincken, Van Gogh TV and 3Sat TV etc. I initiated the founding of the Permanent-Performance-Konference in November, 1995 - connections between theory and practice as performance. Since its foundation there have been three conferences in Cologne, one in Hamburg 1997, Bangkok, 1997, Berlin, 1998 and Glarus/CH in 1999.

My statement about Black Market International is to enable it every time and to develop this principle away from all force of habit. All philosophical statements can be found in the black magazine which we produced in 1991 and in my text about "Network and its Structure".

* There is no good translation for the German "Begegnung". It relies on the definition of "communitas" described by V. Turner in his book "From Ritual to Theatre".

