Everybody Counts

The Aesthetics of Production in Higher Artistic Education and Performance Art Collectives.

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Cecilie Ullerup Schmidt

My writing is dedicated to the students of *Dance, Context, Choreography* at HZT in Berlin in the years 2011–2016 who moved me to start noting down my concerns regarding the art student and conditions of the independent performance artist. One of you, choreographer Martin Hansen, recently said to me that he looks back at those years thinking that we were the 'Frankfurt School' of dance. Indeed, to me, you are all a main source of critical thinking and practice.

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INTRODUCTION

PRELUDE

Performing the Production Conditions

Berlin 2015: Renen Itzhaki, student of *Dance, Context, Chroeography* at the Inter-University of Dance in Berlin, presents a competitive game named *Collecting Points*, a performance explicitly reflecting on the production conditions of young artists trained during education: in a set-up similar to chicken picking corn in a poultry farm, the audience collects small paper dots of different colours corresponding to the modules needed for attaining 180 ECTS points and a bachelor degree. Each audience member, instructed to be a 'BA student' on their[1] degree course in *Dance, Context, Choreography*, is literally picking up small dots of coloured paper next to other 'students'. Their task in the performance game is to fulfil the expectations set by the Bologna Process: in their individual progressions, 'students' must pick the right number of ECTS points in each module, pass the standardised assessments of movement and reflection and be on time in their total activity.

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[1] Disclaimer:

I use the non-binary singular gender pronouns 'they', 'them' and 'theirs' when writing about unspecified persons or general figures such as 'the artist' or 'the student'. I do this partly because some of the people I am citing and/or to whom I am referring use these pronouns to refer to themselves, and partly in order to acknowledge the position of non-binary and queer persons excluded both within the Western historical 'he' and the feminist strategic 'she'. However, as the grammatical consensus is not completely set yet, I write 'they are' but 'the artist is', meaning that I write the verb according to the latest reference in the syntax.
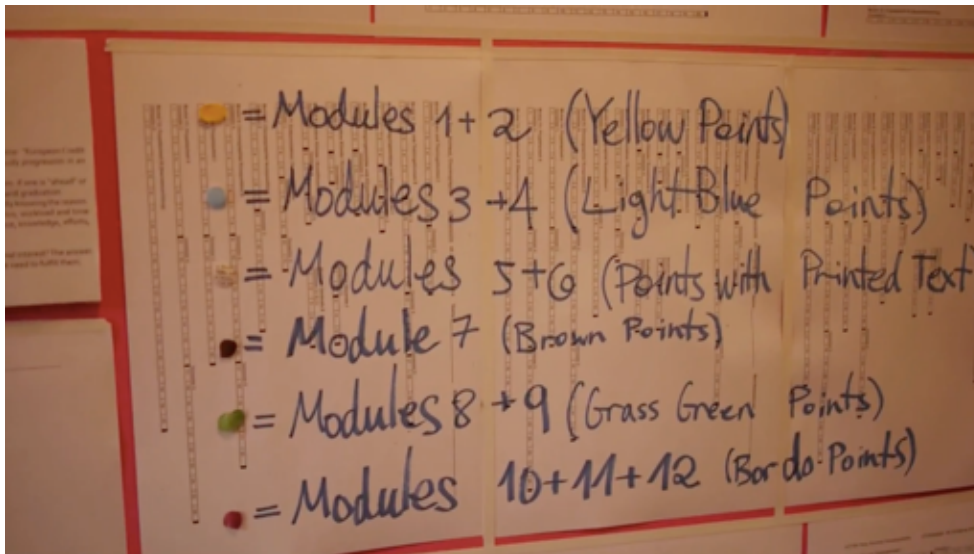
Film stills from Collecting Points (2015) *by Renen Itzhaki documenting how audiences pick module points and giving an overview of the modules.*

In a high-speed format, the desired bachelor degree in *Dance, Context, Choreography* can be obtained by audiences exercising the most important education skills: collecting points, sorting out the quantified differences of the modules (by colour) and going through individual assessments. Itzhaki rhetorically asks what the relation between standardised production conditions and artistic expression might be: "And then there is the main question: how do we choose the courses that we choose? We have been told to be 'in time'. But what does it mean to be in time? I would say everyone here is in time, but maybe we are behind the system."[2]

I understand the character of Itzhaki's work as artistic work commenting on its frame of production: it is an artwork exposing the infrastructures within artistic education rather than being about, let us say, the 'migration crisis' or 'the relation between fiction and reality'. His work presents both a portrait of the working conditions of the young artist and a critique of the new technologies of work and of the self, implemented through the Bologna Process. Consequently, thinking about how structures determine artistic conditions and 'autonomy' must call for a revision of the aesthetics of production: it is time to rethink and theorise how art is made.

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[2] Renen Itzhaki, *Collecting Points,* videodocumentation of performance, https://vimeo.com/128887497, 04:22-04:36.

PREFACE

Giving an Account of Oneself

When I was teaching at The University of the Arts in Berlin for five years, I often heard the students talking about 'being behind on points'. What they referred to was the stressful factor of accumulating enough European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) points during their education. They were preoccupied with being on time in the future progress of their education and fitting the expectations of professional diversity prescribed in the study regulations. Contrary to the still vivid myth of the isolated artist genius creating his sublime *oeuvre* out of pure inspiration, the students in Berlin were structurally determined by the working conditions of their school as they were trained in numeric and narrative self-accountancy. They were preoccupied with an economised form of work where everything counts as work in life.

What counts as work? The question was raised by feminists in the 1970s who demystified the romanticised relation to reproductive and affective labour in the household and demanded wages for housework. More than asking for a monetary reimbursement, it was about politicising what is recognised as work and what is not, what is accounted for as value and what is ideologically constructed as natural talent and desire. Learning to count hours and fill out timesheets paradoxically resonates with this: on one hand, it is a way to get recognition for invisible work and on the other hand, a technology of self-management and an economisation of all spheres of life.

The artist as worker has in recent years been explored in the context of structural precarisation of the cultural worker. The artist, it turns out, is not working in isolation with their original talent and is not performing genius. Rather, the artist has become a good manager of time, economy and relations, good at accountancy and counting hours in the merging grounds of work and life. Accordingly, since the implementation of the Bologna Process in higher artistic education, the art student is increasingly trained in self-managing technologies. Yet, is the artist perhaps still expected to provide artworks in original ways, educated as if it is possible to be both a manager and a genius?

In this PhD, I propose to revisit the contradictions within historical and current aesthetics of production. Let us take a look at how Kantian idealism imagined the artist to work and compare it with how artists are currently trained to become the workers of the future. How much natural 'talent' is presumed? Which skills and competences are they supposed to obtain? What is the temporality of their work? What technologies of the self are they expected to embody? What sociality does the art school currently propose? And how do artists respond to the technologies of artistic work taught in school, when they exit and start producing as professionals?

Yet before I unfold my analysis of artistic educations, students' organisation and infrastructural performances by young *alumnae*, and before I position myself within aesthetic theory on what produces art, I will look at how self-accountancy dates back to early capitalism in the 18th Century. In this excursion to the historical beginnings of the credit economy I present a figure within fiction that resonates with the practices of contemporary artistic work. Here comes the ghost of Western self-management, a specialist in making an account of its own work.

Robinson Crusoe's Narrative and Numeric Accounts

Daniel Defoe's novel and eponymous character Robinson Crusoe (1719) is both in literary history and economics referred to as the prototype of the *homo economicus*. And like Adam Smith and David Hume, Karl Marx follows the tradition and includes Crusoe in his economic model:

> Of his prayers and the like we take no account, since they are a source of pleasure to him, and he looks upon them as so much recreation. In spite of the variety of his work, he knows that his labour, whatever its form, is but the activity of one and the same Robinson, and consequently, that it consists of nothing but different modes of human labour. Necessity itself compels him to apportion his time accurately between his different kinds of work. Whether one kind occupies a greater space in his general activity than another, depends on the difficulties, greater or less as the case may be, to be overcome in attaining the useful effect aimed at. This our friend Robinson soon learns by experience, and having rescued a watch, ledger, and pen and ink from the wreck, commences, like a true-born Briton, to keep a set of books. His stock-book contains a list of the objects of utility that belong to him, of the operations necessary for their production; and lastly, of the labour time that definite quantities of those objects have, on an average, cost him. (Karl Marx: *Capital* [1867])[3]

Like a post-Fordist worker, Crusoe is exercising self-management, self-surveillance, self-governance when recording his work for himself in writing and numbers, being his own boss and own employee on the deserted island. His measurement of work is in time and his records are collected in his journal. Crusoe is partly quoting labour conventions – deciding on the rhythm of the week, Sundays off, as we

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[3] Karl Marx, *Capital,* vol. 1. (2015), 50, https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Capital-Volume-I.pdf

discover – and partly self-instituting the frames and temporalities in which he operates. His work is subjected to the challenges of living in isolation and the memory of how to keep a good household. It seems that Crusoe has found a way to keep himself busy despite the absence of a surrounding culture: if he is not explicitly hunting, butchering, or carving wood, he is doing the immaterial work of praying or the bureaucratic work of writing and bookkeeping.

In the quotation I find a few concepts and distinctions from Marx which can provide the point of departure for my further analysis of subjectivation through self-documentation. I propose to look at narrative and numeric accounts of oneself: what is told, memorised and reformulated in writing and in speech, and what is listed, protocolled, put into timelines and measured in hours. I would claim that the ways of accounting, the relationship between narrative and numeric accountancies, lead to specific knowledge about work, time and subjectivation in different historical contexts.

It is remarkable that the relation between work and time is "noted in a book", in letters and numbers. Crusoe, as an early industrial worker, clocks in and out of his own factory. He makes an account of himself, invents and fills out his own timesheets. Time is value for Crusoe and he calculates how much time all kinds of work costs him. In Defoe's novel, the word "account" gets a high score. When I try to *mine* the word in my digital version of the novel, "account" appears 49 times[4]. Crusoe's accounts stand for personal narratives and numeric measurements.[5] The personal narratives are connected to memory, confession and testimony, something he remembers, passes on to somebody he meets or something he writes down: "I wrote the English captain's widow a full account of all my adventures" (p. 56) or "I must now give some little account of myself" (p. 56, p. 98). Giving an account in narrative form is something Crusoe does daily in his journal, as well as in church and at the harbour, in writing and in speech. The personal narrative is often about being trustworthy and creditable, legitimising what he is doing. The novel itself is continuously referred to as his account: a long, narrative presentation of his life and adventures.

The numeric accounts are measurements related to time, work, value-accumulation and even gold. Crusoe is keeping his books, counting his working hours each day, noting down meretriciously all details concerning date, clock time, activity, duration. "I lost a day in my account", he confesses regretfully (p. 150) and thereby assures his otherwise truthful records. Crusoe does not try to

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[4] I refer to and quote from the digital copy of the novel. However, regarding the wording and use of 'account,' I have cross-read the digital copy with the printed copy of the novel.
Digital version of *Robinson Crusoe* (Planet Publish, 2011 [1719]): http://www.planetpublish.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Robinson_Crusoe_BT.pdf
Printed book employed: Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (Oxford University Press, 2007 [1719]).
[5] Media anthropologist Wolfgang Ernst uses a conceptual pairing similar to mine when, in his media history *Digital Memory and the Archive* (2013), he develops a transition from *erzählen* (narrating) to *zählen* (counting).

overrate his own abilities as a worker – which also makes his account seem creditable, by the way. He compares his forced craftsmanship on the isolated island to estimated professional labour time: "I was full two and forty days in making a board for a long shelf, which I wanted in my cave; whereas, two sawyers, with their tools and a saw-pit, would have cut six of them out of the same tree in half a day" (p. 182). Crusoe hereby reflects on the efficiency of professionalised work. The way he counts when he compares labour time between unskilled and skilled workers is similar to the rhetoric in Marx's later analysis of "The Two-fold Character of the Labour Embodied in Commodities", chapter 1.2 in *Capital* (1887 [1867]). For Marx a commodity entails matter – material such as textile linen – and labour time. For example, a fabricated coat is worth 20 yards of linen, despite only containing 10 yards of material. Here Marx compares the labour time of different products. He explains how a commodity has *use value* in the sense of labour time spent producing the commodity as well as the market-dependent *exchange value*. What Defoe lets his protagonist reflect on, a century before Marx, is how Crusoe, in the absence of civilisation, works for a disproportionally long time on a plank of wood compared to its quotidian exchange value. When Crusoe accounts for the difference between his working hours making a shelf as an amateur on a deserted island in relation to professional and well-equipped carpenters, he uses the numeric account as a tool for comparison. The (rhetorically) honest and transparent numeric account is thereby a proposal to *compare* the relativity of time behind exchange value and shed light on civilisation's need for exchange commodities. Crusoe is, in his numeric accounts, continuously navigating an economic model.[6] His labour measured in isolation is documented for a future account.

As Crusoe, after 35 years on the island, returns to England and civilisation, he receives an account of his investments in the colonies in Brazil. This is an explicit example of financial accounting of value accumulated over time: "He brought me an account of the first six years' income of my plantation (…) I found by this account, that every year the income considerably increased" (p. 450). The investment in the colonies have literally borne fruit and he receives "the rest of the whole account in gold" (p. 454). The different kinds of numeric accounts are related to time and value, if not concretely money. Some value is produced and measured in Crusoe's present for a future assessment and some value is accumulated over time in the colonies. Crusoe counts, measures and compares. He works on his credibility, invests and cashes in. Throughout Crusoe's life in isolation and in civilisation he performs the accounting practices of *homo economicus*.

Now, how do these two modes of narrative and numeric account interact in the novel? Interestingly, the narrative and numeric account intermingle as two modes of documentation. What the

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[6] As brilliantly proposed by literature scholar Mary Poovey, Defoe even trains the reader to think economically. Defoe wrote Crusoe's *memoires* in order to entertain and instruct, to "incite virtuous behaviours that would enhance commercial success" (2008, 100).

two accounts have in common is that they present what is left behind – tracking and confessing – which Crusoe has learned partly from mapping space and time sailing across the smooth space of the oceans[7] and partly through being a good Christian practitioner. Crusoe holds on to experiences and hours spent writing his books. It is a way of confirming, making his existence legible. Together with J.L. Austin's theory on performative utterances, I would describe his constative utterances as performative. He comes into being through writing everything down. He documents his life to an implied reader whom he often addresses. Crusoe imagines company through the act of writing, he places value on his everyday existence by documenting that he actually does things, that progress and change are happening on the island, that each day in isolation is different. In this way, there is a kind of legitimation in the gesture of documentation as if he were awaiting a future assessment. Through accounting, Crusoe justifies his efforts and makes his performance trustworthy. Although he often flirts with the possibility of the reader discrediting the quality of his work, Crusoe's quantified life is *not* "unaccountable" (p. 289).

Departing from one of the most canonised and discussed 18th Century novels, *Robinson Crusoe* might seem 'off track' in order to outline the aesthetics of production in the context of artistic education and beyond. Yet the stereotyped *homo economicus* figure of Robinson Crusoe is rhetorically installed at the beginning of my dissertation in order to insist on a close reading of the materiality of self-publishing genres, and the historicity of work and different forms of subjectivation. Crusoe's performance and production of the self through accounting reveals important motifs. First of all, Crusoe's journal – his narrative and numeric bookkeeping – is a governing production of the self which invites us to look at different genres of self-publication. Secondly, his written documentation of the past in order to profit in the future will lead me to discuss the temporality in the relationship between (self-)assessment and self-production. And finally, Crusoe's all-encompassing economisation of life as work will help me define and historicise concepts of contemporary production conditions.

Create Your Own Profile

Giving an account of oneself – whether in writing or in numbers – is a way of becoming a subject through a representational form which is both aesthetic and social. The most popular form of self-publication today is probably the online profile in social media: a daily and continuous update of social, commercial, affective and political attachments is unfolded through writing, 'likes' and images. In the online profile on Facebook or Instagram the narrative stories and the numeric accounts of 'likes',

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[7] Crusoe says about accounting as a skill when sailing: "I got a competent knowledge of the mathematics and the rules of navigation, learned how to keep an account of the ship's course, take an observation, and, in short, to understand some things that were needful to be understood by a sailor," p. 25.

shares, tags and retweets, of friends and followers, co-produce the subject or 'persona'.[8] Also, the visual narrative through photos, gifs and videos has become a major component in self-publication. The publication of oneself through media is not particularly new: "Individuals have been mediating themselves via communication technologies in perpetuity from rock painting, portraits, journals and letters, to ham radio call signs, autobiographies, and social media profiles."[9] Rather, the genres of exactly how we publish ourselves – through which technologies we publish, their inherent censorship and the temporalities in which it happens – are where we find the specificity and historicity of the subject. In a medium like Instagram remarkable pictures and rating numbers dominate, whereas the written word is the major way of accounting on Twitter. Compared to Crusoe's daily 'updates' in his journal books, an archiving medium to be read again and again in the future, the temporality has speeded up with hourly updates and ephemeral 'stories' automatically disappearing after 24 hours. Which other aesthetic and social forms are currently forming our identity at the border between the private and public sphere? In which temporalities do these forms operate?

I am concerned with the production conditions of art students and professional performance artists. Yet the practice of registering Robinson Crusoe's life as work deserves to be revisited when looking at the contemporary art student and artist worker. I claim to find an extreme case of creating and professionalising one's own profile in the particular educations of performance artists. Here, the raw material of the art form is the artists themselves, their dreams and imagination, and the artistic product carried by their own performing bodies. This happens in education through different forms of accounting in order to be employable in a market of competition and inconstancy. The technologies I look at are reoccurring, self-publishing genres such as documentation, evaluation and assessment. When the performance artist becomes professional, the ability to constantly evaluate themself is a structural demand: they have to quantify their work in application templates and documentation forms, and they have to create a self-narration in the continuously revisited bio. Professional ways of working – on the one hand, in projects with their deadlines, presentations, and documentations, on the other hand, in a constant occupation, day and night – induce standardised and contradictory temporalities into artistic work. However, instead of focusing on the work of professional

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[8] The academic research areas of Persona and Celebrity Studies within Media Studies are at the forefront when including qualitative data in the performance of subjectivity. According to prominent speculative philosophers such as Alfred North Whitehead, Alexander Galloway and Eugene Thacker, an ongoing "'nostalgia' for a time when there was no need for quantitative data about the self" is proven wrong, since a subject is always-already in a network of qualitative and quantitative data, and across media. Cf. Moore, Christopher, Barbour, Kim, and Lee, Katja: "Five Dimensions of Online Persona" in *Persona Studies* 2017, vol. 3, no. 1, 1.

[9] Ibid, 3.

performance artists as have many before me,[10] I depart from the institutionalised education of performance artists.[11]

In education generally, since there is a *training* at stake, I claim to find an idea of 'perfect' cases. These forms of training display technologies of the self and their historicity: the contemporary ideal of what kind of workforce is needed. The three technologies of documentation, evaluation and assessment have become more regular, standardised and legible through the implementation of the Bologna Process in higher artistic education. Essentially, new study regulations have been produced within recent years, operating in a standardised temporal economy of ECTS points and a new vocabulary of modules, documentation and artistic research. However, the demand to be explicit about learning outcomes also makes the difference between the content taught in education very recognisable. For example, the training of artists on BA-level degree courses within the two Danish institutions of performing arts and fine arts respectively, show that performing artists are trained in crafts whereas visual artists are trained in experimentation. The comparison of these two programmes also shows two distinct temporalities of students at work: within performing arts the schedule is set by the school and the hours of the day are divided into disciplines whereas the visual artists have time at their own disposal, responsible for managing days and weeks in the *atelier* only interrupted by occasional workshops or critique-sessions in groups with peers and professors. So, the Bologna Process provides legibility to artists' study in higher artistic education: the standardisation and differences in the training provides examples of co-existing technologies of work, where both project work and constant occupation, and standardised rhythm as well as complete absorption are at stake.

In parallel with the consequences of the implementation of the Bologna Process, particular and local responses arise in forms of collective organisation. In the everyday of study programmes – on the staff and students' side, and among *alumnae* students – I find resistance against accountancy, individualisation and careerism. These forms of resistance happen in the organisation of production and are informed by a Marxist feminist discourse on structural precarity and unrecognised work. I detect these forms of resistance in what I call *infrastructural performance*: an artistic and political way of collectively criticising technologies of work which are meant to enhance individualisation and competition. But inherent in these critiques are also strategies to perform new ways of producing. Consequently, as an answer to the imperative of constant self-accountancy and instead of creating one's own profile, the infrastructural performances are questioning: why create a profile? What is the

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[10] Theoreticians such as Luc Boltanski, Eve Chiapello, Paolo Virno, Bojana Kunst, Isabell Lorey and Angela McRobbie have demonstrated for more than a decade that artists and freelance cultural workers have long been living the 'role model' of work in structural precarity.

[11] I look across educations of dance, choreography, performing arts, performance, Applied Theatre Studies and visual arts since no education is yet dedicated specifically to performance art in northern Europe.

economy of a profile and who profits from it? Infrastructural performances are ways of disturbing the creditability of and speculation in building a profile and instead, having in common not to have a profile or start building new profiles collectively.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research Questions

I will look at temporalities of artistic work in educations and socialities in young professional performance art collectives, in order to propose a theory on materialist[12] aesthetics of production, that is, an aesthetic theory where not inspiration and originality, but time, money and sociality define the artistic production. This theoretical stance is a critique of Kantian heritage within aesthetics of production where the artist as a genius is still haunting. In the case studies throughout my thesis, art students and professional performance artists are quite distracted from the promised position of genius. I will observe both patterns and procedures from the everyday life of art students, as well as artworks made by performance artists exposing and changing their production conditions. Driven by the urge to find out how contemporary artistic education informs contemporary ways of working, and how this influences the concept of the aesthetics of production as well as the subjectivation of the artist, and the notion of the artworks itself, my research questions are:

1) In which ways are students in higher artistic educations of performance art within the Bologna Process trained to become the workers of the future and how does their formation encapsulate contemporary temporalities of work?

2) How can I develop a theory on a materialist aesthetics of production which includes temporality, economy and sociality as co-authoring aspects of the artwork?

3) In which ways do students, artists and artist collectives within performance art reproduce, comment on, criticise and change technologies of work?

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[12] I use historical materialism in the Marxist feminist tradition in my analysis of structural and institutional conditions of artistic work, and operate with the students and the artist workers as co-forming agents. The 'objects' of my analysis determine this methodological decision: rather than materials, textiles, haptics or ecologies, I focus on institutional structures, organisational forms and embodied performance. Consequently, I tend not to integrate theories from New Materialism into my theoretical apparatus, since, to my knowledge, the analysis of my chosen artefacts calls for a departure from a Marxist feminist materialism. However, figures travel between fields – scholars such as Lisa Baraitser and Julia Bryan-Wilson are definitely to be understood as representatives of both kinds of materialism.

An Anthology of Myself

To briefly prepare the reader for how this thesis is constructed, I will make a few notes regarding the article-based format. Within Theatre and Performance Studies and in the Department of Arts and Cultural Studies it is still rare to write an article-based dissertation. In writing such a dissertation, I have enjoyed being able to interact with different academic contexts, from Theatre and Performance Studies and Cultural Studies, to Critical Management Studies, Critical University Studies and Educational Research. Having eight years' experience of freelance work as a performance artist, research associate and curator, the project-mode of submitting case-based articles and having deadlines and responses from reviewers has both been fun, stimulating and also engaging. However, in the years I worked on one project after another and on temporary contracts at the University of the Arts in Berlin I longed for the academic contemplation and *longue durée* found in theoretical research so I have greatly enjoyed writing the longer chapters on work, the aesthetics of production and sociality as performance in this dissertation.

When writing an article-based dissertation, the question for me will always be what to read when. Should the dramaturgy of reading follow the timeline of the research? Should the conclusion, which binds the article together, come first as a sort of introduction to the whole? As a complete product, I have designed my dissertation as an 'anthology of myself'. Throughout the three parts which follow the three research questions I alternate between case studies in articles and theoretical chapters with partial introductions, conclusions and discussions. Chronologically, I start with the conditions of art students and I 'progress' to collective forms of resistance proposed by professional performance artists. The alternation between articles and chapters is for the simple reason that I aesthetically dislike referring to articles that are only added at the end. The more scholarly reason for my choice of writing the anthology is that I believe that the articles – developing in rather short formats – need substantial theoretical accompaniment and discussion throughout. In that respect, my dissertation can also be perceived as a combination of monography and article-based dissertation.

On a meta-level my dissertation is a product of what happens when the cultural project worker re-enters academia and, following the increase of short-term employment even within academia, may also be a stylistic consequence of how our capabilities allow us to work today. It is even a political standpoint for me that I have handed in my dissertation on time: the requirement is to finish within the three years of employment in the university, while also providing 840 hours of teaching and collecting 30 ECTS points equalling six months of PhD seminars. I know all too well from my research that the conditions in the field of work for young academics is precarious and competitive due to austerity policies – the preparation time for teaching has, for example, lessened while I have been employed; the

number of PhD students on faculty salaries within the Humanities at the University of Copenhagen has decreased; and the possibility of getting a permanent position in the university after a post-doctorate is very limited. Therefore, it has been a principle act for me not to 'overachieve' and make an extra-impressive contribution by writing unpaid for another year or two.

Rather than transporting the feeling of exhaustingly doggy paddling from one project-presentation to another, I hope that the dramaturgy can give the reader both a dynamic but also a progressive and synthesising reading experience, moving from case studies to theory chapters and back to case studies again; from educational formation of temporality and subjects, to professional critique and reorganisation of working conditions within performance art.

Silly Objects

Throughout my research I have followed the implementation of the Bologna Process through a selection of higher artistic educations in Denmark, Germany, Sweden and Norway with a focus on the formation of the performance artist. There is no institution in these countries explicitly devoted to performance art but all institutions educate artists who during or after their studies identify as performance artists and use performative strategies. What the institutions have in common is that they have all implemented the Bologna Process within the last decade and have thereby shifted away from education programmes of four or five years in length to three year-long bachelor degree courses and two year-long masters. It is also worth mentioning that the institutions examined are all in a similar economic situation: they are all subsidised by the state, offer free education,[13] and are embedded in nations where the state provides financial support to students while studying, either as affordable loans or with direct monthly grants. The substantial support – despite the fact that I am writing in times of the state's increasing withdrawal specifically from research, arts and culture – means that the aspect of financial debt of students completely differs from the immense study loans in the US and the UK. Study debt in Scandinavian and German higher education is primarily linked to feelings of guilt towards the state and one's co-citizens who are 'paying' for education through taxes. Yet professional artists are often living in what sociologist and philosopher Maurizio Lazzarato has called "permanent debt" mastered by financialised rationales.[14] Also, a new kind of debt is threatening both students and artists due to increasing rent for housing in the northern European capitals.

During my research, I narrowed down the focus of the case studies to bachelor degree education in three institutions, two of which are Danish, fine arts and performing arts institutions,

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[13] The German education system has a fee each term covering enrolment, re-enrolment, and local transport, which in Berlin, Giessen and Hildesheim amounts to between €300 and €400.
[14] Maurizio Lazzarato, *The Making of the Indebted Man* (Los Angeles: semiotext(e) 2012), 19.

respectively. They are as follows: the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Schools of Visual Arts, and the Danish National School of Performing Arts. The third institution is the Inter-university of Dance in Berlin which runs a bachelor degree course on the expanded notion of dance, *Dance, Context, Choreography*. There are several reasons for this selection. I have chosen to focus on bachelor degree education in order to look at the basic conception of artistic education: rather than looking at how art students are trained for their final graduation, I wanted to research into the fundament in order to find out what is the basic idea of the artist as producer. Because I have a specific scholarly interest in the institutional conditions of performance art, which has until now had no dedicated education programme of its own, I also wanted to look at the aesthetics of production – the conditions of how art is coming into being – in order to investigate how the relation between tradition and experimentation, and between control and independent processes appear in the educational landscape.

My research is deeply informed by the bachelor degree education in Berlin where I worked for five years before starting my PhD[15]. I had already gained insight into the institution and knew 'where to look for' specific practices like the protocols of self-study that I illustrate in article I "Giving an Account of One's Work. From Excess to ECTS in Higher Artistic Education". Besides, the Berlin programme is in many ways emblematic within the field because it was born in 2010 with the Bologna Process already implemented and, as such, has no nostalgic 'before' as an institution. Rather, it lives out the dream of – or possibilities within– the Bologna Process to the extreme, for example, in the student's very everyday-present way of calculating and administrating ECTS points and modules individually. Compared to the schools in Giessen and Hildesheim in Germany, Fredrikstad in Norway, and the two Danish schools, no other education allows the students to be in such close contact with the ECTS economy of time.

My research was carried out in Denmark in the period 2016–2019 where the Bologna Process was being implemented. Therefore, there was an opportunity not to be missed – almost an obligation – to follow this as closely as I could! And whereas not all research can be planned to work out productively, I was lucky to find significant differences in the respective educations, which has led me to the conclusion that the Bologna Process is not just standardising education but also allowing educations to become even more distinct from each other. In fact, the framework for interpretation in its implementation can lead to both student-led education as well as very institution-governed, detailed programmes. I write about the different temporalities of artistic work spelled out in the study

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[15] Appendix 1 is a reflection paper on my 'practice informed' qualitative research in Berlin which could be claimed to be biased. However, I prefer to think of my insights as a former "member" of this social world as a resource (Miller, Glassner, 1997).

regulations of the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts and the Danish National School of Performing Arts in article II "Doggy Paddling. Temporalities of Work in Higher Artistic Education in Denmark."

I have analysed very different cultural artefacts: study regulations, visited institutions, participant observation at assessments. I also looked at everyday practices, such as studio booking, administration of ECTS or feedback cultures. To expand my own methodological toolbox, I followed PhD seminars in qualitative methods and analysis at the University of Southern Denmark, I tried out different methods of interview designs, and carried out interviews with students and staff in the artistic institutions. My final analytical toolbox could have been a very mixed one but soon turned out to be mostly focused on the analysis of working conditions and critical strategies as reported in documents, texts and performances. Apart from a bit of participant observation at assessments, I eventually drew on my analytical skills from Comparative Literature, Modern Cultural Studies, and Theatre and Performance Studies.

Rather than favouring objects drawn exclusively from performance art history or obvious anthropological cases, I look across these disciplines to find cultural patterns and forms articulating and exploring similar concerns. Sometimes the artefacts of my cultural analysis are quite small or found in a dusty, hidden archive and do not seem to be widely recognised. I like to think of this mix of ephemeral and peripheral artefacts as a heterogeneous collection which is in itself a methodological point: a strategically messy way of reading across genres and categories in order to find cultural patterns and rationales. Professor of English Lauren Berlant writes about her collection of popular quotations, intimate feelings and artworks a.k.a her 'hated archive' in *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City* (1997) as a sort of methodological manifesto within the humanities. In the humanities, the canonical literature and philosophy – Foucault, Benjamin, Gramsci – are still often the dominant justification for theorising cultural patterns, just like Marx and the Defoe figure in my introduction to this dissertation. Berlant describes her 'hated' archive consisting of analyses of what she calls 'silly objects':

> These materials frequently use the silliest, most banal and erratic logic imaginable to describe important things, like what constitutes intimate relations, political personhood, and national life. (…) I am conducting a counterpolitics of the silly object by focusing on some instances of it and by developing a mode of criticism and conceptualization that reads the waste materials of everyday communication in the national public sphere as pivotal documents of the construction, experience and rhetoric of quotidian citizenship

in the United States.[16]

Berlant deliberately analyses unfamiliar objects across disciplines and promotes it as a counter-politics of academic normativity. Similar to Berlant's argument for her silly and too popular and ephemeral objects, I believe that the particularity of temporal and social structures in the sometimes 'silly objects' of my case studies report on pivotal conflicts within contemporary work.

At the beginning, my research interest was only in temporalities within the Bologna Process, and the ways in which students were learning to work while studying. However, my attention was soon drawn towards how they organise and perform after graduating too. Through my encounters with students and *alumnae*, I started to care particularly about collective artistic organisation and artists' collectives performing in the infrastructures of art. It seems that through putting creativity into organisation they answer back: both to the demands of individualisation, mobilisation and flexibility of the Bologna Process, and to the exhausting structural precarity of the art market. In article III "Being Exhausted, Acting Happy" I write about how the choreographer Dragana Bulut exposes the exhaustion of the freelance performance artist in her work *Happyology – Tears of Joy* (2018) and questions whether artists themselves are able to change the structures they work in. In article IV, "Working by the Numbers. Performance Art Short on Time Proposes Materialist Aesthetics of Production", I show how the student, artist and DJ Fjóla Gautadóttir and the performance artist Florian Feigl intervene in the traditional division between life and artistic work by including regeneration and parenting as part of their work. In article V, "Infrastructural Performance. Reclaiming Social Relationality in Times of Structural Precarity", I speculate on how the infrastructural performance of young artist collectives and networks might change the conception of the artist's signature and the artwork itself.

Structural precarity and contemporary production conditions within the arts have been a theme in many artworks, biennials and publications since 2008, the latest peaking in 2015 with the 56th Venice Biennial devoted to Karl Marx. In continuation of my conception of infrastructural performance, I have analysed how structures of education as well as circumstances of life co-author the artwork. This has led me to propose a theory on a materialist aesthetics of production which I consider as my main theoretical contribution to the field of cultural theory. Here, my methodology could be described as a critique of ideology: having dug out of Immanuel Kant's third critique the way in which he excludes money, sociality, time and other obstacles in the life of an artist, I propose a critique of the still vivid ideal of the artist as genius. In addition, I suggest to reassemble these elements to be included in a materialist aesthetics of production.

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[16] Berlant 1997, 12.

To sum up my methodology, my analyses of 'silly objects' start deep down in the details of European educational policy; they move to professional artistic critiques of and changes within production conditions by contemporary performance art collectives; on the basis of these analyses, I then go on to propose a theory of materialist aesthetics of production.

CONTEXTS

In the chapters and articles throughout the dissertation, I refer to neoliberalism within the university and the Bologna Process in higher artistic education. Therefore, in this chapter I focus my attention on these two contexts, both of which are interconnected while having their own field of research and literature. My aim is to eliminate clichés further on and avoid too much redundancy. I will finish this contextual chapter with a theoretical reflection on the methodological departure from structural precarity – a reoccurring individual experience of inconstancy and vulnerability encountered both in the university and among artists.

Neoliberalism in the University

I use neoliberalism as both a political and economic ideology that has the ideal market at its core and, following Foucault, as a normative reason.[17] The political theorist Wendy Brown defines neoliberalism as an economisation of all spheres of life:

> (…) neoliberal rationality disseminates the *model of the market* to all domains and activities – even where money is not the issue – and configures human beings exhaustively as market actors, always, only, and everywhere as *homo economicus*.[18]

The economising rationale of neoliberalism is to quantify, count, calculate, compare, compete and speculate and this rationale organises "the social, the subject and the state".[19] Importantly, the main act of the state is not to govern subjects but make people govern themselves and to continuously regulate and manage the functions of the state at the service of the market. The operations in neoliberalism are not 'hands-off' but rather, constant micro-regulations, both by the state and its subjects. Neoliberalism

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[17] The concept and history of neoliberalism is long and contradictory. Following historian and philosopher of economic thought Philip Mirowski, neoliberalism can be considered as one of the most important movements in political and economic thought in the second half of the 20th Century. Despite its perception as an individualising rationale, neoliberalism was born as a thought collective, the Mount Pèlerin Society, consisting of transnational philosophers and economists in the Swiss province of Vevey in 1947. From here, it spread out in its different variations from the Chicago School of Economics to Thatcherism. Cf. Philip Mirowski and Dieter Plewhe (ed.), *The Road from Mont Pèlerin* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015).
      In contrast to the '*laissez-faire*' of classical liberalism, as Foucault put it in 1978 (2015), where the subject was left to pursue their own happiness and fortune, neoliberalism as a political and economic model is restoring and constructing class inequality, and works by differentiating the masses at the bottom from the rich at the top of society (Mirowski and Plewhe 2015, 426, 434, 438). Consequently, as Mirowski writes, "the vast worldwide trend toward concentration of incomes and wealth since the 1990s is therefore playing out a neoliberal script" (Mirowski in Mirowski and Plewhe 2015, 438).
[18] Brown 2015, 31.
[19] Wendy Brown, "Neoliberalism, Neoconservatism, and De-Democratization," *Political Theory*, vol. 4, no. 6 (2006), 693.

can be found both in national policies enabling a privatisation of institutions and in culture, and for Cultural Studies scholars, it finds a key moment in the New Labour policies of Tony Blair where the artist becomes the model of the entrepreneurial citizen. As Foucault, in particular, and after him Wendy Brown and Isabell Lorey have shown, neoliberalism can be understood as an everyday technology of the self where the subject treats themself as a brand and attentively governs and accounts for their identity, social life and private time. Following historian and philosopher of economic thought Philip Mirowski, the neoliberal rationale has become a part of everybody's everyday life and is still flourishing after the so-called financial crisis in 2008: " 'everyday' neoliberalism has sunk so deeply into the cultural unconscious that even a few rude shocks can't begin to bring it to the surface long enough to provoke discomfort."[20] Neoliberalism is thus a political context and dominant rationale when writing about students and cultural workers managing themselves in 2019.

Neoliberalism in the university should be understood in the context of the 'neo' in the word, since neoliberalism in education launches a new understanding of what freedom is:

> *Neoliberals extol freedom as trumping all other virtues; but the definition of freedom is recoded and heavily edited within their framework (…)* In practice, Freedom is not the realization of any political, human, or cultural *telos*, but rather it is the positing of autonomous self-governed individuals, all coming naturally equipped with a neoclassical version of rationality and motives of ineffable self-interest, striving to improve their lot in life by engaging in market exchange. Education is consequently a consumer good, not a life-transforming experience.[21]

Mirowski stresses above how education is no longer a humanist virtue; rather, knowledge production is a consumer good on the market that the knowledge worker continuously optimises. In the educational field, the 'enterprise university' is instructing students and academics to inhabit a calculating, competitive and soloist behaviour.[22] The discourse on how neoliberalism has changed the conditions, values and practices of the university has been vivid since the late 1990s. Concretely, neoliberalism can be observed in both how state austerity policies in higher education produce conditions of less time, measurement and competitive individualisation within the academic institution, as well as in the daily governance of academic staff and students. The legitimisation of each act and each relation is economic, at work and at home, as a good investment, beneficial to competition and growth.

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[20] Philip Mirowski, *Never let a serious crisis go to waste* (New York: Verso Books 2014), 89.
[21] Mirowski *in* Mirowski and Plewhe 2015, 437.
[22] Cf. Marginson and Considine 2000, Raunig 2012.

A way to understand the neoliberal university is to analyse both its economising rationale but also its move towards privatisation. Brown argues that neoliberalism in the university causes depoliticisation when it turns political responsibility into a personal problem.[23] On the level of public educational policy, substantial cuts within research have taken place and each researcher has become individually responsible for financing their own research through private funding.[24] Time- and self-management are central skills within the neoliberal university and moves the focus away from the actual academic drive: the passion of researching, reading and writing. This decentralised responsibility encouraging entrepreneurial agency has produced both new tasks of management and administration for academic staff as well as individualised feelings of stress, demoralisation and frustration.[25] Overwork and stress become personal failures within the discipline of time management and lack of individual funding is a symptom of not being a unique and edgy researcher.[26] Through the individual's internalisation of responsibility, the basic practice of critique from within academia – a central role of the university itself – drowns in application writing, portfolio updates and competitive self-improvement.

The substantial changes in the university present the crucial question of the role of the university. Brown argues that the American university used to uphold a democratic vow: peace-keeping, autonomy of thought and equality – access to knowledge across gender, race and class – were central values since the end of World War II.[27] Brown sees the increasing competitiveness, privatisation and redistribution of responsibility to individuals as an economisation replacing the democratic vow. Competences of students are measured not in humanist virtues but in human capital. In Europe, an economy of time is literally counted in ECTS points and the technologies of quantification and meritocracy are practiced in the everyday life of students when they individually plan their progression within their supposedly unique study profile. Two remarkable differences between, on the one hand, Australian, British and American perspectives on the 'enterprise university' and, on the other hand, the central and northern European perspectives, are as follows: 1) Australia, Britain and America have been implementing cuts and the privatisation of universities since the late 1990s, whereas the German and Scandinavian universities are currently introducing neoliberal policies, and 2) while there is a longer tradition of the private financing of study in the aforementioned three countries, in Germany and the Scandanavian countries, higher education has been publically funded and there has even been a tradition of study subsidies or cheap state loans for students. Academic scholarship on the neoliberal

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[23] Cf. Brown 2006.
[24] Cf. Petersen and Davies 2010.
[25] Cf. Petersen 2009.
[26] Cf. Petersen and Davies 2010.
[27] Brown 2015, 178–180.

university therefore comes predominantly from the first named countries, and from Germany since the mid 2000s; there are scarcely any case studies from Scandinavia.

Since 2016, austerity policies have transformed Danish universities. A yearly overall cut of 2% for the period 2016–2022 has led to massive dismissals and a reduction in the number of teaching hours; universities and academic staff have become much more dependent on external funding. In fact, since 2013, higher education policy has already changed the culture of academic study in Denmark. The *Fremdriftsreform* (Eng. *reform of enterprise* or *reform of progress,* hereafter Reform of Progress) was agreed in 2013. The eight universities in Denmark were obliged to reduce the duration of study for each student by 4.3 months before 2020. This means reducing the duration of study, directing students to complete their studies efficiently without taking sabbaticals, off-roads or more than one internship. A recent survey among university professors shows that this has led to pragmatic students who have less time for errors and who focus on assessments rather than study: a general weakening of analytical, reflective and critical skills has been observed and professors see a standardised and less creative way of thinking unfold. [28] Standardisation and 'brave students' have long been an accusing discourse against the so-called "feminised, politically correct" university, proclaiming the real entrepreneurs with edgy personality are to be found outside the rigid institutions.[29] In Denmark, the hunt for norm-following and feminised A-grades by the 'brave' students has become a repeated critique in the public debate. Professor of Anthropology Rane Willerslev has provided a gendered figure to the discourse: "the grade-A girls". Willerslev thereby reduces a policy and structural problem of less study time into a gendered, negative stereotype of the "culture of correctness".[30] His critique is that the policy of the Reform of Progress is not neoliberal enough because it does not provide subjects ready for innovation and growth: the policy has succeeded in public cutbacks but unfortunately it has not produced the strong, creative individuals which the competitive state of tomorrow yearns for. What the policy and debate of the Reform of Progress proves is that there is less time for study but ever-growing expectations for personal qualifications and societal growth. The pressure of progress on reduced temporal conditions has in Denmark – like neoliberal austerity policies abroad – produced a high level of stress, a reduced social life and a standardised rationale of study choices with less risk.[31] Another

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[28] Cf. Sebastian Abrahamsen: "Undervisere råber op: Fremdriftsreformen dræber de studerende kreativitet," *Information* April 15 2017, https://www.information.dk/indland/2017/04/undervisere-raaber-fremdriftsreformen-draeber-studerendes-kreativitet

[29] Brown 2015, 191.

[30] Kenneth Lund, "Danmark har ikke kun brug for 12-tals piger og drenge," Dagbladet Politiken 29 August 2015, http://politiken.dk/debat/art5621941/Danmark-har-ikke-kun-brug-for-12-tals-piger-og-drenge

[31] In this case 'risk' means studying abroad, taking non-mandatory seminars and reading material not relevant for assessments. Cf. Laura Louise Sarauw and Simon Madsen, "Risikonavigation i fremdriftsstormen – når studerende

example of austerity policy in higher education in Denmark is the "Dimensioning" (Da. *Dimensionering*), forcing higher education with low direct employability to take in fewer students. This has led to immense cuts in the humanities. The minority languages such as Turkish and Polish have particularly suffered because they are not regarded as directly profitable in terms of immediate employment: they have been closed down.

"The university, not just the business school, is the primary site of extreme neo-liberalism", writes professor of Strategic Management Stefano Harney, referring to a university governed by the rationale of economisation and subjected to the conditions of the market.[32] Much writing on the neoliberal university has been critical of increased competition, standardisation of academic writing, the psychological pressure due to decentralised responsibility and the precarisation of academic staff. But being critical towards the neoliberal university can also be perceived as a double bind of 'playing the game' while also paying attention to and refining the rules of that game in a critical way.[33] Nevertheless, a number of scholars are currently reimagining the university as a site of resistance, struggle, slow study and radical pedagogy, and thus profiling the student as a powerful agent of change. Both relying on historical struggles led by students, and currently observing the powerful reimaginations of how institutions, artistic production and the organisation of work could be thought differently, I will focus on how art students cope with the combined circumstances of study, work and life.

The Bologna Process in Higher Artistic Education

In which ways does the higher artistic education connect with the university and what is the specific role of the art school within the ecology of the art world? In order to understand the educational and economic changes within artistic study in recent years, I will briefly trace back the historical models of the academy, the art school and the theatre school in northern Europe.

Artistic education has numerous models of learning which rely on different aesthetics of production, that is, they rely on different understandings of how art is made, who the artist is and how the student becomes an artist. In recent years in EU countries, 'the Academy', 'the art school', 'the *Conservatoire*' and 'the theatre school' have merged into the official, generalised notion of Higher Artistic Education. This title developed throughout the 1990s and was cemented with the Bologna Process.

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oversætter fremdriftsreformen ud fra nye risikologikker," *Dansk Universitetspædagogisk Netværk, DUN*, Vol. 12, no. 22/ 2017, 141-152.

[32] Stefano Harney, "Extreme neo-liberalism" *ephemera* (2009), no. 9(4), 322.

[33] Cf. Butler and Spoelstra 2014, Turner et.al. 2017.

Artistic study now belongs to 'higher education' and so the area aligns with other institutions of higher education, both etymologically and structurally.

The etymological understanding of the Academy comes from Plato's garden, a place where the like-minded meet and discuss: Plato taught and discussed philosophy in a public garden named after the Trojan hero Akadēmos. The garden, the group and the activities of learning and discussion characterise the academy. Etymologically the word 'school' originates from the Greek Skholē which denotes "first, 'a pursuit or time of leisure' (taken from a withholding of, or vacation from, other kinds of more instrumentalised time) and only consequently shades off to mean 'a forum of discussion' and 'a place for learning' ".[34] Uniting a temporal, a social and a spatial dimension, the school establishes its own parallel society over time. Both the etymology of 'academy' and 'school' provides a duration of discussion and reflection in a community of learners.

Since the first continental institutions of *beaux-arts* emerged in the 16th Century in Paris, the academy has been based on crafts apprenticeship. With masters in specific disciplines – architecture, sculpture, painting, engraving – students learnt the art of beauty, not to be compared with applied or decorative art. Experimental pedagogics have mostly been taking place in self-led, alternative and free schools.[35] Only since the 1960s when Joseph Beuys started changing the study of art into horizontal experimentation with students in Düsseldorf, the academy has become identified as a site of radical artistic methods and teaching, albeit still identified with singular professorships. Where the *beaux-arts* tradition of crafts and apprenticeship can be described as residing on the idea of the artist as someone who is taught within a tradition and cultivated in a hierarchy, the experimentation from the 1960s onwards can actually be described as a cultivation of an already existing inner creativity, which is nourished in the group with peers and professors. In Copenhagen, it is mainly the relatively new experimental tradition that dominates: this is also known as "the Copenhagener-model", a model without a permanent curriculum, but definitely not without theory.[36]

The following serves as a timeline of sorts within performing arts: in the late 18th Century, the first academy of dramatic arts is established in Paris, but even so, the theatre school is a relatively new invention compared to the academies of fine arts and the music conservatories. At the start of the 20th Century, the first theatre schools are established outside of the theatres. In London, the

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[34] The word 'school' has been explored richly by the Indian artists' group Rags Media Collective in "How to be an Artist at Night" in *Art School. Propositions for the 21st Century*, edited by Steve Henry Madoff, (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2009), 75.
[35] Cf. Mikkel Bogh, "Borderlands: The Art School Between the Academy and Higher Education" in *Rethinking the Contemporary Art School*, ed. Brad Buckley and John Conomos (Halifax: The Press of the Novo Schotia College, 2009), 65.
[36] This term has been claimed by Professor Henrik B. Andersen, see "Et forsvar for københavnermodellen" in *Billedhuggerskolen i Frederiksholms kanal,* edited by Henrik B. Andersen and Carsten Jarlov, (Copenhagen: Det Kongelige Danske Kunstakademis Billedskoler, 2008).

Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts is founded in 1904, and in 1905 in Berlin, Max Reinhardt opens *Schauspielschule des Deutschen Theaters zu Berlin* in a building outside the theatre institution. In the late 1960s in Germany, modern dance educations arise, while theatre apprenticeships are the practice in studies of direction until the early 1990s. In 1982, the experimental and theoretical approach of Applied Theatre Studies in Giessen starts and is followed in 2000 by *Szenische Künste* in Hildesheim.

In Denmark the studies in theatre have been connected to the Royal Theatre for much longer. After many years of actors studying with their 'masters' at the Royal Theatre, the first national theatre school in Denmark is established in 1968. With its beginnings in the anti-authoritarian late 1960s, it starts out being explicitly against apprenticeship, in favour of responsibility towards the students and with an understanding of theatre as a collective art form. The students go through basic physical exercises - wearing uniform training suits to stamp out any traces of individualism - and they take part in formulating the curriculum in the first years.[37] Based on numerous actors with one director and one scenographer per year, the school until the mid 1990s, focuses on training the voice, body, character and improvisation, after which it expands with dancers, choreographers and designers of light and sound.

The Danish state theatre school in Copenhagen has a tradition of developing theatre artists who can collaborate and who can express themselves on stage. In the study regulations from 1999–2000 it is still stressed that the student must become acquainted with "the particularity of theatre as *collective* art form"[38] – a notion that disappears in the general objective of the school in later years, replaced by "cross-disciplinary competences".[39] In addition to the three state theatre schools in Copenhagen, Aarhus and Odense respectively, private educations have existed and have been taking care of the more performative methods: in Aarhus, *Nordisk Teaterskole* offered experimental approaches from 1986–1999 and in Vordingborg, physical and visual performance theatre has been explored at *School of Stage arts* in the years 1985–2009. Since the closure of both these institutions, no education of experimental, theoretical or performance-based stage art exists in Denmark; this education of experimentation and renewal of the performing arts is missing in the Danish ecology of Theatre, as has been argued by both the professional field and academic scholars.[40]

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[37] Thomas Malling, "Statens Egen Teaterskole" *in* Nina Davidsen and Olaf Harsløv, *Statens Teaterskole 25 år*, (Copenhagen: Statens Teaterskole 1993), 10.

[38] Cf. *Studieordning* (Copenhagen: The Danish National Theatre School, 1999), 4 (my italics, my translation).

[39] See study regulations from DDSKS from 2014/14 and 2016.

[40] Cf. Special issue on performance education in the journal *Peripeti*, "Performanceuddannelse," *Peripeti* no. 23 (2015), and a report commissioned by the Danish Ministry of Culture, *Udredning om de videregående uddannelser på scenekunstområdet* (Copenhagen: Kulturministeriet, 2013).

In 2015, the three national theatre schools in Aarhus, Odense and Copenhagen respectively, fuse into The Danish National School of Performing Arts (DDSKS). With the scope of uniting forces into the super-institution, DDSKS is expected to – within the same budget – level up to international standards and implement the Bologna Process in the period 2016–2018, i.e. establish bachelor and masters' level degree courses, including the creation of new educations and the graduation of more students. In a report from the Ministry of Culture in 2013, it is suggested that the future educations – when changing their structure and aligning with the Bologna Process – emancipate themselves from traditions of apprenticeship towards "an artistic accent on independent, entrepreneurial, flexible and cross-disciplinary competences" of the student.[41]

Where the Bologna Process is implemented in artistic educations, standardisation can be seen in the comparable formats of degrees, criteria of excellence, funding structures and the homogenous measurements of modules and ECTS points. Within theatre schools, a fear of 'academisation' in regard to expected knowledge production has been one of the most discussed 'fears'[42] whereas the fixed curriculum has been criticised within fine arts. Based on the two traditions in the fine arts academy, the one being the traditional crafts apprenticeship, and the other, the remarkable professors of experimentation as well as the etymological heritage of the academy's 'learning collectives' discussing over time, the standardised curriculum written in modules as proposed in the Bologna Process, contradicts the self-perception of the academies of fine arts. The implementation of the Bologna Process has produced immense debates and critical literature in the past decade.[43] The Bologna Process has been strongly criticised as a homogenisation of education, as a symptom and co-producer of cognitive capitalism and as a training site of a neoliberal subject, who as a generalist 'dividuum' can adapt to any context (Sheikh 2008, Lemke 2011, Raunig 2012, Gielen 2013). Philosopher Gerald Raunig describes the ECTS points as a system of measurement, and the modulisation of seminars as a mode of discipline and regulation, and the overall goal of the "Factories of Knowledge" as missing any ideals, only aiming towards employability of students on their exit from the artistic version of the "Enterprise University".[44]

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[41] The Danish Ministry of Culture, *Udredning om de videregående uddannelser på scenekunstområdet* (Copenhagen: Kulturministeriet, 2013), 9. My translation.

[42] Cf. John Andreasen, "På vej mod den danske scenekunstskole," in "Performanceuddannelse," *Peripeti* no. 23 (2015), 160-167.

[43] Major anthologies on the changes of the academy and its parallel institutions are, for me, Steven Henry Madoff (ed.), *Art School (Propositions for the 21st Century)* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2009), Brad Buckley and John Conomos *Rethinking the Contemporary Art School* (Halifax: The Press of the Novo Schotia College, 2009) and Arbeitsgemeinschaft Deutscher Kunstvereine (ADKV) (ed.), *Crosskick – European Art Academies* (Cologne: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2009).

[44] Gerald Raunig, *Fabriken des Wissens* (Zürich: diaphanes, 2012), 21–36 (my translation).

However, the consequence of the theatre schools and fine arts academies becoming higher artistic educations has many faces and tampers with the content, the location of the institution, the taught curriculum and the temporality of study: some art schools have been adopted by universities as in Malmö. Some art schools have fused across disciplines as in Stockholm, Helsinki and Zürich, and art schools in Germany continuously show a heavy resistance to adopt the Bologna Process.[45] Others have kept their four-year bachelor degree, as in Glasgow, or are working on reintroducing the four-year study as in Malmö, after realising what it means to have less time. However, it is now common for the higher artistic educations which have implemented the Bologna Process to understand the legibility of how artistic production is quantified: the Bologna Process implies descriptions of modules in the study regulations and the counting of hours in ECTS points. The measurement and quantification of the ephemeral and autonomous character of art can, as a first stance, be considered to align with a neoliberal economisation. It is both a way of showing and legitimising what is taught.

The number of graduating artists in Denmark are six times as many as ten years ago, being 109 students graduating in 2008 and 678 students graduating in 2018.[46] Similarly, in Germany the number of graduating artists from fine arts and performing arts, especially when interdisciplinary and experimental, has more than tripled in the period from 2006–2017.[47] In the last 20 years, the number of artistic educations has been rising, partly due to the diploma education being divided into both bachelor and masters' programmes, but also due to new, self-paid master degree educations. Additionally, the third cycle or PhD-level has been added to higher artistic education which raises the expectations of what an artist is, as well as providing new ways of sustaining an artistic practice economically, when paid by stipends and study grants. The structural changes in higher artistic education means both more levels of education to achieve for artists and more educated artists in the ecology of the art scene. However, the larger number of *alumnae* has not led to higher subsidies to apply for in the state's cultural budgets.[48] Paradoxically, besides being expected to keep the same budget despite expansion, higher artistic education in Denmark has also suffered from austerity policies while restructuring and growing into the Bologna Process. Due to national cut backs, 2% of the total budget of higher artistic education

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[45] In Germany the third cycle / PhD-level is nearly not existing since it is both considered to be a threat to traditional academia to distribute the title of 'Doctor' to artists and also fundamentally doubted whether artistic research can be measured and assessed. See for example Nik Haffner, Hendrik Quast (eds.), *Research Environments. Reflections on the Value of Artistic Processes*, (Berlin: Universität der Künste 2015).

[46] Information generated from the Danish National Statistics, *Danmarks Statistik*, https://www.statistikbanken.dk/UDDAKT12 (accessed 17.9.2019).

[47] Information generated from the German National Statistics *DESTATIS Statischtisches Budesamt,* https://www-genesis.destatis.de/genesis/online/link/tabellen/21321* (accessed 20.9.2019).

[48] Only in the city of Berlin I have observed a contrary tendency: the senator of culture Klaus Lederer decided in 2018 to raise the budget of culture in Berlin by 20%. The high conjuncture in the budget for culture doubles the budgets of museums and theatre venues, and has large sums earmarked for stipends for freelance artists from fine arts and performing arts, ateliers for visual artists and more productions in the independent performance scene in Berlin.

has been cut each year since 2016. However, this is just the recent and most obvious trait of a longer period of austerity politics within culture.[49]

Departing from Precarity

The structural precarity of cultural workers in both academia and the arts has become a consistent condition although there is a tendency to want to forget the temporality of inconstancy and lack of permanent rights when working on a two-year grant or in longer project employment. Therefore, I depart from the political condition of structural precarity in our present history. I do so as an act of solidarity with my colleagues who work on shorter temporal horizons or who are currently officially unemployed, whereas I have three years' employment in which to write. But I also have a methodological interest in inequality as common ground. Scholar in Gender and Race Studies Sara Ahmed defines solidarity as a common ground based on unidentical experiences of precarity:

> Solidarity does not assume that our struggles are the same struggles, or that our pain is the same pain, or that our hope is for the same future. Solidarity involves commitment, and work, as well as the recognition that even if we do not have the same feelings, or the same lives, or the same bodies, we do live on common ground.[50]

To depart from precarity as common ground is both an activist act of solidarity and also a philosophical position. In her book *Parting Ways* (2012) Judith Butler traces the philosophical conception behind precarity and develops the concept of 'cohabitation' as a chosen way of living with unchosen neighbours. Butler departs from Jewish philosophy on diasporic experience as based on not choosing one's neighbours, and always being in search mode. Similarly, in chapter three in *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly* (2015), "Precarious Life and the Ethics of Cohabitation", she continues this line of thought and insists on two analytical levels when thinking about "unchosenness", namely a general level – "everyone is precarious" – and a political, historical level: "Precarity is to a large extent dependent on the organisation of economic and social relationships or absence of sustaining infrastructures and social and political institutions." [51] Both the general level of ontological precariousness and the political, historical particular level of precarity are to be taken into account when conceptualising the philosophical common ground from which to depart: thinking about how to act

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[49] Former rector of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts – School of Visual Arts Sanne Kofod Olsen suggests that the academy from 2008–2018 has had total cuts of around 20%. Cf. "Kunst er for alle,"*Kunstkritikk* June 19, 2019, https://kunstkritikk.no/kunst-er-for-alle/.
[50] Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, (New York: Routledge, 2004), 189.
[51] Butler 2015, 118–119.

from the condition of being unchosen, ontologically and politically, is to depart from a deficit rather than capacity. In Butler's writing on cohabitation in Israel and Palestine, she proposes that the particular political assembly of cohabitation can remind us of a general, ontological state of being unchosen, that is, of not having the right to privilege, which is experienced in concrete situations of precarity:

> We struggle in, from, and against precarity. Thus, it is not from pervasive love for humanity or a pure desire for peace that we strive together. We live together because we have no choice, and though we sometimes rail against that unchosen condition, we remain obligated to struggle to affirm the ultimate value of that unchosen world, an affirmation that is not quite a choice, a struggle that makes itself known and felt precisely when we exercise freedom in a way that is necessarily committed to the equal values of lives.[52]

Butler proposes to think the common ground neither as a set of privileges, nor as common human capacities nor as acts of free will but as a shared state of unchosenness, experienced in current historical and political precarity where the distribution of visibility, power and rights has happened contingently and lays the basis for other versions of inequality.

Butler clearly writes from a political-theoretical position critical of liberal democracy and the idea of free choice: we all live the unchosen condition, or what Isabell Lorey has elsewhere declared an ontological precariousness.[53] The choice of thinking the common ground, the point of departure for thinking and acting, from precariousness experienced again and again in struggles of precarity both means to start from an ontological lack instead of a privilege, and to perceive hierarchies as historical constructions invented by mankind. In her book *Frames of War* (2009), Butler has made clear the solidarity act in her political principle, articulated in the manner of a negative musketeer oath: "(…)

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[52] Butler 2015, 122.

[53] I consequently expand on structural precarity here, as well as further on when reading Lauren Berlant and Judith Butler in chapters and articles. Lorey likewise elaborately distinguishes between precariousness as ontological and precarity as structural (2012). Precariousness is to be vulnerable from the moment we are born. Butler writes in *Frames of War* that precariousness is "that life requires various social and economic conditions to be met in order to be sustained as life (…) survival is dependent on what we might call a social network of hands" (Butler 2009, 14). Precariousness is naked life and can also be exemplified through the ontological lack of the right to own land, or the absence of the right to freedom of movement for all. Precarity is a state made by politics, a way of being vulnerable despite "sustaining" conditions that simply do not take enough care of the subject. Precarisation – the creation of precarity – is exercised by austerity politics, by short-term contracting, by withdrawal of rights, by privileging nation-state citizenship, whiteness or gender. I consequently employ the term precarity, clearly pointing out that my use has to do with structures made by educational policy, neoliberal politics and institutionalised technologies of the self. When I refer here to Butler's ontological description of unchosenness, I connect it to the methodological departure of how to think about common ground. See also Isabell Lorey, *Die Regierung der Prekären* (Zürich: Verlag Turia + Kant, 2012).

even if my life is not destroyed in war, something of my life is destroyed in war, when other lives and living processes are destroyed in war."[54]

The common ground is defined through its weakest part. Departing from precarity is in direct contrast to political philosophers like Jacques Rancière who would propose departing from universalised capacity, namely the equality of human intelligence. In his book *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* (1991),[55] Rancière, when theorising on emancipation, turns towards the emancipation of the mind whereas Butler – through her re-reading of Arendt – theorises on bodily emancipation. Both theories – Rancière on the community of ignorant learners, Butler on the assembly of coercing bodies – can be read as explorations of what constitutes 'the political' in the sense of the possibilities of changing the common conditions. Rancière, however, suggests a universal capacity whereas the "capacity to act"[56] and thereby also to assemble bodies which Butler proposes, is always situated, dependent on other bodies and on the structures in which we are embedded. Similarly, Ahmed writes on capacity as a non-universal, unexpected ability: "Capacity is not something we simply have, as if it were an inherent quality of this or that body. (…) capacities do not belong to individuals, but are about how bodies are affected by other bodies."[57]

Ahmed's quotation reminds me that capacity is relational and not individual.[58] When young artists currently organise in collectives and networks, they comment on and intervene in the socialities they have been placed in: the nation, the family, the classroom, the art institution, the local community, even the loneliness in absence of certain bodies. When I write about the sociality of production I mean the social structure in which an artist is embedded,[59] the circumstantial and chosen group that surrounds and supports each individual artist. Sociality can be uniform – the family, the tribe, peers – or it can be an intersection of relations in a collective across age, class, gender, race and nationality. Sociality in natural science is defined as a way of grouping in response to threats.[60] Hence, sociality is not a natural species group, but a protecting collective. In times of structural precarity in the university and in artistic production, sociality is the battleground: how to move away from

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[54] Butler rephrasing her thesis from *Frames of War* in her recent book *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly* (2015), 43

[55] I bring in Rancière, because he is often referred to as the guardian of free, artistic expression and radical learning. See for example Philipp Schulte "The Art of Staging a Play – Three European Models" (forthcoming)

[56] Butler 2017, 5.

[57] Ahmed 2004, 183.

[58] This has a long tradition within Critical Race Studies represented by amongst others Grada Kilomba in her *Plantation Memories. Episodes of Everyday Racism* (2008) where she reveals the draining task of people of colour, who can never just be 'neutral' or obsolete in the class room. Unlike their white classmates, students of colour are expected to represent a whole continent, a group of refugees, or a 'race'. The limits of the capacity to act and speak within cultural production and theatres due to racialisation is also developed in the recent anthology *Allianzen* (2018) by Liepsch, E., Warner, J. & Pees, M. (eds.), (Bilefeld: transcript Verlag, 2018).

[59] Sociality is defined as social structure by Erwin Goffman in *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life* (1959).

[60] Cf. "Evolution of Sociality" in Neil J. Smelser and Paul B. Baltes, *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* (New York: Elsevier, 2001), 14506.

individualisation, competition and isolation, towards alliances in broader notions of kinship based on precarity and interdependency as common ground?

PART ONE
Temporalities of Work

ARTICLE I

Giving an Account of One's Work

From Excess to ECTS in Higher Artistic Education[61]

Abstract:

Within the last 10 years, the implementation of the Bologna Process in higher artistic education has introduced a time-based economy within artistic production – the counting of ECTS points. Through a reading of protocols of self-study *in the bachelor programme* Dance, Context, Choreography *at the Inter-University Centre of Dance in Berlin, I will show how art students are trained in accounting for life as work: an institutionalised meritocracy turning hours outside art school into ECTS points. In this note, I analyse the performativity in the protocols of the students. Protocolling working hours outside the curriculum with extreme accuracy, the students are led into what I would call a neoliberal double bind: they are complicit with neoliberalism when they subject themselves to counting hours 24/7, and at the same time, they exercise a feminist critique of the neoliberal economisation of life when they recognise 'grey-zone' hours of work by accounting for the invisible conditions of freelance production within dance. Deciphering the performativity of the protocols of self-study, I show how the demands of calculation and meritocracy from the Bologna Process change, challenge and politicise the temporality of artistic work and the production of artistic value in higher artistic education.*

Keywords:

Neoliberalism * Work * Higher Artistic Education* Bologna Process* Performativity* Feminism

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Research/ Own Projects

Reading, writing, collecting ideas and inspiration, conversations and exchange of ideas with befriended artists (music, illustration etc).

Hours in total: 50[62]

What counts as labour and as life, as hard work and as passion, what is networking and what is friendship? How do we measure? In higher artistic education future artist workers are trained to master formal and informal competences. With the implementation of the Bologna Process, the rationality of calculating hours of work is manifested in the counting of ECTS points, and when 180 ECTS points are accumulated, the bachelor degree is awarded. On the bachelor programme *Dance, Context, Choreography* at the Inter-University of Dance in Berlin students write protocols recording hours of cultural consumption, reading and conversation 'outside the school'. As part of assessing modules in *project work* the students are trained to calculate their hours of *self-study* at home, in the museum or with a friend and turn them into ECTS points. Every term they give an account of their work.

In my four-year study of self-study protocols from 2011–2015, the protocols of approximately 45 students develop from recording somewhat private time in the first term – e.g.: dinner conversations, *resumés* of theories read at night, lists of very diverse activities from "sauna practice" to a walk in the park – to more professionalised activities, such as rehearsals with colleagues and application writing in the final term before graduation. The protocols also shorten during the course: from very detailed lists of each hour spent and longer paragraphs including reflections, to short lists summing up. For example: "Written application: 20 hours, Studio work: 36 hours."

Yet the very practice of measuring self-study is a double bind: it is complicit with neoliberalism, because it instills governmentality in future workers, but it also acts as a critique of neoliberalism because students overdo the demands of meritocracy and calculation, and thereby become increasingly aware of the economy of hidden time in artistic work. I will refer to the two interpretations as a neoliberal double bind of complicity and critique. Instead of making an overall critique of the

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[62] My translation. The sample from the protocol is printed with permission from the anonymised student.

standardisations introduced by the Bologna Process, I propose to analyse the performativity of the protocols of self-study of students' own project work on the bachelor programme *Dance, Context, Choreography*. I look at how the recommendations of the Bologna Process have not only introduced technologies of measurement and calculation and a temporality occupying life as work, but also allow accountancy to become a means of critique in feminist strategies performed by students and staff within these technologies.

I want to propose a reading of the protocol of self-study as both a social and an aesthetic structure: a structure that reports on the distribution of time between art and life in the material encounter of excel spreadsheets and diary notes. Methodologically, I depart from performance theory stemming from Jacques Derrida, who understands all utterances, signs and intentions as iterable and thereby their meaning can change from context to context, despite their 'original' meanings when first introduced.[63] With my analysis of samples of protocols from dance students, I want to decipher and discuss the performativity of what counts and is recognised as artistic work.

Accounting for Life

For my research I visited the Inter-University of Dance in Berlin in January 2018 and spent three days reading the protocols of self-study. I sat in an office at the institution with big plastic folders full of A4 pages, partly printed, partly handwritten, in which the protocols of self-study are officially attached to the assessment papers in the files of graduated students[64]. Usually in higher education, self-study is not explicitly controlled and measured, but only assumed and then demonstrated at the end of the term where the student shows through assessment that they have read the curriculum. Yet in this bachelor programme, all hours spent in self-study on the project work modules are specifically listed. Self-study is no abstract term. The activities counting as self-study get protocolled into a continuing portfolio. The hours of self-study are written down during the term. At the end of each term, students hand in protocols of how they have spent their self-study to the teaching staff.

In the protocols of self-study I noticed a variety of recorded activities belonging to artistic practices: meetings, mail correspondences, rehearsals, watching performances, movies and exhibitions, making applications. All seminars and workshops on the bachelor programme *Dance, Context, Choreography* are preparations for the many-faceted practice of independent performance art: from

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[63] Cf.: "Every Sign, linguistic or nonlinguistic, spoken or written (in the current sense of this opposition), as small or large unity, can be *cited*, put in between quotation marks; thereby it can break with any given context, and engender infinitely new contexts in an absolutely nonsaturable fashion." Jacques Derrida,*"Sinature Event Context"* in *Margins of Philosophy* (The University of Chicago Press 1982), 320.

[64] Being enrolled at the digitised University of Copenhagen, the curiosum of the off-line folders in Germany are in themselves worthy of study.

choreographic and conceptual work, physical practice, documentation and skills-based classes in light and sound to theory seminars.

In the protocols, the dissolution of boundaries between life and work appears on a discursive and material level. Over three pages, one student categorises her activities in the following headlines:

PRACTICE/ VERDAUUNG. IMPROVISATION SAUVAGE / EMBODIMENT. VORTRAG/LECTÜRE. GESPRÄCH. ÜBERLEGUNG. COACHING HOURS. MUSEUM. PROJEKT/ MITARBEIT. ON VIEW. THEATRE. DIVERS.

PRACTICE/ DIGESTION. WILD IMPROVISATION /EMBODIMENT. LECTURE. CONVERSATION. CONSIDERATION. COACHING HOURS. MUSEUM. PROJECT/ COLLABORATION. ON VIEW. THEATRE. DIVERSE.[65]

In a mix of French, English and German vocabulary the categories show how inner and outer activities count: motifs from inner bodily processes ("digestion") merge with rather simple descriptions of cultural consumption through the naming of an activity ("lecture") or the institution ("museum", "theatre"). Not only do the borders between life and work dissolve but also those between the private and the public body, between the person and the institutions, and between making and reflection.

Especially in the first year of education, very private moments of life are recorded and counted in the protocols. A student reports minutely what she does outside the school – here named in the German abbreviation HZT, for example, in the category of "GESPRÄCH" (Eng. *conversation*):

-Mit meiner Mutter : über ihre Erfahrung als Tänzerin von den 80's bis jetzt... Und über was ich bis jetzt im HZT gefunden habe. Ich mag mit Bilden den Tanz zu arbeiten.

-Abend Essen mit meinen Eltern und Eltern von einer Freundin ; Was passiert im HZT und in der Berlin Szene ? Wie Kunst entwickelt sich.......................
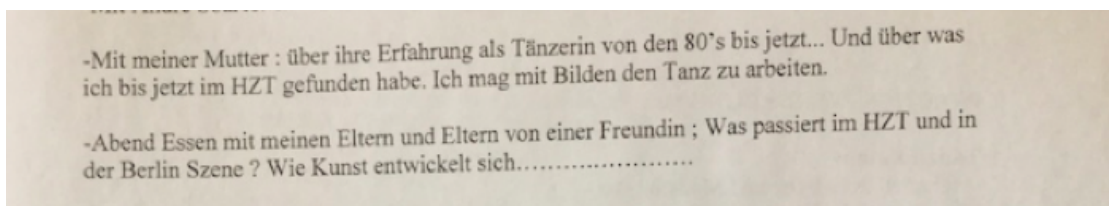
- With my Mother: about her experience as a dancer in the 80s until now… And about what I found until now at HZT. I like to work with images of dance.

- Dinner with my parents and parents of a friend; What happens at HZT and in the scene of Berlin? How art develops…………..[66]

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[65] My translation. The protocol is cited with permission from the anonymised student.
[66] My translation. The sample from the protocol is printed with permission from the anonymised student.

Conversations about the experiences of the (dance) scene in Berlin, the students' new home, and what her experience is of her (new) education, are obligatory developmental themes for people who just started their life as students. Yet here, the dinner conversations with parents and friends of parents also count as work. Obviously, everything counts as self-study – life is occupied by calculation for the sake of work.

The understanding of artistic work formulated and iterated as projects seems to be consensual: students interviewed for this research generally talk about what they do as 'projects'.[67] Project work figures in the study regulations literally named as "Project Work" (Ger. *Projektarbeit*) and unfolds as the most substantial discipline in the programme in three modules of total 62 ECTS points, i.e. over a third of the total 180 ECTS points of the bachelor degree education.[68] In the study regulations, the number of hours of self-study within the modules of project work is high, around 80%. But how do we actually measure and survey this 80% of self-study? How are the students taught what to record? Interestingly, the BA degree staff have a checklist of what counts so that students can calculate their project work:

> Rehearsals and organisation of rehearsals (studio booking, communication, finding material, pre-meetings)
>
> Developing concepts
>
> Meetings within the study programme and in relation to projects
>
> All kinds of research
>
> Applications, requests
>
> Video-filming, photography, editing
>
> Costume
>
> Attending others' performances, trainings, workshops and exhibitions
>
> Working on other projects (paid and unpaid)
>
> Mentoring hours.[69]

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[67] A deviation is students in their 4th year (i.e. students who have prolonged their 3-year study), who are explicitly informed by the discourse on artistic labour as defined by, amongst others, art theorist Bojana Kunst: Kunst writes about how working on projects defines artistic work from modernism onwards (Kunst 2015, 162) and how the performance artist is working in a projective mode. Project-based work is determined by parallel proposals, deadlines, short realisations and then evaluations. Kunst focuses on the temporality of work combining a *projective mode* calculating a possible and always-more-than-realistic future (Kunst 2015, 157), and an *accumulative pace*, where the imperative of producing 'the new', the unseen and contemporary within a short time is combined with the small death of the *deadline,* which constantly interrupts any consolidation (Kunst 2013, 4; Kunst 2015, 167). Project work is standarising the temporality of artistic work. Kunst mourns the lack of other formations of time: due to the constant abundance of production the project work neither allows durational deepening into specific materials nor conflictual, challenging collective work. The 4th-year students are presumably informed by this discourse when they talk about their 'practice' or their 'work' and avoid the term 'project'.

[68] Cf. Study regulation of *Dance, Context, Choreography* (German version): https://www.udk-berlin.de/fileadmin/2_dezentral/Studienberatung/Tanz_Choreographie/Tanz_Bachelor_StO_Lesefassung_-_2014_09_29_-_KV-2013_11_18.pdf , 4.

[69] Official list for internal circulation received via email correspondence with student helper Verena Sepp 30.1.2017 (my translation).

In the period 2011–2016, when I was teaching on the programme *Dance, Context, Choreography*, the checklist was for a long time informal and easy to interpret, which resulted in long discussions about 'what counts as work' between staff and students. The list above is from 2017 and is now circulated in written form amongst staff and students.[70] The list informs about a wide range of activities entailed in the profile of the future freelance dancers and choreographers; they are trained in artistic generalist skills (filming, documenting, making costumes etc.) as well as learning to *project* and invest in the future and manage productions (pre-meetings, writing applications, requesting etc.). There is a remarkable parenthesis: "(paid and unpaid)". When *paid* work outside the school counts in the ECTS economy, this means that the students' hours count twice: once in money and once in ECTS points. This gives an advantage to students who already have paid work during their education: they develop their career and fulfil their education obligations within the same hours.

The checklist epitomises the neoliberal double bind. First, the practice of accounting is complicit with neoliberal demands of calculation and investment: an economisation of all spheres – as Wendy Brown's definition of neoliberal rationality (2015) has it – through the counting of hours spent nearly anywhere; it is even possible to make hours count twice. Second, the institutional checklist and the attentive practice of recording work offer a critique in the form of the de-mystification of artistic work. When becoming aware of all the 'grey-zone' hours spent in communication and application writing, the less glamorous work of artists is recognised and politicised as an invisible part of the cultural economy. The economisation of time thereby occupies and economises life as a part of work, but the very act of accounting for what happens outside the studio, outside the art school, is also a way to politicise work by including unrecognised hours.

The three samples of protocols and the checklist are imprints of how the bachelor programme *Dance, Context, Choreography* motivates a continuation of the reflection on the relation between life and art which has central roots in theorising the *avant garde* (Kaprow 1966, Bürger 1974). *Objects* of the everyday were included as art in the 1920s by Marcel Duchamp. In 1966, conceptual artist Allan Kaprow proposed an extended notion of the artwork through the inclusion of everyday *spaces* and *materials*. Kaprow was one of the first artists to theorise happenings and performance art as the merging of life and art outside the art institutions. However, I would suggest – with my reading of the protocols more than half a century later – to rather rethink the asymmetry in the *avant-garde* concept of life-as-art. By opening with the question "what counts as work?" I want to look at the *temporality of the everyday*, rather than its objects and spaces. I want to point towards the politicisation of unrecognised hours of work rather than extension of the artwork.

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[70] The education itself is from 2010 and the formalising of procedures in the everyday is a continuing process.

Maintenance Work

Large areas of artistic production have traditionally been invisible and therefore unpaid, similar to domestic labour and affective work. For freelance artists, who are both their own employers and employees, 'extra hours' or 'night work' – making connections with potential collaborators, networking, writing emails and applications, researching for future works through cultural consumption and conversations, evaluating finished projects – are notched up on top of the *actual* artistic work, for example, in the studio or performances in institutions (Sholette 2011, Weeks 2011, Kunst 2015, Triisberg 2015). These 'grey-zone' hours of rather profane work are not part of the picture painted of the artist genius. Often this profane work does not figure in the budget of an application. Further on, in the life of professional artists, grey-zone hours are not counted as regular working hours because they fall 'between projects'. Not only do artists always get paid for less hours than they actually work, but also the grey-zone hours potentially produce a structural precarity for them: in the social security system artists are registered as 'unemployed' despite working 24/7. As Maurizio Lazzarato has pointed out, the reality of working in capitalism – as artists, cultural producers, start-ups, journalists etc. – includes periods of official unemployment while continuing the basics of freelance work "self-realization, identity-formation, and social recognition".[71] I think the institutionalisation of protocols urges students to become aware of the unrecognised and traditionally unpaid grey-zone hours, or what artist and writer Gregory Sholette has called "dark matter" of artistic production (2011).

Looking closer at the relation between art and life in art history and art theory in the 1960s, there is a difference between the expansion of the artwork and an expanded notion of what artistic work is. Kaprow works outside the museum and downsizes the status of painting for the sake of art moving closer to life, to the everyday, in the happening and the site-specific assemblage works. When Kaprow looks at "nontheatrical performances" in public spaces by amongst others Fluxus artists Wolf Vostell and George Brecht, he does so in order to show how art is researching into the conditions of life.[72] The nontheatrical happenings and researching performances and scores, however, he appreciates as "very impressive and very elegant,"[73] and he defends artistic virtuosity, inspiration and independency when defining what performance art is. To my regard, Kaprow still represents and defends the exceptional position of the artist as genius, or the artist as a genius researcher, being more interested in

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[71] Lazzarato 2014, 121.
[72] Cf. Allan Kaprow, "Nontheatrical Performance (1976)", *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life,* edited by Jeff Kelley (Berkley: University of California Press: 1993): 163-180.
[73] Ibid, 168.

the originality of the deterritorialised artwork than in the sociality and temporality of working. In other words, Kaprow expands the notion of art, but not of the artist as worker and consequently, I would state that he represents a rather conservative, modernist position. Whereas Kaprow is still genius-affine in his concept in his essays on performance art in 1966 and 1976, the feminist artist Mierle Laderman Ukeles proposes including childcare and cleaning as artistic work, saying: "Everything I say is Art is Art".[74] She thereby politicises what counts as artistic work. On the same time, the performativity of defining artistic work becomes strong: it is about the performance of naming and claiming what artistic work is as a mode of production, rather than citing the originality of the artist condensed in objects and artworks. She uses her performative power as an artist to shed light on the unrecognised work of the artists which she coins as "maintenance". Her *Manifesto for Maintenance Art 1969!* performatively expands the modernist, male conception of 'everyday inclusion' to cover not only the everyday objects and situations but also the everyday life of the working artist: art is happening in the unfettered, domestic field as well as the fields of preparing, cleaning, archiving and maintaining art in public buildings, claims Ukeles. Not only does the original and surprising objects and events by traditional and conceptual artists count as work but also the production of art in all its dull, repetitive and boring forms – this must be considered as well.

Polemically, Ukeles opposes "maintenance" to "development" in her manifesto: where the development-artist being the *"avant-garde par excellence"* creates the big changes and "the new", the maintenance-artist has "little room for alternation", she writes. "Maintenance is a drag; it takes all the fucking time (lit.)."[75] Thereby Ukeles moves the perception from the originality of the *avant-garde* artwork to the unsexy – no 'fucking time' – shadows of artistic production, from the object to the temporality of the making. Her aim of writing the manifesto at a time where she also becomes a mother is to draw attention towards unrecognised hours of work within the temporality of domestic, artistic and capitalist production. Ukeles' artistic manifesto from 1969 can be regarded as a prelude to the second wave feminist fight in the Wages for Housework movement, also fighting for unrecognised hours of work, but mainly in the domestic field.[76]

Temporality of the Protocol

I would suggest that students of *Dance, Context, Choreography* learn to account for grey-zone hours and maintenance work in their protocols of self-study. What they list are the hours spent outside the studio,

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[74] Professor in Performance Studies Shannon Jackson is quoting Ukeles *in* Jackson 2011, 89.
[75] Mierle Laderman Ukeles,"Manifesto for Maintenance Art 1969! Proposal for an Exhibition 'CARE'," in Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson (eds.), *Conceptual Art: a Critical Anthology* (Cambridge: the MIT press 1999), 122–123.
[76] Silvia Federici, *Wages Against Housework* (Bristol: Power of Women Collective and The Falling Wall Press, 1975).

the hours of both research and cultural contemplation, but also the hours of taking yoga classes or providing self-care. The maintenance of the dancer and choreographer is to take care of oneself as a means of production, to put it in an instrumentalising way: to make sure the body, the 'creativity', the finances and the network last a long time. However, the attentive recording of hours is in itself also demanding, with its own temporality: to protocol grey-zone hours demands a 24/7 awareness of possible production.

A protocol is "a formal or official record of scientific experimental observations" (Oxford Dictionary), a way of tracking something seen or experienced. Protocols have a very dry language – originating from the scientific laboratory – and are kept in short and efficient sentences, often linked to a progression in time. Writing a protocol in higher education demands a meritocratic practice with working tasks among staff and students: a protocol requires an object, an activity or a process to be observed, an observer/writer and an authority to collect, compare and store the protocol. The writer of the protocol simultaneously obeys directions from the institution and becomes conscious of their practice.

The accounting list is known from the academic field when publishing online profiles on the university's website, writing applications for funding and counting points for publishing articles. Impact in the neoliberal university is listed in the narrative form of the individualised portfolio,[77] where private life is also a part of your corporate identity in the knowledge economy.[78] However, the very materiality of the protocols of self-study on the *Dance, Context, Choreography* programme span from excel spreadsheets to handwritten diary notes. The laptop spreadsheets and the diary notes unite different spheres of life – computer registration and writing by hand in bed. This materiality reflects the encounter between standardised meritocracy and intimate *memoires* for oneself. When the students write their protocols, an economy of time structures the rhythm of the page. A student accounts for her reading activity with dates and exact hours spent:

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[77] Brown 2015, 33.

[78] In their research on subjection within academia Bronwyn Davies and Eva Bendix Petersen have – through several *poetic representations* of daily life's "painful, risky, and passionate attachment" (2005, 52) to work – revealed how private life is colonised by neoliberal rationalities and governmentality.
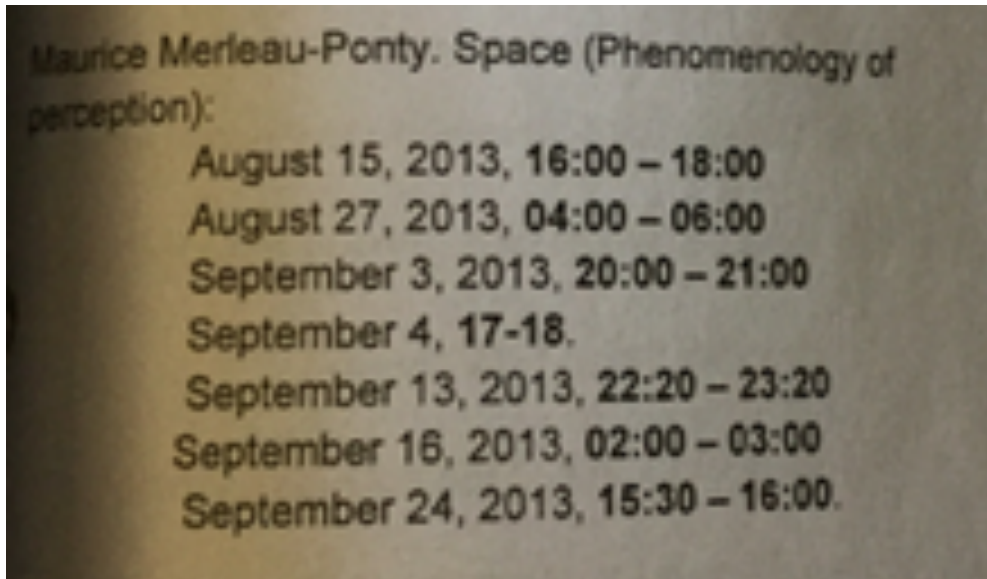
Maurice Merlau-Ponty. Space (Phenomenology of Perception):

August 15, 2013, **16:00 – 18:00**

August 27, 2013, **04:00 – 06:00**

September 3, 2013, **20:00 – 21:00**

September 4, 2013, **17-18**

September 13, 2013, **22:20 – 23:20**

September 16, 2013, **02:00 – 03:00**

September 24, 2013, **15:30 – 16:00** [79]

This student is protocolling her reading hours – in a print form possibly written in an excel spreadsheet – as accurately as if *Big Brother* were watching her. The temporality of work produced through her protocol of self-study is dictated by the clock and demands a self-surveilling performance even when the lights are out. The romantic Marxist ideal of the worker writing poetry and reading philosophy at night revealed by Jacques Rancière in *La nuit des Prolétaires* (1981), has been taken to its extremes when she records her activities by clocking in and out of work at night. The accuracy, especially in the recording of minutes in the sample above – twenty minutes past ten in the evening, half an hour in the afternoon – and the night time activities show an intense performance of self-governance.

The protocol is an encounter between the student's everyday rhythm of work and a temporality of ECTS points calculation proposed by the Bologna Process. Through the ECTS, a legibility of the temporality of work is structured, and a calculable and comparative time-based

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[79] The sample from the protocol is printed with permission from the anonymised student.

economy is proposed.[80] Absurdly enough, while the student above is studying phenomenology at the library in the afternoon and in bed at night, the private space and bio-rhythm is occupied by the meritocracy of the Bologna Process.

To quantify one's work by counting hours could be characterised as what Media Theory scholar Sarah Sharma has called a "power-chonography", a "micropolitics of temporal coordination and control".[81] Sharma proposes in her book *In the Meantime* (2014) that we pay attention to the specific power interests and technologies of control layered in temporalities of everyday work and life under capitalism. She opts against the dystopian discourse of 'The world is getting faster' by left-wing speed theorists such as Paolo Virilio, Frederic Jameson, David Harvey and Jonathan Crary. Instead, she sets out to analyse the particular grids of "temporal power relations".[82] Following Sharma's call for descriptions of particular temporalities of work under capitalism, I would describe the temporality of work given by the protocol of self-study of dancers and choreographers as a performative grid that can lead to a constant self-measurement and self-surveillance politically initiated by the Bologna Process and possibly inscribed in a greater neoliberal technology of the self, but also a feminist counter-politics of work where unrecognised hours of maintenance count.

To be accounting for one's life in time as part of one's work proposes an occupational temporality of potentially always being at work. It is probably "a drag", as Ukeles describes the maintenance work, and usually not an activity the students would consider to be central to their actual artistic '*oeuvre*'. Perhaps it is draining and boring but, as I will show below, it also possibly saves and gives time, if used strategically; and it helps me define what it actually means to be working as a dancer.

Healing and Naysaying

In Autumn 2018 when I return to the *Dance, Context, Choreography* programme in Berlin to have a look at recently written protocols, I come across new kinds of recorded work:

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[80] Two overall aims of the Bologna Process in higher education are comparability and mobility: programmes should be able to easily exchange students between the EU countries. The comparability is made possible through modularisation of study and the calculation of hours into European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) points. Studies – within Europe – are divided into working hours counted in ECTS points, where 1 ECTS point is approximately 25–30 working hours. One year of study consists of 60 ECTS points. However, it differs from study programme to study programme how ECTS points are accounted for. Mostly, self-study is not documented and thereby this is an illustration of an extreme case.
[81] Sarah Sharma, *In the Meantime* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014),139.
[82] Ibid, 9.

18.1.2018	listening to travis	1
21.1.2018	taking time off to heal, total so far:	6
21.1.2018	listening to travis	2
21.1.2018	pillow	3
22.1.2018	taking time off to heal	3
23.1.2018	taking time off to heal	3
23.1.2018	flat earth cinema business	2
26.1.2018	cabaret at sophiensæle	2
28.1.2018	reading THE BLAZING WORLD	3
29.1.2018	looking at korean dance on youtube	1
29.1.2018	pillow (failed)	3

Screenshot from a digital list handed in by a student, showing self-study of project work in module 11, "Project Work".[83]

The student writes down twelve hours of "taking time off to heal". The inclusion of the healing of an injury is far away from the image of the actively working, virtuoso dancer, yet it is a very concrete and time-demanding obstacle in the everyday of both dance students and professionals. Waiting for the injury to heal passively, doing nothing, enduring the pain, does not match the imagined effort of everyday training attached to the dancer. It is not even clear what exactly she is healing from reading the few words in the protocol; it could be the healing of love wounds or, what I immediately supposed, the healing of an injury she got during training or rehearsals.

Despite the uncanny tendencies of neoliberal subjection learned during artistic education when students survey and calculate their activities, I also – in line with Ukeles' expansion of what artistic work includes – read a feminist critique in the protocols because they make visible, count and de-mystify the unrecognised working hours of the dancer. Besides the feminist expansion of the notion of work presented through Ukeles' notion of maintenance, a second feminist strategy occurs: the strategy of 'naysaying' understood as the practice of saying 'no' to virtuosity, 'no' to the harming demand of hyper-productivity, 'no' to the ideology of constant strokes of the genius.[84] Through the practice of

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[83] The sample from the protocol is printed with admission from the anonymised student.
[84] The naysaying is polemically and poetically revealed in Yvonne Rainer's *No Manifesto* in 1965, see
http://manifestos.mombartz.com/yvonne-rainer-no-manifesto/

writing protocols of self-study throughout the three years of study, the students get a pragmatic rather than a passionate relation to hours spent working as an artist.

The choreographer Yvonne Rainer suggests naysaying to artistic virtuosity, to the star-image and the heroic artist-figure in her *No Manifesto* in 1965. The 1970s feminists such as Silvia Federici and Shulamith Firestone and more recently, Kathi Weeks, have been arguing on a theoretical level against positive affects – love, happiness and passion – as compensation for work. The second wave feminist theorists revealed the private household as an obscure component in the economic model, where even Marx never counted domestic work as part of the greater calculation. Love and happiness have traditionally been the wages for housework.

In a post-Fordist era, this kind of romantic relation to hours spent with children, in the kitchen or groceries shopping, has travelled into other spheres of work. The entrepreneurial subject's desire to self-fulfil is similarly fuelled and mystified by love and passion and often accompanied by the image of the creative, innovative force of artists.[85] Feminist research has shown how the mystified relation to work – in households as well as for the entrepreneurial subject – masks the role of economic motives and utilities. To put it simply: when an artist is immersed in a passionate project, they do not count hours or ask for social security. Love is an "unlimited individual resource" and only economic worries will distract from enjoying work.[86] I am intrigued about Rainer's naysaying to artistic virtuosity and the naysaying to unpaid invisible labour. The two feminist ways of saying 'no' bring together resistances against the divisions of being on-stage and off-stage, of recognised production and unrecognised production, of soloist value production and necessary work in the 'background'. The strategies of artistic and philosophical naysaying dismantle a romance with artistic work, both when spectacularly performed on stage and when exploited by one's own passion.

"The first step in any critical project is to make the familiar strange", Kathi Weeks writes in her recently published essay *Down with Love: Feminist Critique and the New Ideologies of Love*.[87] Alienation from the romance with artistic work means in this context translating a mystified imaginary of artistic excess and virtuosity into a pragmatic counting of hours spent in work. Not only does counting profane the artist genius and the aura of artistic practice but it also exposes what kind of material practices artistic work actually covers. Sitting still and waiting for an injury to heal is, on the one hand, maintenance work, caring for the material of the artist which is the dancer's own body, and on the other hand, it is a protesting practice of bodily naysaying: while sitting immobile and enduring the healing process, the

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[85] Within Theatre and Performance Studies the actor as model for the engaged, self-fulfilling employee has taken its extremes in Joseph Pine and James H. Gilmore's *The Experience Economy* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1999).
[86] Weeks 2017, 45.
[87] Ibid, 42.

dancer is inactive yet at work. By noting down the hours of work "taking time off", she says "no" to the physical possibility of working passionately 24/7. The naysaying allows the dancer to win time for herself while working. But is it a 'win' to sit around immobile and injured or rather a painful act of maintenance work?

A less ambivalent version of naysaying becomes clear when the same student records one hour with "8.11.2017: helping Katla with homework". Where the healing time is still in a field of necessary work in order to dance (again), the student here frankly 'wins' time for friendship with her hours recorded as work. A few days later she notes spending an hour with "11.11.2017: emotional hungover poetry"[sic]. While possibly referring to a moment of writing poetry in a state of hangover blues, in my view, she may actually challenge the boundaries of what can count as artistic work. Is hangover poetry not just junk? Or where does the 'great inspiration' start if not in the shadow of a bottle of alcohol? Thinking back to Ukeles' question on which aspects of the everyday have been included in the image of artistic work, a gendered and idealist ideology is performatively reexamined, exposed and mocked: the artist in delirium and on drugs, dealing with mental issues, producing artistic objects (poetry), but not including time to heal their physical and rather profane injuries.

This polemic 'naysaying protocol', being the most recent sample in my analyses of protocols of self-study, shows a performative exploration of what counts as work including regenerative work, friendship and hangover poetry. With mocking self-irony towards the image of a romanticised, semi-drunk artist genius creating out of the dark sides of the soul combined with a serious longing for what has been excluded from the artist's working conditions 24/7, namely both friendship and time off to heal, this student questions the premises of artistic value production.

Feminist Politics of Work

When students write protocols of self-study within project work during their artistic education, their day and night are structured by a temporality, a meritocracy and the extra work of calculation proposed by the local interpretation of the Bologna Process. I have analysed samples of protocols and showed how giving an account of one's work is a performative act both in complicity with and as critique of neoliberalism: the writing of protocols is complicit as an economisation of time, exchanging hours spent in life into ECTS points. But the writing of protocols is also used as a feminist means to politicise the romantic relationship with artistic work by both pragmatically counting grey-zone hours, clarifying the particular work of the dancer, and mocking what traditionally has counted as artistic virtues and values. The institutionalised overmeasurement of work can be seen as extreme self-governance and also as resistance, as naysaying to an obscured economy within the arts.

When reading the protocols of self-study through a feminist perspective, I interpret them as an institutional demystification of artistic work as well as a particular recognition of the dancer's work. The protocol politicises the hidden forms of work, the dark matter, the grey-zone hours and exposes thereby a profane temporality of the dance student's work day and night, in the studio and in bed, in cultural institutions and at home, with colleagues, friends and family. Can the calculation and overmeasuring of time be to the advantage of the future (artist)worker? Could there be a moment of solidarity in counting individual, but structurally similar hours in concert? Hypothetically, if this way of counting hours for different kinds of immaterial and informal work would be recognised on the level of cultural policy, the number of paid working weeks per project would explode! And over time, the performance of an artist saying "no" to artistic values as excessive and original could generate another understanding of the artist as producer.

Thus, the accuracy and changing content of the protocols made by the students and authorised by the institution may be read as a performative investigation of the conception of artistic work and production of artistic value. Within the Bologna Process' demand for measurement and calculation, this constant recording of hours is a way to renegotiate what counts as work. It not only challenges the technology of meritocracy, but also the idealist ideology of the artist as a male genius. Students are *trained* to be aware of exactly what they are occupied by and with. Through the act of accurate protocolling of grey-zone work, they are questioning what the understanding of artistic 'work' entails, and thereby reclaiming an influence on the temporality of production.

INTERMEZZO

What Counts as Work?

Looking back at Robinson Crusoe's narrative and numeric accounts of his work in Defoe's novel and the novel's reception in 1719, I read clear ideological preferences of the contextual valorisation of different kinds of work. What counts as work? And in which forms is work documented?

Crusoe himself notes down both his hunting, carving, building, farming, cooking and his prayers. Physical, reproductive and immaterial work are all equal according to their horizonal arrangement. But when returning to the quotation by Marx from the preface, we see how some parts of Crusoe's activities are of greater interest than others, depending on the historic context: "Of his prayers and the like we take no account, since they are a source of pleasure to him, and he looks upon them as so much recreation."[88]

Besides the narrative and numeric accounts of adventures and hours of work, Crusoe writes about his religious practice of prayers. Throughout the journal notes, his religious attachment grows. But 150 years after Defoe's novel, Marx does not take Crusoe's religious practice seriously. Marx does not include immaterial and spiritual work in his economic model since they are a source of Crusoe's own, individual, personal pleasure. Crusoe's prayers are a way of spending time, a time of regeneration, which might strengthen his human resources seen from a contemporary perspective but are seen as a personal matter to Marx. And for Crusoe in the 18th Century, the religious practice obviously adds to his personal credibility, his truthfulness. In the time when Marx was writing, the personal was not political – not anymore, and not yet, I could add. In other words, Marx did not transform mindfulness, regeneration and other kinds of self-caring work into a source of potential value.

Crusoe, as Marx notes, displays "different modes of human labour". He accounts for sleep, for work, for travels, experiences, considerations and even for forgetting to take hours and days into account. The accounting practices, encompassing both the narrative and the numeric accounting, are occupying or colonising all spheres of life. Consequently, Crusoe records hours of sleep too:

> NOV. 4. - This morning I began to *order my times of work*, of going out with my gun, time of sleep, and time of diversion - viz. every morning I walked out with my gun for two or three hours, if it did not rain; then employed myself to work till about eleven o'clock; then eat what I had to live on; and from twelve to two I lay down to sleep, the weather

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[88] Karl Marx: *Capital,* vol. I (Moscow: Progress Publishers 2015 [1867]), 51.

being excessively hot; and then, in the evening, to work again. The working part of this day and of the next were wholly employed in making my table, for I was yet but a very sorry workman (…)[89]

Crusoe is a plantation owner in Brazil and then, on his way to capture slaves in West Africa, the ship is wrecked off the coast of Trinidad. While Crusoe's isolation on the island is a consequence of an external colonising practice representative of his present time, I characterise his narrative and numeric accounts as total inner colonisation of human work and the self. When writing down accounts of everything, from craftwork and hunting, to regenerative and spiritual work, to hours of sleep, he is domesticating and economising all spheres of life. When accounting in writing and in numbers, the aesthetics of fiction and finance intermingle and the production of the self is a publication across genres. The colonising techniques are all-encompassing, colonising the world through mapping and colonising the self through writing and counting. Crusoe's twofold accountancy might be an act of enlightenment but it also definitely makes Crusoe a well-known and wealthy figure.

Publishing Oneself

Foucault develops a concept of self-interpretation through writing and self-exposure in his two lectures "About the Beginning of the Hermeneutics of the Self"(1980). He describes how technologies of the modern subject find genealogies in Greek and Christian practices of confession. Foucault examines forms of self-construction and self-modification. There is a complex Western history of self-technologies, where the subject discovers, evaluates and formulates the truth concerning himself. Foucault uncovers self-evaluating forms from Seneca's descriptions within Greek philosophy, through to the theologian Cassian's writings about the practices in Christian monasteries, to Freud's analysis of censorship. Foucault thereby also calls for a methodological consciousness about the historicity of the subject. There are two major forms of self-evaluation: *exomologesis*, a theatrical manifestation of one's sins in public, and *exagoreusis*, a permanent verbal self-examination in speech and in writing. The latter has become dominant in Western culture, according to Foucault,[90] whereas I would suggest that the excesses of performance artists in the early, transgressive works in the 1970s – both confessing verbally, but also brushing their sinful beauty out of their hair, whipping their bag (Marina Abramović's *Art must be Beautiful. Artist must be Beautiful* (1975), *Lips of Thomas* (1975)), or normalising through electric shock (VALIE EXPORT's *Hyperbulie* (1973)) – might fall into the theatrical, public performance of

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[89] Defoe 1719, 113 (my italics).
[90] Foucault 1993, 222.

exomologesis.

"Technologies of the self" is a central concept in Foucault's theoretical apparatus and also for my discussions. Technologies are to be understood as patterns proposed by cultural habits and prescriptions, as institutionalised codes of conduct in specific historical periods. Technologies of the self are ways of performing the self according to political, religious or cultural scripts. I choose to write about technologies of the self rather than interpellation, as proposed by Louis Althusser in *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* (1989 [1970]), since I find the concept of 'technology' more complex – a pattern, a prescription, something designed by somebody for somebody else to produce a specific outcome. It is obviously a construct saturated with power and developed across traditions, sometimes even inscribed in an interaction with and a procedure through materials, calling for historical contextualisation. This is preferable to the 'calling and answering' dynamic of interpellation.[91] Foucault writes about technologies (sometimes also "techniques") of the self:

> (…) techniques which permit individuals to effect, by their own means, a certain number of operations on their own bodies, on their own soul, on their own thoughts, on their own conduct, and this manner so as to transform themselves, modify themselves, and to attain a certain state of perfection, of happiness, of purity, of supernatural power, and so on. Let's call this kind of techniques a technique or technology of the self.[92]

Producing and publishing oneself through *exagoreusis* is a governing technology akin to explicitly making people obey rules.[93] The difference between government by the church or the state is simply that the *exagoreusis* makes people govern themselves. The governance is delegated. The confession – with its explicit need of an audience, a listener, a reader – is a performative subject production, where the sinner's account does not necessarily have to match the actual events but rather, is a reformulation and self-publicising.

Thinking about the performance of the self through writing, the genres that first come to mind are autobiographies, artist bios, artist statements, portfolios and CVs, but also artist diaries and log books exhibited and publicised as works or addendums to an *oeuvre*. These *exagoreutic* genres are

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[91] The Althusserian interpellation – the "Hey you" call of the policeman and the citizen answering "Me?" as well as the kneeling down in church and thereby being interpellated as a believer – in the text *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* (1989 [1970]) is, as Judith Bulter later criticises (1993), quite ignorant towards the performativity of the answer: the possibility of change within each iteration. Basically, the interpellation is thought of as a top-down model, from the authority to the citizen, and has in its etymology a focus on the verbal call, which I find limiting compared to the possibilities in "technology" as both a material construct and an immaterial pattern.

[92] Foucault 1993, 203.

[93] Ibid.

records of production, partly documentations and partly public manifestations of the self.

Crusoe publishes his own journal and states performatively in the novel: "I began to keep my journal; of which I shall here give you the copy" (p.109). Crusoe considers what the performative act of writing and sharing does to his constitution. The self-publishing becomes a way to overcome the depressive mode of being lost in solitude, a self-mastery through the force of reason:

> I now began to consider seriously my condition, and the circumstances I was reduced to; and I drew up the state of my affairs in writing, not so much to leave them to any that were to come after me - for I was likely to have but few heirs - as to deliver my thoughts from daily poring over them, and afflicting my mind; and as my reason began now to master my despondency, I began to comfort myself as well as I could, and to set the good against the evil, that I might have something to distinguish my case from worse; and I stated very impartially, like debtor and creditor, the comforts I enjoyed against the miseries I suffered (…)[94]

In a playful mode of setting good against evil, Crusoe confesses his daily ups and downs in a narrative account. He looks at his personal balances of joy and suffering. Interestingly, he compares himself giving a narrative account with those who do numeric accounts: the debtor and the creditor. The comparison of the confessor and the debtor unites Christian and financial technologies of the household. Similarly, Foucault points out how the theologian Cassian compares the monk with a *moneychanger*. The monk evaluates his own self continuously with taxonomies similar to the moneychanger, whose task it is to analyse the outer traits of the decoration as well as to verify the authenticity and purity of the metal.[95] Although Foucault does not explain the etymology of *exagoreusis*, I want to stress the etymological connection between publishing oneself and finance: the verb *agoreúein* (gr. ἀγορεύω) means to speak in the a*gora*, to express oneself in public, something that matches the expression by Foucault of publishing oneself.[96] I read the prefix ex- as something 'out of oneself', probably connected to the public act. Yet other etymological abbreviations are interesting to look into too. *Exagoraso* (gr. εξαγορἀ|ζω) is a verb used for the expressions "to bribe, to purchase, to redeem".

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[94] Defoe [1719], 103–104.
[95] Foucault 1993, 207.
[96] Gerhard Köbler, *Altgriechiches Herkunftswörterbuch 2007*, online pdf,
http://www.koeblergerhard.de/Altgriechisch/griech_etym.pdf, 5.

Agoreuse (gr. αγὸρευσ|η) is a noun meaning "a plädoyer, a plea".[97] Looking at the etymological domain of *exagoreusis,* there is some bribing, pleading, trading going on. Financial negotiation of value is associated with publishing oneself, putting a price on the self. Foucault continuously follows the confession from Greek philosophy and Christian monasteries into a consolidating bourgeois culture in the 19th Century. In *The History of Sexuality* (1978 [1976]) he elaborates on how the moral confession has spread out into everyday life and has become internalised. Confession in the 19th Century no longer belongs to the Church, but is exercised in all institutions, in public and in private.

My reading of the narrative and numeric accounts by Crusoe in Defoe's novel is an attempt to historicise the logos of the 18th Century as an early technology of the self where Christianity and finance meet. It is a technology of the self where a subject like Crusoe through self-publication performs himself as a creditable and trustworthy person. It is an act of authentication and legitimisation. It is a technology where the subject negotiates his value through speech and writing.

Production of the Student

Following Foucault, I am intrigued by the romance between Christian forms of confession and the vocabulary from finance across historical periods in Western history. This intimate relationship between confession and economisation crystallises when looking at the education of artists practicing technologies of the self. As already exemplified in the article "Giving an Account of one's Work", the Bologna Process has animated institutions to increase documentation and connect the documented with a cashing in of ECTS points. Documentation of one's own project work, exemplified in the protocols of self-study, has in Berlin developed both calculating practices of self-surveillance and self-measurement, but also increased the awareness of what counts as work.

The Bologna Process makes study programmes more legible than before, since their intentions, distributions and contents are written in detailed study orders with a similar vocabulary across educations. "Naming" and "faming" are imperative on all levels in the Bologna Process, as sociologist Katja Brøgger has claimed (2017). Similar to the institutions of higher artistic education, students are also required to increasingly verbalise and document their artistic practice and experimentation, and expected to be qualified in reflecting and communicating their artistic work.[98] Three main areas provide the wording for what art students should obtain: "Knowledge", "Skills" and

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[97] *PONS online Greek – German Dictionary*,
https://de.pons.com/%C3%BCbersetzung?q=%CE%B5%CE%BE%CE%B1%CE%B3%CE%BF%CF%81%CE%B5%CF%85%CF%83%CE%B9%CF%83&l=deel&in=&lf=de (accessed 25.9.2019).
[98] Cf. The qualification frame of the implementation in Danish higher education within the arts,
https://ufm.dk/uddannelse/anerkendelse-og-dokumentation/dokumentation/kvalifikationsrammer/andre/dk-videregaaende/tillaeg_kunstneriske_uddannelser_inkl_forstaaelsesdokument.pdf

"Competences".[99] In my view, knowledge production in particular is at the centre of the qualifications and a relatively new expectation within the arts.[100] In order to meet the qualifications and obtain the bachelor of art degree, students train different forms of knowledge production. The self-publishing genres of *documentation, evaluation* and *assessment*, amongst others, taught at the art schools are, in my view, to be understood both as a part of the expansion of work – more to be taught, more to do, more to count – and as technologies of the self. I here define the three genres in a polemic manner by inscribing them onto the horizon of Foucault's historical self-publication, *exagoreusis*:

Documentation is a selected and remediated version of what happened. It is a representation of an ended process published in an aesthetic form: an edited journal or log book, a collection of photographs, a video of what has previously been done, a protocol of self-study. Making the documentation can also be seen as maintenance work: storing and archiving what has been done. Documentation can consist of numeric, written and sensory accounts. A finished documentation is filtered and thereby a fiction about the past. The documentation can be the point of departure for an evaluation or an assessment. Therefore, the documentation is also an intended product, and it is construed in order to justify and give value. Think of the anthropologist Didier Fassin's note on how much worth the paper documentation of medical care has for a migrant: it is the proof that she exists, that someone said "her life counts", and it is the testimony that she has been in a specific country and has visited an authority, the doctor.[101] Similarly, the documentation made by the student themself is testimony that an artistic process has taken place, that skills have been developed and obtained, that certain thoughts have been thought and certain exercises, places, exhibitions, books etc. have been consumed. The documentation of the past permits the student to continue working in the future. The temporality of the documentation is the conglomeration of the past compressed to be estimated for the future. Has this artistic research proved to have potential? What can be developed from here? The documentation is the base for investment and speculation. Popular forms of (self-)documentation are

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[99] My translation of the qualifications for artistic degrees from the document published by the Danish Ministry of Culture, January 2010: https://kum.dk/uploads/tx_templavoila/beskrivelsedokument%20kunstneriske%20gradstyper.pdf

[100] Knowledge production as imperative in the Bologna Process and part of a greater turn in the arts is discussed in Ph.D. in Modern Cultural Studies Sidsel Nelund's dissertation *Acts of Research. Knowledge Production in Contemporary Art Between Knowledge Economy and Critical Practice* (2015).

[101] Didier Fassin's point of departure is that trauma can be a resource in the fight for human rights: "(…) trauma is not simply the cause of the suffering that is being treated, it is also a resource that can be used to support a right. The documentation or certificate of traumatisation is therefore valuable in court for the refugee: (…) it reveals the social investment in this document, both in the care with which it is drawn up, which implies that rules of writing have been established, and in the credit acquired by the organisations, which gains them a degree of legitimacy in defending their clients. Thus the medical and psychological certificate as object represents much more than just a text written on an official letterhead: it is a fragment of history – that of the asylum seeker, of course, but equally that of the contemporary world." Didier Fassin, *The Empire of Trauma* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2009), 10, 252.

portfolios, timesheets, CVs, bios, autobiographies.

Evaluation is a continuous mode of self-estimation and self-interpretation. Under the eye of and in dialogue with an authority, the student assesses their own contribution in a seminar, throughout the previous term, or in an artistic process. It is a temporary judgement of what has been done so far in order to do better in the future. Evaluations are not final assessments and not public. Besides numeric accounts in form of ratings – 'how do you estimate your own contribution on a scale from 1–5, where 1 is low, 3 is mediocre and 5 is very good?' – evaluations are mainly oral or written accounts. Evaluation is an ongoing practice and follows a rhythm throughout the academic year of an institution. At the end of the day, it will become the future artist's own responsibility to undertake evaluations regularly in order not to lose track or develop blind spots. It is a practice that the student learns and internalises. Disciplines within evaluation are reflection, introspection, contextualisation, judgement. Evaluation is closely related to the practice of Christian confession, where one holds up good against bad experiences and searches for answers on how to improve according to expectations. Professional artists are expected to evaluate their projects retrospectively to the authority of the national arts council or a private fund.

Assessment is a frame to prove skills and achieve acknowledgement that the student lives up to the learning goals set in education. Assessments are mostly undertaken individually, despite the fact that the process up to the assessment might have been in a group. It is the goal and the proof. In artistic education final assessments are mostly open to the public and in written and oral form. Within the Bologna Process framework, some educations have a more frequent number of assessments than the former diploma system, whereas others only have the BA project as the final assessment. Assessment is making an end to something: when a seminar or a workshop, an immersion into material, the collaboration and the process are over. The assessment is often including a presentation where what has had a duration and slow pace is supposed to be compressed into a broth, a standardised timespan of something like a fifteen minutes' presentation, ten minutes' reflection and five minutes' discussion, hereafter voting by the accessor and external assessor. In an assessment, certain competences are to be proven, but also certain interests within the institution become legible: how much time for reflection, for peers, for discussion? Finally, not only skills and competences of the student are measured in the assessment, but also their ability to manage time and knowledge, and their responsibility in conducting process and assessment in a professional manner.

The three forms of self-production within the qualification of knowledge production that I set out here can be understood as technologies of the self. Like Crusoe, students exercise an inner colonisation of thier work and the self through exteriorisation and publication. They exercise a mapping, valorisation and condensation of the past in order to be truthful and worth 'investment' in the future. Polemically, I would question whether these technologies produce *virtuoso* artist-selves – measuring, communicating and reflecting themselves – rather than actual knowledge from within the arts, or art. However, as already stated in the article "Giving an Account of one's Work", those technologies of the self are performative. Though intended to measure the student and valorise the work done, the technologies can also be used to expose and reverse the logic of an institution: how many hours do we work? What is recognised as ECTS-point giving activity? Can documentation be faked in favour of the student? Measurement, accountancy and governmentality increase with a reform like the Bologna Process. But while multiple genres of self-production are taught and examined, an expanded notion of work evolves, showing how much we work and making the students count hours differently, and even proposing that the institution recognise hidden, unrecognised hours in their economic model.

CHAPTER ONE
WORK

> A politics of work could be conceived as a way to link the everyday and sometimes every-night experiences of work – its spaces, relations and temporalities; its physical, affective, and cognitive practices; its pains and pleasures – to the political problematic of their present modes and codes of organisation and relations of rule.
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> Kathi Weeks (2011, 18)

Conceptualizing Work

By 'work' I refer to all forms of productive activity which produce and reproduce life and value within and beyond capitalism's privileged model of wage labour, even when unnoticed by most.[102] As the reader might have noticed, I consequently use the word 'work' and not 'labour' in my own writings, although I quote other scholars' concepts using whatever term they employ. By avoiding the opposition of work and labour I avoid essentialised conceptions. Rather, the one category allows me to elaborate on 'work' as an expanded notion of production bridging what happens at home and at work, with feelings and on the computer, through the body as well as in the university, the sauna and the sweatshop. The word 'work' includes paid and unpaid production as something 'counting' and in that respect, I operate from within a rationale given by capitalism where everything counts. But as my findings will show throughout the dissertation, my ambition is – in the Marxist feminist tradition – a constant search for work which counts but is not explicitly recognised, valued or waged. It is not an ambition meant only to get a few new forms of legally paid work, but a political ambition as a cultural analyst being attentive towards areas of exploitation that we do not yet recognise. My ambition is meant as a continuous highlighting of, and search for, the activities that count but are not paid, are recorded but not seen, documented but not used, assessed but not appreciated. To me, the analysis and conception of work are political in the sense that they deal with distribution of time, sociality and economy. Work is *per se* inscribed in a capitalist valorisation – what is for pleasure and what is paid,

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[102] I am inspired by Kathi Weeks to consequently use the word 'work'. Although Weeks does not only use 'work', she suspends the work-labour distinction and uses the terms interchangeably. Due to her critique of the Marxist essentialised concept of living labour as something opposite and alternative to work under capitalism, Weeks believes in developing radical imaginations of other forms of post-work beyond the dichotomy of waged work versus romanticised living labour. By contrast, I am trying, first and foremost, to map an 'all-inclusive' conception of work in order to confront how work is practiced in visible and invisible forms beyond the dichotomy of factory versus home.

when are we off and when are we on, who is a friend and who is a part of one's network – and the analysis of work tells us what are the present organisation and relations of power.

But why am I so preoccupied with the changing forms and concepts of work? Writing after 2007–8 and the beginning of the financial crisis, I believe – as do many scholars rethinking Marx in recent years – that the articulation and reconception of the worker as a figure of agency and transformative power are needed. Without the activity of workers there is no production value, as Antonio Negri says in his plaidoyer for Marx's potent worker-subject.[103] But workers not only have power when they withdraw from work; they can change their working conditions. I base my theoretical apparatus, following Marx and Engels in their *German Ideology*, on the premise that the workers are not just an exploited group subjected to employers and systems, but an active group of powerful people. They are not just subjected to circumstances, but actively create the circumstances under which they work. In left-wing theories, pessimism can take over and critique can drown any kind of initiative or formulation of alternatives. But if there is a drive towards change despite precarisation and exhaustion, from where should we then depart? I do not believe in departing from an imaginary utopian future, nor do I want to put the responsibility on the artwork itself as an incubator of change. Rather, I believe in departing from the ways we work in order to analyse, politicise and change them, with the worker starring as a key subject of change.

When I write about work, it concerns the particular concept of the performance artist as worker under capitalism, as explored in recent decades by scholars within Theatre and Performance Studies. The encounter of Marxism and Performance Studies is fruitful in the sense that both fields perceive work as an action of possible change and provide "a shared imperative of reimagining the ways in which we theorise and practise the social".[104] In performance theory, materialist readings of the artist as a worker has, in my view, two axes. The first is an American feminist axis informed by Hannah Arendt, rooted in discussions on Marxism and living labour, departing from feminist performance art in the 1960s and 1970s. This axis is continuously preoccupied with gendered and racialised forms of work in performance art and in society, and with scholars such as Judith Butler, Julia Bryan-Adams, Shannon Jackson and Sianne Ngai. The second is an axis with representatives in Ljubljana, Zagreb and Warsaw, active in Germany, Belgium, as well as Sweden, more informed by Italian *Autonomia* and the concept of immaterial labour as well as Foucault's concept of working on the self, and with representatives such as Bojana Cvejić, Isabell Lorey, Bojana Kunst, Ana Vujanović and, to a certain

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[103] Antonio Negri, "Starting again from Marx," *Radical Philosophy* 2.03 (December 2018), 3-4.
[104] Joshua Lucin-Levy & Alizia Shvartz, "Living Labor: Marxism and Performance Studies," *Women and Performance: a journal of feminist theory* vol 26 no. 2-3 (2016), 115-121.

extent, Annemarie Matzke. Of course, the two axes have overlapped,[105] yet where the American axis has challenged me on the categorisation and hierarchies of work in and beyond the arts with feminist, decentralising and rematerialising insistence, the (east) European axis has shifted my attention towards the sociality and temporality of work and my Foucault-dependent contextualisation to self-publication and governmentality.

The concept of the artist as worker, and in particular the performance artist, is presented throughout the dissertation and its case-study articles. I examine specific forms of self-management, time distribution, social isolation, multitasking, forced mobility and existential inconsistency which characterise the life of the working performance artist, but I also analyse how art students, *alumnae* and professional performance artists suggest new ways of organising themselves and exercise what Kathi Weeks has called a politics of work. My proposition is that the particular way work is taught in higher artistic education and the technologies of work exercised and renegotiated by performance artists are adding important ambiguities and perspectives into a general discussion of the concept of what work is today and how work forms our common understanding of time, of sociality, of economy, and of ourselves.

In this theoretical chapter, I investigate an expanded notion of work that has been conceptualised since the second half of the 20th Century. The chapter is meant both as a methodological standpoint and as a presentation and discussion of central concepts. I depart from two prominent feminist theorists' responses to Marx: first, Hannah Arendt's critique of the concept of revolutionary 'freedom' and the disregard of necessity, and second, the concept of unrecognised work coined by the Wages for Housework movement. These two theoretical positions expand the notion of what we perceive as work in general. As a next step, I will discuss two concepts that are specifically developed from artistic work within the expanded notion of work, namely the concepts of immaterial labour and maintenance work.

Necessity and Freedom

Hannah Arendt's concept of the political is mostly criticised for her ancient division between the private and public sphere,[106] and rightfully so. But Arendt is central in a Marxist feminist conception of work because she shows how 'free' work in the public sphere is dependent on necessary work in the

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[105] See for example Jasbir Puar's virtual roundtable talk in *The Drama Review* with Lauren Berlant, Judith Butler, Bojana Cvejić, Isabell Lorey and Ana Vujanović (Puar et al. 2012).

[106] A recent critique of Arendt's disregard of the body as political – it belongs to the *oikos*, and thinking belongs to the *polis* – is the point of departure for Judith Butler when analysing new cultures of political protest as "assemblies, strikes, vigils, and occupations of public spaces" in *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly* (London: Harvard University Press 2015), 9.

home. Arendt's extrapolation of the physical labour of reproduction in 1958 can be read as a precursor to the second wave feminism, although Arendt never proclaimed to be a feminist herself.[107]

When historicising work in her chapter on "Labor" in *The Human Condition* (1958), Arendt relaunches the important distinction between labour and work that Locke divided into "The labour of our body and the work of our hands."[108] Her project is an important attack on Marx's exclusion of the labour of the body. In German, Marx writes about *Arbeit* and thereby there is no etymological difference between labour and work. Arendt highlights how most other languages use this labour-work couplet to name human production. Following the Ancient Greek etymology of labour connected to Aristotle's crafting slaves, the *banausoi*, Arendt states:

> To labor meant to be enslaved by necessity, and this enslavement was inherent in the conditions of human life. Because men were dominated by the necessities of life, they could win their freedom only through the domination of those whom they subjected to necessity by force. (…)
>
> The institution of slavery in antiquity, though not in later times, was not a device for cheap labor or an instrument of exploitation for profit but rather the attempt to exclude labor from the conditions of human life.[109]

Arendt shows how labour was conceived as a responsibility for every man in Ancient Greece. A man was responsible for a well-delegated home, *oikos*, the place of necessity, where life-maintaining activities unfolded. His possible freedom lies in the delegation of labour, yet it is still, ultimately, under his responsibility, and against the background of delegated necessary labour, he could be free in the public sphere, the *polis*. The relation between necessity and freedom is bound to the Ancient Greek understanding of the political division between private and public, which is the foundation of *The Human Condition*. Arendt's particular critique of Marx is that he aims at only liberating work in public and thereby he ignores the ancient responsibility for necessary labour.

The central binary in Arendt's writing on labour is the binary of necessity and freedom. Arendt connects – in the canonical tradition of Aristotle[110] – labour to necessity and work to the

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[107] Arendt is even identified as a female male supremacist by Mary O'Brien and in Anglophone feminism in the 1970s and 80s. Cf. Julian Honkasano, *Sisterhood, Natality, Queer: Reframing Feminist Interpretations of Hannah Arendt* (Helsinki: The University of Helsinki 2016), 23.
[108] Arendt 1958, 79.
[109] Arendt 1958, 83–84.
[110] Arendt has also been criticised by feminists for a being a "female mind nourished by male ideology", writing in line with a male canon within philosophy, cf. Adrienne Rich quoted in Honkasano 2016, 34.

possibility of freedom. She notes how the distribution of necessary labour to others determines the possibility to think and exercise freedom for some. However, in Marx's version of freedom, the antique delegation of responsibility has become obsolete, ignored, left behind. The division of work between the delegating part, the political, free man, and the exercising part, the *barnausoi*, the women, the enslaved, is removed from the economic model. While some women are pregnant and give birth unnoticed, the emancipation from work is discussed and explored by revolutionaries in public. The antique distribution of labour and work between the genders is now reduced to only 'neutral' work (Ger. *Arbeit*) that takes place in public. In this sense, the public realm is visible at the expense of the invisibilised private realm.[111] Slavery is the premise of freedom as opposed to delegation; enslavement has lost its recognition. Where fertile women are enslaved to breed children for others: "The labor for some suffices for the life of all",[112] Arendt writes.

Although Marx and Engels write about gender roles as dependent on societal development[113] and despite Marx's growing inclusion of women in the productive class,[114] he does not write much about freedom from reproductive labour. Marx's ambition to free man from work after the revolution does not mean freeing the labouring body as well. It is the emancipation of workers from the factory, including women and children, to a certain extent 'masculinised' here, that is central to his concept of revolution. In other words, emancipation, understood as freedom from work, is solely an ideal for those who are not obliged to be pregnant, give birth and take care of children. Yet, if I want to think about the politics of work through Arendt, including that of necessary labour and 'free' work, everybody counts and all bodies need to be able to appear, as Arendt famously says.[115] Consequently, instead of 'liberating' women from work at home in order to become a wage worker, as some first-wave feminists would have proposed, I find it reasonable to include the private sphere and its bodies within the concept of what is political.

Further on, Arendt's critique of Marx's disregard of necessary labour becomes a foundation for analysing inequalities within the concept of work through the question of *who* can become 'free' from work. Therefore, by relaunching the difference between necessity and freedom, and

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[111] Arendt 1958, 29.

[112] Ibid, 88.

[113] In *The German Ideology* Marx and Engels write about the division of labour as slavery in families, "a tribal ownership", (1845–46), 7. There is no "natural" distribution of work between men and women in developed cultures, they write. Although they are right in their anti-essentialist conception of work, writing in 1845 they do not take continued, constructed roles of gender into account.

[114] In the years after the Paris Commune, Marx's appreciation of women workers' demands grows. In a preamble to "The Programme of the *Parti Ouvrier*" (1880) Marx writes that "the emancipation of the productive class is that of all human beings without distinction of sex or race". Cf. Heather Brown, "Marx on Gender and the Family," *Monthly Review* Volume 66, Issue 02, June (2014).

[115] Butler rephrases Arendt: "politics not only requires a space of appearance, but bodies that do appear", Butler 2015, 155.

claiming that all bodies need to appear, Arendt also delivers the prelude to the reoccurring feminist question on who can go on strike: since the women of Ancient Greece were enslaved to reproductive labour at home, they could not gather and protest in public. But slavery in the age-old division of *oikos* and *polis* is not the reason for not going on strike today. Rather, necessary work in an expanded sense is what workers cannot escape. It is the invisible hours that keep things moving and keep people alive: parents cannot *not* put their children to bed or feed them; an artist cannot *not* store their artworks and cannot *not* write their application for funding; a factory worker cannot *not* commute to work or sleep at night – at least, nobody would notice and the strike during invisible hours would mainly hit the worker themself, or their children. With the expansion of the political by the inclusion of the private, or rather, the personal, I now turn to the Wages for Housework movement and Silvia Federici.

Unrecognised Work[116]

When the feminist researcher and activist Silvia Federici in 1975 summarises the argumentations made by the Wages for Housework's movement in the text *Wages Against Housework*, she sets a milestone in feminist and Marxist theory.[117] The main task of the class struggle, she writes, is to discourage invisible work in the home. The reproductive work at home counts implicitly in the bourgeois economy but is not paid. It is mystified in an economic sense, veiled as a function, covered by affective structures such as love, gratitude and addiction. For centuries, women have been attributed to a number of 'natural' abilities such as tidying, dishwashing, cleaning and childcare. In addition to a woman's 'natural' tasks in the home, the man's role is as breadwinner. He works in the absence of affective compensation – too much, and with pressure, without emotional relief – which the woman then has to compensate affectively when he returns from work.

The woman's work is naturalised and thus invisibilised; it is not organised in trade unions and her dissatisfaction is expressed and heard only as a 'kitchen-bedroom quarrel' and in small private women's circles. The woman's critique of the invisibilised, unpaid work at home is expressed as a lament complaint in what Lauren Berlant later calls an "intimate public".[118] The absence of common organisation beyond the intimate public makes the woman's work at home a personal problem. If she does not settle into the work at home, in the role of mother, in the pleasing and servicing part of the housewife, it is her own problem. Guilt and shame about not succeeding in her 'natural woman's call' is

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[117] Silvia Federici, *Wages Against Housework* (Bristol: Power of Women Collective and The Falling Wall Press, 1975).
[118] Cf. Lauren Berlant, *The Female Complaint* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008)

internalised and individualised under capitalism. But this individually experienced tragedy is structurally determined, claims Frederici and her successors like Berlant and Weeks.

Federici reminds us that the battle against housework is the beginning of a revolutionary showdown with capitalism's division of work for both men and women, a division continued from Ancient Greece and reiterated by Arendt: women are imprisoned as domestic workers, men imprisoned as free workers. It is women who take care of emotions and the home, and men who take care of money and public life. Not only does Federici point out that the struggle applies to both genders, beyond their sexuality as well, she also suggests a showdown with wage labour as such. Wages will never be adequate to the amount of work done. Salaries only help to create inequality and establish hierarchies of what counts and does not count: there is work and non-work, paid and unpaid. Whereas work is paid, non-work makes you happy, as Sara Ahmed (2010) has remarked. Wages under capitalism categorise what work is – it is done in the workplace, is monitored by an authority – and invisibilises and excludes other forms of work: affective work, reproductive work, intellectual work. Wages exclude the work that takes place at home, in relationships, at night.

Federici and co. politicise the field of reproductive and affective work in the home in 1975. However, in Federici's later writings, she provincialises housework and turns towards elderly care work[119] and women's work with farming and microcredits in the global South.[120] Continuously, she is looking for further blind spots in the conception of work and attacks reductionist notions such as "immaterial labour" and "cognitive capitalism"[121] for ignoring more than half of the global workers who are still lifting bodies, changing nappies, sweating in mines or sweeping floors in their everyday lives.

The turn of immaterial labour is announced by Italian autonomists as a historical change in the concept of work where the tendency – across factories, managerial and cultural work – is to animate "affects, relational skills, ordinary know-how, and other basic human capacities for the production of tangible as well as intangible goods".[122] Immaterial labour grows out of the change in production from Fordism to post-Fordism where manual productions of goods changes into immaterial production of mainly knowledge and services. According to the Italian autonomists, the concrete changes from producing things and objects to producing thinking, relations and affects alters

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[119] Silvia Federici, "On Eldercare Work and the Limits of Marxism," *Visuel Arkivering* 11, (Copenhagen: The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts - Schools of Visual Arts, 2017).

[120] Silvia Federici: *Re-enchanting the World. Feminism and the Politics of the Commons* (Oakland: PM Press, 2019)

[121] Cf. Federici 2017 and Caffentzis and Federici 2007.

[122] I quote the precise description of immaterial labour by Sianne Ngai in her excellent discussion of immaterial labour and affective labour in the chapter on "The Zany Science" in *Our Aesthetic Categories* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), 206.

the way we conceive work: we draw not only on skills and crafts trained for work, but also on emotional and social competences, as well as individual capacities for imagination, creativity, and criticality.

Theorists such as Paolo Virno, Maurizio Lazzarato, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri take their point of departure on the notion of immaterial labour from a concept Marx introduced in *Results of the Immediate Process of Production.* Here, Marx operates with the distinction between unproductive and productive work.[123] Productive work produces immediate value and objectifies itself in concrete commodities. In opposition to this, unproductive work is the work of the singer, the teacher and the writer, according to Marx, as long as they do not produce explicit commodities.[124] Immaterial labour belongs in the category of the unproductive work of servants, doctors, teachers and artists who do not bring forth a product, but rather services and expertise. The produced services are connected to the personality of the worker who often needs to be present in the delivery. As Marx writes, a patient would prefer to be examined by the doctor himself, and not by his errand boy.[125] Immaterial labour is reintroduced by the Italian theorists describing how surplus value is extracted from the personality and social behaviour of a worker and converted into marketable value. The ambiguity of immaterial labour is that, on the one hand, the motivation and creativity increases when one's personality is involved (that can be joyful, meaningful) and on the other hand, as Lazzarato writes, immaterial labour "threatens to be even more totalitarian than the earlier division of manual and mental labour" when the personality is a brand and the subject becomes vulnerable to conjunctures and valorisations of the market.[126] The importance of the analysis of contemporary forms of work stemming from conceptions of immaterial labour is indisputable, especially when addressing institutions of education and cultural production, and I shall return to the concept time and again.

However, Federici's critique of immaterial labour is that it is too narrow a concept, since it privileges the mind and continues the ignorance of forms of unrecognised, reproductive work. Federici insists on both the involved bodies and affects: "much reproductive work, as exemplified by the care for the elderly, demands a complete engagement with the persons to be reproduced, a relation that can hardly be conceived as 'immaterial'." [127] In addition to immaterial labour, she criticises Hardt and Negri for distilling the concept of "affective labour", also separating physical and emotional

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[123] Marx elaborates on Adam Smith's distinction between "productive" and "unproductive" work, first presented in *The Wealth of Nations* (1776).

[124] I elaborate further on Marx's productive and unproductive labour in article IV "Working by the Numbers."

[125] Cf. Marx 1976, 1048.

[126] Cf. Maurizio Lazzarato, "Immaterial Labor," in Paolo Virno and Michael Hardt, eds., *Radical Thought in Italy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 136.

[127] Federici 2017, 16.

aspects, and being a part of the fashioning of "care work".[128] The problem for Federici, thus, is both a reductionist and homogenising concept of what Hardt and Negri call post-industrial work. She makes a plea for a holistic concept starting bottom up from reproductive work, later insisting on looking for the unrecognised practices of work rather than one identified concept.

In 2019 when Federici revisits the findings of the Wages for Housework movement, she points at a revolutionary and astute approach:

> What made the discussion of social reproduction by wages for housework theorists and activists in the 1970s 'revolutionary' (in my view) was not the field that they examined, but what they discovered, which is the existence of a large area of exploitation until then unrecognized by all revolutionary theorists.[129]

Throughout her writing, Federici highlights two important aspects in her concept of work: embodied and unrecognised work. Importantly, embodied work is not only synonymous with necessary labour in the *oikos* as encountered in Arendt's analysis but also includes the physical work in hospitals, in elderly care homes etc., as exemplified above.

Unrecognised work is what is incorporated in the economic model of capitalism, but appears somehow under the radar. Unrecognised work is necessary for the total production but has no permanent location. With the expanded conception from reproductive work to unrecognised work, Federici moves out from the *oikos* to include unrecognised, enslaved workers on a global scale: third-world mine workers looking for metals for smartphones are not necessary for the sake of reproduction. They are enslaved, so that others can move, talk, and distribute their time freely. In that respect,

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[128] The dispute between male autonomists and feminists could be a chapter in itself to find out who has the most precise concept of contemporary work:
Federici writes about the proposal of affective labour in *Multitude* by Hardt and Negri: "Indeed, to the extent that a separation [between physical and emotional] is introduced, the extent that elderly people (or for that matter children) are fed, washed, combed, massaged, given medicine, without any consideration for their emotional, 'affective' response and general state of being, we enter a world of radical alienation. The theory of 'affective labour' proposed by Hardt and Negri ignores this problematic and complexity involved in the reproduction of life." Federici 2017, 16.
Taken into account Federici's distance from the concept of affective labour, the more insulting it is when Negri credits himself with being associated with nameless comrades and nameless groups supporting the Wages for the Housewife movement: "Comrades belonging to the groups in which I was militant, *Potere Operaio*, began the movement for Wages for Housework; the first campaigns to demand a wage detached from the factory work." Negri 2018, 5.
Leopoldina Fortunati, feminist activist in *Lotta Feminista*, one of the 'nameless' sister-groups to Negri's *Potere Operaio*, writes how Negri and his workerist comrades "(…) continued to remain blind towards the reality lived by women. So *Potere Operaio*'s discourse was very advanced in considering the new factories, the new workers' role in the contemporary capitalist system, but it was very poor in considering housework, affects, emotions, sexuality, education, family, interpersonal relationships, sociability, and so on." Lopoldina Fortunati, "Learning to struggle: my story between workerism and feminism," *libcom.org* (2013).
[129] Silvia Federici, "Social reproduction theory. History, issues and present challenges," *Radical Philosophy* 2.04 (Spring 2019), 55.

Arendt's motif of necessity versus freedom, enslavement of some for the sake of freedom of others, has continued with a new axis beyond the private versus the public. Now, as before, for example, in colonial history, the axis is multidirectional: unrecognised enslavement of some bodies for the advantage of free minds of others, invisibilised industrial work in the global South versus discursively dominant cognitive capitalism in the global North, underpaid domestic workers in the household versus overworked parents calling out for quality time with their children, surrogacy amongst the poor and affective work of endurance amongst women waiting to fall pregnant.

In my view, there lies in the concept of unrecognised work a more complex understanding of the valorisation of work than in the distinction between paid and unpaid work. The scale from unrecognised to recognised work has to do with equity and with temporalities of work: how much time is the worker supposed to work? How visible is their contribution? How much influence on daily rhythm, schedules and working hours per day does the worker have? How much state infrastructure surrounds the worker in terms of social security? How much reproductive work is done through childcare and elderly care homes in the worker's society? How much transport time does it take the worker to commute to work? How many years does the body still have to live, due to physical constraints? I would describe unrecognised work as an intersection of inequities and structural precarisation, a complex cluster of paid work, underpaid work and all the work done in order to be able to go to work. With attention to temporal and embodied aspects of global inequalities built on Federici's rethinking of unrecognised work beyond the home, I now want to focus the theoretical discussion of work on the concept of the artist as a worker.

Maintenance Time

What is necessary and unrecognised work within the arts? I would like to propose a connection from Arendt's notion of necessary work to the more elastic concept of "maintenance work" launched by performance artist Mierle Laderman Ukeles in her canonised manifesto in 1969.[130] In her artistic manifesto, Ukeles criticises the traditional concept of the freelance artist as a completely autonomous individual. She aligns work on personal, general and earthly levels in order to suggest that maintenance happens in all spheres: maintenance – stemming from the household and childcare, like the necessary work in the *oikos* – is also a part of the everyday life of cleaners, museum directors, shop workers, librarians, nurses, doctors, teachers and artists. In Ukeles' manifesto which is a "Proposal for an

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[130] Mierle Laderman Ukeles, "Manifesto for Maintenance Art 1969! Proposal for an Exhibition 'CARE'," in Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson, eds., *Conceptual Art: a Critical Anthology* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1999), 122–125.

Exhibition 'CARE'"[131] she proposes another division taken from Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), namely between the "Life Instinct", of caring for and maintaining life and then the "Death Instinct", which is driven by individualism and focused on development. She places the "*Avant-garde per excellence*; to follow one's own path" under the "Death Instinct" and devises in short, dense sentences how the concept of freedom and individualism is dependent on the delegated or enslaved, invisible work of people preparing, tidying, cleaning, preserving: "The sourball of every revolution: who's going to pick up the garbage on Monday morning?"[132] Ukeles exposes a concept of freedom lingering on not only liberalist, but also left-wing ideologies. Ukeles' project, in my view, is to particularly shed light on the materiality of maintenance – what is maintenance and who is maintaining – as well as being a critique of the premises of freedom. My expanded notion of work which conceptually emerges from necessary labour, spans reproductive, unrecognised and maintenance work, allows an analysis of the present-day power relations in specific working conditions and workers' identities: who is free at the expenses of others? What kinds of work are unrecognised and what kinds of work are praised? How do wages mirror the hierarchy of what counts as necessary – taken for granted – and as important? How is freedom manifested temporally amongst workers?

What is so important in a feminist discourse on work is how Ukeles with her concept of maintenance names necessary work beyond the household without even navigating on a global scale, as does Federici. Her concept of maintenance written in the manifesto in 1969 – six years before Federici's *Wages Against Housework* (1975) – is inclusive, gender-diverse and solidarising because it operates beyond women's traditional sphere. As an artistic text, it is definitely also more polemic and ambiguous than analytical and theoretically consequent. The text is a collage of covered 'voices' from both the patriarchal family and the cultural industry starring the complaining mother, the self-critical young woman, the educating parent, the demanding curator, the angry female artist, the blaming husband, the boss at the office, the conservative canon on pure art, and the museum director:

> *Clean your desk, wash the dishes, clean the floor, wash your clothes, wash your toes, change the baby's diaper, finish the report, correct the typos, mend the fence, keep the customer happy, throw out the stinking garbage, watch out you don't put things in your nose, what shall I wear, I have no sox, pay your bills, don't litter, save string, wash your hair, change the sheets, go to the store, I'm out of perfume, say it again*

[131] Ibid, 122.
[132] Ibid, 122–123.

– 'he does not understand,' seal it again – it leaks, go to work, this art is dusty, clear the table, call him again, flush the toilet, stay young.[133]

The concept of maintenance work is informed by the gendered heritage of necessary enslavement and invisible housework. Yet Ukeles' gesture is not marked by *ressentiment* caused by exploitation but rather a tongue-in-the-cheek attack – naming the sourball, acting as *killjoy* – on a logic which is ruling both domestic, artistic and capitalist production: in order to be free, others have to be enslaved; in order to be seen as an individual, others have to be invisible; in order to create the new, others have to maintain the old and the archives; in order to have more time for the unexpected, others have to do the expected and keep regular hours. I trace this logic back to Arendt's distinction between necessity and freedom.

Temporality of Work

Thinking about maintenance as something necessary, yet hidden and time-consuming calls for an analysis of the temporality of work. I define temporality as a pattern of time specific to certain people, certain workers. For example a 9–5 job demands a temporality of regular rhythm and the project-work of the freelance artist demands a temporality of durational work '24/7' as well as a rhythm set by deadlines, evaluations and premieres or *vernissages*.[134] Professor in Psychosocial Theory Lisa Baraitser has considered what maintenance means in temporal terms. She connects the "hidden forms of time" with the hours spent with reproductive work in the home theorised by the Marxist feminists and Ukeles' concept of maintenance with the unwaged hours of the Wages for Housework movement:

> Hidden forms of time, then, have a relation to the trapped time of disavowed durational activities that sustain people, situations, phenomena, institutions and art objects, and thereby underpin the maintenance of everyday life. By maintenance I am referring to durational practices that keep 'things' going; objects, selves, systems, hopes, ideals, networks, communities, relationships, institutions.[135]

Comparing Baraitser's statement of "what keeps 'things' going" with the above quotation of the collage of voices in Ukeles' manifesto, it is precisely both the demands from employers and parents as well as the technologies of the self that keeps things going. In that respect, also the Foucauldian production of the self as a representable and reasonable person, woman and artist is a part of the maintenance work.

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[133] Ibid, 123.
[134] I write more extensively on different temporalities of work in the second article "Doggy Paddling. Temporalities of Work in Higher Artistic Education in Denmark"
[135] Lisa Baraitser, *Enduring Time* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 49.

Examples of what "keeps 'things' going" within performance art, where the body, one's social relations and publicised private identity are part of the work, lie in the temporality of self-production outside the rehearsal studio and off-stage: regenerative hours spent healing injuries, the regular yoga classes, the healthy cooking, the eight hours of sleep, the self-care, the networking, the reading in the library, the visit to a museum, the care of friendships in order not to have a mental break-down from being overworked.

I find the notion of "hidden forms of time", coined by Baraitser, similar to "dark matter" proposed by Gregory Sholette (2011), very useful for describing and grasping what temporal economy is at stake both under capitalism and as an object in Marxist feminist analysis. The hidden forms of time, dark matter or grey-zones of artistic work constitute a temporality where the lights are never really off. There is definitely a rhythm within the temporality of the artists' work, namely the rhythm that alternates between show and maintenance. In my view, it was Ukeles' ambition to propose the maintenance as the actual show and not hide the high number of 'boring' hours of artistic work. However, I think there is something too dichotomistic in the conception of maintenance as if these hidden hours of care are always just dull and boring, as Ukeles writes in 1969. Baraitser continues the negative connotations in her description of maintenance as something connected to 'unbearable' repetition, boredom and a standstill:

> Acts of maintenance are durational and repetitious, they may concern time that seems frozen or unbearable in its refusal to move on, and entail practices of bearing the state of nothing happening, of the inability to bring about tangible or obvious forms of change.

However, further in the chapter on maintenance work, Baraitser focuses her reading of maintenance work around Ukeles' findings on the cleaners and does add that a positive transformation can take place from the bad reputation of unpleasant smelling work to the appreciation of sustaining efforts in the city. Thereby, Baraitser stays close to Ukeles' intentions within the social interventions in sanitation and does not explore any further Ukeles' first anchorage of maintenance within the arts. Thereby, in my opinion, Baraitser oversees the ambiguity of suffering and pleasure in the hours spent on maintenance within the arts.

I would claim that maintenance work can be forced, tedious and definitely 'unbearable', but also soothing, contemplating and even pleasurable. Take, for example, the work of a dancer doing their daily yoga class. Yoga is both a rather boring, necessary physical repetition for the dancer to stay fit and – for some – an enviably 'wellness' treat. Compared to other physical workers who do not have regenerative hours as part of the curriculum during education, the dancer might be perceived as

privileged. Compared to the cleaner, the dancer doing yoga does not suffer. But, conversely, is a dancer perceived and recognised as an artist worker when doing yoga? Those daily hours of different *asanas* definitely do not look like hard work, nor like an artistic stroke of genius. As Baraitser writes, "Maintenance is not the time of generation or production, or the eruption of the new",[136] and I add in the case of the yoga class that, instead, maintenance is regeneration. Compared to when the dancer is performing in the theatre, the yoga practice does not add any artistic value, since it is not virtuosic and has no applauding audience.[137] However, I argue that maintenance must be understood as more ambiguous than the wearing-out work of endurance which Baraitser describes. With the double negation of the maintenance of the dancer's body – neither doing real 'unbearable' maintenance work nor real, virtuosic art – I show how Baraitser's dichotomic concept of artistic maintenance versus 'free' work is attached to suffering versus original production. In the end, if it comes to instrumentalising and simplifying maintenance as enduring and dull work alone, the question of how to put value onto work becomes simple: wages compensate for necessary suffering or award original work. But how about when the artist is maintaining themself – mentally, physically – as a self-owned production apparatus and, at the same time, takes pleasure in it?

This leads me to another fundamental difference in the comparison between cleaners and independent artists creating their own work: the artist internalises both the position doing (part of) the necessary maintenance and the position obtaining 'freedom'. The dancer is not doing yoga so that others can show their art detached from the dancer. The dancer, at least when also initiating and choreographing, is perceived both as material and author. When maintaining, they are also working on the perfection of their own *oeuvre*.

Baraitser continues by proposing temporalities of slowness and duration as forms of resistance, as does Bojana Kunst by proposing "less work", and Kathi Weeks when proposing a basic income in her "life against work project".[138]In contrast, I would like to think of a temporality of work where life counts from within and is not an 'outside', even when that includes the risk of "appropriating life itself" as work.[139] I argue that, based on the theories of necessary and unrecognised work, a change in the production conditions of artistic production challenges the dichotomy of life

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[136] Baraitser 2017, 52.

[137] Performance artist and scholar in Theatre Studies Annemarie Matzke has pointed out how rehearsal and preparation is absent in the concept of virtuosic work, or Arendt's notion of action. Virtuosity is theatrical: it needs an audience to appreciate the abilities of the virtuoso. Cf. Matzke 2012, 67.

[138] Kunst 2015, 150 and Weeks 2011, 230.

[139] Professor of Organisation Theory Peter Fleming stresses in 2009 how life itself might have been captured by the Nike slogan of just being oneself in *Authenticity and the Cultural Politics of Work: New Forms of Informal Control* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 40.

versus art, life against work, by striving for less dichotomistic solutions and instead questioning the premises of capitalist valorisation of work.

Ukeles herself started out working on sculpture and then, in order not to have to store and carry around the enormous sculptures, developed enormous inflatable objects. But she got tired of the maintenance of materials, and realised that instead of hiding this time-consuming work with preparation, storage and reparation of objects, she could make that the actual work. She forefronted the hidden hours as the actual work. Therefore, she made the proportionally dominant hours spent on unoriginal work visible and count. She made the unrecognised and necessary work recognised, so that her action – unlike the dancer working on their own *oeuvre*, but not showing their yoga as work to the public – questions not only for whom we work, but what has value and recognition as artistic production.

In the fourth article of this dissertation "Working by the Numbers" I exemplify how the performance artist Florian Feigl, during the period of being a fulltime parent of three children, changes the standardised temporality of rehearsals and performances into just having five minutes a day, every day, to produce a performance-for-video. With his durational series *300* (2009–) consisting of a collection of the five minute performances-for-video, he demands that his work as an artist submits to the temporality of his domestic work. It is "less [artistic] work" each day, one could say following Kunst, but I would prefer to call it art-making which recognises its circumstances and questions artistic value. Instead of continually rehearsing and performing in pre-designed temporalities (rehearsals in six or eight weeks followed by a performance, big scale, evening-filling), ignoring and depending on the maintenance of others, Feigl's artistic production adjusts to and gives time to the necessary hours where he works at home as a parent. Thinking with Ukeles, his maintenance work at home is namely also artistic production: the demanding temporality of parental maintenance 'inspires' him to produce his dense five minute performances. By making parenthood determine the temporality of artistic production he *changes* the preferences within the aesthetics of production: it is not autonomy, but dependency which defines his artistic work.

In my description of Feigl's *300*, I employ the word 'change' which for Ukeles belongs to the *avant-garde* "Death Instinct" of development and with "room for change".[140] To change something is, according to Ukeles, to have capacity to think and act, to develop and alternate, whereas maintenance "takes all the fucking time (lit.)".[141] Both being unsexy – literally no "fucking time" – and time-consuming, maintenance does not leave the worker with much capacity. But Feigl does change by

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[140] Ukeles 1999, 123.
[141] Ibid.

shifting the balance: he diminishes the explicitly artistic outcome to something less central. He grafts art with a temporality taken from maintenance. He does it every day, continuously, dutifully, caring for his artistic production and over time – like a child – his production grows into something bigger, accumulates time into a collection of five minute performances which at some point will overgrow and overcome the standard duration of a performance (one or two hours) by its 300 pieces or 24 hours of five minutes, the declared goal in Feigl's title, *300*. If Feigl thereby accustoms himself to demands of grandiosity and impressive art, if he actually produces 'the new' by making a change within the aesthetics of production through his learning from maintenance work and adjusting to the temporal circumstances of parenting, must remain the ambiguity of *300*[142].

A Particular Worker

Returning to Ukeles' concept of maintenance work, it connects the conditions of the social with the conditions of the sensible: artworks are visible because some cleaning employee dusts off the paintings and sweeps the floor in the morning; because some trading company transports the paintings overseas; because some curator's assistant-intern posts and retweets them on social media. Ukeles' concept includes the bodily involvement and physical exhaustion in spheres often attributed to immaterial labour and reminds us of a chain of necessary delegations behind the seemingly autonomous artwork.

Putting attention to maintenance in and beyond the art world is to subscribe, as Baraitser does, to the Marxist feminist tradition of recognising unrecognised work and hidden hours in a general economy. The analysis of maintenance work belongs partially to a tradition of performance art and philosophy of work, where the artist or thinker practically immerses themself in concrete areas of work and crafts such as cleaning, the textile industry, transportation infrastructure or pottery. Just as the philosopher of work Simone Weil devoted years of her life to working alongside factory workers in Berlin in the 1930s, Ukeles devoted most of her career to (unpaid) artistic work around and with cleaners in New York.[143]

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[142] Thinking about the temporality of production intervened by Feigl, I could also connect the concept of change to Arendt's concept of *action*, the third component of her conception of human activities in the triad labour, work and action. Action is to be understood as something humans start without knowing the end-product or its final temporal frame – as opposed to work, fabricating final objects. However, when positioning myself within Marxist feminist theory, I have chosen to primarily be concerned with the Arendtian notion of labour/work and not – as do amongst others Paolo Virno and Annemarie Matzke so brilliantly – focus on *action* and its inherent promotion of the theatrical virtuoso worker. Cf. Virno 2004, 49–71, Matzke 2012, 66–70.

[143] For an introduction to Ukeles' work *Touch Sanitation* (1979-80), where she documented her self-appointed artist-in-residence work in the New York City Department of Sanitation, see the Re:act Feminism Archive: http://www.reactfeminism.org/entry.php?l=lb&id=197&e=a&v=&a=Mierle%20Laderman%20Ukeles&t= (accessed 24.7.2019). Besides, Braitser writes about Ukeles' many different works with cleaners (2017, 54-62), as does Jackson in her chapter "High Maintenance. The Sanitation Aesthetics of Mierle Laderman Ukeles" in *Social Works* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 75–103.

Many curators have explicitly iterated Ukeles' notion of care in exhibitions in recent years, and numerous artists have staged cleaning in their performance works since Ukeles, as did the duo Hesselholdt and Mejlvang recently in their performance *THIS MOMENT is THE BEGINNING* (2019) staged at the Thorvaldsens Museum in Copenhagen.[144] The performance work by Hesselholdt and Mejlvang exposes the gendered, class-based, racialised and colonial implications in the idea of artistic autonomy by staging the delegated cleaning and maintenance of the museum to performers of colour. They point towards the chain of necessary but uncredited co-authors who make the artwork visible. The tradition of artists occupied with other kinds of work often seeks solidarity with 'the other' manual or industrial workers through means of representation: they expose bad, unfair, unrecognised and colonial working conditions. The artists might want to claim that they, too, are a part of, as well as co-producers of, the cultural precariat in a continued hierarchal chain of production. When it comes to typecasting performers as black cleaners, Hesselholdt and Mejlvang might even reproduce the colonial relation in the representation through a double-blackfacing: performers of colour acting the roles of underpaid cleaners of colour. In opposition to Ukeles, who followed cleaners and also worked in paid cleaning jobs herself at times, Hesselholdt and Mejlvang – two white female artists – represent cleaning through delegated performers of colour cleaning the museum. Although the questions on delegation and representation will not be addressed much further here, the diegetic gesture of making a connection between artists and cleaners, art workers and 'real workers', colonising institutions and colonised cleaners, is to me primarily pointing towards the premises of artistic production by acting within an aesthetics of representation – showing how art is dependent on other kinds of degraded work – rather than *changing* the aesthetics of production. Additionally, both Ukeles and Hesselholdt and Mejlvang sympathise with and partly take on professions, playing with a downward mobility within jobs where it may not be possible to aspire the other way around. "The privileges of re-employment are reserved for elite mobility", writes art historian Julia Bryan-Wilson in her plaidoyer for understanding the artist as a privileged and educated contributor to the redefinition of work, rather than being "just any worker".[145]

To conclude, I will name a few problems within the traditions of either representing others' bad working conditions in artworks, or theorising artistic work as a generalised model. First, the danger of *fetishisation* of the artist's work: unlike the great potential of Federici's theoretical proposition

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[144] For a documentation of the performance, see the second video in this feature on the exhibition: https://www.idoart.dk/blog/hesselholdt-mejlvang-haabets-loevfald-i-en-kaotisk-tid.

[145] Julia Bryan-Wilson, "Occupational Realism" in *TDR: The Drama Review*, Vol. 56, No. 4, "Precarity and Performance: Special Consortium Issue" (Winter 2012), 39.

of continuously looking for unrecognised forms of work and Ukeles' pursuit of the motif of maintenance across fields, the danger of portraying and representing *one* kind of work as a symbol for all – the artist as all-round metaphor – is a certain uniform and standardised, even fetishised, notion of work where the same kinds of suffering are detected and fetishised as existing in all fields of work. In fetishisation also lies the simplifying dichotomy of painful maintenance versus free and ignorant creation. I have tried to complicate this with the example of the dancer who both enjoys and is dependent on their unrecognised, self-paid yoga. I also use the example of Florian Feigl who changes the expected temporality of performance art due to the circumstances of parenthood and thereby is perhaps additionally creating something 'original'.

This leads me to my second problem, the recurring *disarming of one's own agency* in representations of 'the Other's work'. When only elaborating on the working conditions of others, and not artists, a certain blind spot can emerge: the inability to recognise the powerfulness of the worker as a figure of agency and the transformative power in their own field as Marx suggested. In fact, artists are not just workers like all others. Artists do still have the power to point publicly towards a problem through their trained ways of communicating through the sensible: they have the power to delegate work to others, the power to employ colleagues or not, the power to reschedule working time. Artists are able to explore and expose the performativity of their seemingly unchangeable working conditions.

Third, despite the powerful changes made by artist workers during production, the changes sometimes get lost in the reception of the work due to a *lack of contextualisation*: the museums, the art collectors, the venues, the auction houses, the press and the academics all write about and represent them. Yet the intended shared authorship often fails to credit more than the sole artists. As museum director Glenn Adamson and art historian Julia Bryan-Wilson conclude in their book *Art in the making* (2016), especially fine artists only have a limited control over the way their work is presented and circulated when artworks are sold and circulate on the free market.[146] Therefore, as a researcher, I see it as one of my greatest asks to shed light on the complex circumstances of artistic work, redistributing practices and collective forms of authorship.

The artist and writer Gregory Sholette puts it too simply when saying that the artist "is simply another kind of worker, no more no less".[147] In opposition to the intendedly solidarising gesture of understanding the artist as 'just another worker', and aligning the problems of the artist worker with the problems of a generalised worker, my case studies are chosen to specify particular problems and

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[146] Cf. Glenn Adamson and Julia Bryan-Wilson, *Art in the Making* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2016), 228.
[147] Gregory Sholette, *Delirium and Resistance: Activist Art and the Crisis of Capitalism* (London: Pluto Press, 2017), 23.

conflicts within the education and professional practice of performance artists working within and on the working conditions of independent performance art in Denmark and Germany. I carve out the particular knowledge and ambiguities excerpted from within artistic education and artistic production in order to address the power of the artist work and the possibilities of change.

In my further readings I hope to involve four aspects from my conception of work based on a Marxist feminist vocabulary developed above: the many temporalities of artistic work, the necessary work as the premise of artistic freedom, unrecognised forms of artistic work, and finally, the agency of workers in concert. In the following article I compare temporalities of work trained within higher artistic education within performing arts and fine arts. In part two I develop a theory on a materialist aesthetics of production and analyse the promise of artistic freedom as a repeatedly excluding and exclusive motto in the history of aesthetic theory, especially detected in the third critique of Immanuel Kant. In part three on artists' collectives and the sociality as performance, the dissertation shows its hopefulness towards the power of artist workers when they address and change their working conditions together.

ARTICLE II

Doggy Paddling

Temporalities of Work in Higher Artistic Education in Denmark[148]

Abstract:

This article engages critically with the conception of the temporality of artistic work taught in higher artistic education, which has recently been implemented through the Bologna Process. Through an analysis of new study regulations within fine arts and performing arts education in Denmark, this article lays bare two very distinct temporalities of artistic work. A combination of methods was used in the research: a thick reading of temporality distributed through European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System *(ECTS) points and modules in study regulations will be compared with participant observation on the distribution of time during bachelor degree projects and assessments. The concepts found in higher artistic education – practice-based time in fine arts and employment-based time in performing arts – will be reflected on from the perspective of two temporalities of professional artistic work: projective time and total occupation. The temporalities report on distinct genres of art, but more importantly, on the contemporary simultaneity of non-simultaneous concepts of time. The conclusion proposes that not only is our concept of the temporality of contemporary work many-faceted, but also the artist worker has to navigate between and in those many temporalities.*

Keywords:

temporality of work, higher artistic education, performance art, employability, professionalism, neoliberalism

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Since the historical *avant garde* the work of the artist has been an attempt to merge art and life in a "life practice" with revolutionary and subversive potential.[149] The temporality of such a life practice is fluid, borderless, not counting hours of work, not clocking in and out of the job. The change from product-oriented to immaterial work and the interest in a self-managed temporality of work beyond the 9-5 rhythm was prefigured and announced by the neo-*avant garde* in the 1960s and 1970s. It has intensified with the fundamental change in production in the era of post-Fordism of the late 1980s and has become normative. Today, theoreticians from Philosophy, Political Theory, Social Science and Performance Studies broadly subscribe the artist as a role model of work in neoliberalism and confer on them attributes such as passion, freedom, self-governmentality, flexibility, creativity, innovation and a life in precarity.[150] With the artist as a role model, the temporality of work is 24/7 (Steyerl 2012, Crary 2015). However, instead of fetishising the artist as *one* model providing one uniform temporality of work, it is my claim that artists today are trained to produce in very different ways and to work in distinct temporalities, namely in permanent employment, in project work and in continuous practice. They are working in predesigned productions and self-managed projects, having 9–5 jobs, as well as elaborating on lifelong artistic practices. The simultaneity of the three different temporalities show how contemporary work culture within the arts is not becoming standardised or uniform at all, but rather, is conflicting and resonates with plural paradigms of work. In other words, the temporalities of work at stake in higher artistic education, state a typically modern experience of what Reinhart Koselleck would call a "simultaneity of the non-simultaneous":[151]concepts of time collide and intersect.

Since the Bologna Process was introduced in artistic education from 2003 onwards, there has been a dystopian anxiety that the consequences will be efficiency and factory-like production of artist workers (Caffentzis & Federici 2007, Raunig 2012). An assembly line of regularity is going to break with the idea of the artist as genius evolving their own autonomous aesthetic practice in a continuum of time. More specifically, one can talk about a standardisation of the art student's time: the regulatory means of the Bologna Process promotes the distribution of ECTS points corresponding to hours spent. This has often resulted in a more defined schedule of the student's everyday and increased control in the form of attendance lists and time sheets. The most obvious reason to formulate module descriptions and divide time into ECTS points within study is to make the education programme

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[149] Kunst in "Lebensprzxis zurückzuführen", Peter Bürger, *Theorie der Avantgarde* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1974), 29.
[150] Representatives are, amongst others, Paolo Virno, Judith Butler and Franco "Bifo" Berardi (Philosophy); Maurizio Lazzarato, Richard Sennett, and Eve Chiapello and Luc Boltanski (Social Science); Isabell Lorey (Political Theory); Bojana Kunst, Bojana Cvejić and Ana Vujanović (Performance Studies).
[151] Reinhart Koselleck, *Vergangene Zukunft* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1995), 125.

legible and accessible for people outside the art school, such as the accreditation jury,[152] potential future students and exchange students abroad. Yet it has also been concluded that the Bologna Process, rather than homogenising artistic education in Europe, actually sheds light on the extreme heterogeneity within artistic fields and national variations.[153] Standardisation does not necessarily lead to uniformity across education (Brøgger 2018).

I agree with the early scepticism regarding the framework of the Bologna process. I therefore place emphasis on the distribution of ECTS points as a striking general economisation of time in the sense of students being trained in the economic relationship of hours spent: counting, estimating and investing in time. Through the calculation of ECTS points, the time during the education programme is divided into a calculable and comparable credit system, where 25–30 hours equals one ECTS point and a total education programme is 180 ETCS points. I understand the calculation of ECTS points as a technology of the self, a part of a greater culture of measurement in education, and neoliberal subjectification consisting of a "governing rationality that disseminates market values and metrics to every sphere of life".[154] However, within this self-measuring technology and governmentality, temporalities play out in extremely different ways and rhythmise production contrarily – this depicts particular forms of artistic work in neoliberalism.

In this article I analyse temporalities of work formed during artistic education. In my analysis I will show that the study regulations – the distributions of ECTS points and the division of education into modules – make legible how differently the temporality of artistic work is perceived and taught within fine arts and performing arts; I will define the temporalities of work within two higher artistic educations – the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts – School of Visual Arts (KADK) and the Danish National School of Performing Arts (DDSKS)[155], the former, as practice-based and the latter, as employment-based time, or a rhythm of total occupation versus a rhythm of regulated dissection. In order to specify what supports the two distinct temporalities of work – practice-based versus employment-based – time distributed in three main structures of art students' study will be analysed: in study regulations, in individual planning of one's own projects, and in the final BA project assessment. Despite different temporalities and rhythms, my claim is that the Bologna Process makes legible exactly

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[152] Legibility is important in order to ensure governance of higher education in the EU. As sociologist Katja Brøgger (2016) writes in her study of follow-up mechanisms within the Bologna Process, the standardisation and comparability are ensured through common infrastructure such as the credit system, but also the architecture of the three cycles (BA, MA, PhD) and the outcomes-based curriculum.

[153] "So far, the Bologna Process has proved more successful at showing all the differences between educational systems in its expanded version of Europe (which includes forty-six European countries, not only the twenty-seven member states of the EU) than at homogenizing them." Dieter Lesage, "The Academy is Back: On Education, the Bologna Process, and the Doctorate in the Arts," *E-flux Journal* #4 (2009).

[154] Brown 2015, 176.

[155] Initials following the Danish abbreviation, respectively.

how both fine arts and performing arts education are designed to match demands for employability, and to fulfil existing and imagined future market expectations. Concurrently, I will compare my findings in the educational field with two temporalities from the professional field of performance art theorised by art theorist Bojana Kunst and visual artist and filmmaker Hito Steyerl: projective time and total occupation. Finally, I will discuss how the combination of the analysis of artistic study and theories on the work of professional performance artists portrays a contemporary temporality of work characterised by the synchronicity of employment, projects and practice, which in itself can be a time-consuming challenge.

Project Work and Occupation

When developing a conceptualisation of contemporary temporality of work, it is – according to conceptual historian Reinhart Koselleck – important to take into account parallel notions of time.[156] Temporality has been much debated in the last 20 years, where, generally speaking, capitalism has been analysed as the accelerator pedal of collectively experienced time. Social time has been described as fast (Rosa 2005), as duration without breaks (Crary 2013), as a contemporary economy (Weber 2009), as a promise of a brighter and more productive future ("Bifo" Berardi 2011), as a feeling of contingent, destabilised time (Vogl 2012), or as distributed in certain materially determined temporalities such as projective time in freelance work (Kunst 2015), or as constant occupation as an artist worker (Steyerl 2012). As a conceptual frame for understanding the temporal horizon of art students today, I want to explain the two specific ways of understanding the distribution of the artist's professional work time – projective temporality and occupation – as proposed by Kunst and Steyerl respectively.

The rhythm of the artist's everyday is determined by structural conditions: funding possibilities offered by foundations, art institutions and (inter)national cultural policy. Bojana Kunst writes about how working in projects define artistic work from modernism onwards.[157] Project-based work is determined by parallel proposals, deadlines, short realisations and then evaluations. Kunst focuses on the temporality of work combining a *projective mode* calculating a possible and always-more-than-realistic future,[158] and an *accumulative pace*, where the imperative of producing 'the new', the unseen and contemporary within a short time is combined with the small death of the *deadline,* which constantly interrupts any consolidation.[159] Kunst condemns an artistic standardisation through project work in regards to expression, sociality and the production of subjectivity. The project work is *standardising* art

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[156] Koselleck 1995, 122.
[157] Kunst 2015, 162.
[158] Kunst 2015, 157.
[159] Kunst 2011, 4; Kunst 2015, 167.

and neither allows durational deepening into specific materials nor conflictual, challenging collective work:

> (…) in this kind of work, temporality is completely at the service of the implementation of the project; the relationship between work and the future is a static one, preventing other forms of collaboration, connections, persistence in time and space, and research periods that extend beyond the set evaluation periods. The unforeseeable dynamic and energy flows of creativity are standardised, the tensions and intensities are reduced and subjected to the fulfilment of the promised obligations.[160]

In the projective temporality the artist subject becomes isolated from the life which the historical *avant garde* proposed to embrace. Lonely and short-breathed, the project-based artist is following their 'own' standardised artistic goals which might be slightly varying in expression, but not in temporality, rhythm or signed authorship. In the context of artistic freelance production, the project temporality has a relatively fixed measure of hours and months. It is a repetitive format of perhaps three or six months per project. It operates within a horizon of applications sent out (projected) two years in advance of the project, and one year after the project then evaluated and accounted for. I would add that due to the parallelity of several projects and even more projective horizons, the workload prevents the artist from thinking about challenging and changing the infrastructural temporality of project work.

Another temporality created by the same structural conditions of funding is proposed by Hito Steyerl. She writes about *occupation* as the state of being constantly occupied with one's artistic practice, with no sleep and no end. Steyerl develops the neo-*avant-garde* idea of process work as opposed to hourly wage labour. Where the Fordist paradigm produced products, the contemporary production offers performance "turning the making-of into a commodity".[161] The working is the artwork.[162]

Within dance and choreography, occupation can be related to the word 'practice' which has become the key word to describe 'the making of' as the actual and central product. The word practice (Greek: *prattein*, to act or to do) relates to the execution of a theoretical foundation, a *doing* of an ideology or a conceptual approach. Aristoteles's division of *poesis* and *praksis* aims at dividing creation into a making with an end product and making as a goal in itself. A practice is in dance also referred to

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[160] Kunst 2015, 159.
[161] Hito Steyerl, "Art as Occupation: Claims of an Autonomy if Life, " in *Work, Work, Work. A Reader on Art and Labour*, edited by Annika Enqvist, Jonatan Habib Engqvist, Michele Masucci, Lisa Rosendahl, Cecilia Widenheim (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2012), 55.
[162] I am rephrasing here Mierle Laderman Ukeles "MY WORKING IS THE WORK," highlighting of the process as the work in itself in her famous *Manifesto for Maintenance Art 1969!*

as the daily doing and maintaining, an ongoing activity as when having a body practice or a writing practice.[163] Here, the practice is not creation, but rather a daily "set of activities".[164]

This commodification of production and process has been further exemplified and problematised by other scholars of Theatre and Performance Studies such as Paula Caspao and Stefan Hölscher. In her research project "Expanded Practices All Over 2019–2020", Caspao investigates how the seemingly anti-objectifying interest in artistic practice has become imperative in order to explain, name and justify, even get funding for one's artistic work as choreographer or performance artist. Hölscher has analysed the way democratic workshops of the neo-*avant-garde* dance scene promised a collective "truth", which in contemporary workshops has been translated into a format of individual "truth"-finding.[165] The 'making-of', the 'expanded practice' and the workshop are all historically entangled with process rather than product, exercising collective experiments and focusing on investigation together, but have – due to exhaustive descriptions and reflections – become consumable, measurable units to place in an accumulative selection in the individual portfolio.

Steyerl reveals how work as continuous occupation breaks and expands temporal boundaries, invades life, and also points to the military etymology of taking "(…) possession of, seize, occupy" (2012, 49), a violent and colonising act. Here the artist worker is caught between being the occupier and the occupied of their work – or of being both the employer and the employee.

What I find conceptually productive in the encounter between project work and occupation is not only the isolated and precise conceptions but also the merging of both characteristics: I would claim that the concepts are simultaneous and interacting. Project work could be operating as rhythm within a broader temporality of total occupation. I will now turn to how art students are currently educated to become artist workers operating within the temporalities of both the project and total occupation. Hence, my analysis will add to the vocabulary on the temporality of work, but also discuss the complexities and conflicts that future art workers are facing when both subjecting themselves to pre-designed production schedules and becoming self-managing time-planners.

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[163] Cf. Anne Schuh, "Having a Daily (Performance) Practice: Dance Artists' Everyday Work, Support, and Form" in *Dance Research Journal*, vol. 51., iss. 1 (New York: April 2019), 79-94.

[164] Ana Vujanović,"Performance Practice: Between Self-Production and Transindividuality" in *Performance und Praxis: Praxeologische Erkundungen in Tanz, Theater, Sport und Alltag,* edited by Gabriele Klein and Hanna Katharina Göbel (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2017), 299.

[165] Stefan Hölscher, "The Workshop – A Format and Promise between Collectivity and Individualism," forthcoming in *Peripeti* 31 (2020).

Temporalities of Practice and Employment

The Bologna Process generally changes the duration of artistic education – from diplomas of four or six years to BA degree courses of three years and two years for MA programmes – which is designed to improve mobility and comparability within Europe. Furthermore, higher artistic education distributes its educational input into the format of modules and gives a temporal measure of ECTS points to the content provided. In the years 2016–2018 the Bologna Process was implemented in the Danish National School of Performing Arts and the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts – Schools of Visual Arts.[166] The implementation has led to a shortening of the duration of artistic education as well as a standardised discourse on new academic qualifications – reflection, analysis, critique – in both performing arts and fine arts. My analysis of the temporality of higher education of performance artists crosses over and compares institutions that do not necessarily identify with each other at all. Where fine arts in the academy in Copenhagen has a tradition of a "curriculum-free" and "open, departemental structure" led by significant professors who depart from each individual student's artistic work,[167] the performing arts school in Copenhagen has a tradition of curriculum-based teaching with a planned progression within skills over the years of study. What happens with the temporality of study when the Bologna Process is implemented across higher artistic education?

The ways of creating rhythm within everyday study in artistic education in the Scandinavian and German landscape through the measurement of ECTS points in modules, are indeed already very different on the level of study regulations if we look at the context of fine arts or performing arts that more or less explicitly deal with the bastard-genre of performance art.[168] The number of modules spans from five to 22 modules distributed over three years of BA study.[169] Comparing the study regulations of fine arts and performing arts education in Denmark, I find two distinct modes of implementation which represent the extremes when it comes to the distribution of

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[166] Admittedly, looking at implementations of the Bologna Process in higher artistic education in Denmark in 2019 is like looking into a construction site and trying to say something about the result of the architectural ambitions. What I can say in 2019, after the education courses and programmes have recently passed through their respective accreditations, it will most likely be in everyday practice completely reformulated within the next two or three years.

[167] Bogh 2009, 67.

[168] The selection of my focus specifically on performance art within artistic education lies within the larger framework of my research. I base the research on the assumption that the work of the performance artist serves as an extreme case of neoliberal precarisation due to project-based production conditions, the parasitic relation to one's private sociality and bodily crises as raw material for artistic work as well as the indispensability of oneself in both production and product, etc.

[169] The lowest number of modules is distributed in the context of fine arts in Denmark (6), the highest number of modules in the Theatre Academy in Fredrikstad, Norway (22). Theatre schools examined in Germany and Denmark both have 12 modules. The Applied Theatre Studies in Giessen have 19 modules, and in Applied Cultural Studies in Hildesheim, 18 modules.

ECTS points. Even the very first comparison of their study regulations calls for further analysis of the temporality of artistic work.[170]

For the bachelor degree in fine arts at the KADK around 90 students study together accompanied by four professors and guest teachers. The elements of study on the bachelor programme are disciplines within a critical and theory-informed artistic practice spanning over six modules all together, out of which one is optional (internship) and another is the all-encompassing final bachelor project. The smallest module here, "Presentation", consists of 15 ECTS points and the largest, "BFA Project" consists of 85 ECTS points. These few modules and their generous distribution of ECTS points into specific artistic practice[171] allow a very open and semi-autonomous structure of how to schedule the everyday, the academic year and the three years of study.[172]

In the performing art, the DDSKS trains quite differently the artist workers at bachelor level. Generally speaking, the school is rather traditional in its distribution of artistic roles and skill-based competences.[173] The directors are expected to be original and leading artists. Actors are expected to be mainly vocally and physically skilled and trained in dramatic method, albeit also qualified "to work within all professional acting fields in a constantly changing job market".[174] Dancers and choreographers are according to the course description – similar to fine artists – trained to develop their own practice, often in collectives or temporary collaborations. They are also expected to both choreograph their own work as well as dance others' choreography.[175] At DDSKS all students are taught in 12 modules of 15 ECTS points, the final bachelor project being 15 additional ECTS points compared to 85 at KADK. When looking closer at the study regulations for the performing artists, the modules are often divided into several blocks of smaller units of only 10 or five ECTS points. The dissection of the modules hereby unfolds a plurality of competences divided into up to 28 sub-modules.[176] An example from the study programme *Dance and Choreography* of a dissection of the module

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[170] The comparison also calls for other analyses of relationality and quality within higher artistic education: What is done alone and what is learned in groups? What is supporting respectively experimentation versus traditional crafts, artistic autonomy versus generalist competences? However, I do not have the capacity to analyse these aspects further here.

[171] "Artistic Practice" is 115 out of 180 ECTS points.

[172] Cf. The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, *Curriculum for the Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Visual Arts* (Copenhagen 2018).

[173] DDSKS operates with the traditional hierarchical division of artistic roles within performing arts, as do also KHiO in Oslo or Uniarts in Stockholm. Contrary to this, the programmes in *Acting* and *Scenography* at Nordic Theatre Academy in Fredrikstad educate students to be more independent and initiate cross-disciplinary works in groups.

[174] The Danish School of Performing Arts, *Curriculum of the Bachelor Programme in Acting* (Copenhagen 2018), 4.

[175] This education underwent a major change in 2015 where the division between dancers and choreographers was expelled. Prior to this, the class of dance students was divided in their 4th year of education into dancers and the exclusive category of a few choreographers. Students and the head of programme Sara Gebran (2012-2016) revolted against the unfitting separation because it did not match the actual way of working collectively and co-authored within the expanded notion of dance.

[176] This is the counting of sub-modules for scenographers: whereas directors have 27 sub-modules, actors have 26 sub-modules, and dancers and choreographers have 23 sub-modules. However, redundancy also appears in the structure of the

"Professional Immersion I" shows how it is divided into the very distinct sub-modules "Body Dance Movement", "Choreography" and "Entrepreneurship", each one worth 5 ECTS points.

The distribution of time within fine arts and performing arts BA programmes opens a scale of rhythms within the everyday of artistic study: ranging from spending approximately between 125 to up to 2,875 hours on one central practice;[177] from contemplating five or six different competences within three years of study to landing up with 28 competences within the three years of study. The temporality of study displays for how long students ask certain questions and make explorations. It also exhibits relative structural autonomy versus institutional control in the distribution of input, as well as aesthetic ideologies relating to allowing room for experimentation versus taught craftmanship.

My first thesis, with regard to study regulations for BA education in fine arts and performing arts in Denmark, is that the temporality within fine arts is distributed generously in a few modules consisting of many ECTS points, whereas the performing arts curriculum is dissected into smaller units, modules, and sub-modules of as little as five ECTS points. When looking more broadly at the European landscape, I see this tendency mirrored: fine arts students have a more self-led curriculum, whereas students of performing arts go through more institutionalised competencies or skill-based programmes. Similarly, fine arts education has fewer modules or even none,[178] and performing arts education often has between 12–18 modules. The two education models also differ in how much detail the curriculum is controlled: the 12 modules at the performing arts school are – due to the decision to create sub-modules – extremely detailed outlines of what should be taught and learned, and in the progression routes. In contrast, the six main modules at KADK have broad, open categories to be interpreted by students and professors.

My second thesis is that the temporalities are, generally, a continuation of the temporalities of study in the respective institutions from before the implementation of the Bologna

programme, naming modules or submodules similarly but numbering them differently, i.e.: "Professional Introduction I" "Professional Introduction II," and "Professional Introduction III." See also the "Appendix 1: Programme Structure" in the study regulations of *Dance and Choreography* (Copenhagen: 2018).

As I am writing this article, a revision of the study regulations is in the making. From an internally circulated document in progress I have learnt that the school aims to reduce the number of sub-modules down to only 14, yet still having some sub-modules in "Entrepreneurship" and "Independent Project" of five ECTS points.

[177] In extreme comparison, the BA in *Performing Arts* (Ger. *Szenische Künste*) in Hildesheim contains 18 very specific modules. Here the smallest module consists of 3 ECTS points and the largest of 18 ECTS points.

[178] The benchmarking of fine arts at the *Städelschule* in Frankfurt, one of the many German institutions still surviving as a five-year diploma programme, has the principle of a 'students-and-professors' co-directed curriculum: "Fine art is taught at the Städelschule in a special context: the collaboration between students and teachers is not defined by an established doctrine or curriculum. The students are taught in classes under the guidance of their professors." Cf. https://www.staedelschule.de/en/study.

Process;[179] in other words, rather than standardising the educational landscape within the arts, the Bologna Process has made the disciplinary differences within art legible.

I would suggest that there exists a spectrum of temporalities in fine arts education and performing arts education from practice-based time to employment-based time. I understand practice-based time as a kind of open temporality, in which the rhythm of artistic study is defined by the specific practices developed by the students over time in the generous clumps of ECTS points of individual artistic practice. Here there is more difference in the rhythm than repetition. In the fine arts academy, this will typically be defined by the individual work in and outside the studio for which no one will hold the students accountable. Employment-based time, on the other hand, is defined instead by repetitive schedules proposed by the study programme. At DDSKS, directors and actors as well as dancers/choreographers are subjected to nearly the same temporality of the full-time curriculum dissected into smaller units, or what I would call the employment-based time. Here, an iteration of shorter time units defines the everyday rhythm: a project interpreting a theatre classic takes three months, or the class on Theatre History is taught every Monday between 9–11am.

The concept of 'employment' is etymologically a bit outdated and connected with paid labour and the regularity of a permanent position. A synonym for employment-based time in the everyday of performing arts students is to say that their time is planned beforehand. The schedule is set. The subjects of study are prescribed. The duration of contemplation and production respectively are pre-designed. Planned study could also be termed controlled or directed study. It is an institutional demonstration of knowing what is needed for the art student and expected from the artistic field, and putting this knowledge into detailed standards that can be replicated. Who plans or controls the study of performing arts? One could say that the planners of artistic study are those who write the study regulations and those who interpret them, fill out the schedules and match the modules, day to day. The explicitness and richness of details in the description of the learning inputs and expected outputs – I here refer to the aforementioned 28 sub-modules of five ECTS points – expose the power of writing study regulations. The more details that are given from the moment of writing the authorising document, that is, the study regulations, the less freedom it allows for interpretation and rethinking education on the part of future staff. My argument is that when study regulations dissect the curriculum into small units, each with their own description of learning goals, it both reproduces a certain mode of production and restricts future teachers and students from inventing their own temporality of work, and thereby reduces the performativity of the curriculum.

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[179] I base this thesis on a comparison with the study regulations from the years before the implementation.

I now want to turn to the bachelor project and its assessment within the two educations, since my observations of production and presentation of the artistic work of students report on the contrast between dissecting, employment-based versus durational, practice-based temporality.

Assessments on Time

During the winter and spring terms of 2019 I was attending bachelor project assessments at both institutions. Methodologically, I was there doing participant observation (Laurier 2010) from a rather discrete position. Involvement of researchers in educational institutes and workplaces has also been labelled "legitimate peripheral participation" (Lave & Wenger 1991). At DDSKS the presentations were public and at KADK the students were informed about my research and had consented to my presence. I was bodily present, took notes, and did not talk. I was especially attentive to how the students articulated their work and the temporality of production. In addition, I took notice of the temporal frame of the assessment itself given by the institutions.

For the students of performing arts, the three months before Christmas was the period for their 15 ECTS points bachelor project. In the presentations that I attended in January 2019, most of the students referred to exactly these three months as time for their investigation into an artistic problem or question.[180] Many projects were based on questions the students were keen to explore alongside, in addition to, or in contrast to the curriculum of the school. The assessments at DDSKS were public and presented in studios and black boxes with chairs for the audience. Peer students and teachers attended and applauded after each presentation. The bachelor project is, according to the study regulations, supposed to be an individually planned period of an artistic development project.[181] The teaching staff had suggested that the students divide the presentation in three parts: the research project, its reflection/ documentation – written or in another media – and the assessment presentation, the latter often turning out to be a small 'show' in itself. Characteristically for DDSKS, there were several tasks and sub-projects in the bachelor project. Likewise, the assessment of 50 minutes had a mandatory rhythm: it was dissected into smaller parts of first, a 15 minute presentation, then an 8–10 minute conversation with the supervisor, an 8–10 minute conversation with the external assessor and supervisor, followed by 3–5 minutes of voting behind closed doors, and finally 3–5 minutes of oral

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[180] An exception was the students of *Dramatic Writing* who had also included their "Individually Planned Period" of the preceding three months/ 15 ECTS points as the research phase for the bachelor project.
[181] Officially, since there is not yet a third cycle level in artistic education in Denmark, the word "artistic research" is not applied. Instead, institutions under the Ministry of Culture employ artistic development (Da. *kunstnerisk udviklingsvirksomhed*).

feedback to the student.[182] In other words, both the production and the presentation iterated the already observed dissection of time into smaller, mandatory units of time.

To the students the bachelor project was an exceptional format, both prestigious in its status – many celebrating that they would now surely graduate as bachelors after the voting – and formally different from the otherwise less independent and personal formats. Many students had pursued very personal interests in (seemingly) opposition to what they otherwise learned, either by travelling away from the school, interviewing people outside the arts or initiating their own work in a non-hierarchical collaboration. The bachelor project was obviously one 'project' in a line of several involvements: students often referred to how they came into the process directly from an internship or a production, thereby indicating that there was an immediate interruption from one involvement to another, rather than a continuation of an artistic practice.

The bachelor assessments at KADK took place in May 2019 at the site-specific exhibition space – a water tower in the suburbs of Copenhagen – where the artworks of the students were installed. The assessments were neither public, nor the slightest bit spectacular. Only the peer students who had their assessments on the same day attended. In contrast to the temporary three months 'project' and pre-rhythmised 'show-time' of the assessments at DDSKS, the bachelor projects and assessments at KADK operated with very open and durational temporalities. Although the assessment itself was supposed to last for a standard 50 minutes, it sometimes extended to up to 70 minutes. Obviously, neither the assessing professor nor the students looked at the clock. The assessments were hardly directed besides from asking the student who was standing in front of their artwork to do a "small introduction"[183] before conversing with the internal and external assessor. The conversations were led by the external assessor and were not structured by a specific dramaturgy of questions. I would describe the conversations as both in-depth and somewhat contingent in the sense that the set-up was completely without any pressure or staged mode of presentation.

The striking observation at the assessments at KADK was how the students talked about the temporality of the 'making-of' their bachelor project: the process and research were definitely not limited to a few months! Most students described generating the material, consciously and unconsciously, over several years. Ideas and investigations sprang from questions and impressions before entering higher education, or in the first term, experimenting with material from a workshop

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[182] The procedure of both the triad of research-documentation-presentation and the rhythmising of the assessment were both communicated to me beforehand when addressing the head of Centre for Dramatic Writing, Sandra Theresa Buch, and also announced to audiences at the assessments at the beginning of each day by staff from DDSKS.
[183] This was the direction they had from the staff, according to an email sent out to the students and shared with me by professor Henriette Heise.

two years ago, reading about a phenomenon last summer or continuously conversing with a friend. One student even said "I didn't want to make something deadline-specific", and presented instead a collection of different works from their artistic practice during their studies. Obviously, despite being the final project, the assessment proves that the bachelor project is part of an intended "ongoing process". [184] The bachelor project is structurally embedded in the large module of 2875 hours and aligning with the concept at KADK of finding one's own, continuous artistic practice.

To conclude, it is confirmed that the bachelor projects and assessments in fine arts at KADK are a continuation of the practice-based time, whereas in performing arts at DDSKS the format of the artistic development 'project' is a rupture within, a temporary exercise in artistic independency. However, the singularity of the independent 'project' in the performing arts is embedded in such a dominant temporal structure of planned and dissected work that the possible autonomous and independent artistic work in the bachelor project is 'drowned' by other obligations:[185] The exception of 'independency' finds no scheduled aftermath of continued research or time for similar artistic reflection and thereby assimilates into the generalised rhythm of employment-based temporality.

Becoming Professional

It would be difficult to imagine education without a goal, and students starting education without having a picture of how and where they would like to work in the future. Yet the question is what kind of relation to the future should education encourage? To what extent do students already learn to measure themselves in relation to the professional world in bachelor degree education? I would claim that the temporalities at KADK and DDSKS exercise futurity – an imagination of the future produced in the present – in the sense that students encounter professional rhythms (and expectations) of work.

The practice-based temporality matches the working rhythm of the fine arts freelancer developing their own works over time, in a self-instituted rhythm, autonomously and self-managing. Looking at the short description of the BA Fine Arts degree on the KADK website, I would connect the temporal cultivation of individual talent through giving time during education with a futurity, a promise of autonomous experimentation:

> The primary function is to enable and support students as they establish their own art practice. This will involve producing works of art in an ongoing process that

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[184] From the short introduction to the *BFA in Fine Arts*, https://kunstakademiet.dk/en/schools-and-institutes/bfa-school
[185] Compared to performing arts education abroad – Fredrikstad, Giessen, Berlin, Hildesheim – where students have several months a year to develop and continue their own works in the 'curriculum free' time between terms, the academic year in DDSKS is also relatively long and primarily allows for holidays or for students to work for money between terms.

encompasses individual exploration and experimentation, studies of art history and culture, and studies of various materials and media.[186]

A discourse on autonomy is dominant in the study regulations. The iteration of "one's own work" is striking in the study regulations, although the student's practice is also expected to be reflected in relation to other students' work. In the study regulations it is stressed that the core of the education is to challenge the student in an academic environment and support each student's artistic "experimentation, investigation and a flexible approach to working processes".[187] The objective of this experimental and individual practice is to become 'professional' – a wording stemming from the executive order of the Ministry of Culture,[188] a word appearing 23 times in the study regulations of the bachelor of fine arts at KADK. In order to become professional as a visual artist, a temporal flexibility is prerequisite, which is to read in the institutional logic of scheduling, as little as possible. The students are expected to learn to manage and structure the temporality of their production themselves.

The concept of the teaching at KADK is based on "Student-Based Learning" which means involving students in co-designing the curriculum. The concept of "Student-Based Learning" is a model adapted from European standards of quality assurance.[189] I would claim that the involvement of students in the development of the programme could be both interpreted as a democratic involvement but also as a delegation of responsibility which – according to political theorist Isabell Lorey – corresponds with neoliberal interpellation dressed as freedom:

> (…) the concept of responsibility of one's own, so commonly used in the course of neo-liberal restructuring, lies within this liberal force line of possessive individualism and actuality and only functions additionally as a neo-liberal interpellation for self-governing.[190]

Thinking about the generous number of 115 ECTS points for "Artistic Practice" in the study regulations, it is remarkable how the students are expected to invent and manage their own discipline of working artistically. They do have a mandatory course each term in "Artistic Practice" for approximately one week, just as they do have to show work at the presentations by the end of the term.

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[186] *BFA in Fine Arts*, https://kunstakademiet.dk/en/schools-and-institutes/bfa-school

[187] *Curriculum for the Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Visual Arts* (Copenhagen: Det Kongelige Danske Kunstakademi 2018), 2.

[188] Cf. the Danish Executive Order no. 830 of 23 June 2017 on education at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' Schools of Visual Arts, https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=192136

[189] *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)* (Brussels: 2015).

[190] Isabell Lorey, "Governmentality and Self-Precarization. On the normalization of cultural producers," published in the archive *EIPCP,* (2006).

Supporting autonomy, providing temporal flexibility and distributing responsibility for the curriculum, the fine arts students are expected to be and interpellated as responsible, robust and independent artist-workers. The temporality exercised in the school assumes an individualised practice of each artist without any presumptions or professionalised measures of certain 'better' rhythms of the working day. However, the practice-based temporality of the fine artist definitely resides in an aesthetic ideology of the Kantian artist as genius: natural talent that can only be stimulated and cultivated but not taught.[191] This becomes particularly clear in contrast to the artist as a skilled employee when glancing at the school for performing artists.

Being professional within fine art means – amongst other things – to be responsible for the distribution of time in one's own practice. Interestingly, when it comes to the performing arts, to imitate and reproduce the dissecting and pre-designed temporality is connected with being professional. In contrast to KADK, the executive order from the Ministry of Culture concerning DDSKS does not employ the word "professional".[192] Nonetheless, in the study regulations of *Theatre and Performance Making*, the word "professional" appears 21 times and seems to be the reoccurring measure: to match "professional standards" and to show a "professional approach".[193] The employment-based temporality trains students to produce in an already existing model of a pre-organised temporality, typically matching the temporality of directing in institutional theatres or working as an actor in a permanent ensemble-employment. Reproducing existing temporalities of productions, applauding the measurement of professional standards and giving responsibility to the students in order to test and strengthen their professional approach towards the economy, time and production teams, DDSKS interpellates their students as workers in an already fixed notion of what theatre production is.

Similar to the bachelor project, the students at DDSKS are, albeit for shorter intervals and within the linearity of many productions, learning to manage their own time. One module of 15 ECTS points named "Individually Planned Period" – a period with a start and an endpoint, not a practice – allows the students studying directing, scenography and dramatic writing to organise their own artistic work and distribute time – on their own or in groups – for approximately three months or half a term. The students' expected learning outcomes in this exceptional, self-organised period are explicitly managerial competences:

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[191] Cf. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement,* Transl. J.H. Bernard (London 1914 [1793]), §46 – §50, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/48433/48433-h/48433-h.htm#s44

[192] Cf. the Danish Executive Order no. 1157 of 19 September 2018 on education at the Danish National School of Performing Arts https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=203069

[193] "professional standard" p. 39, 43 and "professional approach" p. 5, 46 in *Curriculum for the Bachelor Programme in Theatre and Performance Making* (Copenhagen: DDSKS, 2018).

- Planning an individually planned period based on a predefined learning need.
- Communicating the core realisations achieved during the period to professional peers.[194]

And similarly, the actors are expected to be able to manage time and be professional in the conveyance of their self-led bachelor project:

- Preparing a realistic time schedule and abiding by it. (…)
- Searching for relevant cooperation partners and entering into subject-related and/or cross-disciplinary cooperation with a professional approach.[195]

The two very different temporalities within fine arts and performing arts education provide two rhythms of work in the everyday routine of art students – continuous practice versus dissected and pre-designed employment. But this also suggest two very different aesthetics of production: the concept of the artist as genius, an individual, autonomous talent, who can only be supported and cultivated in their original experimentation, and the concept of the artist as a professional who has been trained in certain skills and competences. Despite the very distinct rhythms of the every day and the difference in how much the students are expected to invent or learn, both schools expect the students to be responsible. Fine art students are expected to be responsible for their curriculum, learning process and knowledge production, whereas the performing artists are expected to be responsible for budgets, plans and teams.

More than Professional

Besides reproducing an already existing temporality of artistic work at DDSKS, the dominance of entrepreneurial discourse is striking in the study regulations of performing arts. A "professional approach", managerial competences and even the ability to analyse and identify artistic "value potential"[196] are required from all students across the programmes. In contrast, at KADK the entrepreneurial discourse is – intendedly, I presume – absent in the study regulations, which of course does not mean that the students do not learn similar competences through their self-led and self-responsible "Student-Centered Learning".[197] How does the entrepreneurial discourse match the mainly

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[194] Module 9 description from the *Curriculum for the Bachelor Programme in Theatre and Performance Making* (2018)*,* 4.

[195] Module 10 description from the *Curriculum for the Bachelor Programme in Acting* (2018)*,* 25.

[196] Sub-module in "Entrepreneurship" consisting of 5 ECTS points of the 15 ECTS points module called "Performing Arts Immersion I" from the *Curriculum for the Bachelor Programme in Acting* (2018)*,* 24.

[197] In the official guidelines of "Student-Centered Learning" only the teaching and administrative educational staff are expected to be professional, not the students, see examples *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)* (Brussels: 2015), 13, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 27.

tight, linear and dissected temporality? My suggestion is that an employment-based temporality of work combined with managerial skills and an entrepreneurial value-awareness are the exact symptoms of professionalisation in artistic education.

But what is professionalisation? Often, professionalisation is connected with neoliberal governance in institutions. Professor in Art and Policy Randy Martin has presented the "professional turn" as moving artists and academics from their expertise towards legitimisation through accountability and administration.[198] In the case of higher artistic educations, the demand of professionalisation can be described as the process of legitimisation. Here, not only the institutions are "granted powers of self-regulation and accreditation",[199] independent from the state, as is the case of the Bologna Process, but also the student is professionalised in terms of becoming increasingly self-measuring and legitimised through accountancy and evaluations. The legitimisation through accumulation of ECTS points promises, for example, certain institutional standards reached according to international measures. Similarly, knowledge production is supposed to verbalise and publicise that the students have learned and reflected. But, more importantly, professionalisation is also a subjectivation process where responsibility and autonomy are granted in standardised ways.

Comparing the two institutions, there is no doubt that students in both are professionalised through the Bologna Process. But the students at DDSKS are *promised* professionalisation, by structurally being taught generalised skills and discursively following entrepreneurial legitimation in the curriculum. They are professionalised in a more detailed way than the students in fine arts education at KADK. Professor of Strategic Management Stefano Harney and black poet Fred Moten claim in their book *The Undercommons. Fugitive Planning & Black Study* (2013) that professionalisation in study is the privatisation of the social individual. By this, they read professionalism as something "more than professional".[200] What could be meant by being more than professional? At universities, like Martin proposes, the extra-professional lies in the administrative skills. Within the arts, however, I would propose that being more than professional has to do with both entrepreneurial and managerial skills but also new forms of "value production" and being ready for "a constantly changing job market": actors, for example, are in transition from being mainly employed in ensembles to rather initiating their own projects in self-organised groups.[201] This implies the abilities to

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[198] Randy Martin, *Under New Management: Universities, Administrative Labor, and the Professional Turn* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011), xiiv, xiv

[199] Blomley, Nicholas: "Professional Geographies" p. 222–226 in Laurie, Nina and Bondi, Liz: *Working the Spaces of Neoliberalism* (Malden/Oxford/Victoria: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 224.

[200] Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, *The Undercommons. Fugitive Planning & Black Study* (New York: Minor Compositions, 2013), 30.

[201] This is an assumption also confirmed by the rectorate of DDSKS Mads Thygesen in an interview by Solveig Gade and Cecilie Ullerup Schmidt, "Handle with Care," *Peripeti* 26, (2017), 66–72.

plan, schedule, cooperate and communicate one's work, to create "value", as the study regulations suggest. Consequently, the professionalised actors are supposed to be working with both traditional acting skills and entrepreneurial and managerial competences, with being led in pre-designed processes and inventing their own formats. The flexible artist worker is the aim, the general objective of all study regulations for bachelor education at DDSKS:

> The programmes are directed toward an expanded field of employment - for performing and creating artists - and will embrace knowledge, skills and competences within the entire performing arts field.[202]

Professionalisation can be understood through the projective temporality of Kunst: being ahead of the professional career, always imagining new ways of working and new projects to commence. This is, in Steyerl's words, "a total occupation of time". When not specifically being in a production process, the artist is working on how to find and adapt to the next and future form of expanded production. To match employability to an unknown future is a total occupation.

The students at DDSKS are expected to learn a lot of skills and competences on their road to becoming 'professional', yet the employment-based temporality reproduces a traditional way of professional production within performing arts. Students of performing arts might be ready for other ways of working but in a standardised way. In the field of performing arts – and especially when thinking about the production conditions of the independent performance artist – the employment-based temporality is only one of many ways of working. At the performing arts school, however, the temporality of production – as read through the study regulations, the dissected temporality of the bachelor project and its assessment – does not encourage students to work with durational formats or research-based independent productions since they hardly have any influence over their curriculum, nor do they have temporal capacity for their own reflection and experimentation. What seems to be left out, compared to fine arts, is experimentation and self-conducted practice over time, beyond the pre-defined project. Individual artistic practice and artistic research seems to me to be introduced at MA level within the performing arts, whereas it is the very foundation in fine arts. In other words, professionalisation on BA level at DDSKS aims at employability in an uncertain future. To become more-than-professional means to obtain many competences in a standardised quantity: traditional competences and independent projects are aligned in an employment-based temporality, secured by the abilities to plan, manage and communicate.

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[202] For example *Curriculum for the Bachelor Programme in Acting* (2018), 4.

At KADK professionalisation is less about imaginaries of future employability and entrepreneurship, and more about communicating one's work and producing knowledge. The largest number of ECTS points at KADK goes into artistic practice defined as follows: "The element Artistic practice places emphasis on experimentation and on exploring processes, ideas and materials."[203] The combination of Student-Centred-Learning and the many hours of artistic practice allow the students at KADK to form their own artistic formats and processes, to experiment with and take responsibility for how to distribute time themselves. The practice might in itself also be a product, as proposed by Steyerl, and if able to communicate this continuous practice, the students could have products without making the practice into materialised artworks. This has to do with an expanded notion of artistic practice as well as with professionalisation: the ability to communicate and manage the production. Yet, from the bachelor assessments at KADK, it did not seem essential that students had to already be, or would become good managers of time or planned processes. Rather, intuition, openness towards contingent influences as well as an experimental, conceptual approach, were still demonstrated to be central.

Doggy Paddling

When I started to analyse the implementation of the Bologna Process in two Danish artistic educational institutions, I expected to be able to make some general conclusions about the consequences of the Bologna Process. I expected to find very uniform rhythms of work and to conclude on the homogenisation of artistic education through the EU-guided standards. Contrary to my prejudices, when analysing both study regulations and production and assessments of bachelor projects, I found contrasting temporalities of the continuous practice-based time in fine arts, and the dissecting, predesigned and employment-based time in performing arts. These two temporalities are actually a continuation of the two ways of conducting artistic study: on the one hand, an open, students-and-staff led education within fine arts, and on the other, a schooling based on a pre-scheduled curriculum within performing arts.

Where the student of fine arts learns to work in what Steyerl calls a total occupation of life, the students of performing arts learn to work in a continuum of projects, albeit without much independent time. A currently changing job market within performing arts implies unforeseen changes and risks, not knowing what will be necessary in the future, and therefore the curriculum at DDSKS claims to engage with an expanded field of employment. Unfortunately, the professionalisation teaches managerial and entrepreneurial skills of measuring rather than structurally giving time for a new

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[203] *Curriculum for the Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Visual Arts* (2018), 14.

aesthetics of production to emerge from the students. Despite proclaiming to be ready for an expanded field of employment, the foundational years at the performing arts school are rhythmised in a remarkedly traditional, controlled and reproductive way in respect to what the temporality of production might be.

What do we find out about contemporary temporality of artistic work as taught in these two institutions? Despite the ECTS-bound contrasts and the dichotomic tendency of practice versus employment, I want to stress the discursive simultaneity of project work, practice-based time, total occupation and the more traditional employment-based regularity. For many artist workers today and in the future, working within several temporalities will be a fact: sticking to plans and projecting into the future, keeping deadlines and continuing one's practice. The alternation and combination of different types of work have increased as the length of semi-permanent employment diminishes.

When temporalities of work – employment, projects, practice, total occupation – are combined, could it make the working conditions better for all workers? Is there a chance that full-time employed workers get more freedom in their work schedule? Will independent project and practice workers win legal guarantees of social security? The consolidation of flexibility and social security in a contingent career is dependent on social reforms. If contemporary economy was based on Keynesian principles, the future might be to the advantage of permanently employed workers only. And, as philosopher and cultural theorist Michel Feher suggests when reading contemporary combinations of work in the light of financial capitalism: if the target of social reforms today is rather to accommodate an economy of investments and debts and "help people help themselves",[204] the "chances that contingent workers will experience the upcoming single regime of professional activity as a 'win-win' improvement on freedom and security are extremely thin".[205] In a post-wage-labour society beyond permanent employments, public officials cannot be held responsible for security and employability of the self-employing citizens, Feher states. The responsibility for the good, long and safe life is privatised and the responsibility lies on the individual.

Performance artists are figures between fine arts and performing arts and operate between different temporalities of work in their professional lives. The management of contrasting modes of production, temporalities of work, and thereby also the switch between different technologies of the artist-self, is in itself a demanding, time-consuming task. In the context of neoliberalism and life in structural precarity, Berlant portrays time as something in crisis, a broken

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[204] Michel Feher refers to "help people help themselves" in Bill Clinton's so-called welfare policy of 1996, taking away the unemployment check in order for the unemployed to be empowered, cf. Michel Feher, *Rated Agency* (New York: Zone Books, 2018), 157.

[205] Ibid, 183.

structure, a bumpy ride: "Under a regime of crisis ordinariness life feels truncated, more like desperate doggy paddling than like a magnificent swim out to the horizon" (Berlant 2011b:117). Rather than an experience of being in a generous continuum of time, in a Goethean *Verweilen*, the experience of time is here associated with an inelegant and exhausting swim for survival. Rather than performing one style of swimming – or undertaking one temporality of work – the subject is exhaustingly trying to reach the next shore. The "doggy paddling" is a metaphor capturing the rhythm of a life in temporal inconstancy. It is a picture of a dehumanised species swimming alone, probably out of breath.

PART TWO
The Aesthetics of Production

ARTICLE III

Being Exhausted, Acting Happy[206]

Abstract

The dance performance Happyology – Tears of Joy *not only exposes and teaches a current imperative of happiness in times of structural precarity and exhaustion, it also raises questions on the efficacy of performing one's autobiography and makes the author speculate on who can be the agent of change in political theatre preoccupied with how we work.*

Düsseldorf 20 June 2019: it is a hot summer, and the Impulse Theater Festival, showcasing the "best of the German independent scene" has a packed and provocative programme. We have just left the first performance of the evening: a work on white male fear in *Great Depressions* directed by Jan Philipp Stange. Now we are waiting in the narrow corridor of the Tanzhaus NRW for the second performance tonight. The air is humid and oxygen is scant, but we wait eagerly for a promised change of affects from depression to euphoria, the performance *Happyology –Tears of Joy* by Draganda Bulut which originally premiered on 10 October 2018 at *Hebbel am Ufer* in Berlin. The area is too crowded and the ceiling feels like it is only 20 centimetres over my head. We are asked to write our name on a name tag but there are too few pens and it takes a long time. There is also some confusion with the ticketing. Finally, we are let into the slightly more temperate black box theatre with a small auditorium for approximately 80 audience members.

After a few minutes Bulut, a choreographer from Belgrade currently based in Berlin, enters from a side door, dressed in black jeans, a sweater and trainers. She nearly falls into the space, off balance and with a disoriented gaze, wringing her hands and coughing to clear her throat. Bulut excuses herself for being late. She says she does not feel well, that the tech went down just before the show, that the run-through the day before was a disaster and honestly speaking, she has not felt well at all in the previous months. She has had anxiety attacks due to pressure of producing and responsibility for performing well. Bulut stumbles over her words and feet, and her voice trembles. She acts as if she is about to cry. She repeats that she does not feel well and that she never gets to see her friends anymore because either they are touring or she is touring. Such is the predicament of an artist in today's independent theatre scene.

Having experienced working as an internationally touring performance artist myself and having taught students to work under exactly the same conditions in Berlin as Bulut describes, I recognise all

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too well the affective labour of missing friends and family, the exhaustion of moving from venue to venue and wanting to be at home, the disappointment of not being able to engage locally as an activist due to the next gig abroad, and being tired of inventing 'the new', humorous and surprisingly edgy show under the standard conditions: 60-80 minutes long with a travel-light set design, a minimal number of performers, and a not too demanding technical rider. We – Bulut, students and fellow artists within the European independent theatre scene – know these repetitive production conditions painfully well. How can we then change them from within? I wonder: will Bulut invite her friends and family along on tour? Will she shorten the performance and leave to sleep at the hotel? Will she explode the temporality of the show and build permanent housing on stage? Will she redistribute the production costs to the people who cannot afford to enter the theatre? My own imagination for rethinking the aesthetics of production in the theatre has not yet really reached any particular artistic heights but Bulut's opening monologue raises these questions, and I am hopeful that she has an idea of how to change the fundamental conditions of independent theatre work. I so much want to believe that Bulut is going to challenge the way we work now.

The dancer Andrew Hardwidge, acting as if he is her coach, appears with a relaxed attitude from behind the minimalist set-design behind Bulut, which consists of a white triptych of floor-to-ceiling blinds. He is wearing an orange turtleneck and beige pants. His greased hairstyle and clean-shaven cheeks remind me of a Gillette-commercial from the 1990s. His body language radiates self-confidence: opened chest, palms constantly facing the audience or the ceiling, a permanent smile and perfect teeth. He is guiding Bulut and the audience towards "more value, more happiness". He promotes facts, tips and tricks on how to stimulate and accumulate our natural happiness hormones such as dopamine, oxytocin, endorphins and serotonin through the collective standing ovations that are offered. Breathing out longer, eating dark chocolate (hidden under our chair – a surprise releases dopamine too) and imitating laughter are prescribed. At this point, everyone in the audience is actually laughing and enjoying the treat of happiness brought on by the silly but good-looking coach. Only a few anti-participation audience members try to disappear into their seats.

Then a second coach appears: the dancer and performer Dani Brown, who is slightly more insistent and demanding in her happiness directives.[207] She is wearing a beige suit, her brown hair in a swinging ponytail and she has a board with a checklist and a pen under her arm. She wants to share knowledge on how to stabilise and optimise happiness. She calls out names from the tags on the audience's t-shirts in order to gauge the room's current level of happiness on a scale from 1–10. This

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[207] Bojana Cvejić and Ana Vujanović, "Exhausting Immaterial Labour," in *The Journal for Performing Arts Theory* (October 2010), http://www.tkh-generator.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/tkh-17eng-web.pdf

shift from coach to dominatrix of positive psychology is the first warning that *Happyology* may spread a plague of imperative wellness and technologies of positive psychology rather than revolution.

Meanwhile, Bulut has seemingly become less depressed from the exercises offered by the coach and now animates the audience along with the coaches who are controlling more of the space. Bulut convinces, nearly begs audience members to help her and succeeds in forming a group of eight volunteers. She invites them on stage to follow her in a choreographic score of being pushed down, falling, getting up, catching oneself and being pushed down again, and again, and again. Then the lights are choreographed, Bulut shouts at the lights to change colour again and again and so they do, after which the female coach introduces a whip, demanding more smiles and the volunteers slide back to their seats. The male coach now dances and falls repeatingly. Bulut has disappeared behind the white blinds and now reenters with a trolley filled with fruit, cups and a blender. She has been transformed to a *joyeux* zombie: eyes, teeth and nails green from fluorescent lights. With a permanent grin towards the audience, her automated hands are preparing smoothies. She reanimates the previous volunteers from their seating and orders them – with a deep, distorted voice – to serve smoothies in cups to their fellow audience members. By the end of the piece, instead of applauding the work of the performers, the entire audience is dutifully drinking green smoothies. As an entire show, *Happyology* has been rhythmically entertaining, the performers demonstrate their coaching roles convincingly and with a good dose of positive psychology spiked with happiness-hormone-increasing exercises and sweets, the audience seems more than content.

However, I am left with a few concerns: first, is Bulut really under pressure to constantly produce well-made plays and simply does not have the capacity to organise a collective way out structural precarity and exhaustion? Has depression really paralysed her from political action? Or is the structurally determined depression and resulting flight into the technologies of positive psychology itself the political message of the work? *Happyology*, like the medical industry, deals with symptoms rather than seeking for a cure for what ails us. From this view, the problem of exhaustion remains consolidated and personal rather than political. Bulut and the chorus of life coaches ironically reiterate the "help people help themselves" as was the slogan of Bill Clinton's so-called welfare policy in 1996, taking away the unemployment check in order to empower the unemployed.[208]

Second, it seems to me that the dramaturgy of *Happyology* shifts from a focus on a particular problem and the promise of addressing it to a generalised critique of a fetichised coaching culture that exists *outside* the context of independent theatre production. Bulut's piece thus moves away from the

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[208] Cf. Feher 2018, 157.

very real structural issues of performing and producing in the independent theatre scene that opened the work.

Third, the theatrical investigation of positive psychology in the work seems distanced and without ambiguity: it is evil and we laugh about the shallow advice from the choreographed instructors, yet we also willingly participate.

However, there is another way to read Bulut's work. She coins a fundamental theatrical reflex of survival in acting happy when feeling exhausted. Methodologically, she oscillates between performing her close-to-authentic, autobiographical self and then acting stereotyped roles such as the depressed artist, the coached optimist and the happiness zombie. She starts out as a fragile artist: a version of herself which I perceive as real, authentic, despite that it might be a repeated script and a set of reproduced sentiments. The fragile artist is close to her autobiographic self, touring in the independent scene, and her excuses for not feeling well are plausible due to the fact that she is performing at the prestigious festival and most likely had too few hours to set up and rehearse. When Bulut ends up playing the artificial figure of the zombie, she plays a caricature extracted from her research on a coaching culture flourishing far away from the independent theatre scene and probably also from her own life. Virtuously, she gradually slides through what professor of Drama Michael Kirby proposed as a scale from not-acting to acting in 1972, from seemingly being herself – I know it is problematic to assume authenticity – to being a role. In documentary theatre and autobiographical performance, a simplified version of the self is mostly performed and repeated. Carol Martin, professor of Drama, writes about the simplification and reduction of complexity in documentary theatre: "Documentary theatre takes the archive and turns it into repertory."[209] Could the same be said about Bulut taking her autobiographical archive and making it into a play, and her personality into a role? With the precision of attitude and choreographed gestures, even the 'authentic self' performed in the beginning of this piece is exposed as an affective and artificial effect in the machinery of theatre entertainment. Bulut is virtuously acting as if she is completely herself. The use of the references from performance art – the authentic self and its personal pain and embodied suffering – as a theatrical means is cynical to me. I was personally affected by and identified with Bulut's point of departure and the issue of structural precarity, and I *want* to believe she has a problem with the working conditions in the independent theatre scene. However, she does not employ her autobiography to "challenge the efficacy of performance", as performance theorist Jon McKenzie famously characterised the potential

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[209] Carol Martin, *Dramaturgy of the real world on stage,* (New York/ London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 18.

of performance art,[210] to potentially change her own exhausting circumstances; rather, she uses her personal exhaustion to reproduce existing structures and fuel a funny show.

In recent years, scholarship in Theatre and Performance Studies has been at the forefront of articulating structural precarity and exposing the exhausting conditions of artistic freelance work in capitalism. In *Artist at Work* (2015), professor in Choreography and Performance Bojana Kunst analyses the performance artist as someone who instrumentalises her private sociality, embodied wounds and life crises as material for the next work, commuting from project to project and moving in solitude from residency to residency. The dramaturge of *Happyology*, Ana Vujanović, is a Performance Studies scholar who has prominently articulated the particular forms of exhaustion of the performance artist as "multitasking *bricoleur*" and for nearly a decade she has called for "proactive strategies of self-organisation" as institutional critique.[211]

There are other reasons I believe Bulut is aware of the piece's critique, the futility of finding a way out of certain structures and the impact they have on individual lives. Bulut graduated in 2012 from the MA Solo/Dance/Authorship (SODA) at the Inter-University Center of Dance in Berlin where the discourse was already vivid due to professor Boyan Manchev and guest lecturer Bojana Kunst.[212] Additionally, Bulut is associated with the artist-run and community-generating production space Station Service for Contemporary Dance in Belgrade. The autobiographical aspects of *Happyology* are obviously both informed by the discourse on and practice of performance work in capitalism, as well as filled with personal experiences of being affectively and physically exhausted from constantly producing and touring. Bulut performs herself in a depressive state and animates a 70-minute coaching show for herself and the audience in order to become both 'happy' and seemingly resilient to great expectations.

She opens the work with the topic of the pressure to produce and the permanent exhaustion resulting from an artist's lifestyle, and she mocks the culture of coaching that is supposed to heal the contagious depression. However, she does not actually propose other ways of organising, nor does she change the working conditions under which she and her colleagues in the cultural precariat suffer. On the contrary, on the level of production, she produces a well-made play with wit and current urgency for others and herself to continue to live up to and measure themselves against. Therefore, with

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[210] Jon McKenzie, *Perform or Else* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 30.

[211] Cvejić and Vujanović 2010.

[212] It could be discussed whether the MA in Solo Dance Authorship trains its students to be critical in their practice and infrastructural performance or to reproduce the given conditions within the independent German scene as recognising solo authors dealing with a critical – and hot! – content. Yet this article aims to discuss the performance *Happyology* of Bulut and not the institution she is educated within.

Happyology she both criticises and reproduces the "cruel optimism" of our historical present.[213] But could Bulut have changed her production conditions and remained visible in this esteemed festival? Would such a critical act be visible and heard? Are festivals of 'the best of' independent theatre and performance willing to show other formats? *Happyology* figures as one of 12 productions at the Impulse Theater Festival where most curated shows are between 60–90 minutes long and fit into programmed evenings of double bills. Is it the responsibility of the artist, already responsible for the conception, funding, direction, choreography, set-design, touring and performing of her own work and so on – to fundamentally change the infrastructure and working conditions?

When thinking about how to fundamentally change the theatre institution, I always return to Bertolt Brecht. He proposes at least two different answers on where change could happen. On the level of reception, Brecht proposes that theatre performance should not deliver answers, but should rather show and exhibit the status quo in order for the audience to shout out loudly and furiously: "It cannot continue like this!"[214], and then go home and organise to change society themselves. For that matter, Bulut's crash course in and showcase of easy-evil healing through coaching, chocolate and smoothies is exercising a Brechtian exposure of the world as it currently is, and that it should not continue. Her work as an artist is to expose and diagnose depression as well as promote a positive 'cure' as *Volkskrankheit,* and then to critically reflect on the imperative of happiness. Thereby, she locates change in the site of reception, and relies on the audience as possible agents.

Brecht's other proposal is on the level of production, and here the theatremaker is the producer of change. An anecdote tells how party functionaries came to complain about the length of one of Brecht's plays. The play was three hours long and the audience was deprived of regenerative sleep which was a problem for the next working day. Brecht replied to his critics that "obviously one would have to change the work schedules".[215] Although Brecht here only addresses the temporality of production and the distribution of time of the co-workers outside the theatre institution, I read in his second proposal that theatre can not only change the infrastructure of production in theatre but also beyond. To position oneself politically in relation to the two Brechtian proposals – to encourage

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[213] The notion of "cruel optimism" stems from Lauren Berlant's book by the same name, describing a Western optimist narrative of constant progress and growth throughout life which on a daily basis meets individualised disappointment. See Berlant 2011b.

[214] My translation of the German "Das muss aufhören." Bertolt Brecht, *Schriften zum Theater* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1957), 64.

[215] Hans-Thies Lehmann and Helene Varopoulou, "Brechtbrief" in *The Brecht Yearbook / Das Brecht-Jahrbuch 40*, ed. Theodore F. Rippey (n.p.: Boydell and Brewer, C. Hurst & Company, 2016), 15.

change in the aesthetics of reception or to reform the aesthetics of production – seems to me a central challenge for artists concerned with the structural conditions of work (and life) in and outside of the theatre. Bulut chooses the first strategy: she leaves us with an overload of serotonin and a sweet, green smoothie in order for us to say, "It cannot continue like this!" Yet, I am not sure we – the cultural precariat from the independent theatre scene – would have gone down that guided coaching-road first, if she had not led us down it. As an audience, we are left with the options either not to participate and make the show painfully stagnant, to participate and co-produce a well-made, funny show, or to delay our engagement and leave the show, motivated to individually stop obeying the imperative of happiness. Either way, we willingly go towards non-revolutionary 'solutions' to symptoms rather than causes.

CHAPTER TWO
AN AESTHETICS OF PRODUCTION

Artists, whether in art school or as professionals, are workers influenced by economy, time and sociality. They live under similar conditions to other freelance workers, dealing with time-pressure, fundraising and the merging grounds between friendships and professional networks. The notion of the artist as a worker is a figure in Marxist theory rooted in material conditions and dependencies of everyday life. The figure has been refined in recent feminist theory by thinkers such as Angela McRobbie, Bojana Kunst, Isabell Lorey, Judith Butler, Julia Bryan-Wilson and Kathi Weeks. The contemporary artist worker is described as living a life in structural inconstancy: working as freelancer, in an inconstant temporality, having no rights and living in forced mobility. The artist worker in northern Europe is often seemingly free but economically poor, socially isolated and temporally determined by deadlines, parallel projects and evaluations.

Theories on the artist as worker are embedded in both a feminist discourse on unrecognised work and Foucauldian social critique written in the context of increasing precarisation in capitalism and neoliberalism. However, in aesthetic theory these constituting elements within production seem to me underestimated, if not ignored. I therefore propose a theory on materialist aesthetics of production where the artistic abilities are co-formed by time, economy and sociality and not only, as Immanuel Kant proposed, identified as nature-given talent.

From Reception to Production

Within aesthetic theory two spheres are traditionally covered: the aesthetics of reception and the aesthetics of production. In contemporary aesthetic theory, reception dominates the field. An aesthetics of reception covers inquiries into aesthetic experience. The interest is the experience of the artwork and the interaction – reflective, phenomenological, affective – with the artwork. Kant, in his aesthetics of reception developed in *Critique of Judgement* (1793), investigates what it does to the beholder to experience an artwork and pursues how beauty resonates. Other theories on the aesthetics of reception examine how the artwork represents its political context or how the truth can be discovered within the object of art, or elaborate on the interaction between the artwork, its context and the beholder in theories on phenomenology, performativity or relational aesthetics.

In the 20th Century, the phenomenological critique of Kant's aesthetics of reception has a central position. Where Kant promoted the position of the beholder as disinterested, Maurice Merleau-

Ponty insisted that there is no "pure description",[216] but only embodied and intersubjective perceptions in this world. This phenomenological, embodied and intersubjective aesthetics of reception has served most theories of the artwork since Modernism and is central in Queer and Performance Studies. About the perception of the subject, Merleau-Ponty writes: "The world is not what I think, but what I live through".[217] Within Performance Studies, the embodiment has included both the beholder and the artist, both the aesthetics of reception and the aesthetics of production, particularly unfolded when it comes to the body as witness: histories of invisibility and social and political inscriptions in the body are considered as determining factors of what can be uttered, made visible, heard and addressed in performance art (Case 1988, Muñoz 1999, Nyong'o 2013). In that respect, Performance Studies has included the body, its memory and desire in its contribution to aesthetic theory, developed from embodied practices and research with regard to historical representability of race, class and gender.

"The world is not what I think, but what I live through", Merleau-Ponty writes and points at the tactile horizon of perception of each subject. It is about perceiving the world through one's situatedness. Could I reformulate this sentence about the production of the artwork, moving from perception to production, moving from the beholder to the producer of art and say instead "the artwork is not what the artist thinks, but what they live through"? Could we imagine removing the idealist concept of purity from the aesthetics of production in the way purity has been removed from the aesthetics of reception? It would be worth trying, next to the embodied and intersubjective beholder, to theorise on artistic production as something always-already in relation, materially, to the world.

What is then a materialist aesthetics of production? I define the aesthetics of production as 'how art is made'. And by materialist, I mean the opposite of idealist: the artistic production is not based on spirit, inspiration and natural talent, at least not only, but on the material and historical conditions of the artist and their production. The artist's so-called inspiration is rooted in concrete production conditions in a specific historical context. I see time, economy and sociality as central, co-producing circumstances in an artwork, and these circumstances have often been overseen or excluded when defining what an artist is, and what art is. As cultural analysts, whether in Performance Studies or in Comparative Literature, we are often trained to see the intention of an artist – that is, the imagined inspiration and the conceptual ideas from the seemingly free artist genius, perhaps including a glimpse of their biography.[218] I claim that the inspiration is a myth and I pursue, as a cultural analyst, the search for the artist's infrastructural and institutional frames for production organised within the artwork. At

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[216] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (New York: Routledge, 1962), ix.
[217] Ibid, xvi-xvii.
[218] Sometimes we are also trained to see biography as a kind of authentic co-authoring explanation.

the same time, the performativity within materialism should not be wiped out: In Marx and Engel's *German Ideology* they criticise Feuerbach's materialism for only recognising that the "circumstances make men" and thereby, Feuerbach does not promote the performative dimension of materialism, namely that "men make circumstances".[219] Of course Marx and Engels would not write about performativity, a category not used before J.L. Austin's lectures nearly a century later, but the worker is definitely a figure who has the power to change the circumstances – the infrastructures and production conditions – under which they are subjected.

Coming back to the relation between reception and production, the museum director Glenn Adamson and art historian Julia Bryan-Wilson state in their book *Art in the Making* (2016) that both artists and academics tend to prefer to reflect on concept rather than making, reception rather than production.

> (…) making may seem a conservative matter for scholarship. For decades art has been pricipially valued for its conceptual merits, not for its physical qualities such as materials, craftsmanship, or technological sophistication. (…) We are also in an era in which the reception of art – its networks and circulation, its institutional homes, and its counter-institutional impulses – dominates critical discourse.[220]

Adamson and Bryan-Wilson identify themselves as art historians with a materialist approach and in their book, they analyse specific material-bound artistic disciplines from painting and sculpting to performing and crowd-surfing. In their book they demonstrate an intriguing sympathy with the artist as producer and they depart from the fact that production determines what artists can do. They operate with artistic skills in an expanded sense where some have trained to paint and others to outsource and lead complex processes of production, stating that "one can outsource with greater or less intelligence, just as one can paint thoughtfully or not".[221] In line with their departure from the artist as producer with a complex set of capacities, and building on the Marxist idea of the worker as a powerful figure, I see the artist as someone who distributes both materials and work-related tasks, and forms both the sensible and the social.

Three years after *Art in the Making,* the interest in a materialist aesthetics of production has not lessened: on the contrary, the interest in the materiality of art has increased in recent years both

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[219] Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx, *The German Ideology* (Progress Publishers, 1968 [1945–46]), 17. https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/Marx_The_German_Ideology.pdf
[220] Glenn Adamson and Julia Bryan-Wilson, *Art in the Making* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2016), 15–16.
[221] Ibid, 21.

with New Materialism and the more Marxist feminist discourse on the artist as worker, where I also position myself.[222] Like Adamson and Bryan-Wilson, I am sensitive to authorship and the economics of production, and methodologically, I propose to move closer to the circumstances of the artists than to their ideas. But where Adamson and Bryan-Wilson look particularly at material-bound processes, I look at how time and sociality are formed in the new (and old) technologies of work.

In the following, however, I will do some theoretical footwork. First, I engage with key Kantian concepts and historicise their ideological construction within aesthetic theory, and second, from a Marxist feminist position, discuss the exclusions of economy, time and sociality in Kant's third critique. Third, I will look at Walter Benjamin's understanding of the artist as producer in order to revisit early materialist theory to support my argument that students and artists can not only represent, but also performatively transform both their own production conditions as well as common technologies of work.

The Artist as Genius

In his third critique Kant concentrates mainly on the aesthetic judgement which means he develops primarily a concept on the reception of the artwork. Yet as he needs to differentiate artworks from other objects, he develops a short theory on the production of the artwork: that production is only a concern when it comes to distinguish art from other things. It is the production that makes art exclusive, something other than nature, science and crafts. Kant's definition of the artist as a genius is clear and concise. In four paragraphs from §46 to §50, he promotes the genius as a natural talent producing original artworks. To me, the most central premise for an aesthetics of production according to Kant is that before art comes the genius:

> *Genius* is the talent (or natural gift) which gives the rule to Art. Since talent, as the innate productive faculty of the artist, belongs itself to Nature, we may express the matter thus: *Genius* is the innate mental disposition (*ingenium*) *through which* Nature gives the rule to Art.[223]

The crucial circumstance, or condition, for art, is the genius. Not money, not time, not social surroundings, but natural talent precedes the possibility of art. It is a mental, not a material condition. The Kantian promise of talent is transcendental, ahistorical and knows no political context: no class, no

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[222] Cf. Jackson 2011, Sholette 2011 and 2017, Kunst 2015, Shukaitis 2016 etc.

[223] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement,* Transl. J.H. Bernard, (London: 1914 [1793]), §46, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/48433/48433-h/48433-h.htm#s44

race, no political infrastructures. The rule of art is given from nature. Michel Chaouli, scholar in German Philosophy, sums up the project of the third critique with the question: "What can we say about a human way of making that is geared toward the experience of beauty?"[224] Read in the context of the rest of *Critique of Judgement*, Kant is interested in how art is experienced as beauty, and *not* what art tells us about the world we live in.

The motif of the spirit is central to the concept of the artist as a genius. The spirit animates the soul to create (§ 49). The spirit allows the artist to have intuition, or aesthetic ideas, representations made up by the imagination *(Ger. Einbildungskraft)*. The artist is able to imagine aesthetic ideas and then pass them on as representations which "go beyond the limits of experience" (§49). Beyond reason, the imagination of the artist genius creates sensible representations that communicate more than words can express. Therefore, the work of the artist genius is exemplary and does not spring from imitation (§46).

The exclusiveness of the Kantian genius resumes the two strong forces of production in the Western history of aesthetics: the ideas of divine inspiration and natural talent. From Augustine's early Christian aesthetics to the German transcendental aesthetics of Karl Wilhelm Ferdinand Solger and Friedrich Schleiermacher, the artistic creation out of nothing is what makes the artist become similar to God. Being a "second God", as Julius Caesar claimed, the artist creates (lat. *facere*) through writing and painting small worlds similar to – because the artist is still subjected to – God's creation.[225] The exclusive position of the artist as second God is the foundation for the concept of the genius. Different from the ancient ideal of the artist as imitator of the world, the artist in the 18th and 19th Centuries is an inventor. Opposed to the scientist, who produces knowledge and discoveries from nature, the artist creates 'the new' out of nothing. The artist is inventing thanks to his nature-given imagination.[226] Imagination is a gift, not something to be trained in at school, nor achieved through hard labour.

But under which circumstances does the artist emerge as a genius? According to Kant, art is – unlike the works of scientists or craftsmen – "production through freedom" (§43). Whereas bees instinctively produce honeycombs in regular patterns, human beings are able to act in accordance with reason (Ger. *Willkür*, a word synonymous with one's own will, subjectivity). As opposed to the mimesis of nature, there is no necessity in artistic production. It is the imagination that creates art. When creating out of

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[224] Michel Chaouli, *Thinking with Kant's Critique of Judgement* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017), 113.
[225] Karheinz Barck, et.al., eds. *Ästhetische Grundbegriffe*, Bd. 5, "Postmoderne – Synästhesie," (Stuttgart: Verlag J. B. Meltzer, 2010), 46, 49.
[226] Ibid, 54.

nothing, or pure imagination, the artist becomes ontologically detached and isolated from material surroundings, historical context and local sociality.

Kant's writings on the genius in isolation sum up a position of disgust towards crafts, wage labour and outspoken process description. Art as something not involved with money or vulgar bodily practices relies on an antique concept of purity. Going back to antiquity, the first foundational and normative distinctions can be found between pure and impure art, between fine arts and crafts. Plato differentiates in his notion of producing or making, *poesis*, between God's creation of ideas, craftsmen's production of tools and artists' making of appearances. In Plato's notion of *poesis* God is responsible for nature and man is responsible for creating imitations with his hands and words.[227] The division of tasks between God and man is central in aesthetic theory and the artist is consequently an in-between figure in the aesthetics of production: half God, half man. Aristotle proposes further on two different kinds of artists: the one working with imitation, and the one working with crafts. The latter is, in his material practice, too close to slaves and too far from the purer occupation with eternal ideas:

> (Any task, craft, or branch of learning should be considered vulgar if it renders the body or mind of free people useless for the practices and activities of virtue. That is why the crafts that put the body into a worse condition and work done for wages are called vulgar; for they debase the mind and deprive it of LEISURE.)[228]

The opposition between free thought and waged crafts has haunted the concept of aesthetics since Aristotle. Bodily involvement in production is condemned as vulgar. Aristotle leaves an affect of disgust towards physical work, the identification with workers, and also towards the need to be paid in money, which to Aristotle only resembles slavery and prostitution. In that respect, Aristotle founds idealism in the aesthetics of production: that it relates to pure imitation. Far away from sweating bodies demanding money for work, the artist produces leisure.

In Plato and Aristotle's definitions of the artist, social divisions are central. The artist is already an exception, something other and freer than the enslaved workers, the *barnausoi*. Obviously, the definition of the artist here is grounded in the Athenian *polis* where the concept of the people excluded children, women and slaves. The artist was a part of the free men in the *polis*, dependent on necessary, enslaved work. Another founding feature is that of artists distancing themselves from

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[227] Cf. "Production/Poesis" in *Ästhetische Grundbegriffe* (2010), 43.
[228] Aristotle, *Politics*, transl. D.C.D. Reeve, (Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1998), 1337b6–13, 228, http://my.ilstu.edu/~jkshapi/Aristotle%20-%20Politics.pdf

earning money for their work. "Activities of virtue" of "free people" do not engage with money, as Aristotle states above, and do not demand much physical involvement. It is this distinction between ideal work in the *polis* and necessary work in the *oikos* that Hannah Arendt later discloses as problematic in her reading of Marx's concept of work.

In Kantian aesthetics the free production is the act of imagination. The faculty of imagination is activated when making art, as is the faculty of reason in science. Similar to Aristotle, Kant continues to reserve a certain exclusivity to aesthetic production as something opposed to crafts: art must be free, not waged. Kant introduces the idea of art as *play* (Ger. *freies Spiel*) which later becomes fundamental for both Friedrich Schlegel and Friedrich Schiller's concepts of artistic autonomy as something opposed to labour. [229]

Despite the continuous disgust towards crafts and economic dependency, Kant states that it is impossible to think of the concepts of freedom and play completely liberated from coercion:

> *Art* also differs from *handicraft*; the first is called *free*, the other may be called mercenary. We regard the first as if it could only prove purposive as play, *i.e.* as occupation that is pleasant in itself. But the second is regarded as if it could only be compulsorily imposed upon one as work, *i.e.* as occupation which is unpleasant (a trouble) in itself, and which is only attractive on account of its effect (*e.g.* the wage).
>
> (…)
>
> But it is not inexpedient to recall that in all free arts there is yet requisite something compulsory, (…) which must be free in art and which alone inspires the work, would have no body and would evaporate altogether; (…) for many modern educators believe that the best way to produce a free art is to remove it from all constraint, and thus to change it from work into mere play.[230]

The aesthetics of production is located in a body and not freed from all constraints. Although Kant continues the age-old disgust towards simple and physical production, there is a faint element of embodiment in his aesthetic theory. The artist genius, however, can neither locate the place where his

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[229] Professor in Literature Anja Lemke proposes that Schiller's concept of artistic autonomy provides the recipe for self-managing subjectivation in the society of control. Schiller's 'play' is exemplified by Walz in which the dancer is allowed to do anything but stop dancing. Similarly, according to Lemke, creative freedom has become an entrepreneurial virtue in the Deleuzian society of control where working on the self is limitless.
Cf. Anja Lemke, "Ästhetische Erziehung asl Arbeit am Selbst. Schillers Bildungsprogramm aus der Perspektive postfordistischer Kontrollgesellschaft," in *Experimentalanordnungen der Bildung*, edited by Thomas Glaser and Bettine Menke, 131-145. Uni Erfurt, 2011.
[230] Kant, 1914 [1793], §43.3.

inspiration comes from, nor can he demonstrate his process: "Hence the author of a product for which he is indebted to his genius does not himself know how he has come by his Ideas"(§46.3).

The artist is Nature's favourite, writes Kant, a chosen, privileged being. The artist has the exceptional gift of being born a genius and his talent cannot be taught at school – that would only result in mechanical imitation. On the other hand, Kant notes, talent must be cultivated. Making art requires talent, but talent needs to be nourished and shaped:

> Now since the originality of the talent constitutes an essential (though not the only) element in the character of genius, shallow heads believe that they cannot better show themselves to be full-blown geniuses than by throwing off the constraint of all rules; they believe, in effect, that one could make a braver show on the back of a wild horse than on the back of a trained animal. Genius can only furnish rich *material* for products of beautiful art; its execution and its *form* require talent cultivated in the schools, in order to make such a use of this material as will stand examination by the Judgement. (§47)

While talent can be cultivated at school, Kant cautions against all kinds of failing performances by 'wannabe' artists. The artist genius creates exemplary models, not just original nonsense (§46). It is easy to recognise the difference between the artist genius and "the good heads at school" who only provide "mere *aping*" when they copy the art of the genius in details (§49). Another wannabe artist is the mannerist who presents their art in embarrassing, theatrical ways (§49). Kant does describe how the artist is produced using their imagination but he also excludes other ways of creating through imitation and training, and not least, recognisable characters within a school who are not gifted by nature and do things wrong.

Including what was Excluded

Through extrapolating how pure and ideal imagination operates, the Kantian concept of the artist genius excludes interests, rationality, social relations, working conditions and economic dependency from artistic creation. It draws on Western traditions of distinguishing the artist from other human beings, and positioning the artist as a second god, a chosen one, Nature's favourite. The exclusivity of the artist is the base for an individualised and bourgeois subject: without class and gender, 'beyond' power relations, colonial hierarchies and exploitation. The history of aesthetic theory keeps repeating how the artist needs to be isolated – whether in nature, or in their studio – from the disturbing reality as if dependency only corrupts the otherwise pure channelling of truth. Methodologically, Kant defines

artistic production from what it is not, through the technique of exclusion. Besides the explicit disturbances such as the need for money, mechanical reproduction, circumstances hindering freedom, a lot of other conditions within the production of art are simply not mentioned. Reproductive work – pregnancy, giving birth, taking care of children, the elderly and family members who are ill – is completely absent, as is regenerative work – sleep, exercise – and relational and affective work such as dealing with conflicts with colleagues, collaborators and customers.

The absence of reproductive, regenerative and affective work is obviously a Western tradition from the ancient *polis* where children and women had no access. These invisibilised social forms of work are not considered as part of what co-produces artistic creation. These invisibilised social forms of work are deemed irrelevant through the ideological construction of 'production through freedom'. Yet, based on an expanded notion of work developed within feminist theory and performance art since the 1960s, a theory on materialist aesthetics of production must include these kinds of demanding work within the category of the artist's sociality, because freedom is an illusory condition. Freedom from social dependency proposes a privileged and isolated (male) subject. The claim that the artist can be free implies that somebody else will take care of the reproductive, necessary and bodily work, and that money and time is at their disposition.

Recently, feminist and critic Katrine Kielos rephrased the Marxist feminist conception of work by pointing towards the pattern of invisibilisation of domestic labour in 'liberal thinking' in Western philosophy in her book *Who Cooked Adam Smith's Dinner?* (2012). Her proposal is to shift focus from Adam Smith, the founder of economic liberalism driven by self-interest, to his mother who cooked his dinners and washed his clothes while he wrote about how markets are regulated by the 'invisible hand'. Consequently, Kielos adds an 'invisible heart' to Smith's philosophy of modern economics.

Thinking with Kielos and the tradition of Marxist feminism, it is interesting to continue the investigation of who or what is not included in central models within Western philosophy. Smith and Kant, the founding theoretical fathers of the figures prominent in their time, *homo economicus* and *the artist genius,* share both historical context and partly also moral philosophy.[231] Both exclude femininised work from their models of production. Meanwhile, on a deserted island, the fictional character Robinson Crusoe milks his goats, hunts, prays and sleeps while keeping an account of his work. Through this idiosyncratic comparison of a British moral philosopher, a German philosopher of (moral) aesthetics, and a character from the British novel of 1719, I propose that the philosophical

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[231] According to professor Mark D. White, Department of Philosophy at the College of Staten Island/CUNY, Kant's moral philosophy was influenced by Smith's distinction between benevolence and self-interest. See Mark D. White "Adam Smith and Immanuel Kant: On Markets, Duties, and Moral Sentiments," *Forum for Social Economics* 39(1), (Springer 2010): 53–60.

tradition of invisibilisation, exclusion and ignorance of what is traditionally ascribed as women's work could have been thought differently by the end of the 18th Century when Smith wrote his *Wealth of Nations* (1776) and Kant wrote *Critique of Judgement* (1790). However, the crucial problem of the consequent invisibilisation through the ideologies of freedom and purity is the repetition ever after. The canonisation of idealist aesthetics of production has excluded so-called women's work.

It was only two centuries later that the invisibilised work becomes visible through the actions and writings of second wave feminists in the 1960s and 1970s. Feminist artworks, however, have reorganised the hidden hours of work from background maintenance to maintenance as centre piece when portraying the artist as a mother, the artist as a domestic worker, or the artist as a waitress. Rather than mourning the inability to be an artist genius, isolated, solitary and with plenty of time, feminist performance artists have included what has hitherto been excluded from the understanding of artistic production: they make art with and about what is traditionally conceived as disturbances, that is, children, breaks, bodily fluids, money, vacuum cleaners, kitchen tools, friends, parents etc. Thereby they recategorise the artist as dependent instead of independent and show that even the most 'immaterial' work with conceptual art or performance art is deeply material in its production.

The Artist as Working Genius

The notion of the artist as a worker is a Marxist figure rooted in material conditions and dependencies of everyday life. On the one hand, this has led to understanding the artist as part of a greater and solidary community of workers with similar rights and fights. But on the other hand, the artist-as-worker figure has within the post-Fordist context, in my regard, also led to a nostalgic figure of the artist as worker, who used to be a genius. Somehow, despite very specific and critical readings of the increasingly precarious working conditions, the ideology of the artist genius seems to survive in our historical present.

According to Bojana Kunst, "the artist is losing the essence of their work: autonomy" under the increasingly bad conditions within infrastructures of artistic production as well as in educational programmes.[232] Kunst writes how capitalism on the one hand appropriates artists' ways of living, and exploits and profits from their creativity, but at the same time withholds any gain from artists as producers.[233] When mourning the loss of autonomy, Kunst argues that under capitalism, art is still produced in the same way, i.e. through the "essence" autonomy, but perceived and exploited differently. I agree with Kunst that there is a predisposition to highly value artistic work in capitalism at

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[232] Kunst 2015, 150.

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the same time as not returning much value to the artists themselves. For Kunst, autonomy is lost when artists start measuring and justifying themselves as they do in higher artistic education.[234] But I doubt whether artists historically have ever had greater autonomy, which they have now lost. Rather, I propose to think about how artists are always-already dependent and how the dependencies change historically. My proposal of starting from dependency instead of autonomy is a philosophical one, similar to departing from precarity instead of capacity, as already discussed. Starting from dependency and even interdependency is a way to unsubscribe from the Kantian promise of artistic freedom and commence from what we do *not* have, as common ground.

Similar to Kunst's mourning of a lost autonomy, Jan Verwoert, professor at the Oslo National Academy of the Arts, describes a temporality of work within the arts, where contemplation is lost: the projective temporality and market-dictated flexibility of touring and residency-based artists today damages the quality of the artistic product. There is a lack of contemplation:

> (...) they travel from project to project and tackle issue after issue that all they can possibly do when they are invited to contribute to a show or conference is to hastily gather some available information and stitch it together around some more or less witty ideas.[235]

In Verwoert's description of artistic project work there is a blame on mobility as the contemporary disturbance of contemplative production. The sentiment of his diagnosis corresponds with contemporary cultural analyses by speed theorists of acceleration and loss of contemplation in capitalism. I wonder if there has ever been a time where the artist genius was not disturbed in their contemplation by either time-pressure, lack of money, forced mobility, political interests or social duties? I suggest that instead of thinking from a loss of contemplation – which I immediately recognise as a fair diagnosis – it should be possible to think of the temporality of work as always-already disturbed.

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[234] Cf. Kunst suggests in a footnote the following thesis on the imperative measurement and transparency in higher artistic education: "The more central creativity is in production, the more it is reduced, disciplined and regulated. Today, it is especially evident in the numerous higher education reforms: a socalled knowledge-based society develops countless mechanisms by means of which creativity is regulated and made to fit transparent 'moulds,' whose effectiveness must be open to verification at any given moment."Footnote 186 (Kunst 2015, 212). Her diagnosis is – as is the diagnosis by philosopher Gerald Raunig presented in part one of the dissertation – solely negative towards what 'comes out' of a, at a first glance, quantifying and standardising reform like Bologna.

[235] Jan Verwoert, "School's Out!?," in *Notes for an Art School*, edited by EIDahab, Mai Abu, Anton Vidokle and Florian Waldvogel (New York/ Berlin: International Foundation Manifesta, 2006), 4.

To me, there is a *ressentiment* at stake in some of the contemporary portraits of the artist as worker: affects of loss of time, loss of autonomy and loss of continuity. Although there are structural changes and austerity policies which very concretely demands the artist to spend time on recording, documentation and administration instead of making art, this way of articulating a loss also presupposes that for the artist there was a time when the temporality and pace of work was different – that earlier, the artist was not bothered by economic worries, nor social responsibility or time-pressure. *Ressentiment* has two problems: first, the subject of *ressentiment* might be more attentive to and invested in their own injuries and sufferings than in the overcoming of the common structural challenges.[236] Second, and more important, the analysis of the contemporary artist worker often also contains a nostalgic echo of an era where artistic production was free from all constraints. Nostalgia is a longing to go back to a lost 'normality' of 'the old days'. But which 'normality' has been lost? Who had the privilege of that 'normality'? A longing for a time lost is also a longing for a time where privileges were not confronted with class, gender, with migration and decolonial critique in the way they are currently: a lost white, colonial patriarchy in European welfare states or in the former East.

Despite Verwoert and Kunst's pivotal diagnoses and critiques of contemporary work abbreviated from the artist as an exhausted role model working 24/7 with no rights, the inherent nostalgia in the theories risk leaving thinkers and artists more attached to their marginalised Left critique than to the possibility of social change.[237]And further on, sentiments of loss here presume that actually, artistic production needs structural freedom. I will not argue that this is wrong but rather point towards the continuation of a Kantian premise. The artist is a genius at work, unfortunately living in structural precarity.

Kunst and Verwoert are imbued with sentiments of loss – of time and sociality respectively, and of contemplation in the production – within contemporary capitalism. The sentiments are similar to many Marxist and left-wing analyses of the production conditions of historically situated artists, where either nostalgia, longing for the past, or utopia, imagining the future, fuel the critique. In the curious text *The Soul of the Artist* from 1891, the author and playwright Oscar Wilde reflects on the social relations and material conditions of production as decisive in the realisation of art. He writes that only the extremely exceptional artist is able to live and work in isolation:

Now and then, in the course of the century, a great man of science, like Darwin; a great poet, like Keats; a fine critical spirit, like M. Renan; a supreme artist, like Flaubert, has

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[236] Kathi Weeks ascribes this kind of critique of *ressentiment* to a feminst position in the 1990s personalised in Wendy Brown's critique of anti-utopian feminism, Cf. Weeks 2011, 185.
[237] Ibid.

been able to isolate himself, to keep himself out of reach of the clamorous claims of others, to stand 'under the shelter of the wall,' as Plato puts it, and so to realise the perfection of what was in him, to his own incomparable gain, and to the incomparable and lasting gain of the whole world. These, however, are exceptions.[238]

In Wilde's Socialist utopian aesthetics, there is a regret that the production conditions, the economic and social circumstances, are hindrances for most artists. Most artists cannot create out of nothing as could the "supreme" author Gustave Flaubert, writes Wilde, rather they need economic and structural support, and this is what Socialism should provide. Although Wilde regrets the mostly disadvantaged conditions of artists, he believes in the ideal of the autonomous and lonely artist genius to be realised as soon as Socialism is implemented. Surprisingly, despite the historical materialist recognition of how circumstances determine artistic possibilities, Wilde signs up for utopia and promotes the romantic idea of isolation as the best condition for artistic practice: "But alone, without any reference to his neighbours, without any interference, the artist can fashion a beautiful thing; and if he does not do it solely for his own pleasure, he is not an artist at all."[239] In other words, it seems that Wilde only needs materialism to explain the aesthetics of production *before* the coming revolution. When first the revolution has set the (male) artist free, he will produce independently and in ideal isolation. Art is an "intense form of Individualism",[240] Wilde continues, and thereby repeats the myth of the artist as an exception who deserves exclusive freedom.

Materialism as Demystification

My suggestion is that artistic creation is a product of its historical context, of the specific production conditions and not only, as Kant proposed, a channelling of a nature-given talent into original artworks. From this suggestion, I insist on conceptualising the aesthetics of production by departing from the historical constraints, dependencies and disturbances. Instead of diagnosing our present time as an era where autonomy and contemplation are lost (which indeed they are now), I propose that in any historical context the artistic production is shaped by particular dependencies. The proposal of departing from materialist dependencies is a proposal of methodological attentiveness towards situatedness as opposed to immediate diagnoses of loss of privilege.

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[238] Oscar Wilde, *The Soul of Man under Socialism*, (1891), 1, https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/wilde-oscar/soul-man/
[239] Wilde 1891, 13.
[240] Ibid.

To me, it seems crucial for the self-understanding of young artists in particular, to learn to acknowledge their personal and structural co-creation with and dependency on family, colleagues, money and time, at the start of their education in order not to suffer from the mystifying 'romance with work', where isolation in the studio (or in the woods) provides the ultimate twosomeness with art.[241] Kathi Weeks has proposed to demystify a contemporary romance with unpaid and exhausting, passionate work by learning from the alienation proposed by second wave feminists:

> There are at least four ways that feminists understood romantic love and happiness as an ideological phenomenon: as propaganda, as mystification, as depoliticization, and as subjectification.[242]

When reading the Kantian artist genius together with feminist theory, a politicisation of the ideological construction takes place: how did the artist become so mystified and who works in the grey-zones of their mystified romance with work? How can we read the artist genius, as proposed by Kant and reiterated in contemporary promotions of the artist as autonomous soloist, as an ideological phenomenon? As propaganda of a gendered freedom, as mystification of everyday relations and economic dependencies, as depoliticisation of privileges, as subjectification of individualists? Who and what was excluded from the concept of the artist genius?

Second wave feminist Shulamith Firestone rhetorically asks what women have been doing while men became great artists in her canonical book *The Dialectic of Sex* (1970):

> The tired question 'What were women doing while men created masterpieces?' deserves more than the obvious reply: women were barred from culture, exploited in their role of mother. Or its reverse: women had no need for paintings since they created children. Love is tied to culture in much deeper ways than that. Men were thinking, writing, and creating, because women were pouring their energy into them; women are not creating culture because they are preoccupied with love.[243]

Firestone is here both cementing and also deflating is the fact that, as I argued in the chapter on work and Federici's interest in unrecognised work, women have been busy with invisibilised domestic, affective, reproductive work. Firestone chooses to stress that women have no natural call for love.

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[241] Kathi Weeks writes about a romanticised relation with work in Weeks 2017.
[242] Weeks 2017, 42.
[243] Shulamith Firestone, *The Dialectic of Sex* (London: Verso, 2015 [1970]).

Love is a construction, mystified like the natural talent of the artist, which makes it alright not to be paid for it. Demystifying love and passion, taking apart the ideological construction that makes some individuals freer and excludes others, is done by recalling the material and historical conditions of work. Similarly, as opposed to the loss of time of the independent artist, Ukeles showed us that there is "no fucking time" when work is conceived as maintenance.

Umfunktionierung

The interest in and theorising of the aesthetics of production have increased in recent years, as already contextualised at the beginning of this chapter. Historically, one of the most central texts is, in my view, Walter Benjamin's *The Author as Producer* (1934). Similarly to my writing in the context of the financial crisis in 2007-08, Benjamin writes during the Great Depression of the 20th Century. His ambition is to pay attention to the material circumstances of artistic production and also the performativity – he did not employ this word, but would probably refer to transformability (Ger. *Änderbarkeit*) as did Bertolt Brecht - within these conditions.[244]

Benjamin links the attention on the aesthetics of reception to the aesthetics of production when he insists that artists who understand themselves as political – those who fight on the side of the proletariat against capitalism – must "never merely work on products but always, at the same time, work on the means of production". [245] The artist and writer cannot just provide political messages and content in their writing – this is counter-revolutionary[246]– but must identify as a producer who is able to change how art is made. Benjamin is deeply inspired by the Russian Socialist writer Sergei Tretiakov's distinction between the informing writer and the operating writer.[247] Later in *The Author as Producer*, when referring to Bertolt Brecht's epic theatre, Benjamin himself distinguishes between representation and organisation within the artwork. The importance of operation within and organisation of the means of production is that it is a solidary act. The solidarity with colleagues starts when the means of production and the individual specialisation are shared. Today, we could reformulate Benjamin's concepts of operation and organisation as an insistence on an open source of techniques, skills and resources: not as a mere way of sharing but also as a way of showing each other how to change the apparatus. Benjamin refers to Brecht's notion of "*umfunktionierung* [functional transformation]"[248] which

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[244] It would absolutely be worth a further historical comparison of materialist aesthetic theory produced during economic low conjuncture in the beginning of the 20th and 21st Century, respectively.

[245] Walter Benjamin, "The Author as Producer," in *Selected Writings 1931–1934*, Bd. 2, vol. 2 (Cambridge: The Harvard University Press, 1999), 777.

[246] Ibid, 772.

[247] Tretiakov has a very concrete notion of the artist as a worker: He defines the writer as a word-worker. In the Russian *avant garde* the materials of the artists are aligned to wood, steel, and metal. Cf. *Ästhetische Grundbegriffe* 2010, 69.

[248] Benjamin 1999, 774.

I think is a really productive and powerful category: the transformation of the production conditions in solidarity with other producers.

In my case studies I write about how art students, *alumnae* and professional performance artists transform their production conditions – the temporality of work, the sociality when producing, the individualised authorship – to their own advantage and the advantage of peer artists. Infrastructural performance and feminist acts of inclusion can be understood as *umfunktionierung* of the contemporary production conditions, reorganisation of time, sociality, and economy. I will return to how *umfuntionierung* can happen on several levels after a few words on what Benjamin proposes to transform: technique.

An interesting concept within Benjamin's essay is the concept of "*technique* of works".[249] When Benjamin employs the word "technique" it is to be understood as concrete techniques of production: print, reproduction, recording etc. He writes about how genres change due to historical development of techniques: that the novel belongs to a certain era and might not exist forever. He proposes that literary genres are products of their historical contexts and the techniques at hand. Naming his analysis explicitly materialist,[250] he aligns himself to the tradition of Marx and Hegel, insisting that there are neither transcendent categories, nor eternal forms within art.

Marx writes about how subjectivation happens through work in his pre-study of *Capital, Results of the Immediate Process of Production* (1863–66). He here spells out how detachment from work is different depending on how much one can distance oneself from one's profession. As an example he writes how the production of non-material art is inseparable from its production and thereby also from its producer: work and subjection go hand in hand. Following Benjamin's insistence on the materialist analysis of the techniques of artistic production, technologies of the self within artistic production also change according to historical context. With new ways of working, new ways of becoming a subject develop. The techniques are not eternal, nor are the technologies. In other words, to follow up on my argument of the artist as a product of other circumstances,[251] there is no such category as a transcendent artist genius, but only historical versions of how the artist works according to their given production conditions.

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[249] Ibid, 770.

[250] Ibid.

[251] *A Product of Other Circumstances* is the title of a performance by Xavier Le Roi from 2009 where he presents what came out of a choreographic study of Butoh limited by time and money. Le Roi exposes that his work is produced with ridiculously limited time and money and therefore is informed by quick internet research. Despite the exposure of his poverty in production, Le Roi actually creates quite a virtuoso performance that has toured successfully for a decade. His work, being easy to take on tour with no set and an appropriate one-hour long show, could be criticised for being counter-revolutionary and "cosily accommodated in an uncosy situation"(Benjamin 1999, 776) in the sense of Benjamin's critique: informing on the scarce means of production but not re-organising the apparatus.

Umfuntionierung means, for Benjamin, a transformation and reorganisation of the techniques regarding the form and genre of the artwork. I propose throughout my case studies that art students, *alumnae* and professional artists transform their production conditions to their own advantage and the advantage of peers and colleagues. But I would also like to propose that a transformation of the technologies of the self is possible: technologies of the self within neoliberal work – self-management, numeric accountancy, increasing competition, individualisation, economisation of time – can be reorganised, *umfunktioniert*, into solidarity acts of inclusion and redistribution of time, sociality and economy. *Umfuntionierung* on the level of technologies of the self makes the transformation relevant for more than just artists. If students and artists make visible how to change patterns of subjectivation within contemporary work culture, the functional transformation becomes a strategy for all: how to install time for regeneration, how to make invisibilised and romanticised working hours count, how to include children in one's life, how to reorganise the artistic signature, how to redistribute financial support beyond nations, how to stay on the spot when forced to be flexible, and establish a continuous sociality at work.

Consequences: No genius, a Historical Context, and *Umfunktionierung*

When forming a theory on a materialist aesthetics of production, main figures are resettling: first, the role of the artist as a worker rather than a genius. This artist as a worker has been formulated in Marxist and feminist theory throughout the 20th Century, but the romantic myth of the lonely genius is still very active within many of these theories: it often echoes a loss of time, a loss of autonomy, which presumes that there is a 'before' where the artist (genius) had plenty of time, no restrictions, a steady economy, and no disturbing relations. According to my theory on a materialist aesthetics of production, the artist is never autonomous, neither temporally, socially, or economically, but always-already dependent on their historical context – in times of high conjunctures in cultural policy, in times of royal patronage, in times of structural precarity as well as after a potential socialist revolution.

The second consequence of a materialist aesthetics of production is that we become qualified to analyse and understand the artist as a product of their specific historical context rather than a transcendental model of creativity. Specifically, the artist as a situated individual can inform Cultural Studies and Performance Studies about particular temporalities, economies and socialities in a historical, political and geographical context.

My materialist analysis provides a heightened sensibility towards, and vocabulary for, the shift in the understanding of artistic works produced within the last decade, where I argue that not just the aesthetics of reception has been changed, but moreover, a reorganisation of production conditions

has been seen. Here, the content and form of the artwork should not only be an informing matter that tells us something about its historical context and the (poor) production conditions under which the artwork came into being, but can potentially also transform the organisation of time, sociality and economy within the production conditions so that others can copy, get inspired, take part. This transformation of the working conditions, brought about by art students, *alumna*e and professional performance artists, is a *unfunktionierung* of contemporary technologies of work. *Umfunktionierung* works on the inherent performativity in the infrastructures of art. When students and artists transform the ways in which their lives are organised by work, it is an act of solidarity where colleagues, audiences and other workers can start to get inspired – or disagree - and take part in change.

In recent years, new materialist theory – represented by Isabelle Stengers amongst others and also lately Bojana Kunst – have reanimated the vocabulary of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari on micropolitics[252]: to think with everyday transformations and agencies rather than in macropolitics, i.e. in changes made in representative democracy. It would be obvious to subscribe my materialist theory to a plaidoyer for micropolitics, thinking about how art students and performance art collectives reorganise their everyday production. However, instead of operating in the reversing hierarchy between micro and macro, I propose to refocus the analysis of political art from the level of reception to the level of production. The political in art has in poststructuralist analysis been theorised as a change of interest from the 'what' to the 'how', from the content of the artwork to the artistic *form* that interrupts dominating ways of sensing the world. I suggest we look at the 'how' behind the scenes, off-stage. To politicise the production is to focus on how art can be organising the social, the temporal and the economic, and not just the distribution of the sensible within the arts. My manoeuvre simultaneously enlarges what we can perceive as the sensible – beyond the apparent structures of what we see and hear in an aesthetic experience, and into the political infrastructures of how we can appear, live and move. This changes analytical questions and critiques from the representative into the performative, from – as Tretiakov would say – information to operation: from the negotiation of 'how' in the textuality

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[252] Deleuze and Guattari propose to look at operations in literature – specifically departing from Kafka's beetle-being Gregor Samsa in *The Metamorphosis* - on a 'minor key' in their book *Kafka – Pour une literature mineure* from 1975. This is a literature that operates politically from the position of being othered, becoming animal, and the minor literature has an inherent collective, revolutionary utopia. Isabelle Stengers continues the thinking of micropolitics, proposing an 'ecology of practices' by departing from the situatedness of practice: "An ecology of practices may be an instance of what Gilles Deleuze called 'thinking par le milieu', using the French double meaning of milieu, both the middle and the surroundings or habitat," Isabelle Stengers, "Introductory notes on an ecology of practices," *Cultural Studies Review,* vol. 11, no. 1 (2005), 187. Bojana Kunst continues on the concept of an ecology of practices when she in her lecture "Practice as Condition of Dramaturgy: on Efflorescent Time of Care and Work" at the conference *[Obscene] Dramaturgie als Praxis de (Un)Sichtbarmachens*, Zürcher Hochschule der Künste (ZHdK) on 3 September 2019. Kunst argued that dramaturgy can be seen as a relational practice and that its quality is exactly to move in the invisibilised spheres of relational work, which can be positively connotated as working on a 'minor key' instead of wanting to be forefronted, central and loud, in a competitive mode with the traditional director.

perceived by an audience, the 'who speaks' within the art product is negotiated[253], to 'what does' the artistic production on the socio-economic level, or 'what is produced' in the means of production, in – as the new materialists would say, and rightly so – a greater ecology. Thinking of artistic production in a greater ecology is to address the collective production of value in a greater economy, in a greater temporality, in a greater sociality. It is to 'return' artistic production to its circumstances, to claim that artistic production is a co-producer of its circumstances.

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[253] The question of 'who speaks' was the focus point in my master thesis in 2009, *Was spricht da? Irriterende Stemmeføring i Virkeligheden.* (Copenhagen: The University of Copenhagen 2009). I addressed amongst others how authorship was mocked and negotiated in the 'inter-cultural' performance *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* by Jérome Bel (2001). I witnessed my analyses to the bodily and textual negotiations of being a subject happening repeatedly in the performance on stage, in the aesthetics of reception, not in the budgets or credits lists (which were also not artistically worked on as material).

ARTICLE IV

Working by the Numbers

Performance Art Short on Time Proposes a Materialist Aesthetics of Production[254]

Abstract

In this article I want to show how the performance artists Florian Feigl and Fjóla Gautadóttir engage with production conditions of artistic work through their ways of managing time in performances. Informed by Marxist and feminist theories on affective and reproductive work, I demonstrate how, contrary to myths of inspiration and virtuosity, production conditions co-organise artistic authorship. Thereby, I propose a materialist reexamination of what traditionally is termed as the aesthetics of production. An aesthetics of production is, I propose, not about natural talent and originality of the soloist artist genius, but is founded on the inseparability of life and work, and what enables the artist to do work. Feigl and Gautadóttir's performances include what has been excluded as disturbances by idealist aesthetics of production: the sociality, temporality and economy of the artistic work. By proposing a materialist aesthetics of production, I claim that the artist's work is not only working by the numbers of the present production conditions, but is also performing and intervening within the infrastructures of art.

In the performance-for-video series *300* (2009–) the German performance artist Florian Feigl is doing one thing for 300 seconds, or five minutes, as performance: washing his hands for five minutes, sweeping the floor with a broom for five minutes, walking down a road for five minutes, fighting with furniture for five minutes, playing chess with his children for five minutes. *300* is a collection of time-limited artistic, bureaucratic and domestic work that has been equated on a horizontal, accumulative line since 2009. The form of the series exposes the modularisation of everyday activities of the artist as a father.

In the Icelandic performance artist Fjóla Gautadóttir's work, the rhythmised life of the student is exposed: she documents and measures her private life to the extreme in *The Masturbation Log* (2018). Raised within the economisation of artistic study through the Bologna Process, Gautadóttir has learned to record life as work, and she both exercises and comments on this demand when accumulating the seemingly 'free' act of masturbation in a numeric account: "Third time today", "Real quick before school", or "Masturbated for three minutes".[255]

Both artists make an issue out of the measurement of time within the parasitic relationship between life and work. The artistic forms, the five-minute series and the log book portray and reproduce a numeric and accumulative temporality of work. The temporality and rhythm in which the artworks are produced shape the distribution of time within the artwork itself. Both works are thereby determined by and contributing to a materialist aesthetics of production. But in which ways do Feigl and Gautadóttir reproduce measuring standards of production as a critique of gendered and capitalised work time? Rather than proposing a division of life and work, or 'rescuing' life time from work time, both artists demonstrate how the life of the performance artist is subjected to the technologies of contemporary work: technologies of self-publication, value-production and measurement of time.

In the following, I will argue that Feigl and Gautadóttir's works are demonstrating how the organisation of time plays a measuring and occupational role in their artistic practices and in the life of an artist. Both works show how the temporality of production predetermines both ways of living as an artist and the form of the artwork, both subjectivity and aesthetics. Pending between performance analysis of the works of Feigl and Gautadóttir, and Marxist feminist theories on affective and reproductive work, I suggest that, contrary to myths of inspiration and originality, production conditions co-create artistic authorship.

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[255] Fjóla Gautadóttir, *The Masturbation Log* (Berlin: 2018)*,* 8, 12, 41.

A Time of One's Own

The inseparability of performance art and the life of the performance artist has been historically manifested in blood, hair, cum, physical pain and time since the 1960s. Thinking about canonical durational works in performance art history such as the Taiwanese conceptual body-artist Tehching Hsieh's five separate one-year-long performances, or the meticulous, time-consuming writing practice of diaries and schedules by conceptual artist Hanne Darboven, it is clear that doing art is happening while living life. The strictly timed and embodied *One Year Performances* of Hsieh – taking a photo every hour or being tied to the performance art colleague Linda Montana for a whole year – put the artist's social subjectivity at the centre of the art work: he is subjected to the rules and scores he made up for himself, of hourly clocking in and out of work by means of self-documentation. Similarly, Darboven devotes her life to a daily practice of noting down everything she experiences following the strategy of "writing without describing" in her *Pocket Calendar 1966–2009*: "read Brecht", "Mom called", "Guggenheim" or "didn't take Bruno's apartment." [256] Close to being compulsive in her writing practice, she puts her life into schemes, as she would put music into composition, accounting for her life and work. Both artists are definitely in the conceptual and 'dry' end of the performance art spectrum and their materials are more photos, paper, calendars and ink than blood or cum. Their works put on display "figurations of temporality through system and seriality"[257] and exercise an obsessive, austerely timed recording of life in and as art. They perform a kind of aesthetics of (self-) administration: the works are full of numeric accounts, working by the numbers as something that can be read both as critique of a standardisation and over-measuring of work and as a driving force, a self-chosen rhythm of their practices.

Working by the numbers, the title of this article, means to follow the instructions given with the greatest accuracy. Etymologically the expression stems from strict military formation in the American Revolutionary War where soldiers were trained to follow a protocol of positions for their rifles, position by position, numbered in order. Working by the numbers means thereby following a strict routine in relation to materials at hand and to the clock. To be working by the numbers is to follow a schedule instead of being autonomous.

For each five-minute performance in *300* Feigl does one thing. He washes his hands until the soap disappears: five minutes are over. He lets his glasses defog for five minutes. He licks a

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[256] Hanne Darboven, *Enlightenment – Time Histories. A Retrospective*. Edited by Okwui Enwezor and Rein Wolfs (Munic: Prestel Verlag, 2015), 56.

[257] Adrian Heathfield, *Out of Now. The Lifeworks of Teching* Hsieh (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2009), 14. Professor of Performance and Visual Culture Adrian Heathfield makes a connection between the works of Hsieh and Darboven's "systems of logic which strongly evoke lived duration and generate a slowdownwithin their time of reception." Heathfield 2009, 17.

children's bicycle for five minutes. He licks a saw for five minutes. Time is set by an egg timer. Most performances-for-video in *300* are performed and recorded live in an art space, and some outside in nature, or at the artist's home. The materials used in the performances are domestic objects: hand soap, a vacuum cleaner, dust, waste, soil, a broom, sugar, tea, butter, oysters, toast, a tea cup, a coffee grinder, wine glasses, a dinner table, a wash bowl, a wardrobe cabinet, an armchair, a saw, a hammer, nails, a pair of scissors, a sledgehammer, a children's bicycle, a toy magic wand, a television, a book, a rubber boat. Feigl takes everyday objects of family life and objects from the home into the art institution. Sometimes he even performs with his children in the living room or in their bedroom: unpacking birthday presents for five minutes, playing with chess pieces for five minutes, or delegating the performance to them, for example, when a baby is trying to unpack some wool in a plastic bag for five minutes.[258]

  With the many household objects, his performance series is somehow an extended encyclopaedia of Martha Rosler's canonical performance-for-video *Semiotics of the Kitchen* (1975). Rosler's performance was, similar to Feigl's, a reexamination and denaturalisation of the everyday objects of domestic life through excessive use and acoustic retuning. A similar performance-for-video format was explored by Rosler and feminist US artists around Womenhouse as an accessible media: it was easy and handy to operate and the performance could be repeated without the artist and mother being present. They recorded everyday life and domesticity as an artistic manifestation of the personal as political and the domestic relations as inseparable from the female artistic production.[259]

  Where the repertoire of affects in Rosler's kitchen performance span from passive-aggressive to explicitly aggressive, Feigl's attitude in his performances seems apathetic, pragmatic, functional, neither aggressive, nor joyous nor excited. Is this a special kind of male affect to execute work in a seemingly apathic manner? Similar to the indifferent gaze of Hsieh on the photograph taken hourly in *One Year Performance 1980–81*, Feigl has an attitude of executing an order, obeying a higher demand, almost compulsive. I think the reference to Hsieh's work is explicit in Feigl's work in the way he makes time both structure his practice as well as render time sensible through the expansion of the *now*, beyond the event, by doing very little for five minutes, repeatedly.[260]

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[258] Other categories are: objects related to *work* – a pencil and pencil sharpener – or the art institution: a pillar, a mirror, a blank page, paint, gold leaf. Performances with *audience members* sitting on Feigl or holding hands with him for five minutes. Explicit references are made to *time* passing: a shadow moving over Feigl in a backyard for five minutes or Feigl dipping his face in a bowl of water, the water being in motion and still again within five minutes.

[259] See the documentation of the first Womenhouse exhibition centred around the domestic spaces in 1972 on http://www.womanhouse.net/.

[260] Feigl also explicity refers the work with time as material by Hsieh in the performance lecture *Die Enzyklopädie der Performancekunst* by Wagner-Feigl-Forschung (2006).

What is most significant about *300* is the format of five minutes. Obviously, the format invites a meditation on time. The simplicity of doing one action, possibly in a repetitive manner, makes me think of the time spent planning the choreographic precision of the five minutes: five minutes of performance, and behind each five minutes, the time rehearsing and planning. For example, exactly how Feigl disappears out of the frame when walking away from the camera, down a road, for five minutes. The simplicity of the format and the few references lead the attention to what is outside the work of art: the temporality of Feigl's private life, the places he spends his life, the practices, interests and habits he has off stage, the social relations surrounding the production (family, friends, audiences, programmers). The (mostly) cheap material or found footage which appear as objects in performance art also here bear witness to the proximity between art and life. Aligning with conceptual performance art history, he implicitly refers to the serial, repetitive and durational performances by Hsieh, and his tongue-in-cheek way of naming the pieces in series sounds like Fluxus scores: *Lick pieces* or *Sound Pieces*.[261] However, just as Hsieh's *One Year Performances* were a way of both documenting, justifying and reappropriating life by an artist in exile *sans papiers*, Feigl's five minutes are also a reappropriation of stolen life. He finds the five minutes for himself, five minutes for being a performance artist, in a period where he is a fulltime parent:

> What makes a performance artist? For me the question was actually "did I move [away] from being a performance artist, which is was what I called myself, and now I am a father?" And these two things that exclude each other, thinking that what makes a performance artist, is his practice, like you do things; And continually doing things, you are a part of your artistic process. This became harder and harder at a certain time in my life, and in an act of self-defence, I thought there has to be something left: Five minutes a day! Beyond discussion. I cannot fight for it. This is something I need. I want this. And so, this was what I had out of that situation.[262]

The format of five-minute performance art per day departs from the time Feigl was working as a fulltime father at home with three children where he did not find time for longer rehearsal periods and artistic collaborations. The declaration "Five minutes of time one should be able to spare"[263] on his homepage, is, in that respect, not meant as the time the audience should be able to spare for him, but

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[261] Here I think of Yoko Ono's scored *Clock Pieces* and *Sky Pieces* in the book *Grapefruit* (1964).

[262] Florian Feigl in conversation with Cecilie Ullerup Schmidt, "Views on Dance 5.6.2013", video documentation https://vimeo.com/67818033, min 0:14:06–0:15:57.

[263] In the introductory text about *300* Feigl writes: "Five minutes of time one should be able to spare, and 5 minutes should suffice for literally everything. Five minutes cannot be too much to ask," https://www.florianfeigl.com/

that he himself and the social institution of the family should be able to spare five minutes for Feigl as an artist.

The title *300* in itself is numeric, consisting of three numbers. Three zero zero, or three hundred. It is a sum pointing towards the number of seconds within five minutes. It is the smallest division of time, a dissection of the precious time Feigl has on his own, practicing being a performance artist working on time. The format exposes the temporality of parental work as a fulltime occupation threatening Feigl's ability to be an artist. Two forms of unpaid or badly paid work – the domestic care work and independent artistic work – are competing for time in the life of the artist. Feigl invents an artistic format responding to the governing temporality in his life, which is the temporality of parenthood. The temporality of *300* is thereby political in two ways, first – in the tradition of feminist artists since the 1960s – by including unrecognised, necessary work as something central in the identity of a worker, and second, by proposing a too short format in the context of performance work which exposes how precarious time is in independent artistic practice.

The shortness of the performance contradicts traditional expectations and habits within the theatre institution. A theatre performance is expected to last between one and two and a half hours (including a break). As sociologist Eviatar Zerubavel has noted in his book *Hidden Rhythms* (1981), expectations of quantity (hours of entertainment, number of actors, volume of set design etc.) is normatively set to match the price of the ticket.[264] Feigl's work ponders on the contexts of theatre institutions, fine art galleries and museums and therefore, the format of five minutes is a conceptually strong inquiry of the production of value of time, rather than a consequence of cheap ticketing. In fact, the seriality of the five minutes is potentially creating its own parallel economy: one could become a collector of these small performance-for-video units and classify them in themes. There is a certain financial logic in the material, a futurity, and a not-yet reached sum of accumulation: the promised complete collection of 300 times 300 seconds is a congregation of Feigl's work over many years. It is a collection of hours spent in his life. And the accumulation of spent lifetime produces value in itself.

Summing up, Feigl's work *300* is both subjected to and explores what time there is between the social institutions of the family and the art world, between the interests of the performance artist as a worker, as a father, as a producer. Feigl's personal experience of time is torn apart, modularised into units of institutional interests. Through the series of *300* he both establishes a stretched temporality beyond economisation and institutionalisation, and at the same time he accumulates his own personal temporal capital as an artist.

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[264]Eviatar Zerubavel, *Hidden Rhythms* (Berkley, Los Angelses, London: University of California Press, 1981), 6.

The Aesthetics of Non-material Production

Karl Marx proposes in *Results of the Immediate Process of Production* (1863–66), a pre-study of *Capital*, a division of unproductive and productive labour.[265] Productive labour produces immediate surplus value and objectifies itself in concrete commodities. As opposed to this, unproductive labour is the work of the singer, the teacher, and the writer, Marx writes, as long as they do not produce explicit commodities. Similarly, he also promotes the idea of "non-material production", the making of non-material products to be consumed, which is the work of service workers. Non-material production can be divided into two categories. First, there is the non-material production that results in "commodities, e.g., books, paintings and all products of art as distinct from the artistic achievement of the practising artist", and second, there is the non-material production where "(t)he product is not separable from the act of producing".[266] The second category of non-material production does not function well in capitalist accumulation, according to Marx, since it cannot be delegated, passed on or resold. Marx gives an example: "I want the doctor and not his errand boy."[267] The doctor is not producing his knowledge in one space and then selling it as a product for the market somewhere else. The doctor embodies his knowledge and cannot delegate his examinations of patients to unskilled helpers, nor can he ask somebody else to perform his personal style of confidence. The same goes for the teacher in the "learning factory" as Marx calls the school,[268] who can never become more than a wage-labourer since he never increases anybody else's wealth through delivering a product for circulation.

At first sight, the genre of performance art matches Marx's category of non-material production within unproductive labour as something that does not objectify, but remains ephemeral: an encounter, a show (Ger. *Aufführung*), an experience. As a genre, it is something that at first does not produce commodities. But within the last 10 years, we have seen very concrete objectifications of performance art with solo retrospective shows by Marina Abramović and Yoko Ono with reenactments, scores, documentation in photos and video, reliquial material traces from performances, and new objects made for exhibition and for sale. The commodification of immaterial work is theorised in post-Marxist literature and both cognitive and artistic work can today be said to be productive labour, objectified as something one can privatise and sell, redistribute and gain from.[269] Yet within

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[265] Marx writes about unproductive labour in the pre-study to *Capital*, "Results of the Immediate Process of Production" (1863-66), published post-mortem in German and Russian in 1933.

[266] Karl Marx "Results of the Immediate Process of Production" in *Capital*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1976), 1048.

[267] Ibid.

[268] Ibid.

[269] In recent years, Marxist scholars actualise the categories of unproductive labour and non-material production in the notion of *immaterial labour* and its close relative *virtuosic labour* which are both central to the analysis of contemporary artistic and academic practices. The notion of immaterial labour is promoted by Italian autonomists such as Antonio Negri, Michael Hardt, Maurizio Lazzarato and Paolo Virno.

performance art theory, Marx's twofold category of non-material-production is very useful in order to create theoretical and descriptive nuances between more commodifiable and – at first glance – less commodifiable artworks of so-called 'unproductive labour'. I am thinking about the traditional event of the unrepeatable ephemeral performance as ascribing to Marx's category of non-material labour, which cannot be separated from the act of producing. And I am thinking of the documentation within performance art – books, photographs, performance-for-video – as Marx's other category where the non-material production of performance art can be turned into commodities alongside paintings, sculptures, installations, which can circulate independently within the art market, separated from the artist's body.

I propose to define the two categories of non-material production as performance and post-performance respectively.[270] Performance is when the product is inseparable from the act of producing. Performance is the live event in the performance art work, the moment of *Aufführung* praised in Performance Studies as 'authentic' by Peggy Phelan (1993), and particular for the art form, by Erika Fischer-Lichte (2004). The performance is inseparable from the body and the lived temporality of the artist. Post-performance is the performance artwork that can be displayed in object form, distributed, reenacted by others, and circulated without the artist being present. Post-performance is, as an artwork with the artist being absent, an immaterial concept, manifested and recorded in materiality. Post-performance can be perceived both as the artwork itself and its documentation. A canonical example of the ambiguity of post-performance is when Mierle Laderman Ukeles recategorised art as maintenance work and was then photographed by her husband in order to document herself doing the ironing or looking after the children at home. The materiality of her maintenance work was documented and presented as a traditional art object, a photograph. The erosion that comes from performing at home to objectifying maintenance in an object for exhibition gave Ukeles conceptual troubles: "her photographs, not the labor, were conceived as the 'art' ".[271]

Summing up, I claim that the genre of performance art is both productive and non-productive labour, can restrain from being commodified and at the same time be objectified and create surplus value due to its twofold non-material character as both performance and post-performance. This has consequences when it comes to subjectification as artist worker. The performance artist as a figure has in recent years been characterised as living out a neoliberal work ethos putting flesh, sociality,

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[270] The category 'post-performance' has also been used to describe a generalised state in contemporary culture, albeit vaguely theorised, around the exhibition *OVER-EXISTING* at Alt_Cph 18 25–27 May 2018, at Fabrikken for Kunst og Design, Copenhagen.
[271] Jackson 2011, 91.

and mind into investment and never letting a serious (personal) crisis go to waste.[272] Within performance art theory, the performance artist as a figure has been characterised as a very productive worker, exhausted by constantly being at work in inconstant structures. Similar to the doctor and the teacher, the performance artist's work and production are inseparable from their life: the performance artist is embodying their work, not being able to distance themself from their physical 'products' as opposed to other artists such as the painter, the sculptor, the writer, even when at a later point, the post-performance can circulate with less affective and physical effort.

Bojana Kunst has, as a strategy replying to a life in structural precarity and exhaustion, proposed that the performance artist should "do less, precisely when confronted with the demand to do more".[273] In the Italian autonomist writings, resistance towards the occupational temporality of immaterial work is proposed in forms of strike, refusal of work and withdrawal. Doing less can be understood as a direct answer to late capitalist demands of constant productivity, competition and individualisation. Doing less, striking or not working at all, are ways to demand autonomy for life itself; or it could be a strategy of naysaying and, as Kathi Weeks says, paraphrasing Shulamith Firestone, a way to start thinking about a rediffusion between what is love and what is work.[274] However, it is my argument that rethinking and reclaiming non-work is a way to try to separate life and work again, within a genre and in a time where inseparability has become the norm.[275] Feigl's *300* accounts for domestic work as a competing factor to the hours spent working as an artist: there is not a life that has to be rescued from work, because life at home, with the kids, is also work – and a possible source of material 'inspiration' for, or rather *organisation of,* non-material work.

From the perspective of an idealist aesthetics of production where the artist is a genius with natural talent, the artist is seen as somebody who needs to be freed from economic and social dependencies. Is the ideal of artistic autonomy echoed in Feigl's need for at least five minutes a day of being an artist – not a father? Does he want to have artistic freedom, autonomy, undisturbed time, at least five minutes a day? Are the five minutes his justification as a true artist doing pure art? Rather than fighting for more artistic freedom from worldly production conditions, I see *300* as a plaidoyer for a

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[272] I am here paraphrasing the quotation "Never let a serious crisis go to waste" by American Democrat Rahm Emanuel, who proposed to look for the endless opportunities right after the financial crisis in 2008. It is also the title of Philip Mirowski's book on neoliberalism after the financial Crisis (Mirowski 2013). The artist worker is a figure that promises creative speculation nurtured by personal crisis, as has been pointed out by, amongst others, Bojana Kunst, cf. Kunst 2015, 193.
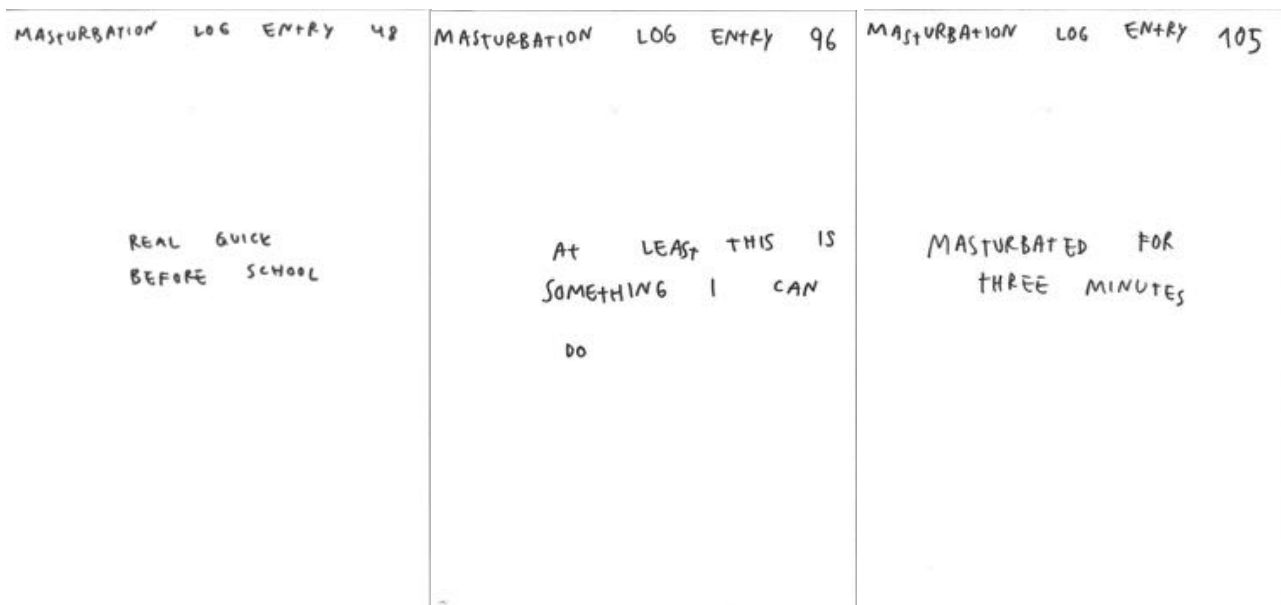
[273] Kunst 2015, 193.

[274] Weeks 2017, 55.

[275] In my regard, this separation of life from work relies on an antiquated notion of work where the private is an untouchable and institutionalised 'outside.' Rather, I would argue, this 'outside' must be politicised as always-already counting, even when – in earlier times – it was unrecognised. Feminists in the late 1960s such as the Wages for Housework movement and Silvia Federici start politicising this separation of life from work and I take my lead from them.

materialist aesthetics of production: art is not a creation channelled by nature-given talent, it is a product of social, temporal and economic conditions in the artist's life. I propose to depart from a materialist aesthetics of production in order to describe how non-material art is organised by its circumstances. It is precisely the inseparability of non-material art and life – the fact of being a parent, a worker, a money-earner, an application-writer and so on – that is co-authoring the artwork. Rather than going on strike and nostalgically reclaiming lost life, as the Italian autonomists would suggest, the question becomes *how* the non-material artwork has been 'infected', or less negatively expressed, 'informed' and even co-produced by its working conditions. How are the *parergonal* structures such as the family situation, the historical context and cultural policies organising the structures of the artwork? Could it even be said that what Kant would understand as disturbances for the artist genius, and has therefore also been excluded in his aesthetic theory, are actually material inspiration for the performance artist?

The Account of an Idle Desire

Organising life into schedules, recording time, making accounts of one's work, is something students have already been trained in during their study since the implementation of the Bologna Process in European higher artistic education. As an example, students in Berlin in the bachelor degree course *Dance, Context, Choreography* learn to calculate hours of their project-related work outside school, and then cash in ECTS points for the hours spent doing relevant activities such as writing applications, having meetings with future work partners, taking yoga classes, visiting exhibitions or reading books. The recording of hours can be seen as both a self-surveilling, occupational and overmeasuring value production of all the student's activities, but also as a feminist strategy of making visible all the hours of unrecogised work of artistic production. An artistic work which could be read as a direct reaction to the art student's recording of life as work, is *The Masturbation Log* by Fjóla Gautadóttir. Gautadóttir was a student on *Dance, Context, Choreography* in Berlin and graduated in the summer 2019. Her artistic log book is a collection of handwritten pages recording and commenting on Gautadóttir's masturbation practice:

MASTURBATION LOG ENTRY 48	MASTURBATION LOG ENTRY 96	MASTURBATION LOG ENTRY 105
REAL GUICK BEFORE SCHOOL	AT LEAST THIS IS SOMETHING I CAN DO	MASTURBATED FOR THREE MINUTES

The Masturbation Log (2018), entry 48, 96, 105.

What is masturbation? The act of masturbating is something done alone, or in company of a dear object, a pillow in the case of Gautadóttir. It is an act which is economically without expenses. It provides immediate physical satisfaction and a short moment of distraction from one's responsibilities and obligations. It is regenerative, relaxing, but not providing any outcome besides pleasure, leaving no traces or objects for others to consume or circulate. Masturbation is also an act of procrastination, unproductive and idle. Yet when one talks about one's masturbation practice, it is both transgressive (too private) and creates, when in the repetitive accumulation, a myth of a natural talent of pleasure-making as well as an abject dependency of one's immediate orgasm. Female sexuality is traditionally associated with reproduction. Yet the act of masturbation is literally non-productive as well as non-material, and hardly something that can be categorised as work. Is masturbation, then, an individualist and even egoistic practice, not for making babies but only for personal pleasure? Or is there an act of solidarity when exposing and performing the desire to escape the pressure of producing the productive self, either as an active art student, original artist or as a reproductive woman?

Whether Gautadóttir's documented masturbation is faked or not is irrelevant. Rather, the (imitation of) registration of such private moments into an artistic accumulative economy is commenting on a commodification of life. Each of the 64 pages in the artist's book of selected log entries is numbered and shows – with numbers up to 121 – that the book is a collection, perhaps a 'best of' orgasmic events. The numeric account of her desire is similar to the everyday clocking in and out of work at night which the students in Berlin exercise when collecting and counting reading hours in bed or regenerative practices at home compatible with ECTS points. Handwritten and numbered,

copied on A4 papers, the visuality of the book is both intimate, standardised and 'cheap'. Consisting of an accumulation of private physical peaks, the work of Gautadóttir comments with wit and sarcasm on how she is highly interpellated by economic calculation. The sarcasm promotes with its mocking attitude a certain distance and critical sovereignty towards the standardised, yet demanding expectations of quantification of young artists trained within the Bologna Process. At the same time, there is a fear of failing at stake, as an artist and as a person: "Somehow I managed to masturbate despite paralysing fear of the days to come", "At least this is something I can do".[276] The pressure of professionalisation and the horizon of a life in structural precarity are the contexts of Gautadóttir's escapism when jerking off.

In *The Masturbation Log* the twofold of non-material production of performance art is coined: the strategy to escape professionalised technologies of work through masturbation is performed in each description of the idle act, yet in the accumulative aesthetic form of the collected, numbered log, the artist is also making the explicitly unproductive work into a post-performance product. The feminist naysaying to reproductive work, literally no babies, is exchanged into an artistic value. The student's interpellation of rigid standardisation and self-measurement in artistic education is translated into a witty and sarcastic critique of numeric accountancy. Gautadóttir shows how to never let a serious institutional and personal crisis go to waste, and she thereby performs both critique of, and complicity with, the neoliberal rationale.

Gautadottir's making the unproductive masturbation productive could be compared with performance artist Eliza Shvarts' exploration of self-insemination and self-induced miscarriages in the durational performance *Untitled [Senior Thesis]* (2008). For a whole school year at Yale University, rhythmised by her menstrual cycle, the student and performance artist Shvarts prepared her senior thesis: a presentation of her material and discursive examination of reproduction as installation and video. However, as the work started raising ethical debate, the Yale University administration censored the work from the final presentation calling Shvarts' work a "creative fiction", adding "Had these acts been real, they would have violated basic ethical standards and raised serious mental and physical health concerns".[277] Compared to Gautadóttir's commodification of private pleasures, Shvarts' non-productive performance is extremely painful, but what both works have in common is that they examine the right to do something without any means to an end. Can counter-productive and even destructive reproduction count as work in artistic education? This might be a question of ethics but first and foremost both works points towards domestic 'obstacles' that reduce the normatively

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[276] Gautadóttir 2018, 20, 34.
[277] See documentation https://alizashvarts.com/2017_posters.html

acknowledged productivity and 'threatens' the temporal economy of the student as a worker in present day capitalism.

The works of Feigl and Gautadóttir in many ways adopt the aesthetic category of *the zany* proposed by cultural theorist and feminist scholar Sianne Ngai in her book *Our Aesthetic Categories* (2012). The zany is a complex aesthetic category emerging out of a late capitalist work paradigm, where the performer is occupied by – as in infected, haunted by – her role in a condition where life and work intersect, and, as I have argued, have become inseparable.[278] The occupation of the role is characterised by permanent performance, the constant and undifferentiated, chaotic activity of doing too many odd jobs of affective work, which Ngai locates both in feminist performance works by Linda Montana in the 1970s and in popular movies like *The Cable Guy* (1996) and *The Full Monty* (1997).

"The zany is not just funny but angry", Ngai writes.[279] Despite Feigl and Gautadóttir's charming critiques of a life being short on time due to societal, private and institutional demands, they are also attacking due to exploitation and pressure and with many contradictory affects. The zany performer is both desperate and compensatory in their acting out, Ngai states, but also exposes a post-Fordist in-betweenness of "gender *as a point of uncertainty".[280]* Thinking about Feigl using his parental role to fight back for his right to work is both a feminist demystification of domestic work, and also perhaps a patriarchal claim for the right to be a 'real worker', an autonomous artist, for five minutes a day. I read his five minutes as both a feminist achievement proposed through the act of making visible the reproductive work in the domestic institution, and at the same time a nostalgic reaching out towards a lost ideal: the solitude of the free (male) artist genius. Here, two temporalities collide: the occupational, domestic time of parenthood, and the independent work time – though really short – of the autonomous artist. Is Feigl performing a mixture of what feminist Mierle Laderman Ukeles manifested in 1969 as the female "maintenance artist"[281] and the autonomous male artist genius? Similarly, several and possibly contradictory gender agendas are at stake in Gautadóttir's work. She is a witty and alienating artist, who is both dedicating her attention to female intimacy and structural vulnerability, but also transforming the unproductive, non-material acts of masturbation into a post-performance artwork for circulation, participating in the professionalised economy of 'original' artworks based on personal crisis.

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[278] Ngai 2012, 204.

[279] Ibid, 218.

[280] Ibid, 110.

[281] Maintenance was to Ukeles both domestic labour, gardening, affective work, and cleaning of art institutions, see *Manifesto for Maintenence Art 1969!*

Towards a Materialist Aesthetics of Production

When reflecting on Marx's distinction between non-productive and productive labour, both Feigl and Gautadóttir are making the non-productive work of the performance artist really productive. Through the materiality of their post-performance works, the performance-for-video-format and the printed book, both artworks can be repeated and circulated unlike the historical concept of non-material, ephemeral performance; both works can and do accumulate value beyond the temporality of the production as event, beyond the presence of their bodies. In that respect, both artists have made anti- and non-productive work productive through post-performance.

Bojana Kunst calls for contemporary artists to explicitly make their particular – not generalisable, nor universal – production conditions visible in order to complicate the norm of the artist's life as a role model in capitalism: "In this, it is extremely important to make visible the exploitation within one's own methods of production – to work in a way that makes the production conditions visible."[282]

The works of Feigl and Gautadóttir show how production conditions such as economy, sociality and temporality co-author the artistic creation. Feigl works through the conditions of being parent and artist. Gautadóttir works through the self-managing technologies fostered in the Bologna Process, where the student is trained to keep an account of life and work. Structural precarity, whether gendered, as a result of educational policy or due to neoliberal professionalisation, are echoed in contemporary artistic works: I see an occupation with numbers and a quantification of life. I see a longing for more time and a restructuring of time. I see cheap materials in poor times. The works of Feigl and Gautadóttir can be understood both as an exposure of the artistic production conditions in our historical present, as well as a critique of a lack of time, an increasing demand of self-accountancy and outsourced responsibility.

In *300* and *The Masturbation Log* the inseparability of life and work – parenthood and institutional standards defining the temporality and proposing the numeric accountancy in the artistic practices – is both a production condition and an exposed concern in content and form of the artworks. However, I wonder whether the fact that Feigl and Gautadóttir expose their tight temporality of production is a way of proposing a reinstalment of the separation between life and work? Do they actually still, nostalgically – like in the Kantian idealist aesthetics of production – believe in and long for an artistic practice freed from economic, social and temporal restrictions? Or are the works of Feigl and Gautadóttir first and foremost a feminist plea for a materialist aesthetics of production in the sense of

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[282] Kunst 2015, 150–151.

conceiving the artist not as a (male) genius, but as an artist-as-producer deeply dependent on and always-already in artistic dialogue with time, economy and sociality?

It is my argument that not only do the works of Feigl and Gautadóttir expose and thereby criticise their production conditions, as already proposed by Kunst. They also intervene in, shape, re-form their production conditions through the artworks. Most explicit is Feigl's invention of the parent-friendly format of five minutes as a temporal frame for his performances. The five minutes redistributes time both on the side of production and of reception. The temporality and rhythm in which the artwork is produced – units of five minutes – shape and reappropriate the management of time within the artwork itself with the series of five-minute performances. What Gautádóttir does is a practice of inclusion: she includes taking time off as part of what should and must be recorded as work. She is making her masturbation part of the time sheet and thereby installing life time in the equation of contemporary work.

With this reading of how artists intervene in and reorganise their own production conditions, I propose a theoretical reexamination of what is traditionally termed as the aesthetics of production. An aesthetics of production is concerned with what enables the artist to do work. Since the ancient times, a disgust towards manual and wage labour has paved the road for an exclusive and excluding position of the artist as a genius. Following Immanuel Kant in his third critique, the artist genius is not – and should not be – disturbed either by social or economic interests, but has a nature-given talent for creating original works.[283] The feminist gesture of inclusion can be understood as an opposition to Kantian aesthetics of exclusion. Where the artist genius must be alone, undisturbed, freed from interests, the feminist artist is including both their reproductive, regenerative and affective work in their practice. In the two works analysed, Feigl's restricting parenthood and Gautadóttir's useless masturbation are given time and attention. Through my reading of their performances and post-performances, I present the concept of a materialist aesthetics of production as an act of inclusion: rather than dividing art from other forms of work, rather than separating art and life, a materialist aesthetics of production conceives artistic creation on the basis of historical circumstances. Time, sociality and economy in the artist's production conditions are the actual sources of what was earlier conceived as nature-given inspiration. Proposing a materialist rather than an idealist aesthetics of production is a political reading of the artwork as something that is not a reflection of genius ideas, but something that resides in the interdependency of life and work.

Through the works of Feigl and Gautadóttir we can see how explicit the production conditions of parenthood at home or self-administration in school create art. This is not to say that

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[283] Kant 1914 [1793], §43.3, §46.3.

there is no such thing as creativity or sensible intuition. Yet my argument is precisely that the traditionally categorised disturbances from sociality, time and economy co-create new and original artistic formats such as parent-friendly five-minute performances and zany time sheet recordings of private moments. The works are not just – as obeying a late capitalist demand – producing the new, but become political through an infrastructural performance: not only are Feigl and Gautadóttir working by the numbers of parenthood and neoliberal quantification, they are also making the numbers themselves move.

PART THREE
Sociality as Performance

INTRODUCTION TO PART THREE

Thinking about how Renen Itzhaki exposes and mocks the infrastructures of higher artistic education with his installation performance *Collecting Points,* where audiences diligently collect ECTS points in order to achieve bachelor degree certificates, as presented in the prelude of this dissertation, the aesthetics of production calls for revision as something defined by circumstances rather than natural talent. Itzhaki's wry presentation of the local implementation of the Bologna Process in Berlin serves as an extreme case that exposes the contemporary production conditions within the arts after the implementation of the Bologna Process: how students are occupied with collecting points, i.e. quantified value, in order to become professional artists. Itzhaki makes quantification and calculation practices in artistic work visible and likewise, Dragana Bulut has problematised the fragmentation and exhaustion in the artist's life. Florian Feigl and Fjóla Gautdóttir have both exposed how they are structurally short of time and try to reorganise their respective temporalities of work. After having examined individual critiques, in this part on the *Sociality as Performance* I will turn towards collective responses.

Bojana Kunst argues that contemporary occupation of artistic life as value in capitalism demands introspection and visibility of production in the arts:

> The projection of the speculative value of artistic life shows that the formation of life is at the core of contemporary value production, because our lives are becoming our principle tasks (work). And if there is no additional value (profit) to our work any longer, we are no longer worthy of life (investment).
>
> Visible processes of work in the arts therefore become interesting when they disclose the hegemony of the difference between art and life and open up ways for representations and imagery of contemporary exploitation. In this, it is extremely important to make visible the exploitation within one's own methods of production – to work in a way that makes the production conditions visible.[284]

I agree with Kunst that it is necessary to question and expose working conditions in the arts when they become instrumentalised as a model. I have observed this introspection – the artist looking at their own circumstances – as a current trend: in opposition to self-exploitation, competitiveness and constant mobility, theoreticians, artists and institutions critically engage both by exposing the conditions, but also in organising new alliances, claiming continuous socialities, durational engagements and a

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[284] Kunst 2015, 150–151.

redistribution of rights and privileges. In that respect, partly disagreeing with Kunst, I suggest that not only an exposure of, but also a change – a Brechtian *umfuntionierung* – within production conditions have shown themselves to be important and necessary.[285] To me, it seems that a whole generation of recently graduated artists are currently organising *collectively* in new ways. [286] They operate intuitively from what I define as a materialist aesthetics of production by departing from their historical circumstances as material in their artistic proposals.

I have noticed how many performance art collectives in Denmark and Germany currently organise around a redistribution of structural privileges: they redistribute visibility, money, authorship and time amongst themselves. They work against privileges of the individual, the nation and of class, gender and race. In that respect, one important difference between Itzhaki's institutional critique and the infrastructural performances of these collectives is the way the latter make use of the inherent performativity of their working conditions. They do not just portray, expose and critique standardising or individualising structures; they also intervene in the infrastructures of artistic work in order to change them and provide protected and less precarious socialities of production for the artists themselves.

Artists' collectives gather around and depart from the challenges they meet in independent and freelance production: imperatives of individual careerism, flexibility and internationalisation in higher artistic education and in professional production. In the following, I will focus on how *socialities* performed in artists' collectives challenge a context of structural precarity. The bulk of this will be analyses of what I term *infrastructural performance*: how specifically performance art collectives develop strategies to expose, protect and care for their working conditions when they either erase the individual signature, arrange a shared temporality of work or curate and credit friends and allies in their work. That performance art collectives put their artistic power into organisation makes me define their effort as *structure-challenging* collectives in the context of collectives in performance art history. In these case studies, I will mainly be concerned with how young performance art collectives suggest infrastructural performances. In the protection of and caring for the sociality of the 'institutionalised' collective[287]there resides both a response to our present neoliberal conditions of work and self-production and an inherent critique of idealist aesthetics of production, i.e. a critique of the idea that the artist genius creates in isolation. I will discuss how the sociality of the collective becomes a

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[285] Kunst herself proposes a retreat rather than a change: slowing down and working less.
[286] Itzhaki himself is even participating in this more transformative critique by co-forming the artist collective Breakfast Club Collective with his classmates during their studies at HZT in 2012. See https://breakfastclubcollective.com
[287] By institutionalised I mean established and continuous.

performance in itself, consolidating resilience and interdependency in times of inconstancy and individualisation, and reforming how to live and work together.

The Sociality as Assembly

When artists' collectives actively work on and protect and care for the sociality they produce in, I perceive the sociality as a consciously performed assembly. Judith Butler writes about "a plural form of performativity" in what she terms as *the assembly* in her recent book *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly* (2015).[288] Performativity is not only – as could be the simple interpretation of her book *Gender Trouble* (1990) – about the individual's possibility for constructing their own gender beyond heteronormative binary sex categories but also a common possibility for collectively questioning, intervening in and changing conditions of life. In her definition of the assembly, of acting in concert, she writes:

> If performativity has often been associated with individual performance, it may prove important to reconsider those forms of performativity that only operate though forms of coordinated action, whose condition and aim is the reconstitution of plural forms of agency and social forms of resistances.[289]

In her authorship Butler has added agency into the model of interpellation by Althusser and of subjectivation by Foucault. Now she explicitly changes the perspective from the individual agency to analyses of collective action or what she calls "acting in concert", quoting Hannah Arendt.[290] Butler writes about several bodies in concert, whether in movement or stillness, and refers to bodies in alliance partly from particular movements: Black Lives Matter, *Los Indignados*, the Occupy Movement; from moments: Tahir Square, Palestine 2012; or from expelled groups: nationless Romas, veiled women in France attacked by white feminists, and inhabitants of Palestine. Her point about the assembly is that the coming together of bodies produce and possibly renew principles of how to live together in greater communities. She writes:

> So the assembly does not exactly mirror the broader structure of the economic world. But certain principles get elaborated in those smaller assemblies that can nevertheless

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[288] Butler 2015, 8.
[289] Butler 2015, 9.
[290] Ibid.

produce – or renew – ideals of equality and interdependency that may well be transposed onto larger national and global contexts.[291]

She writes how recent demonstrations and movements of many bodies throughout the 2000s and 2010s are reacting to a biopolitical situation of increasing precarisation and neoliberal "responsabilisation" of the individual.[292] For me, Butler's concept of the assembly is interesting because it does not claim to mirror but rather to intervene in its historical presence. This is especially interesting when I examine artists' collectives that work as assemblies of racialised and queer bodies: their groups do not just problematise missing representations, as do many theories in Cultural Studies also preoccupied with this, but rather, the assembly of bodies suggest a performance of, and care for, both a continuation of a sociality that already exists as well as a performance of mixed social compositions. With the concept of the assembly, Butler proposes that the sociality is not a 'natural' way of being together but rather a performance, and even a political one. An assembly of racialised and queer artists might provide 'visibility' of underrepresented bodies, but also, I might add, it rejects the lonely position of the person of colour within 'fair representation' that is supposed to mirror the world as it is. Understood in a broader perspective, there is a need to understand that artists create from a sociality and not from a singular, representative position of either being a man, a woman, a non-binary person, a person of colour (POC) or a queer person. In other words, it is not enough to count the number of POCs represented; rather, it is necessary to be numerous. Consequently, I observe a need to continue and acknowledge the sociality of production and not just the representative individual. The concept of the assembly is useful to me in order to insist on the performativity of production by artists' collectives. Where the sociality is artistically exposed and performed, alliances are enacted and new organisations of privileges and norms are proposed.

I suggest that with new technologies of making, new desires for doing and organising emerge. Since the technologies of making in artistic education partly split young artists through self-governance, delegated responsibility, measurement and creating one's profile, so a desire develops to resist both individualisation and quantification, as well as develops a desire for assembling. The care for the sociality of production becomes a deed. This care must be read both as an institutional critique and infrastructural performance; however, the plurality of recent artists' collectives and organisations should, following Butler, also be contextualised into a broader political movement of demonstrations and bodily resistance since, I would propose, 2008 and Occupy Wall Street.

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[291] Butler 2015, 137.
[292] Butler 2015, 15, 16.

ARTICLE V

Infrastructural Performance

Reclaiming Social Relationality in Times of Structural Precarity[293]

Abstract

As freelance workers are living in inconstancy and increasing social isolation, a crucial question arises: how can solidarity be reclaimed through a critique of structural precarity? Precarity as a consequence of neoliberal working conditions is analysed and problematised across academic disciplines. Departing from Lauren Berlant's description of structural precarity and Judith Butler's elaborations on performativity, I propose the term infrastructural performance in order to portray artistic strategies which are criticising inequality and organising collectivity. I analyse the infrastructural performance of the performance art collective cobratheater.cobra to show how precarity has provoked organisational and artistic reconfigurations in the independent performance art scene. I demonstrate how features within the neoliberal work ethos such as the repetition of the artistic signature, individualisation and the imperative of mobility are dismantled by the group's infrastructural performance. I conclude that infrastructural performance criticises structural precarity through collective actions of infection, exposure and disobedience. It is a new form of collective artistic organisation, which proposes the possibility of change in social and economic conditions. At the end of the article I speculate how infrastructural performance might change the conception of the artwork itself.

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[293] This article is peer-reviewed and published in *Nordic Theatre Studies Journal*, August 2018. The article is republished here, albeit with two alterations in order to align with the style of the dissertation: the grammar is changed from US to UK grammar and the pronoun is changed to the non-binary singular 'they.'

What constitutes continuity amid the pressure of structural inconstancy?

Lauren Berlant (2011b, 69)

How can we struggle around or organise diffuse forms of cultural and artistic labor?

Stevphen Shukastis (2016, 74)

I'm a part of a network which has so many protagonists and so little structure that all financial supporters and institutions constantly say: Set up an organisation. Set up a business entity. Set up a contact person.

Carolin Gerlach about the network cobratheater.cobra (2016, 4)

Introduction

The possibilities of unfolding artistic work depend on an infrastructure of venues and funding. In Europe, the contemporary cultural policy behind venues and funding builds on national belonging, international mobility as well as an ideology of the (soloist) artist genius. I define *infrastructure* within artistic production as the organisational model, which determines how artists can work, move and live their lives. Literature professor Lauren Berlant describes infrastructure as an organisational model consisting of "patterns, habits, and norms of use".[294] Infrastructure is performative or as Berlant writes: "infrastructure is defined by use and movement".[295] I employ the term infrastructure as an organisational model which is not just given through policy and institutions, but can be performed, moulded and changed. *Infrastructural Performance* is then the specific negotiation of the given conditions for economy and sociality. It is a reconfiguration of structural conditions which determine how we work and live.

As theoreticians such as Luc Boltanski, Eve Chiapello, Bojana Kunst, Isabell Lorey and Angela McRobbie have demonstrated for more than a decade, artists and freelance cultural workers have long been living the 'role model' of work in precarity. I am curious to see how artists reflect and respond to this state of precarity in their way of organising: might there be more socially and financially sustainable ways of working?

When looking at the performance art scene with its imperative of the constant production of ephemeral works, of transformation, of building portfolios with recognisable and outstanding

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[294] Berlant 2011a, 4.
[295] Berlant 2011b, 393.

signatures, I am hopeful about the tactics of certain young, international groups such as cobratheater.cobra, Breakfast Club Collective and DANSEatelier which all have emerged out of educations of performance art within the last five years.[296] What I find compelling in analysing these artistic practices of collectivism, is how – following Blake Stimson and Gregory Sholette (2007) – collectivism inevitably exposes and attacks "broader social and economic conditions of production".[297] In the context of neoliberalism, every sphere of life is economised and each individual is working on themselves as a company, measuring and accounting their individual production.[298] The performance groups mentioned above propose other ways of performing and re-forming the economic and social conditions which we are offered in neoliberalism. In various ways, the groupings mentioned above actively resist the conventions of recognisability, belonging and governable behaviour through their infrastructural performance. Yet before looking into the specific infrastructural performance of cobratheater.cobra, I want to propose *structural precarity* as the contextual horizon on which this phenomenon figures.

In this article, I read precarity in the context of the work[299] and economy of the independent performance artist: a precarity based on short-term contracts, being one's own boss and own employee, performing social and geographical flexibility, having freedom to follow one's desires and to decide the rhythm of work, and only a few social rights, if any. I want to address structural conditions of precarity in my historical present in order to address challenges of the subject in new forms of work, specifically the work of the freelance performance artist. Through a reading of the performance group labelled cobratheater.cobra, I show how they through infrastructural performances criticise the demand for artistic signature, individualisation, austerity politics and inequality. I want to discuss how performance collectives display structural precarity not only as distribution of political powerlessness, but also as a

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[296] The following two collectives will not be explored further here, but can be summarised briefly as this: DANSEatelier is a group of 13 *alumnae* from *Dance & Choreography* at the Danish National School of Performing Arts, who through a shared space, continuous daily, collective practice and performance nights with a broad spectrum of associated artists exercise an infrastructural performance, where the shared space and the continuous practice are opposing neoliberal individualisation and mobility. Breakfast Club Collective consists of 11 members from 9 different countries, all graduates from *Dance, Context, Choreography* at the Inter-University of Dance in Berlin, and attacks directly the privilege of the nation state. Breakfast Club Collective redistributes national funding between its transnational members and opposes the idea of privileged belonging. See also Schmidt 2017.

[297] Stimson & Sholette 2007, 11.

[298] Brown 2016, 23, 30.

[299] I consequently employ the term 'work' instead of 'labour,' since – following Marxist feminist Kathi Weeks – 'work' is associated with waged activity opposed to the broader understanding of 'living labour' as something alternative happening 'outside' waged work time (Weeks 2011, 14-15). In times of neoliberal economisation of every human activity (as for example unfolded by Wendy Brown in *Undoing the Demos* (2015)), I don't find a division between waged work and living labour productive since every kind of activity potentially counts and adds to or disrupts the individual value production. Through this, I also focus on a critique of work in all its complexity, instead of opening a utopian idea about living labour as 'outside economy' or 'without interest.'

reason for forming models for "rethinking social relationality"[300] through a reorganisation of infrastructure (Butler, Berlant). Consequently, I want to examine the sustainability of these reorganised infrastructures: What happens to economic stability, the possibility of family, continuous work relations or close friendships? Is it possible to imagine temporary models of situated critique ten years ahead? In a final perspective, I will consider whether the infrastructural performance might change the conception of the artwork itself.

Precarity Made by Structures

Precarity is a term employed on life formed by structurally determined inequality and insecurity: the everyday is filled by worries such as if social security can be guaranteed, whether there will be jobs in the future, if one can afford having a family, falling ill, ageing. Here, the citizen puts a lot of affective work into thinking about how to sustain an acceptable life.

Berlant explores affective responses to structurally conditioned precarity in the US, where poverty, inequality and structural inconstancy are caused by racial hierarchies, reproduction of class and austerity politics. She defines precarity as a structural condition coming out of "(…) the privatisation of wealth and the slow and uneven bankrupting of so many localities (nations, states, regions) beginning in the 1970s: leading to such uneven desiccation of the public sector materially, ideologically, and in fantasy that 'austerity' has developed into the name for the new realism."[301] Precarity is defined by Berlant as a structural condition growing out of capitalism over the past nearly 50 years, where the public sector has been shrinking in the global North, work has become globalised, debts have been growing and where the rationale is to cut welfare, when crisis threatens growth. Furthermore, Berlant defines precarity as an affective resonance of this structural diet:

> (…) an ongoing (structurally) economic problem – first, indicating that capitalism thrives on instability; and second, pointing to the ways that capitalist forms of labor make bodies and minds precarious, holding out the promise of flourishing while wearing out the corpus we drag around in different ways and at different rates, partly by overstimulation, partly by understimulation, and partly by the incoherence with which alienation is lived as exhaustion plus saturating intensity."[302]

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[300] Lauren Berlant in Jasbir Puar et al., "Precarity Talk: A Virtual Roundtable" in *TDR: The Drama Review* 56 (4, Winter 2012 (T216), 170.
[301] Ibid, 166.
[302] ibid.

Berlant stresses how capitalism has structurally inserted instability as an existential feeling. She makes a notable link between the ways of working in capitalism and the production of precarious subjectivation: the constant changes of rhythm resulting in a bodily and mental exhaustion. Through various analyses of literature and film works, Berlant points out how an individual self-precarisation – a sort of self-interpellation of a disappointing narrative of one's own life – takes place through what she calls a general *cruel optimism*. Here a collective fantasy of 'the good life' is practiced: "a heterofamilial, upwardly mobile good-life fantasy"[303] including "job security, political and social equality and lively, durable intimacy".[304] Yet this fantasy is lost in the clash with an individual reality of structural inconstancy. Broken, unrealistic promises make the individuals of cruel optimism face their life as a continuum of defeats with the soundtrack of guilt – 'I didn't manage to…' This individual affect of loss, as Berlant stresses, belongs to the general structure of feelings in capitalism.[305] Berlant is pending between individual structures of feeling and structural conditions set by contemporary politics. She detects a general cruel optimism in capitalism echoed in many individual "situation tragedies",[306] where one personal disaster seems to lead to the next. Precarity is structurally destabilising, yet felt on a very concrete, subjective level 'at home' with such common symptoms as "a lack of time, energy, money, multiple work commitments leaving little time for meetings or even travelling to meetings, burn-out, health issues, including mental health, forced migration, visa issues, care duties".[307] The political "capacity to act"[308] within one's own life and in public is limited. Or, as art theoretician Bojana Kunst states, a certain powerlessness towards political change is experienced.[309] The genre of the individualised situation tragedy leads me to look at the internalisation of the structures of the freelance worker, hereunder specifically the performance artist, who embodies the rhythm and life of structural precarity.

The precarious worker as a figure covers not only artists and cultural workers, but also migrant workers, PhD students, interns, students, service workers, manual workers and freelancers (without any noticeable, continuous success). The precarity of the freelancer is substantially described by German political theoretician Isabell Lorey. She is tracing in the close relation between freedom and insecurity, between the entrepreneurial, passionate, self-governed work-life and the lack of security (2006, 2012).

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[303] Berlant 2011b, 11.
[304] Berlant 2011b, 3.
[305] Berlant emphasises her methodological ambition to track individual feelings into generalisation: "This is part of my method, to track the becoming general of singular things, and to give those things materiality by tracking their resonances across many scenes"(Berlant 2011b, 12).
[306] Berlant 2011b, 6.
[307] See "Precarious Workers Brigade: Transversal Articulations of Art Workers' Organising Precarious Workers Brigade interviewed by Tereza Stejskalová and Barbora Kleinhamplová" p. 171–18 in Krikortz 2015, 172.
[308] Butler 2017, 5.
[309] Kunst 2015, 154–155.

The etymology of the freelancer is the medieval knight being hired to fight for whatever lord offering the best conditions. The freelancer risks their life in the name of others, yet they travel alone from one temporary employment to the next. They live out an unreserved mobility and serve neither a nation, nor a religion, nor a political direction. Berlant describes the freelancer as one of the key figures in neoliberalism: a mobile and "post-geographic" character preferring "entrepreneurial precarity (…) giving 'herself to the dream' ".[310] Especially the artist is connoted as a *happy worker*, loving what they are doing, thankfully accepting chances in place of fees and operating in self-constituted sovereignty.[311]

What makes the independent performance artist a figure exposing the conditions of artistic freelance work to its extremes is the immateriality, embodiment and ephemerality of the genre of performance art. Here the personality and the body are the main materials in the artistic practice: think of solo pioneers of body art Carolee Schneemann or Marina Abramović, or contemporary performance artists with bodies in political conflict such as the South African feminist Mamela Nyamza or Serbian border-crosser Tanja Ostojic. Or think of British and German performance art collectives such as Forced Entertainment, She She Pop or Gob Squad drawing on their relations and conflicts as the main motive of their performances. Obviously, affective and bodily work are at the centre of these artists' political production. Since the personal-political is at the centre of performance art, it cannot be delegated to others, nor repeated, but requires authentic passion *in personae.*[312] With Derrida, I would say that performance art as a genre lives from producing *différance.* Therefore, similarly to other consumptions in capitalism, performance art steadily produces 'the new' and through this constant transformation and production, new ways of seeing and consuming, a.k.a. growth.[313] So, if performance art is serving the demands of capitalism perfectly in its productivity, and at the same time exhausting the artists through structural precarity, how can artists then propose more socially and economically sustainable ways of working?

Philosopher and feminist Judith Butler insists on analysing structural distribution in social and economic institutions, when addressing new forms of work within academia and the arts:

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[310] Gibson quoted in Berlant 2011b, 76.
[311] The figure of the 'happy artist' is a strange prejudice, 'dream' or promise: the artist is assumed to be in constant happiness and self-fulfilment through work as opposition to all other workers being unhappy. Such assumption of the happy artist paralyses the possibility of structural critique from the artists. The price of the 'free' preference of passion and pleasure is the loss of rights and protection, but also of the right to complain.
[312] Even when mediated, as in performances of Gob Squad or The Wooster Group, the play with the expected 'ontological' authenticity of the genre is at the centre, as pointed out by amongst others Philip Auslander in *Liveness* (1999).
[313] Bojana Kunst points out, with reference to Brian Massumi's mourning of the loss of normality, how "wiredness" of performance art is a promise of growth and radical consumption (Kunst 2015, 21).

> I want to caution against an existential reading and insist that what is at stake is a way of *rethinking social relationality* (…) our precarity is to a large extent dependent upon the organization of economic and social relationships, the presence or absence of *sustaining infrastructures* and social and political institutions. In this sense, precarity is indissociable from that dimension of politics that addresses the organization and protection of bodily needs. Precarity exposes our sociality, the fragile and necessary dimensions of our interdependency.[314]

Where Berlant detects individual situation tragedies and Kunst mourns a powerlessness towards political change, Butler insists on actively rethinking sociality. With the backdrop of structural precarity, Butler formulates optimism towards the collective restructuring, towards new ways of assembling.

Infect and Explode the Signature

An example of how infrastructural performance collectively negotiates and opposes the structural precarity of performance artists, I find in the multi-levelled work of cobratheater.cobra exemplary. Their way of organising collectively criticises (at least) three conditions within structural precarity: the idea of an artistic signature, the isolation and exhaustion of freelance workers and the imperative of individual mobility.

cobratheater.cobra is a group of more than 40 members from visual arts, performance art and Cultural Studies. Based in Germany, members of cobratheater.cobra have mainly studied at the Department of Cultural Studies and Aesthetic Communication at the University of Hildesheim, which is amongst others directed by the professor for experimental forms of contemporary theatre and founding group member of the performance collective She She Pop, Annemarie Matzke. After a few decades of hyping the brand of the *collective* in German performance art, influenced by the many successful graduates from the Institute of Applied Theatre Studies in Giessen, cobratheater.cobra calls itself neither a collective nor a self-organised workers' association, but a *network* and a *label*. cobratheater.cobra is influenced by digital technologies and they work – partly due to its dispersed workers all over Germany – widely through the medium of the internet. To describe the relationality of themselves, cobratheater.cobra deploys the metaphor of infection (Ger. *Ansteckung*): when you have been infected – that is involved – in a cobratheater.cobra production, you're automatically licenced to use the label for your own work.[315] Despite the easily obtained admittance to the label, another

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[314] Berlant in Puar et. al. 2012, 170, my italics.
[315] See http://www.cobratheatercobra.com/die-cobra/

inauguration ritual is demanded: you have to let at least two – until then to you unknown – members of cobratheater.cobra attend and criticise a version of your artwork before going public. This peer critique must go public along with the artwork. The infective principle means that cobratheater.cobra is constantly expanding as a network: the cobra snake, the hyper-flexible line of vertebras, has, as it says on its official website, no end. The very casting of members is uncontrollable and results in a diverse identity with divergent aesthetics. The inauguration ritual – getting a peer critique from unknown members – exercises a continued criticality among the members.

Opposed to the idea of the artist genius or the autonomous theatre director, cobratheater.cobra has no addressable spokesperson, front figure or identifiable 'creative mind'. Neither has it an aesthetic mission, as opposed to numerous German collectives educated since the late 1990s in Giessen. There is an obvious critique of authorship and of artistic signature in insisting on the diversity of a label. Also, the aesthetic contingency makes the group a sincere provocation to art councils: when cobratheater.cobra sends eight applications to the Berlin Senate, who is then being supported? In the reading of the application, the network forces the appointed jury to close-read each of the applications in order to estimate the specific artistic proposals. Since cobratheater.cobra is a network and its website-calendar presents a hyper-activity of work as well as a many-voiced authorship, there is no portfolio or artistic recognisability to rely on. As Marx said, the collective action of workers exposes the fragile construction of individuality and develops the capacity of the group: "When the labourer co-operates systematically with others, he strips off the fetters of his individuality, and develops the capabilities of his species."[316] In collective action cobratheater.cobra devalues the artist genius as a prisoning narrative building on a speculative accumulation of aesthetic practice as property. I read the explosive production of identities and dissonant aesthetics within the label cobratheater.cobra as an infrastructural performance criticising artistic identification: a strategic labelling to cause destabilisation of the judgemental premises for traditional infrastructural support within (performance) art. The infective network disturbs identification as we know it from the art world: here, I neither identify the artist genius nor the (German) performance collective nor the workers' association. The artistic signature has exploded.

Expose Exhaustion and Isolation

cobratheater.cobra attack the structural level of precarity, when they through strategic labelling infect the purity of the artist genius and explode the artistic signature. And they display an affective level of precarity when they expose their own daily interpellation as precarious cultural workers within the field

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[316] Karl Marx, *Capital*, (New York: Penguin Books 1976), 447.

of performance art. In the concrete performance work, *Caro von Cobra auf Kampnagel* (2016), cobratheater.cobra make visible the common precarity which gathers and characterises the work and lives of the cobra-members. In an artistic statement at Kampnagel on Nov. 26, 2016, presented in the frame of the discursive evening, a so-called 'apparatus,' *Really Useful Theater* curated by Stefanie Wenner and Thorsten Eibeler, the performance artist Carolin Gerlach stands alone in the *manège* representing nine digitally present colleagues of cobratheater.cobra. Through short *snap-chat* messages with video confessions the colleagues send their 'updates' to Gerlach in a media designed for ephemeral, personal statements: mothers, artists, thinkers and other workers across Germany complain about the exhaustion between a forthcoming premiere of a political theatre piece and the organisation of a children's birthday, a late-night deadline and a next-morning rehearsal with colleagues, in a scenery between kitchen sink and computer screens. Here, masked with the cartoonish and stereotyped filters offered by the software, the women confess and mock the precarity of the cultural worker. This exposure of the exhaustion could be read as a feminist performance in the sense of sharing:[317] Through the gathering of documented personal precarity caused by a neoliberal work demand, a solidarity is exercised among precarious workers across immaterial, creative, domestic and reproductive work.

cobratheater.cobra's collectivism displays the affective level of individual precarity through several examples on snap-chat. At the same time, the repetition of individualised trouble proves a general structural condition of contemporary performance art production. But although the 'cobras' are sending their warmest thoughts and greetings to their colleague Gerlach, they physically leave her on her own: online sociality in the mobile network. The network is apart, since the neoliberal work market demands flexibility and mobility: one month of production here, another three weeks there, a residency abroad again. The geographical work mobility functions as a promise of economic upward mobility for the artists – or at least maintenance of a minimum income and the right to work. Physically present sociality is thereby threatened by economically forced migration.

Disobey Economically Forced (Im)Mobility

While the colleagues – due to temporary project work or residencies away from home - are all placed in different corners of Germany, Gerlach is able to be present and represent cobratheater.cobra. Since 2016 she is officially unemployed on *Hartz IV*, the unpopular German unemployment benefit and social welfare package of 409 Euros a month. Hartz IV was introduced in 2010 and is an example of

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[317] I here think of the practice of sharing as seen in 2017 in the #metoo movement, which points back to the tradition within feminist affect theory represented by amongst others Audre Lorde and Sara Ahmed. Both writers accumulate episodes of racist or sexist behaviour experienced by themselves in, for example, Lorde's *Sister Outsider* (1982) and Ahmed's recent *Living a Feminist Life* (2017).

the German austerity policy with not only financial, but also social consequences. It includes directories about how to live and how (not) to move. Gerlach presents her personal ambivalence towards the imperative of mobility haunting the life of the performance artist: officially Gerlach is allowed to travel only 21 days a year, when receiving Hartz IV, in order to mainly be available for possible job offers in Dresden, where she is based. Gerlach decides to reject the geographical imprisonment and conduct what I would call an infrastructural performance of *civil disobedience* through her on-going practice *HARTZ IV UND DIE WELT GEHÖRT DIR* ("Hartz IV and the world belongs to you", my translation from German). Gerlach has taken the 'freedom' to travel as much as possible across Mid-Europe in 2016. Invited by Wenner and Eibeler to perform in Hamburg, Gerlach finds another possibility to break the Hartz IV-conduct of immobility: Gerlach travels 600km from Dresden to Hamburg to perform. She travels by train as unemployed, performing her self-declared freedom, a civil disobedience. She travels through several of the cities where her cobra-colleagues are simultaneously working and being paid as performance artists. She travels and performs for the label cobratheater.cobra. Her individual civil disobedience against geographical imprisonment in Dresden is placed in the context of the other working cobras. As a collective they expose how the 'freedom' to move is structurally dictated by their working opportunities within an unpredictable work market of independent performance art where, at the lowest income-level, Gerlach is governed by the state and cannot move. Their collection of migratory inequality I categorise as – with the term of Berlant – a collection of neoliberal situation tragedies. In the discourse on the artist as worker, it is often criticised that the narrative becomes too generic and fetishises certain simplistic motives such as poverty or loneliness.[318] But with cobratheater.cobra rather explicit inequality within the independent performance art scene is on display. I here detect a conflict in neoliberalism: the structural inequality within the group of colleagues shows a conflict between the lived mobility of the freelancers and Gerlach's immobility dictated by austerity policies. Besides exposing the unequal economic and social conditions of performance art workers, cobratheater.cobra also proposes civil disobedience towards the state-led government of precarious subjects.

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[318] Maurizio Lazzarato warns against a generic "Artist's Critique", which he finds developed by Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello in *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (2007 [1999]). Lazzarato promotes is very specific on the inequalities of creative workers: "In ein und demselben Beruf arbeitend, kann man reich und abgesichert sein oder arm und einer Situation extremer Prekarität ausgesetzt. Zwischen den beiden Extremen gibt es eine beinahe unendliche Abstufung und Abwandlung bezüglich Situation und Status." See "Die Missgeschicke der „Künstlerkritik" und "der kulturellen Beschäftigung" Maurizio Lazzarato p. 173–197 in Raunig & Wuggenig 2016, 379.

A Promising Infection

Obviously a network does not make its members more equal than the market, the curators, the grant juries and the state allow: Despite the label as a solidary infrastructural performance producing a plurality of aesthetics, shared visibility, individual legitimisation and access to the performance art scene, cobratheater.cobra is neither a guarantee of continued work, nor a stabilisation of income through collective sharing of income across projects. In the performance Gerlach tells how a member of the Austrian performance collective God's Entertainment addresses her as a cobratheater.cobra member, asking her what she presented in the last performance of cobratheater.cobra in the frame of the *Really Useful Theater* in Berlin. But Gerlach wasn't attending that cobratheater.cobra performance in Berlin. Other colleagues performed under the same label. She explains the model of cobratheater.cobra to the God's Entertainment member: "I'm a part of a network which has so many protagonists and so little structure that all financial supporters and institutions constantly say: Set up an organisation. Set up a business entity. Set up a contact person."[319] Her utterance states the institutional advisory and interpellation of the artists to become recognisable as an organisation, identifiable as a financial model and addressable in terms of a reduction of the label into one subject. Gerlach states how they are too many and too much, exploding the reasonable number of the performance art collective, at the same time having too little structure to be an entity to collaborate with. In other words, corbatheater.cobra doesn't respond to the institutional interpellation in the Althusserian sense: similarly to the police officer, the art institution shouts "Hey you," and a network-choir of internet-dispersed subjects answer with more than 40 ephemeral snap-chat videos. cobratheater.cobra is not fulfilling the institutional expectations, but the label *does* allow the individual to identify with the collective: Gerlach states her legitimisation in cobratheater.cobra saying "I am part of (…)", which I would interpret as an affective belonging. Gerlach is not a soloist. She is infected: a part of the network cobratheater.cobra.

Artistic self-organisation and collectivism are phenomena which could easily be subscribed to a transitional, 'immature' phase after finishing studies: a communal step into the market made by alumnae, who haven't yet found their own artistic signature, nor stabilised their individual life nor working conditions. To me, as an academic gesture, there is a point in highlighting the artists' infrastructural performance as a political form of economic and social critique. But also, I mean to read the current disproportionality in collectivism – too big groups exploding the artistic signature, exposure of inequality among the members – as a direct response to the increasing structural precarity and individualisation in our historical present; an individualisation, which is a characteristic of the project work and the possibilities for funding and career, and which is already starting during art school, where

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[319] From the script *Caro von Cobra auf Kampnagel* (Gerlach 2016, 4), my translation.

– following the Bologna Process – each art student is trained to collect individual points and form an individual, recognisable portfolio as artist genius.[320] A politics of belonging is negotiated in the structures and movement patterns of cobratheater.cobra: the right to belong in a social group and the right to appear without aligning to the neoliberal work ethos are exercised.

I conclude that infrastructural performance is a way of recomposing within the 'given' political and economic conditions, insisting on the possibility of political change. When cobratheater.cobra criticises the idea of an artistic signature, the isolation and exhaustion of freelance workers and the imperative of individual (im)mobility, they thereby also promote a collective political imagination: infection, disturbance and disobedience are the means to start this change. The infrastructural performance is critique and re-negotiation of what is promoted in neoliberalism as a given and unchangeable situation tragedies of each individual.

Concerns around the fragility of working subjects have increased against the backdrop of the so-called financial crises, cuts in education and culture, growing nationalism and border politics. I would claim that infrastructural performance is a new phenomenon growing up with and out of these concerns, uttered by young performance artists who make artistic proposals within the practice of social organisation. In visual arts a tradition of self-organised art workers' movements uttering institutional critique, fighting for minimum wage and visibility of women can be traced already from the first half of the 20th Century, but increased in the 1970s and onwards.[321] Yet, as Airi Triisberg (2015) and Isabell Lorey (2012) have described, since the 2000s a collective outspokenness on structural precarity has emerged. The organisation of and solidarity in social movements in and beyond art and education have been established such as W.A.G.E (2008–), Precarious Workers Brigade (2010–), the Occupy Movement (2011–). The category of infrastructural performance I define as neither a social movement nor an artwork. It is both.

I would advocate for an understanding of the ongoing, collective infrastructural performance of cobratheater.cobra – on stages, on the internet, in funding applications and in ways of organising – as *avant garde* in the sense of Peter Bürger: durational artistic activity which makes visible the very conditions and general categories of art, rather than serving 'whole,' finished art works of hermeneutic, aesthetic unity.[322] Far more than making hermeneutic art works, cobratheater.cobra's artistic organisation must be read as an expanded ongoing performance: an ongoing performance of constant

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[320] See an elaborated reading of the conditions of art students following the Bologna Process in "The-One-Woman-Orchestra," Schmidt 2016a.
[321] See "Art Workers between Precarity and Resistance: A Genealogy" by Corina L. Apostol in Krikortz et al. 2015, 108.
[322] Peter Bürger 1974, 19-20.

criticality which challenges the given structures within artistic production – and even, with this criticality, threatens its own very existence.[323]

When reading the infrastructural performance of the network, it displays the technologies of subejctivation within artistic practice: how an artist subject becomes individualised, hyper- or immobile and exhausted due to working conditions. But it also proposes a range of performative technologies of assembly and promotes the possibility of change by reclaiming social relationality in times of structural precarity.

Continuing from Berlant's idea of the affective level of precarity uttered in situation tragedies, I propose that infrastructural performance is a *reaction* to the loss. It is not just an experience of an individual situation tragedy, but the reaction and answer to the situation tragedy: A disturbing and disobedient, collective reaction to structural precarity. This answer to structural precarity is a new affective state of collective optimism against the backdrop of individual situation tragedies: The activity of cobratheater.cobra is proposing a hope for political change in assembly. The infection is good: after fever comes strength.

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[323] A few months after the performance of cobratheater.cobra, the documentation video on the website of *Really Useful Theatre* was taken away, censored by the members of cobratheater.cobra themselves. In the continuous critical practice of the network, they agreed to take the documentation away from public accessibility, "due to statements made during the performance that could be misconstrued as racist" (still-statement inserted in videodocumentation of the evening at Kampnagel, http://usefultheater.de/really-useful-theater-auf-kampnagel/). cobratheater.cobra's identity is defined by constant criticality in terms of peers reviewing before going public. Yet the performance was censored after the show. Through correspondences by email with the curator Stefanie Wenner as well as Caroline Gerlach herself, I learned that the racist uttering was found in the way Gerlach describes a mask worn in one of the snap chat videos. Whether she or the software provides the racialising language is arguable. But the consequences of this utterance, which was anything but central in the dramaturgy or focus of the performance, caused the 10 cobra-collaborators to decide – after months of email and skype conferences – to invest the fee for the performance of 1300 Euro in a 3-day professionally moderated racism-sensitive conflict conversation for 9 of the 10 cobras (one did not participate in this so-called 'white space'). Moving away from criticising precarity, the cobras ended up in a new precarity: spending unpaid hours evaluating an unpaid job. What came out of their engagement with critical whiteness (self)studies, will hopefully be discussed and published elsewhere. But the critical practice of self-evaluation can be described as a central *modus operandi* in structural precarity: staying with the trouble in a double sense, criticising and optimising at one's own expense. What is more, the actual artwork is no longer accessible. The possible surplus value which it could attain through attention online, as well as the critique of structural precarity and knowledge sharing, which it actually exercised, are deleted. This article records the memorable work.

CHAPTER THREE
COLLECTIVE RESPONSES

What does it mean to act together when the conditions for acting together are devastated or falling away?

Judith Butler (2015, 23)

The Performance Art Collective[324]

Performance theorist Jon McKenzie claimed in *Perform or Else* (2001) that performance art challenges norms such as race, gender, class, borders of bodies and nations. Looking at the landscape of performance art within theatre history from the 1960s until today, the presence of collectives is remarkable. Through its many versions of collective work, performance art challenges the limits and possibilities of sociality and organisation, i.e. it conducts something like research into the foundations of democracy. I propose to operate with the performance art collective as a model so as to pay particular attention when reflecting on how to cope with structural inequalities. I perceive the performance art collective as performative rather than representative, both within the art institution and in a societal context. Like the assembly theorised by Butler, the performance art collective produces "ideals of equality and interdependency that may well be transposed onto larger national and global contexts".[325] In that sense, I suggest transposing the conflicts from the single performance art collective to its historical context.

A I understand it, artists' collectives – across theatre, performance art, visual arts, literature and music as well as interdisciplinary – are groups that have chosen each other as colleagues and are continuously working together. Opposed to temporary collaborations, artists' collectives stay together over years, across projects. As opposed to theatre ensembles, there is no casting or audition or scouting in order to put the members together. Artists' collectives institutionalise their sociality of production, meaning that they consolidate the social structure from which they produce. The self-institutionalised artists' collectives have, in theatre history, lead to an independent scene of producing

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[324] A shorter version of this section and the two following sections have been published as a part of the peer reviewed article: Schulz, Schmidt, Lebech: "Reclaim Challenge: Rethinking the Critical Impact of an Education of Performance Art in Denmark" in *Nordic Theatre Studies Journal*, vol. 30:2 (2018), 40–60. The part quoted here is solely authored by myself.
[325] Butler 2015, 137, see also the section on "Sociality as Assembly".

groups: independent in the sense that they initiate their own works rather than wait for the theatre director to call and ask them to clock in to the institution.[326]

Artists' collectives often operate towards a common goal, either aesthetically or politically, or both. Intendedly or not, thematised in artistic works and published on websites, articulated in artists' talks or kept secret, artists' collectives have an inherent ongoing production and exposure of what keeps people together, what 'keep things going' and what challenges their continuation. Both infrastructures within the art institutions, daily practices and rhythms, affective bonds, concepts about the role of art and political positioning keep collectives together. The 'glue' of collectives can be identified both on the side of reception and production, albeit my primary interest is the side of production.

How are artists' collectives distributing and sharing their resources in work schedules, in the organisation of tasks and skills, in rehearsal spaces, in credit lists, on bank accounts? The performance art collective, the theatre collective and the artists' collective have been theorised within Theatre and Performance Studies as well as in Art History. Theatre scholar and performance artist Annemarie Matzke has theorised the ephemeral and publicly inaccessible rehearsal of performance art collectives and argues that they are fundamentally challenging and changing the structures of production and rehearsing. Similarly, theatre historian Kai van Eikels has given particular attention to the ways performance art collectives rehearse. He writes in his dissertation that "performance art can be a laboratory or practicing ground for forms of collective acting".[327] The art historians and critics Blake Stimson and Gregory Sholette claim that collectivism inevitably exposes and attacks "broader social and economic conditions of production" and thereby they draw an explicit line from the negotiations in the collective to the discussion of democracy.[328] I think it is crucial to conceptualise the performance art collective as both witnessing and (per)forming aesthetic and social paradigms: it exposes and changes structural conditions of working and living *together* in specific historical contexts.

Methodologically, I am primarily looking at the organisation of time and bodies in collective production. I look at compositions of groups, temporalities of work in the everyday, infrastructural performances within given production conditions as well as artistic statements. My description of an artists' collective can of course never be complete since I do not have an insight in the daily discussions, nor in all the work done by the groups. A total mapping of a collective would

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[326] Annemarie Matzke claims that the independence of theatre collectives, having each other as unquestionable and continuous sociality of production, is a protection against the needed flexibility and networking otherwise demanded from artists collaborating from project to project. Cf. Annemarie Matzke, *Arbeit am Theater* (Bielefeld: transcript verlag, 2012), 279.
[327] Eikels 2013, 5.
[328] Stimson & Scholette 2007, 11.

demand a completely different methodology to mine, probably longer periods of participant observation and interviews over years.[329]

Collectives Challenging Structural Precarity

Collectives in performance art history have distinct chapters from their massive flowering in the 1960s to the present moment. In order to both understand the historical differences but also the continuation of the political work across performance art collectives, I propose a periodisation. A periodisation of performance art collectives is of course difficult since all groups migrate between theatre traditions, continents and decades.[330] My suggestion is to call the first wave of European and American collectives departing from the late 1960s to the 1970s *director-driven*. This category stars groups such as The Living Theatre (1947 (!) –2015) with Julian Beck and Judith Malina; The Performance Group (1967-1975) with Richard Schechner, which then became The Wooster Group (1975–) with Elizabeth LeCompte; Ontological-Hysteric Theatre (1968–) with Richard Foreman; and even the later Forced Entertainment (1984–) with Tim Etchells and Needcompany (1986–) with Jan Lauwers and Grace Ellen Barkley.[331] These collectives could be described broadly as developing their own practices and (cross)media aesthetics, working continuously together, devising material together yet centred around a director as the artistic 'outside eye'. Compared to traditional theatres where text-based dramas and hierarchies in staff are at the core of the institution, the contribution of the director-driven collectives is a high conjuncture of what is called the "*création* collective" in theatre: the reorganisation of the sociality in production and the group-based development of early post-dramatic aesthetics.[332] Yet, as my categorisation implies, the director-driven collectives show a transitional movement in history away from the single-authored *Regietheater* (German for director's theatre), towards non-hierarchical

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[329] Annemarie Matzke comes probably the closest to the ambition of describing and analysing the dynamics of collectives from the inside in her book on rehearsals which is informed by her own experience as a member of the performance art collective She She Pop. See Matzke 2012.

[330] I concentrate on groups working during the period when performance art was established as an independent and vivid genre in theatre history, i.e. from the 1960s and onwards.
However, I could also have departed from collectives already in the core of *commedia dell'arte* (Mic 1980 in Matzke 2012) or at the beginning of the 20th century in the cross-medial, temporary collaborations between pioneers of the historical *avant gardes*. The performances in the 1910–20s grew out of environments and were collaborations between significant signatures from different art fields. An example is *Parade* (1917) by Picasso, Satie, and Cocteau. As Art Historian Jens Tang Kristensen has described, from the 1930s onwards collectives within fine arts in Denmark also developed political formations who redistributed money, attention and access to art amongst each other and to those needing, such as unemployed workers. A collective like Corner, established in 1932, both lived and worked as collective and were simultaneously – similar to artists' collectives today – politically active in activism and resistance outside the arts. Cf. Jens Tang Kristensen, "Nedslag i de kollektive kunstnergruppers opstand og forfald 1930-1989," in *Peripeti 31* (forthcoming 2020).

[331] If I were to write about theatre collectives and not particularity collectives identifying with performance art, I could of course also point to Odinteatret (1964–) with Euginio Barba and Théâtre du Soleil (1964–) with Ariane Mnoushkine.

[332] The notion of *création* collective dates back to *comedia dell'arte* in theatre history and is revised by Annemarie Matzke as an ongoing trait of all theatre groups identifying as collectives in the 20th and 21st Centuries. Cf. Matzke 2012, 272.

structures: they are collectives and they actively attack the powerful position of the director, but they still have one.[333] Politically, many of the collectives in the 1960s and 1970s explicitly identify with a utopia of revolution where the work in the collective is perceived as a "permanent revolution", the first concrete step toward societal change, albeit also as a circular movement of ongoing struggle as the core of collective work.[334]

The second wave I would call *discourse-driven* in the sense that they are associated with and aesthetically negotiating academic discourse within Theatre and Performance Studies.[335] Here, prominent European groups are Norwegian Baktruppen (1986–2008) and Verk Produksjoner (1998–) and the collectives founded during their studies of Applied Theatre Studies in Giessen: Gob Squad (1994–), Showcase Beat Le Mot (1997–), She She Pop (1998–), Monster Truck (2006–), and others. The fact of being a collective is very much becoming the problem investigated aesthetically and socio-politically for these discourse-driven groups. They are explicitly working with and for a non-hierarchical structure; they refer to performance art history and theatre collectives as their traditions, depart from a critique of representation and challenge conventional aesthetic perceptions of time, narration, spectatorship and space.

The third wave of performance art collectives could be defined as *structure-challenging* in the sense of being informed and formed by structural precarity within independent, freelance cultural production and therefore grouping as a way of securing each other structurally and criticising inconstant and individualist working conditions. The third wave is a tentative categorisation of a tendency amongst young performance art collectives still 'in the making'. Here, I could mention the aesthetically diverse and organisationally refreshing cobratheater.cobra, Breakfast Club Collective, DANSEatelier and ongoing project which have all emerged out of educations of performance art in Denmark and Germany within the last five years. Additionally, the recent Danish collectives Marronage, Feminist Collective with No Name (FCNN) and The Union, all collectives gathered in resistance to different versions of structural racism, proposing a decolonising practice across the arts and political activism, are organised to challenge and change racist logics within artistic production. Where the first mentioned collectives explicitly address an unjust distribution of rights and privileges

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[333] I write 'still' since most collectives forming in the later years, especially in Germany, explicitly distance themselves from the role of the director. That a collective can institutionalise equality when having a director is impossible, according to Matzke, who exemplifies how Ariane Mnoushkine becomes the most privileged and heard artist in *Théâtre du Soleil*, despite her good intentions of non-hierarchical collective creation. Groups after the *director-driven* collectives define themselves in opposition to the logic of synthesising and sorting the artistic work from a traditionally powerful, 'more knowing' and spectating position from 'outside.' Instead, they propose an artistic process of research where the material and the collective mind guide the decisions. Cf. Matzke 2012, 274, 277, 278.

[334] Matzke 2012, 271.

[335] Obviously, the Giessen collectives have been informed by the Institute of Applied Theatre Studies. The Norwegian groups have been connected to the strong tradition of Theatre Studies around Knut Ove Arntzen in Bergen.

within artistic production under neoliberal conditions, the latter three are likewise formed and informed by institutional standardisation and structural precarity, and explicitly criticise the alliance between capitalism, nationalism and colonialism.

When looking at the current landscape of artistic educations implementing the Bologna Process, a structural individualisation corresponding to the neoliberal economisation is taking place: students collect their ECTS points individually, they go alone abroad on *Erasmus*-exchanges, they are – in study regulations – often told to develop their own aesthetics and they graduate with individual BA- or MA-projects. Simultaneously, a careerist hype is built up from the surrounding theatre institutions, presenting students' work as professional work – without wages, with less production means – which urges the students to fit conventional and 'tour-able' formats, i.e. to have a name/brand, to fit into a one-hour show, to reduce the volume of the set design and the number of performers.

Altogether, the one point of departure across the structure-challenging collectives can be said to be responding to structural precarity. "What constitutes continuity amid the pressure of structural inconstancy?" Lauren Berlant has asked, regarding the structural precarity of work in neoliberal regimes.[336] And I might continue: What constitutes focused, sustainable and socially dependent artistic work in times of imperative individualism and careerism? The third wave performance art collectives propose ways of performing critically from within and re-forming the economic, temporal and social conditions around the production of art. Instead of focusing on the aesthetics of reception, they operate with the aesthetics of production as material to mould. In various ways, the groups actively resist the conventions of individualisation, recognisability – in authorship and concerning race – and governable behaviour through what I have defined as infrastructural performance.

Resistance towards structural precarity can have different forms: resistance can be critical – laying bare problems without solving them – and it can actively intervene in and change its own conditions. In the following sections, I will exemplify how the infrastructural performances by artists' collectives both challenge, attack and change structural precarity. First, I will exemplify how members of the German collective ongoing project form their temporal and economic organisation through the passion-free principle of *pragmatism* which is a way of sustaining sociality and solidarity within the collective. Afterwards, I will turn to infrastructural performances by the Danish collectives FCNN and The Union proposing visibility and a continuous sociality of BIPOCs[337] within the art institution.

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[336] Berlant 2011b, 69.
[337] BIPOCs are Black, Indigenous and People of Colour. I consequently use this category instead of POCs (People of Colour), since it is the term used by The Union officially. However, I sometimes quote the category POC if from the artists' own vocabulary.

Throughout the analyses, it will be my claim that structural precarity is responded to in ways of organising time and bodies in the artists' collective.

Pragmatism Beats Passion

Conventional and market-fitting: when scrolling down the website of the performance art collective ongoing project, it seems like a regular performance group of seven members with a normal – or relatively high – production of 'projects'.[338] In the short biography of the group on the website, the important educational institutions are mentioned and accompanied by a list of the prominent venues the group has worked with. In the right margin of the website, they have a roll of *tweets* mentioning their latest successes: a good review or a prize they have won. ongoing project obviously 'plays the game' in the sense of providing the information which gives market value to performance art makers. They belong to a generation who knows how to promote themselves and work with social media which in itself demands communicative and marketing skills.

ongoing project has a quite unspectacular biography compared to collectives from the discourse-driven and aesthetically positioned second wave of performance groups.[339] Put in a polemical way, there is really nothing 'sexy', 'creative' or 'radical' in the aesthetic appearance of the collective. ongoing project seems rather normal and representative for a new generation of producers in the cultural industry. Yet, one thing is remarkable in the biography: ongoing project sees itself as an agent from the political left and has a sort of mission statement which is concerned with class and artistic work, aiming for a revolutionary practice:

> Our work contributes to clarify the concept of art in order to support the formation of theory and strategy, which are both demanded by a revolutionary practice. In this context works concerning the avant-garde and the theory of class, state, and performance are arising. In doing so, we will also take into account both the methodological problems of such theories as well as their reflections in strategies of revolutionary groups.[340]

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[338] Many artists have avoided using the term *project* as a categorisation of artistic works since Bojana Kunst analysed the problematics of the projective living of performance artists: always working in temporalities of projecting the future through application and creating the past through documentation, rather than working in/on the present. See for example Kunst 2013 and Kunst 2015.

[339] See for example the biographies on websites such as the funny and decadent western movie quote, which figures as 'the biography' of Monster Truck, or the laid back, virtuous-cool manifesto of Showcase Beat Le Mot: "when they rehearse, it looks as if they are sleeping, and vice versa" (my translation). Cf. http://monstertrucker.de/about/ and http://relaunch.showcasebeatlemot.de/de/showcasebeatlemot/about (accessed 27.12.2018).

[340] http://ongoing-project.org/index_about.html

This statement shows that the discourse-driven second wave has obviously not finished. The critical and theoretically informed tradition from Giessen – now probably also influenced by Bojana Kunst being professor there – shines through. When looking at the artistic outcome of ongoing project, they are focused on Marxist problems and often the projects take place in suburbs or smaller cities, involving social groups other than artists. In 2017, they arranged a colloquium on the rediscovery of class awareness: 11 discursive sessions with speakers from feminist theory and social science, social workers, artists, activists and sex workers. But how does the political leftish content transfer into the organisation of ongoing project?

In an interview about the organisation of work I did with Alexander Bauer, one of the seven members of ongoing project, he kept repeating the word 'pragmatic': that the collective seeks pragmatic solutions for working continuously together, which means to live close to each other, have a common space to meet, have two days of *jours fixes* for theory reading and discussions.[341] This could be an answer to the question posed by Berlant: "What constitutes continuity amid the pressure of structural inconstancy?": ongoing project has established a 'normal' working day structure which opposes the 24/7 temporality of constant availability in freelance work. It is more predictable than passionate. Berlant describes the freelancer as a character preferring "entrepreneurial precarity (…), giving 'herself to the dream' ".[342] Being passionate is the petrol of the freelancer in the cultural sector. Kathi Weeks traces the figure of *passion* back to the imperative *love* of reproductive work criticised by feminists in the 1970s. The reproductive work in the household has been mystified and difficult to criticise, since feelings have covered "the role of economic motives and utilities".[343] The figure of the happy housewife is a fantasy figure "that erases the signs of labor under the signs of happiness", Sara Ahmed notes.[344] Similarly, I could say that the passionate artist is a fantasy figure and their intimate romance with work makes them maximise their performance, while self-realisation, love and passion pay off as salary, and shadow the need for workers' rights. ongoing project performs organisational pragmatism as a form of resistance towards the professional demands of passionate freelance work. Their critique manifests itself in organisational performance rather than in aesthetics: in their everyday, the members secure time together for caring for the sociality and for common thinking. The infrastructural performance of ongoing project I will describe as a 'normalised' temporality in the everyday of artistic work and a distribution of tasks among the members. It is a political positioning

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[341] The interview was conducted on skype by Cecilie Ullerup Schmidt on 20 March 2018.
[342] Gibson quoted in Berlant 2011b, 76.
[343] Stimson & Sholette 2007, 11.
[344] Ahmed 2010, 573.

within Marxist discourse starring the worker as an agent of change, and it is promotion of the pragmatic solutions as a weapon against the speculation in passion.

When the artists collectively become pragmatic instead of passionate, all that is air has to become solid again: regular hours, salary and basic rights are in demand.[345] As an example, ongoing project distributes parallel tasks in order to secure a basic income for its members. Rather than all seven being present in every decision, the collective takes on several parallel projects in order to earn enough livelihood for its seven members. Seen from a critical perspective, I could propose that ongoing project functions like a brand for its artists in the 'collective': as opposed to the processes and discussions worked through together in the discourse-driven second wave of performance art collectives and theorised by Annemarie Matzke from She She Pop, ongoing project divides the work in order to take up several parallel projects in the collective. However, I would claim that ongoing project is also suffering from the hype of the collective that the second wave of performance art collectives has co-created:[346] collectives are wanted by curators but not fully financed in the budgets. Bauer uncovers a structural problem of the much-desired collective work: "No one pays seven fees, rather two or three". The distribution of tasks between the members consequently, as I read it, becomes a response to the imbalance between the immaterial value of 'collective' and precarious pay.

The need for professional pay under professional circumstances had already been a demand of ongoing project during their studies in Giessen. As a critique of the increasing professionalisation of the art student, the seven members – together with peers from Giessen – chose to perform a students' strike at Maxim Gorki in 2013. The Maxim Gorki Theatre invited theatre students to take part in the project *Rehearse Revolution* in their Easter holidays, advertising the unpaid offer to the students as "an opportunity for participating artists to present themselves without pressure", while the theatre had a paying audience looking for "young talents".[347] This interpellation of unpaid, careerist subjection was answered by the students with a public calculation on the main stage of

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[345] "Pragmatism is the care of the possible", philosopher Isabelle Stengers has proposed. I perceive her definition of pragmatism as 'a way of caring for and being cautious of the small, everyday infrastructures at hand'. However, Stengers' 'the possible' (in French "*possibles*") is not meant as 'what is at hand, now,' but rather her philosophy aims at the future, speculating on what could be possible later on, potentially. Therefore, although it is tempting to think with her statement – as does Lotte Løvholm in a curatorial way in her exhibition *The Care of the Possible* in Basel 14.9.2019–12.10.2019, including works of FCNN – I will remain with pragmatism as an opposition to passion within the feminist discourse and as theorised by Weeks. Cf. "The Care of the Possible. Isabelle Stengers interviewed by Eric Bordeleau" in Lotte Løvholm, *Le Soin des Possibles. The Care of the Possible* (Basel: 2019), 32.

[346] Professor in Theatre Studies Meike Wagner discusses how Applied Theatre Studies in Giessen and the expectations of collective creation has become marketised, in Mieke Wagner, "Expanding the Canon, Creating Alternative Knowledge, Marketing the Field," in *Nordic Theatre Studies Journal*, Vol. 28, no.1 (2016), 4-14.

[347] The Boycott-Group, "DER AUFSTAND IST NICHT GESPIELT – THE OCCUPATION OF THE MAXIM GORKI THEATRE," in *The Public Commons and the Undercommons of Art, Education and Labor. The Reader,* edited by Stefan Apostolou-Hölscher et. Al. (eds), (Frankfurt am Main: Justus Liebig University, Gießen, 2013), 22.

the expenses it cost them to take this 'opportunity'. The calculation of exploited 'opportunists' was followed by a strike, a plenary session, a staged court case as well as further talks between students, audiences and the theatre management.

The programme of Applied Theatre Studies in Giessen has – as an artistic programme within a university – since 2008 been navigating within the structures of the Bologna Process. Furthermore, it has a tradition of critical self-inquiry towards the logics of one's own production. Students in Giessen are discursively and aesthetically informed and active within a sincere critique of both their conditions of study and future professional imperatives. Yet, as professor of Theatre Studies in Stockholm Meike Wagner has pointed out, there is also an increased awareness of branding, marketing and professionalisation in the field of applied performance and theatre studies.[348] Has discursive virtuosity and criticality become a value in itself?

The Bologna Process – individualisation, standardisation, mobility – and increased early professionalisation within artistic education are important contexts in order to understand the proposal of ongoing project. I would call the anti-spectacular pragmatism of the collective a sort of critical 'answer' or response to exactly the professionalisation of the studies as well as the imperative intimate, unpaid relationship with work in the independent theatre scene. The website, the biography, the tweets, the administration of parallel tasks in one brand and the basic income model could all be read as signs of highly professionalised self-marketing and distribution. Polemically, I would ask if this organisational performance is then just a strategy to become resilient in the neoliberal art market? However, together with the insistence on spending time together, I also read this as a way of protecting the social structure of the collective. The sociality is what is being taken care of structurally when the performance art collective starts working 9–5: the sociality is protected by a temporal structure of regularity and repetition. To meet again and again with the same few people, rather than socialising with a broad network, is a way of building resistant sociality and avoid exhaustion.

As the Maxim Gorki Theatre invited the young theatre students to work unpaid on their own projects at the theatre in Berlin, the theatre director claimed that "Art is revolution or nothing".[349] A member of ongoing project and participant in the art students' strike answered:

Art is revolution or it is nothing. Revolution is the re-cultivation of all social relations. Ergo art is re-cultivation of all social relations. The conclusion is that art only exists as an emerging practice that has a consequence on all conditions. Because of that, art is

[348] Wagner 2016, 11.
[349] The Boycott-Group 2013, 25.

impossible in this society as it exists, ergo: there is no art.[350]

With this cryptic answer the students say no to a cultivation of artistic talent on exploiting premises.

Through the infrastructural performance of younger performance art collectives, I see how the very form of performance art collectives has shifted from being aesthetically and discursively challenging to being also organisationally challenging by becoming 'normal' and pragmatic, rather than ground-breaking, provocative, radical and passionate. Reclaiming normality, it seems, has become a sustainable answer to the structural precarity of artistic work. The normality of work can here be understood as a regularity and a maximum of hours and a sum of rights: the right to vacation, the right to pension, the right to paid sick leave and parental leave, the right to rest between work, but also the right to study and not be professional during education. At the historical point where structural precarity and demands on passionate work has forced freelancers to give up rights and work 24/7, it is the expropriated workers who demand the right to live a liveable life based on this 'normality'.

Who is in the Classroom?

When reclaiming normality, it seems to me that the conditions of 'normality' are being appropriated by people outside what is conceived as norm-giving. The temporal normality of 9–5 that ongoing project appropriates comes from a standard rhythm of work outside the arts. It is in my regard questionable whether the 'normality' is an import of a temporal structure – something new to the performance artists producing in the independent theatre scene – or a historical re-claiming – something their ancestors have experienced before in the history of German workers. When ongoing project rediscovers class and workers' rights they do it within a German context and a somewhat white history of workers in unions outside the arts. The historical reference to a lost 'normality' makes me pose the question: Who has the capacity, voice, cultural heritage and position to *re*claim normality? In the following, I will shed light on the assumption of 'normal' conditions inherent in problematic imperatives of mobility and internationalisation within education and artists' lives.

In the book *Death of a Discipline* (2003) professor in Literary Theory Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak rightly questions who is in the classroom while she is teaching Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*. When revising one's teaching and the future of an academic discipline – Spivak writes about the future fate of Comparative Literature and calls for an interdisciplinarity of Cultural Studies – not only the curriculum and canon when teaching must be revised, but also the composition of students in the classroom must be considered. I might add that, likewise, the composition of teaching, administrative

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[350] Ibid.

and directing staff in education has to be reflected on. Otherwise, an excluding 'normality' of whiteness in academia and in higher artistic education is most likely to continue.

The classroom is, to come back to Butler's terminology, a performative group of bodies: temporary, recomposing, renewing, altering status quo.[351] Despite institutional admissions and through that a pre-selection or curating of the composition, the classroom is a semi-contingent coming together of people who have not chosen each other. It is a space that can produce unchosen antagonism and conflict. The classroom can potentially become a small democratic space of negotiations and disagreements but it can also be homogeneous and consensual. The classroom is a curated group and it potentially has a performative force, it can even become an assembly as was the case of the class at HZT that became Breakfast Club Collective after their graduation. But the classroom can also, as it is often the case in higher education in Denmark, be a continued space of white, national, middleclass privilege.[352]

It is not within my capacity to write about representation of BIPOCs within the cultural industry in general, nor do I have the necessary academic overview of the research within Migration and Diversity Studies.[353] But since I have observed infrastructural performances by artists' collectives working on structural racism within the last two years in Denmark, I want to develop further the question of composition in the classroom by focusing on mobility as a privilege – not in the sense of class mobility within one country but in the sense of moving across national borders and across institutions as an art student and artist worker. The classroom composition as well as the ability to move in and out of it have to be considered in order to address structural racism as a specific nuance of the structural precarity of art students and cultural workers in Denmark and the EU more generally.

I have already stressed how professional artists are suffering from forced mobility – with references to Kunst and Verwoert – when the temporality of work is rhythmised by the residency or festival invitation, and the artist is travelling from residency to residency, from gig to gig. And in my analysis on the inequality of mobility amongst the cobratheater.cobra members where Gerlach as the only member is immobilised by rules imposed when receiving public benefits, I have shown how the

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[351] I would not define the classroom as an assembly, since the Butlerian concept of the assembly is attached to activist groups and political movements uniting – from their own initiative – by necessity.

[352] I here want to draw attention to the explicit curation against BIPOC loneliness at the Malmö Theatre Academy who at their admissions for the acting class has 5 BIPOCs in a class of 12 students. The institution explicitly has 'inclusion' as a recruitment strategy and collaborates with the Folkshighschool Fridhem – a school working with young people with migrant background - on qualifying students for the admissions, see "Breddad rekrytering" (in Swedish) at https://www.thm.lu.se/om-oss/organisation/inklusion (accessed 10.6.19).

[353] I want to direct the reader's attention towards research publications by colleagues in my department, Department of Arts and Cultural Studies at the University of Copenhagen, who deal with post-migration, representation, and racialisation such as Mathias Danbolt, Anna Meera Gaonkar, Sabrina Vitting-Seerup, and Anne Ring Petersen, to all of whom I am grateful for keeping exactly these research areas vivid and in close contact with the Danish colonial amnesia.

imperative of mobility in freelance work is causing structural off-line isolation from the sociality of the artists' collective. In that respect, I would say that the freelance artist experiences structural loneliness due to imperatives of flexible production, mobility and competition.

Yet this suffering, described above, under forced (im)mobility in the context of freelance production can be nuanced though the decolonising question "Who is able to move?"[354] To have both the freedom to move and to be forced to move in order to be able to work is a paradox of Western cultural workers: first, one has to have the right to cross borders with a European passport and through European subsidies; and second, of course, one has to have the privilege to be selected, invited as an artist to residencies and venues, where there are subsidies and infrastructures for artistic production. Forced mobility is a 'problem' assuming an artist's freedom to move. But the ability to move is for the invited artist or art student with an EU passport.[355] This privilege is not universal.

In the Bologna Process, two main goals are mobility and internationalisation in higher education. A goal formulated for 2020 by the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) is that at least 20% of the graduating bachelor students in Europe have spent a term abroad.[356] The assumption in the Bologna Process is that mobility is good for all students. The impetus of mobility and internationalisation, however, is not the well-being or development of the single student. The motivation is competitiveness of European knowledge production on a global scale. The operating body of higher education in the EU, EHEA states:

> Mobility and internationalisation have been among the central objectives and main policy areas of the Bologna Process and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) from the very beginning. The Bologna Declaration (1999) set out "the objective of increasing the international competitiveness of the European system of higher education" and pointed out the need "to ensure that the European higher education system acquires a world-wide degree of attraction".[357]

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[354] Thank you, peer PhD student Anna Meera Gaonkar for reminding me at my pre-defence: the freedom and obligation to move is a Western, partly white, privilege.

[355] To be privileged with mobility due to an EU-passport was already thematised in Serbian Tanja Ostojic's durational performance *Looking for a Husband with EU Passport* (2000–2005) where she changed her "private and individual concern to a public and social matter", cf. Rune Gade, "Making Real. Strategies of performing performativity in Tanja Ostojic's *Looking for a Husband with a EU Passport*" in *Performative Realism. Interdisciplinary Studies in Art and Media,* edited by Rune Gade & Anne Jerslev (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2005), 203.

[356] See "Mobility strategy 2020 for the European Higher Education Area" (2012), https://www.cmepius.si/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/2012-EHEA-Mobility-Strategy.pdf (accessed 4.6.2019).

[357] Cited from the Working Group on Mobility and Internationalisation in EHEA: http://www.ehea.info/cid105326/wg-mobility-and-internationalisation-2012-2015.html (accessed 2.9.2019).

No need to argue that studying in other educational contexts abroad can be both artistically inspiring and enlightening. But the motivation for mobility and internationalisation from the policymaking organ is a capitalist argument of competitiveness. The reason to move for the individual is to strengthen Europe's position globally. Structurally, mobility is distributed and likewise withdrawn by the power of the nation state and – in the case of the EU – its allies. Students within the EU can be at exchange in partner institutions in other EU countries and get additional support by the *Erasmus* subsidies connected to European higher education. To be international and on the move as an art student or a freelance artist is in other words a privilege of the EU citizen: either as the student inscribed in the institution of higher artistic education, or as the freelance artist who can support themself, and who is not, like Gerlach, dependent on social benefits. To be an *Erasmus* student on an international exchange is a practice of mobility both privileged and complicit with capitalist competitiveness. To be a cultural worker freelancing (and earning one's living from it) with an EU passport is serving a model of a subject responsible for her own business, successfully living the neoliberal conditions of flexibility and self-management. What kinds of critique of this alliance between national privilege, neoliberal flexibility and capitalist competitiveness can be uttered and organised?

In the following, I take a closer look at new assemblies questioning the whiteness and structural exclusion of BIPOCs in the art institution. I will analyse how alliances between students and artists of colour stress particular experiences of structural loneliness due to institutional racism and imperatives of mobility as well as internationalisation within the policies of higher artistic education and in professional freelance production.

Assembly Against Loneliness

In the period 2016–2019 I have observed infrastructural performances by new collectives gathered around the specific structural precarity of BIPOCs and queer racialised positions in Denmark.[358] In a Danish context, structural precarity of BIPOCs has to do with the lack of accessibility to cultural institutions, curatorial racism, absence of non-white voices and the invisibility of colonial heritage in the Danish public discourse. On the level of organisation and artistic intervention these collectives have a kinship with other structure-challenging collectives already described. By analysing the practice of

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[358] A related predecessor is the artist collective Unidentified Foreign Object Laboratory (UFOlab) who in their practice 2004–2010 criticised transnational adoption. They worked with strategic separatism being five women who as children were adopted from South Korea to live in Denmark and Sweden. The group performed masked and continuously questioned the whiteness norm. Their most important contribution is how they connected the particular experiences and affects of adoption to "structural issues of global inequality, racism, colonial history, diasporic identity, and migration policy" (my translation), see Lene Myong, "Et laboratorium for de uidentificerbare og fremmede objekter: Om UFOlabs bidrag til at udforme en adoptionskritisk epistemologi" in *Kunst og Kultur* 03/2018 (nr. 101)

Feminist Collective with No Name (FCNN) and with a perspectivation to The Union, I want to show how their infrastructural performances can be understood in line with and as an addendum to other artists' collectives and networks already presented.

The trio FCNN is a collective of activist artists working across performance, statements, interventions and video. In collaboration with colleagues, FCNN creates amongst others a media platform of counter-news with queer and BIPOC-hosts covering acts of institutional racism, media misrepresentation and policies of exclusion. The media platform is called *FCNNNews*, also known as the "Fuck CNN News" and consists – until this moment of writing – of two episodes of approximately 15 minutes. FCNN writes about their broadcast:

> FCNNNews is a news platform and curatorial project initiated by Feminist Collective with No Name. The platform is born out of the adverse misrepresentation of POCs in the art industry and mainstream media – everything from "de-ghettofying" areas in urban spaces to traumatic defeat and most importantly to public and institutional racism.[359]

FCNN was founded while the three artists were studying or graduating from different Danish artistic educations in 2016. The facts about the constitution during study- and graduation time and the affiliation with the schools are not central to the self-written biography of FCNN, yet I think that the loneliness of the student of colour in art education is an affective experience that the group implicitly and explicitly refers to. I would even suggest that the loneliness of the artist of colour might be one of the affective bonds of this collective. Both the loneliness in the art academy, in the media and in the museum are explicitly addressed in FCNN's works and statements. In *FCNNNews Episode 1* (2018) a member of the collective interviews the art student Eliyah Mesayer who puts the structural precarity of the lonely student of colour into words:

> You take my spirit when you befriend me for my colour and you don't really see me. Or, that I am a filling up a folder in the institution. That you don't recognize my loneliness of being different, the only woman of colour.[360]

What Mesayer and more generally *FCNNNews* create is solidary visibility and common space for reflection on structural racism for BIPOCs in the art scene. In my own experience from teaching,

[359] From "About," https://fcnnnews.love/.
[360] Eliyah Mesayer, student of fine arts at The Jutland Art Academy, in *FCNNNews Episode 1* (2018), 11:05-11:42.

assessing and observing assessments at art education in Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Germany in recent years, the student of colour has often been alone in the classroom. From an observer's position, it could sometimes look like a quota representation of one person of colour per class which Mesayer also refers to as a feeling of "filling up a folder in the institution". My analysis of the phenomenon of the sole student of colour is that it is counter-productive for the artistic development and personal well-being of the student to be alone in this position, both isolated and stereotyped into a generalised BIPOC-identity without a personal history.

The societal minority of students of colour in northern Europe is socially isolated within the white art institution, both structurally being too few, and socially due to lack of responsiveness from peers and staff. I have seen the above-mentioned problems of the isolated student in graduation works where collaborative possibilities and coaching have been restricted by the dominance of whiteness. Several graduation works have not dealt with being of colour although the students have actually had a strong desire for an articulation against racism and loneliness. The student of colour has found no allies of colour to collaborate with in the peer-group, nor allies of colour in the audience. Similarly, I have witnessed graduation works elaborating explicitly on specific black stories which then in the white institution finds no qualified, nor challenging feedback partners of colour in peers and staff. I would argue that white staff informed by, for example, Critical Whiteness Studies and Decolonial Studies would maybe be able to coach such works but apparently there has been either a lack of theoretical background for this, or the staff have had too much 'kind' respect for the BIPOC position and thereby have been paralysed as critical partners.[361] The lonely position of the student of colour costs affective work, often not being allowed to be either oneself as an individual or sometimes just obsolete. Rather, students of colour are often tokenised and expected to 'represent' a whole group of coloured people.[362]

Besides loneliness being a reoccurring phenomenon experienced by the neoliberal subject under the pressure of imperative mobility and constant individualised production, it is also experienced in a particular structural, racialised version by many individual students of colour in higher artistic education. Thinking about loneliness in relation to mobility, I would suggest that the loneliness of the students of colour is post-migratory[363] – in relation to travels in the past, prior to their studies, in

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[361] This overdose of 'kind' respect could be seen as a combination of 'white guilt' and 'white saviourism', i.e. that the teacher or coach at the art school is paralysed in their critique due to colonial guilt-feelings and an unproportional sense of benevolence towards BIPOCs. Thank you, peer PhD-student Sabrina Vitting-Seerup for naming those two complexes as references.

[362] The student of colour as representative not for herself, but for a whole 'race' has been theorised by Grada Kilomba in *Plantation Memories* (2008).

[363] I here deploy the term post-migratory descriptively: an experience that comes after travelling. I do not refer to 'postmigration' as a general societal condition in the 21st Century as does the recent German theatre scene around Ballhaus

childhood, as for Mesayer, or by predecessors – whereas the loneliness experienced by *Erasmus* students and professional (European) artists travelling from residency to residency is in relation to present travels. A student of colour can, in that respect, potentially experience a double loneliness: due both to demands of mobility and internationalisation in education and post-migration. The first form of loneliness is due to neoliberal individualisation: the individualisation of students through study regulations and professionalisation, and later, professional artists through funding possibilities and the myth of the autonomous artist moving freely from institution to institution, from one country to another. These structural conditions force the individual away from a continuous sociality. The sociality left behind due to professionalisation and the reproduction of 'autonomous' artistic mobility are the friendships, the family, the BIPOC community or even the peer group from the art academy. The second form of loneliness is a result of the mixture of underrepresentation and an inability to talk about colour in the art institution: the feeling of not matching the norm, of being a tokenised representative, is experienced alone, in isolation, with a post-migratory background and in a racialising milieu. The latter form of loneliness, being isolated in the classroom of the art institution, is what is addressed as a specific structural precarity experienced by BIPOCs reflected in *FCNNNews* and, I believe, has also informed the infrastructural performance of The Union.

Unsubcribing from Internationalism

The artists' organisation The Union is a monitor of the particular structural loneliness of BIPOCs in art institutions. It is a self-instituted "Cultural Workers Union for Black/ People of Colour" iterating the function of a union not as an expensive association with employed lawyers working on behalf of its members' rights in official negotiations, but as an action of joining forces in precarity. The Union was created in 2019 and some of the artists in both DANSEatelier and FCNN refigure here along with colleagues across dance, choreography, fine arts, music, fashion design and performance art. The declared goal of The Union is to unite BIPOC cultural workers against precarious working conditions, institutional racism and discrimination in Denmark:

> The purpose of The Union is to create networks between racialized workers, to secure better working conditions, and to confront racism and the lack of representation of Black and People of Colour within the Danish culture industry.[364]

Naunynstrasse and the Maxim Gorki Theatre, also elaborated on extensively by colleagues in the research group "Art, Culture and Politics in the 'Postmigrant Condition' ",conducted by Anne Ring Petersen and Moritz Schramm.
[364] Quoted from the facebook profile of The Union since the group has not yet launched a website: https://www.facebook.com/cwu.bpoc (accessed 7.6.19).

The establishing of The Union is in itself making visible – through the strategic separatism – the invisibilised bodies of BIPOCs in Denmark. The Union proposes an assembly which is not mirroring an already existing community or group but performatively constitutes a solidary platform for people of colour across indigenous, black, adopted and racialised identities. For a reader outside Danish society, the necessity to claim visibility for BIPOCs might seem surprising at this moment but in Denmark a silencing of colonial history, the prominence of exceptional Nordic "colour-blindness" and current flourishing racism in public discourse and policy is alarming.[365] First, it was not until the centenary of the sale of the Virgin Islands in 2017 that the public discourse has really concentrated on Denmark as a colonial and enslaving power between the years 1672–1917. Second, the Danish public has for long understood itself as an including and tolerant welfare state, or as art historian Mathias Danbolt has put it, an exceptional "moral superpower" of "generosity, equality, and care-taking".[366] And finally, as also addressed by *FCNNNews*, the Danish asylum policy underwent a paradigmatic shift in 2018 from integration of refugees and migrants to sending them 'home', and has invented 'ghettos' in order to stigmatise, survey and criminalise descendants of migrants. Consequently, it is not a coincidence that The Union assembled in 2018 in Denmark.

I want to reflect on FCNN and The Union by returning to the artistic education as a site of structural racism and loneliness. The relation between loneliness and structural racism in the promise of 'internationalism' is an issue described by the choreographer Fabiàn Augusto Barba. Barba has in recent years questioned what 'contemporary' and 'international' mean in artistic education, drawing on their experience as they moved from Quito to Brussels to become a student of the renowned dance school P.A.R.T.S.[367] Both in the dance curriculum and in the composition of teaching staff Barba notices a westernisation, a cultural colonisation. They describe their embodied assimilation moving from Quito to study dance in Brussels:

> I invested myself in a different kind of technical training, I was initiated into commerce with other ideas, I started pursuing and negotiating other ideals. I didn't improve my previously acquired technique; I put it on hold to focus on acquiring a new one. Thinking retrospectively about this, I have become convinced that an education in dance implies

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[365] For an elaborate discussion on the Danish colonial amnesia and its continued life in the reception of anti-racist performance see Mathias Danbolt & Lene Myong, "Det her skal alle da se!" in *Peripeti* 29/30 (2018), 56–71.
[366] Mathias Danbolt, "New Nordic Exceptionalism: Jeuno JE Kim and Ewa Einhorn's 'The United Nations of Norden' and Other Realist Utopias" in *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture,* vol. 8, no. 1 (2016), 4–5.
[367] P.A.R.T.S. is not implementing the Bologna Process until 2019, being one of the last institutions to align to the standards; this lateness is probably due to its highly esteemed reputation.

not only a technical education, but also an education in a way of thinking, a way of appreciating work (a way of enjoying or disliking dances), a way of interacting with the network in which one is educated: *a dance education is a way of inscribing oneself within a dance culture.*[368]

The artistic education into which Barba was inscribed at P.A.R.T.S. is dominated by white, Western teachers presenting the white, Western norm of what is contemporary in dance. Barba writes specifically about the cultural colonisation through the curriculum and the unicoloured, monocultural staff since in Brussels the classroom is very diverse. In a lecture given at the Malmö Theatre Academy in November 2018, Barba stressed how the concept of 'international' education was unidirectional: from the West to the rest.[369] At P.A.R.T.S. the crowd of students from different nations and cultures justified the 'international' as something global while the dance culture taught came through teachers from the US and central Europe mainly informed by post-modern dance (release technique, pedestrian walk, body-mind centring, contact improvisation etc.).

Thinking along with Barba's description of westernisation through education and the unidirectionality of internationalisation, I understand the infrastructural performances of FCNN and The Union as ways of *unsubscribing* from an aesthetic paradigm of white internationalism within Danish artistic educations and art institutions. The assemblies of FCNN and The Union are recultivating social relationships between bodies that have been physically separated and culturally colonised as well as assimilated within the white art institution.

Towards a Freedom of Interdependency

FCNNNews is not for you who believe in the freedom of art. FCNNNews is not for you who keep fighting for white supremacy. Either you are with us or you get out of our way.[370]

As this quotation from the beginning of the first episode of *FCNNNews* states, the work of FCNN is a critique of the continued dominance of the white, autonomous artist both uttered in speech and on an organisational level. With an aggressive attitude and in the fight against the whiteness norm, the three

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[368] Fabiàn Augusto Barba, "The Local Prejudice of Contemporary Dance" in Frederik Le Roy (ed.), *Documenta 34/2* (2016), 47.
[369] Barba gave the keynote lecture *International Schools for a Culturally-Specific Art Form?* at the seminar "Changing the Curriculum" at Malmö Theatre Academy on 13.11.2018, curated by Cecilie Ullerup Schmidt.
[370] *FCNNNews Episode 1* (2018), 01:11-01:31.

women and non-binary persons in FCNN call for both separation and – what I, with Butler, would call – interdependency. Butler writes about interdependency: "We might think that interdependency is a happy or promising notion, but it is often the condition for territorial wars and forms of state violence."[371] Interdependency is no hippie circle but rather a precarious condition and then, additionally, a strategic and affirmative performance of assembling across identities. When I analyse FCNN's invitation to 'be with' them, I interpret it as a call for interdependency, a solidary 'choice' of the already existing precarious and unchosen condition, of being dependent on each other's support, without a shared identification.

FCNN deals with structural violence experienced by queer and racialised bodies in Denmark for many centuries and particularly and continuously in the Danish art institution and in cultural policy. The problem is that the 'neighbour' is silenced and excluded. [372] They ask the viewer of *FCNN News* to 'be with' the historically silenced memories, the unfitting queers and the bodies of colour. FCNN seems to be angry, posing standing with their arms crossed, no smiles, and speaking directly into the camera, addressing the viewer. The affective utterance "or you get out of our way" I see as a strategic, feminist practice: An emotional argument not censoring or 'overcoming' one's anger but rather exposing that emotions are always-already there, even when – following black feminist Audre Lorde (1982) and later Sara Ahmed (2004) – 'neutrality' or the Kantian disinterest is performed. Their call for interdependency – 'be with us' – is no call for a hippie circle but an iteration of George Bush's "either you are with us or you are against us" slogan in the war on terror. For George Bush, the to 'be with' does not only mean to support the war in Afghanistan but to support Bush's white and colonising 'truth' about the free, democratic world, which the war is supposed to defend.[373] Yet the performativity is used by FCNN to erase the logic of being with or against, of being pro or anti-terrorist: FCNN asks the disagreeing part to be with, despite disagreement, or to go somewhere else, out of their way. They ask for time and room to speak, to be heard and be seen, instead of dialogue or antagonism. Being together means not being in consensus, but rather to live with, be in and highlight the shared conflict zone of unchosen 'neighbours'.

"Feminism's collective project might become then a way of responding to the pain of others," Ahmed proposes while intertextually responding to Susan Sontag's canonical essay (2003), in

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[371] Butler 2015, 120.

[372] The 'neighbour' is a word often used in the Middle East when talking about Israelis. The concept of unchosen neighbours – that is, the nomadic people without rights to land, stemming from Jewish culture, but today lived by Palestinians – is central in Butler's book on cohabitation, *Parting Ways* (2012). Butler's concept of the 'unchosen condition', living with the unchosen neighbours, not being privileged, is her point of departure for thinking about cohabitation and solidarity.

[373] I am here leaning on Sara Ahmed's discursive reading on Bush's 'be with' in *The Cultural Politics of Emotions* (New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 169.

order to escape internal battles within feminism either essentialising or universalising pain and suffering.[374] What is the point of departure for FCNN, is the revenant particular experiences of a structural precarity rather than the tokenised pain. The word "responding" is interesting, meaning to resonate, reflect and answer. And even, responding to the pain of others suggests first of all to see and listen, and then to answer. Responding is to 'be with' in the sense of listening, reading and seeing patterns. Responding does not necessarily mean to agree with or find common identity but responding is an action searching for common ground. What does it mean to be responding to the pain of others? From a feminist position it means to listen, analyse and politicise what is neglected, excluded, mystified and silenced.

FCNN consists of the visual artists Dina El Kaisy and Lil B. Wachmann and filmmaker Anita Beikpour. As a trio of two persons of colour and one white person, respectively female and non-binary, and in outspoken collaboration with transgendered and queer persons in *FCNNNews*, the composition of sociality is an act of different marginalised positions in concert. The website of *FCCNNews* shows a photo gallery of sixteen collaborators behind *FCCNNews* the broadcast, all represented with photo, name and individual website. The collaborators are more and less established fellow BIPOC and queer artists based in different countries. The collective's compositional answer to structural racism could be called solidarity across vulnerable positions or – as the group proposes in their bio themselves – intersectional, drawing on the term and critical feminist tradition coined by the lawyer and leading figure in Critical Race Studies Kimberlé Crenshaw in the late 1980s. Intersectionality for Crenshaw departs from analysing the particular violence experienced by poor, black women in the US. Intersectional analysis insists on the particularity of marginalised horizons, structurally silenced positions, looking into how they embody crossing or colliding precarious categories of class, gender and race. The formations of The Union and also Marronage are more explicitly groups of solely BIPOCs and could as organisations be said to exercise strategic separatism, a way of breaking consensual and normalised (white) communities in order to become visible and heard.

However, where most theories on racialised bodies would be concerned with the lack of representation and visibility, I propose a focus of the sociality: sociality as something active and constructed, both necessary and political in its composition. A theory on the materialist aesthetics of production includes amongst others an analysis of the sociality of artists: the familial relations, friendships, continuous colleagues and peers constitute such socialities of artists, probably disturbing but also conditioning artistic production. The private and personal dependency on others, whether it is credited or not, I claim as co-shaping in the aesthetics of production. The sociality of the artist consists

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[374] Ahmed 2004, 174.

of affective, attention-drawing, 'disturbing' and 'draining' relations for the seemingly autonomous artist, and partly, a sociality of belonging that one cannot wash off or run away from to become autonomous and free. When including and crediting a broader sociality into the production of and representation in the artwork, it is rising the question of what authorises the artistic signature and who is, how many are, welcome at the exclusive and excluding position of being an artist. Within a materialist theory on the aesthetics of production, the heterogeneity of performance art collectives suggests a sociality opposed to the autonomous Kantian artist genius. It suggests a sociality of infection and contamination by the surroundings, rather than idealising a pure creation.

The possibility of remaining in and producing from one's cultural and political community adds to my understanding of the sociality of the artist. The curated and co-producing community of queers and BIPOCs in FCNN and the organisational performance of BIPOC cultural workers in The Union are ways of assembling in strategic groups and acknowledging their historicity. FCNN attacks the amputation of sociality in the white art school and art institution with regard to race and includes bodies excluded from the concept of the artist genius. Their collective performance as intersectional assembly disturbs the idea that the artwork is produced in isolation and reclaims sociality as a site of artistic creation.

DANSEatelier, FCNN and The Union are curating and creating communities bigger than the collective itself; they are creating scenes of communing and distribute access to the artistic means and attention. Outspoken in their biographies, the collectives criticise the autonomous artist, thought to be free from sociality. They are resisting neoliberal demands of individualisation and internationalisation and their curated assemblies are ongoing plaidoyers for 'freeing' the artist from the myth of isolated geniality into a greater sociality. So, whereas the artist genius in the Kantian conception should be free *from* social and economic obligations, the infrastructural performances proposed by these performance art collectives work in exactly the opposite way: *towards* a freedom of interdependency.

Now a question is whether the production by FCNN can be and should be categorised as infrastructural performance. Is my academic gesture of inscribing their particular work into a greater context of infrastructural performances in itself a colonising and ignorant gesture? Why not just stick to elaborating on their position within feminist intersectional art? Why not categorise their work within the genres of media art or performance for video? Or why not define them as an artistic prolongation of a social movements such as Black Lives Matter and Black Panthers? Needless to say, there are reasons to categorise FCNN, as all of these, since the group explicitly refers to several medias on their website autobiography and proclaims its position as intersectional feminist. However, my proposition is

to look at the assembling practice of the group and their ongoing performance beyond the singular artistic works in relation to other artists' collectives working under similar conditions in our historical present.

I earlier defined infrastructural performance as a structure-challenging artistic form. Infrastructural performance is an organisational negotiation of the given conditions for economy, temporality and sociality of artists. Infrastructural performance is part of a broader movement of what Butler has termed assemblies: groups which are not mirroring broader structures, but performatively renew and produce "ideals of equality and interdependency" for larger contexts, as Butler has put it.[375] There is both resistance and agency at stake in the infrastructural performance when cultural workers propose how to work and live together.

My reading of the organisational structure and artistic production of FCNN is as an addendum to the concept of infrastructural performance, complicating the neoliberal ideals of mobility and internationalisation: Who moves from where to where? Who can move? Which ways of moving are creditable? FCNN focuses on BIPOCs both in content and as assembly. They perform numerous voices with artists in post-migratory isolation. They criticise the whiteness norm found in the classroom of higher artistic education and in exhibitions in the art institution. Their curated assembly proposes a materialist aesthetics of production based on a sociality of colour and queerness.

On the Same Page?

I suggest that structure-challenging performance art collectives expose and intervene in their self-experienced structural precarity through infrastructural performances in – following my examples, at least – Germany and Denmark, perhaps in Scandinavia, perhaps in Europe. However, I have registered both general traits in our historical present in the arts and differences which report on institutional norms and structural privileges. Consequently, I will conclude this part of the dissertation by considering two assumptions. First, I will discuss the assumption that a current *generational reconfiguration* of structural conditions is taking place, both as a reaction to local precarity of cultural workers and as an emancipation from the myth of the artist genius. Second, I will reflect on the assumption that infrastructural performance demands a *new categorisation of the artwork* as something that happens on the level of production and organisation, and requires new forms of analysis and reception.

Let me explain what I observe as a current *generational reconfiguration*: I see a connection between the infrastructural performances of, on the one side, the collectives and networks cobratheater.cobra, DANSEatelier, Breakfast Club and ongoing project, and then on the other side, the

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[375] Butler 2015, 137.

Danish collectives FCNN and The Union. All collective formations mentioned are initiated by artists, all formulate structural critiques by relating to our present history. They assemble around criticising individualisation and competition in the arts, international organisation of bodies by EU citizenship and national inequalities, and they disobey or mock national policies such as the German Hartz 4 or the Danish Ghetto Plan. They can all be read in a context of broader political movements of resistance such as The Occupy Movement, #metoo and Black Lives Matter.

Yet there are also significant differences worth mentioning: while a collective like ongoing project reclaims a lost 'normality' of working conditions and workers' rights in Germany, the artists in FCNN ask the fundamental question of who is able to enter the art world at all. Similarly, the issue of being mobile is tackled differently: while cobratheater.cobra mourns the social isolation due to constant touring and being on residencies as a freelance, project-dependent artist, the normativity of internationalisation and mobility is displayed when FCNN profiles the racialised, post-migratory loneliness of the single student of colour in the classroom. And while cobratheater.cobra is rather busy erasing the signature of the individual artist, FCNN displays photos and names of their many collaborators on their webpage, to both act in concert and to perform a voluminous heterogeneity visible of queer and BIPOC artists. Groups like FCNN and also The Union contribute to and refine the concept of infrastructural performance with their critical insistence on difference and inequality within the cultural precariat, both in higher artistic education and in the art institution. I thereby also want to point towards the distinct historical horizons that the collectives operate within: whereas ongoing project inscribes itself at a low conjuncture in a central European workers' history, FCNN and the Union operate within the rewriting of colonial history.

"I like all the girls my age cause we're on the same page", sings the Swedish Choreographer Alma Söderberg from the German/Swedish/Icelandic/Belgian/Spanish collective John the Houseband,[376] a performance collective slightly older, perhaps a generation older than cobratheater.cobra, ongoing project, FCNN and The Union. The infrastructural performances of structure-challenging collectives are in some ways on the same page, from one generation: they have in common being more concerned with the structural precarity of their production conditions than aesthetic or visual originality, yet they do also absolutely expose a variety of inequalities, each opening a particular historical and local horizon to be taken into account.

I have already suggested that infrastructural performance might propose *a new category of the artwork*: rather than producing isolated art works, structure-challenging collectives can be understood as working on the *umfuntionierung* of production conditions through their infrastructural performance:

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[376] The song is from Söderberg's solo performance *Travail* (2011).

their organisational behaviour, their scene-building curation, their way of crediting, their temporality of work and assemblies in public. This change in the materiality of the artwork has consequences for the aesthetics of reception: infrastructural performance demands the beholder to look at unknown cultural artefacts and 'silly objects' which do not seem to be art. It is not the visual product – a film or a dance – but the re-organisation of bodies, time and economy, the political statement layered in the making of, that is at the core of the artwork. Infrastructural performance demands the beholder to watch performances of the group outside the art institution – at the margins of the visible, in activist contexts and in online formations. Within Performance Studies the expansion of the notion of the artwork has been elaborated by – amongst others – associate professor Laura Luise Schulz drawing on notions proposed by professor Rebecca Schneider at Brown University: instead of analysing 'a work', scholars analyse the ongoing 'work'.[377] The artwork cannot be read as a single event but in its assemblage of appearances over time, in different media. Schulz elaborates on the continuous practices of artist collectives from the era of what I have described as discourse-driven collectives to think of them as part of a relational turn. Schulz looks at how the relation between the expanded work and then the beholder has changed. She points out that the duration magnifies and the contours of the artwork are blurred. It is no longer the things, but the durational relation between the different appearances of the merging work of the artist(s) and then the beholder which are at the centre of the aesthetic experience. Consequently, I observe that infrastructural performance imposes a durational temporality of the interested beholder's attention: to stay tuned with the continuation of reconfigurations of the collectives on a demanding, durational scale. And definitely, infrastructural performance challenges the boundaries of what is art and what is not art. Yet to me, the interesting shift by infrastructural performance is from the relation between the object of art and the beholder to the relation between artists and their historical production conditions. This shift changes the analysis from focusing only on the form of the artwork and what it does to the beholder to focusing on the founding temporality and sociality of artistic creation. In infrastructural performance, the organisation of temporality and sociality is often the artwork in itself.

Performing the Historical Present

One could think of the expanded sociality in infrastructural performance as a continuation of what has happened since the 1990s in "artivism", relational aesthetics (Bourriaud 1998, Bishop 2012) and socially engaged art. Yet when moving from the aesthetics of reception to the aesthetics of production, the

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[377] See Laura Luise Schulz, "Værker der Virker – om aktuelle forskydninger i værkbegrebet," in *Peripeti* no. 18 (2012), 107-116 and Rebecca Schneider (ed.), *Performing Remains. Art and War in Times of Theatrical Reenactment* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

concept of sociality changes from what the curator and cultural theorist Nicolas Bourriaud would call "art as a state of encounter" between in people, a "dolce utopia" and a temporal "interstice",[378] to a concrete and lived performance of interdependency here and now. The assembly as an act of solidarity, a reintegration of who has been left out of the artists' sociality, has become the artefact, and its composition of bodies in alliance performs a proposal of equality amongst artists, first of all.[379] The category of infrastructural performance thereby challenges the routines of the cultural analyst: it moves away from the direction of intentionality traditionally moving from artist to beholder. Infrastructural performance is to the advantage of the artist rather than the beholder. Infrastructural performance does not care about reception as aesthetic experience but about the conditions and politics of artistic work. Inscribing into the tradition of performance art, it is *doing* change in its historical present and in that sense infrastructural performance is neither diegetic nor utopian.

In order to make changes from the inside of cultural production, *avantgarde* movements have been striving towards revolution and operating with a radical imaginary of the future as did both the surrealists, Situationist International as well as punk "mythological warfare".[380] This utopian horizon is iterated in Bourriaud's relational aesthetics and perhaps again in afrofuturism as a contemporary reference. But in the reorganisation of temporality and sociality in structure-challenging performance art collectives, I do not perceive change as imagined for the future. Change is performed in the present. The specificity of everyday production as the site of change rather than the encounters of reception or in an imagined future revolution is a shift towards, at first glance, more introvert meta-performance: the artists are working for themselves, with each other, on the change of their own production conditions. Nonetheless, the introverted changes of the artists' production conditions are public performances and therefore also function in terms of reception. The artists' collectives are performing change now – not creating a utopian imaginary, but a living change from the inside, in the present.

Isabell Lorey proposes in her essay "Presentist Democracy: Reconceptualising the Present" (2017) to rethink the way philosophy and political theory value and operate with the present. She is departing from the example of the social movement of single mothers occupying houses in Madrid, creating conditions for living well together under the name *Madres unidas por el derecho a la vivienda digna* (Mothers united for the right to live in dignity) in 2014. The single mothers in Madrid are acting on their structural precarity by taking over houses not being sold, real estate waiting for buyers. Lorey theorises their act of "presentist democracy" as a way of responding to ongoing precarisation

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[378]Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics* (Paris: Les Presses du réel, 2002 [1998]), 18, 14, 16.

[379] I am aware that the assemblies of artist collectives and activists do probably not want to be objectified but I here instrumentalise the concept of assembly in order to change the focus of the aesthetic theory of the artwork.

[380] Kasper Opstrup, *The Way Out* (New York: Minor Compositions, 2017), 25.

and austerity policies:

> Radically starting from precarization, they do not demand simply the re-establishment of (social) securities. They do not primarily pose demands to governments, because they deeply distrust the representative democracy. They are inventing new forms of *presentist democracy* and unfolding new ethic socialities against the austerity policies of European governmentality. At stake is not a great, one-time break, but the permanent unfolding of affective connections. It is a becoming democracy in the extended present, not in the deferred future. Through trust and affective relatedness, through solidarity networks and collective support, in this present becoming the movements invent the practices of a presentist democracy.[381]

Similar to Butler who argues for building assemblies from and against struggles of structural precarity, Lorey exemplifies how the Spanish activists gather around a political situation of precarisation: the ongoing stately withdrawal of the right to live well due to privatisation of housing. Reconceptualising the present means for Lorey to oppose a leftist tradition of seeing the present as an interstice between past and future, a moment to overcome. Instead of praising the revolutionary and traditional Marxist break, Lorey insists on continuous work with the returning struggles in an infinitive present.[382]

Lorey is not too optimistic about the isolated event of the present in itself. She proposes a strong awareness of how the past manifests again and again in the present. The historical past with its "relations of domination, ongoing exploitation, and injustice" must be articulated and criticised.[383] The event in the present has a relation to the past, it is shaping history in the present and this relation to and shaping of the past Nietzsche has called "plastic power". Lorey explains Nietzsches's concept of plastic power as something that "forms the present by incorporating splinters of the past".[384] I would rephrase the plastic power of the event as a performativity of history, thinking of how the infrastructural performances of artists' collectives struggle with and mould different historical horizons of respectively liberalism, workers' rights, aesthetic autonomy and colonialism.

I opened this part on Sociality as Performance by asking, with Butler: "What does it

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[381] Isabell Lorey, "The Precarious, Immunization and Presentist Democracy. Paths Towards the Common" in Apostolou-Hölscher, Cvejić, Kunst et. al. (eds.): *The Public Commons and the Undercommons of Art, Education and Labor* – The Reader (Frankfurt am Main: Justus Liebig University, Gießen, 2013), 101.
[382] Lorey 2017, 173.
[383] Lorey 2017, 185.
[384] This is Lorey's definition of plastic power in the footnote number 36 (2017:202). She refers to plastic power as a concept from Nietzsche's *Untimely Meditations* [1876].

mean to act together when the conditions for acting together are devastated or falling away?" It is worth considering whether the temporality of the recently formed artists' collectives is just a short period, a stepping stone on a personal career ladder. Do the contemporary structure-changing performance art collectives only last "for the duration of a gig with no mutual obligations beyond provision and remuneration of a single task", as Michel Feher warns in his book *Rated Agency*?[385] Or do their infrastructural performances propose new, continuous and heterogeneous temporalities of being together? Is there a sustainability beyond the immediate moment of critique, beyond the period of economic and social precarity of the *alumnae*?

I will not conclude on 'the one sustainable production method', promising that artists will no longer be exhausted, lonely, poor or living in inconsistent conditions; I will not oblige artists – in the form of infrastructural performance, artists' collectives, activist assemblies – to take a moral oath concerning their and our future, swearing to stay together, work less and continue creating 'new', alternative forms of organisation. To conclude on the best and most sustainable production method would in itself be a repetition of the commodification of life and instrumentalisation of artistic proposals that I have throughout my writing defined as symptoms of neoliberal competitiveness and capitalist valorisation.[386] Rather, I want to conclude this chapter on collective responses with highlighting that students, performance artists and artists' collectives *are currently* reminding us of and investigating the performativity of our historical present – the plastic power – by taking the means and conditions of production into their own hands. If I should think about a continuity from Kant's

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[385] Feher 2018, 178.

[386] Further on, questions could be posed regarding the 'sustainability of infrastructural performance', namely "Is it only for the independent scene?" and "Will change only be proposed in the most independent infrastructures, and only within collectives not bound to institutions?". Obviously, the performance art collectives I have analysed move in their first years after education and in the independent scene. Thus, I do find resonances of structure-challenging collectives on a higher institutional level: in Switzerland the tendency is obvious, where in Zürich alone three leading venues have employed new, collective leaderships at Gessnerallee, Schauspiel Zürich und Theater Neumarkt. At Gessnerallee, a prestigious venue for independent productions within dance, performance art and theatre, the direction departing from the season 2020/21 consists of three women one of whom has roots in the network cobratheater.cobra. Accordingly, the collective movements from the first years after study have an institutionalised aftermath. In Europe elsewhere, collective leadership resonates too: Belgium's esteemed Kunstenfestivaldesarts has since 2018 been directed by a trio and the documenta 15 in Kassel in 2022 will be curated by the Jakarta-based collective ruangrupa.

However, I dare not conclude on the institutionalisation of collective leadership in cultural institutions as a direct consequence and continuation of infrastructural performance. I hesitate partly because I would not want to 'imperialise' the model, saying it works and manifests successfully on all levels of cultural production, and partly because exactly the cultural policies and budgets in Switzerland and Belgium are currently less precarious than in Denmark. Finally, I do not know whether the new collective leaderships are financed with the same one director's salary distributed on several 'heads' or if a trio direction triples the budget.

Cf. "Weibliches Führungskollektiv," *Nachtkritik*, Februar 6, 2019, https://nachtkritik.de/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=16396:neue-leitung-fuer-theaterhaus-gessnerallee-zuerich&catid=126:meldungen-k&Itemid=100089 (accessed 9.9.2019), "A trio of directors of Kunstenfestivaldesarts," https://www.flandersartsinstitute.be/news/5123-a-trio-of-directors-for-kunstenfestivaldesarts (accessed 9.9.2019) and "ruangrupa selected as Artistic Direction of documenta 15," https://www.documenta.de/en/news# (accessed 9.9.2019).

aesthetic theory on the artwork, they are making art in the sense of something that "excites" and "extends" our ideas about how the world is ordered.[387] But rather than exciting our concept of nature, as does the sublime according to Kant, infrastructural performance is exciting and expanding our understanding of how our socio-political world is ordered. The performance art collectives assemble and care for their sociality as performance in times "when the conditions for acting together are devastated or falling away", and that makes me not only hopeful regarding a more socially just future based on interdependency rather than individualism; it also makes me believe in the power of workers 'in concert' as the agents of structural change, now.

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[387] Kant defines the sublime as something that awakes, disturbs and expands our concept of what nature is:" It, therefore, actually *extends*, not indeed our cognition of natural Objects, but our concept of nature; [which is now not regarded] as mere mechanism but as art. This leads to profound investigations as to the possibility of such a form. But in what we are accustomed to call sublime there is nothing at all that leads to particular objective principles and forms of nature corresponding to them; so far from it that for the most part nature *excites* the Ideas of the sublime in its chaos or in its wildest and most irregular disorder and desolation, provided size and might are perceived." (my italics) Kant 1914 [1793], §23.

CONCLUSION

Working in the performance duo Chuck Morris (2008–) consisting of choreographer Lucie Tuma and myself, we have written records of our calculations towards an 'equal' salary. The handwritten calculations below are from 2013 and appear in our notebooks next to 'to do-lists' of other production responsibilities: a physical exercise, a graphic design calculation, a funding application, a set-design idea, plus planning of storage and touring.

June 2013: Photos of performance duo Chuck Morris' monthly expenses calculations (top – mine, bottom – Lucie Tuma's): rent, social security, telephone, insurance, internet, union membership. The calculation shows a monthly difference of 284 euros due to Lucie Tuma's higher living costs in Zürich compared to my expenses in Berlin.

To Chuck Morris, equal salary does not mean earning the same. Rather, it means to be able to afford the same way of living. First, it is about being able to pay rent, telephone, insurances, pension, taxes, food. Second, we found out how much we could afford of additional goods: travels, clothes, eating out, cultural consumption, holidays. The calculation resulted in salaries with a difference of approximately 100 euros per month, since my expenses in Berlin at that time were less than my colleague Lucie Tuma's in Zürich. However, in that period of our lives, we were both subjected to similar circumstances: we did one or two productions together per year, we both had a part-time position at a higher artistic education, shared a three-room apartment each with our respective partners, we did not have children, and the taxes in Zürich and Berlin are similarly low when earning relatively little. Also, we assumed that we both spent the same number of hours with Chuck Morris during 'project periods': full time, including making application and administration work, affective work, reading books, physical training, studio rehearsals etc..

Calculating how to deal with structural inequality between colleagues required a third party as an outside eye: the production manager Luisa Grass attended our calculation session so we would not feel that we either exploited each other or constructed new privileges. Calculating fairness is a tedious job and requires continuous attention to shifting conditions of life; however, in Chuck Morris, we did it only for a few projects and not for a permanent employment, since – like many other performance artists – we are doggy paddling between our independent duo projects, temporary part-time employments in institutions and a continuous practice.

I claim that time, sociality and economy of the artist co-create the artwork. In order to make that argument consistent, this dissertation seems to lack the part on the concrete *economy* of the performance artist in regard to state funding, production budgets and also strategies of redistribution and solidarity. The example above of Chuck Morris' exercise in equal salaries across different circumstances of living is also only an empirical source to find in the twilight between private and public, as an 'insider' of cultural production. It is difficult to find public infrastructural performances dealing with economy.[388] Unfortunately, many artists and artists' collectives are less articulate about their concrete economic situation than about the reorganisation of their immaterial economy: temporal and social capital. Despite an articulate theorisation of precarisation and indebtedness in the field of

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[388] A pioneering work on self-precarisation is German performance artist Jochen Roller's performance trilogy *Perform Performance* (2002–2004), which has been mentioned as a stand-alone example by Isabell Lorey (2006). Similarly, sociologist and dance theorist Gabriele Klein writes about how Roller's trilogy performed the transition from a monetary to a financial economy in 2009, as the objects from the first performance from 2002 were auctioned after 150 successful shows. See Gabriele Klein, "Labour, Life Art. On the Social Anthropology of Art," in *Performance Research*, vol. 17, no. 1 (2012), 4–13. In my view, Roller's performance on stage represented his economic situation, rather than a reorganisation of his production conditions, until in 2009 when he intervened in the infrastructures of finance.

cultural production and in Cultural Studies and Performance Studies, few works and infrastructural performances are preoccupied with monetary or financial economy of production. The absence of radical economies most likely explains the fact that very few artists' collectives have the capacity to distribute money in accordance with their ideals. The concrete economy of independent performance artists remains instable for the most, and it seems easier to be creative with cultural capital such as time, relations and attention, rather than with money. Even if a collective receives yearly funding, it is for two to four years and scarcely enough to cover production costs and salaries for all. The economy of production is – compared to the number of hours that each person can spend or the number of people insisting to stick together – literally out of the artists' hands. Rather than taking collective action and redistributing money, artists are often *waiting* for funding, *stretching* the small sums of singular fees or busy *patchworking* their individual income.

However, a few models of how economies are articulated and organised collectively are reoccurring. They are mostly to be found in the more 'established' performance art collectives of the *director-driven* and *discourse-driven* generations. In the example above, I brought my own experience on how Chuck Morris has tried to exercise 'how to have an equal salary' across different material conditions. This model looks at the regular, monthly familial, private and local needs of the members of a collective and the distribution of salaries according to circumstances: it gives the artist who is a single mother a higher income than a single colleague or a colleague living in Zürich who earns 'more' than the colleague based in Berlin. When Chuck Morris tries to find out how to earn equally, it is a way of confronting the intersectional challenges of producing internationally and having different taxes and living costs.

Another model is the establishment of a monthly basic income: some performance art collectives such as ongoing project and Monster Truck pay a monthly basic income to their core members across projects and touring shows. The basic income requires a yearly funding and a regularity of successful applications. A third model is to count and record hours in timesheets. This old-school listing of hours is to be found in Gob Squad's productions and is meant to secure a fair distribution of means in a collective where some members work full time whereas others collaborate on other parallel projects outside the collective. A fourth, and definitely more radical way of thinking economy is to work on redistributing beyond the individual economy and as intervention in national privilege. In Breakfast Club Collective the members draw on subsidies from wealthy nation states – France, Germany, Switzerland, Denmark - with the 'cultural value' of the less wealthy nation states – Poland, Israel. It is a redistribution from within and against national privilege amongst artists, and has no diplomatic policy as have greater redistributing organs such as the Goethe Institute or the Institute

Français. This redistribution of economy beyond national privilege and across monetary capital and cultural capital is practiced once or twice a year by Breakfast Club Collective. It would be intriguing to see this redistributing economic model elaborated on a greater scale, outside the global North and beyond the temporality of the project.

Artists counteract structural precarity when they start changing the production conditions – redistributing time and economy, including a broader sociality – but the occupational practice of infrastructural performance can also be draining since it might not be the reason why most artists started studying art in the first place. If the capacities of each artist go into only necessary reorganisation, albeit conceptualised in an artistic way, it might seem politically, temporally and socially rewarding. But if there is too little time left to also generously research, practice, rehearse, read, think, discuss, draw, move, sing and create art alone and together, it might sometimes feel like the artist has become a social worker or an accountant instead of being an artist. Consequently, it is important for me as an academic scholar to analyse and theorise that infrastructural performance *is* art in times of structural precarity. Infrastructural performance is a historical sub-genre in the history of performance art. It is – as Benjamin said about literary genres – a product of its historical context. I thereby shed light on the fact that when austerity policies hit the arts, when the production conditions get tight and the artists are competing on the few subsidies, the artist is not producing the same kind of art as when the public funding and societal conditions allow more generous conditions. Infrastructural performance by artists is a response to a changed and contradictory status of artistic production within the capitalist economy and to the decay of supporting socio-economic infrastructures by the nation state.

Everybody Counts

Throughout this dissertation I have applied two distinct perspectives on a materialist aesthetics of production: a synchronous and a diacronous perspective. In the synchronous perspective, our present historical moment, I have been looking at both precarious production conditions in higher artistic education and at artistic responses to this made by performance art collectives. The diachronous perspective, on the other hand, has to do with the combination of a technology of accountancy and an idealist ideology of freedom which have roots in early historical capitalism around the 18th Century. Since the 1960s, I find this combination of accountancy and freedom subverted and politicised by the feminist expansion of the notion of work.

In our present moment – this is the synchronous perspective! – everybody is quantifying their worktime. It is a condition I detect in contemporary artistic education and professional artistic work: ECTS points, hours of work, hours of sleep, minutes of presentation, schedules for evaluation,

time with children, daily breaks of masturbation, a reintroduction of the 9–5 working day. Technologies of self-publication, governance and a distribution of responsibility to the individual are central in the way young performance artists are trained to work: they learn to manage their own ongoing mental and embodied 'practice' as if it was a product on a market, flexible and compatible to any kind of temporality of work. They learn to economise their capacities, to install time for socialising and regeneration. It is important for me to state that this quantification happens in a historical context of structural precarity in Denmark and its neighbouring countries. This can be read in the light of increasing austerity policies because since 2007–2008 and the implementation of the Bologna Process there are more artists graduating than ever before, while the time for study is proportionally shrinking and the state budgets for both higher artistic education and culture either stagnate or decrease. At the same time, an individualisation and competitiveness are encouraged: students and young professionals are trained to create individual educational paths, to account for their individual work, to establish autonomous and knowledge-producing artists' identities, and to be mobile and flexible according to employability.

Art students and *alumnae* in performance art collectives respond to what I would call a cruel optimism, applying Lauren Berlant's concept of believing in and living out an ideology which is at the same time destructive to oneself. The cruel optimism of the artist genius in particular is to live out one's dream and innate 'talent' while ignoring and excluding the material conditions. The iteration of the artist genius as a role model in neoliberalism results in cruel optimism. While celebrating the passionate production of the 'new' and original, it has a blindness towards the necessary maintenance of the artist's own resources and material conditioning of 'talent' and also in a greater 'ecology': on the costs of invisibilised people and unrecognised efforts surrounding the artist. Instead of only suffering from the exhaustion and individualisation by cruel optimism, art students and *alumnae* develop, train and employ feminist strategies of naysaying and politicise what creates artistic value. When art students start counting hours of grey-zone work and record time spent with healing, administration, reading or friendship, and when performance art collectives reorganise their shared time, erase the individual signature or redistribute attention to co-producers of their work, they all break away from the idealism inherent in the cruel optimism. Artistically, they shift focus from the aesthetics of reception to the aesthetics of production and thus, they are working on the infrastructures of their everyday: the temporality of work, the sociality of the artist and the economy of production. They give attention to the necessary but obscured production conditions that co-produce and determine the artwork. In concert, they respond to the inconstancy of artistic production; together, they react on their experiences of social isolation, exclusion of broader socialities and racist logics within the art

institution. As collectives, they form solidary assemblies, share spaces to rehearse, organise pragmatic rhythms of work and redistribute their privileges. Based on the notions of Judith Butler and Isabell Lorey, I claim that the artists' collectives respond to current structural precarity by finding a 'freedom' in the always-already existing interdependency and when exercising presentist democracy, changing their ways of producing *now*.

Thereby not only the conception of work has expanded, but also the notion of the artwork has changed from an interest in reception to an interest in production: in current infrastructural performances by performance art collectives the conditions of time, sociality and economy have become the material itself. The historical circumstances have entered the centre stage, the operations within the frame have become the artwork itself. Consequently, neither the singular subject nor the beauty in Nature are the protagonists of performance art in our historical present, but rather the political infrastructures which are performed in the assembly. The purpose of art is thus not the experience of sublime beauty, to speak in Kantian tongue, but the expansion and excitement of our understanding of commonality. As a numerous body moving both in public and in the infrastructures of cultural production, performance art collectives explore the performativity of production in order to shed light on inequality. This artistic assembly questions what counts as work, how lifetime is giving value in art and who is 'free' to move in Europe. Every body counts in the counter-narrative of the autonomous and self-producing artist.

The diachronous perspective lies in my attempt to historicise the technology of self-accountancy and the conception of work. In early capitalism in the 18th Century, a self-accountancy, an inner colonisation and a publication of life as work is exercised by Daniel Defoe's novel character Robinson Crusoe. Literature scholar Joseph Vogl has summarised the early life-as-work relation like this: "Since the end of the eighteenth century (…) labour (…) has amalgamated with the concept of life itself"[389]. Half a century after the publication of Crusoe's numeric and narrative household, a belief in autonomy and freedom is cemented in liberal philosophy by Adam Smith and in idealist aesthetic theory by Immanuel Kant. The optimism towards the self-managing individual, free from social, economic and temporal constraints, is established. It is both the capitalist practice of recording, tracking and managing life as well as the liberal ideology of the natural, autonomous man, that pave the ground for the independent artist as a model of neoliberal work.

When I formulate a theory on a materialist aesthetics of production, I do so in order to politicise the interests, exclusions and ignorance inherent in this model. In my proposition of an

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[389] Joseph Vogl, *Kalkül und Leidenschaft: Poetik des ökonomischen Menschen* (Munich: Sequenzia 2002), 30. My translation.

aesthetic theory based in materialism, I have emphasised two historical corrections to the idealist optimism: first, I have pointed towards how feminists from Hannah Arendt to Silvia Federici and the Wages for Housework-movement, through to feminist performance artists and Kathi Weeks, have made visible the unrecognised necessary, bodily and peripheral work 'behind' the artistic autonomy. Second, I have placed infrastructural performance as a contemporary continuation and practice of the feminist inquiry. The insistence on the performativity of production and the political agency of the artist as producer has historical roots both in theorised materialism by Bertolt Brecht and Walter Benjamin and in the collective explorations of democracy and equality by historical performance art collectives. The fundamental transformation of how art can be produced – a Brechtian *umfunktionierung* of the production conditions – is at the very core of the artists' collectives from the first wave of directors-driven groups to discourse-driven collectives and structure-challenging networks.

The historical present of numeric and narrative accountancy in artistic education and production is both a result of current institutional reforms and austerity policies in northern Europe and a feminist key to revise a long, Western tradition of fetichised autonomy. Consequently, my conclusion ends on partly a Marxist note, and partly on a feminist one: as an echo of Marx, I have located the power of the artist workers who – consolidated in collectives – change modes and dominance of production through infrastructural performances: performance art collectives make use of the inherent performativity of their working conditions and change the structures in which they live and work, together. It is not the visual product – a film or a dance – but the reorganisation of bodies, sociality, time and economy, the political statement in the making of, that is at the core of the infrastructural performance understood as historical genre of performance art. The sociality of the artists' collective has become the location of both protection of the otherwise precarious individual worker and a site of redistribution of privileges. Institutionalising the collective is consolidating both social interdependency and institutional independency, structurally setting the artists 'free' from being flexible workers looking for the next collaboration.

Echoing second wave feminists, I have paid attention to unrecognised hours of work in the production conditions taught in artistic educations and have applied them to the field of artistic freelance work. A feminist practice is not to quantify as a technology of the self, but to look for the yet unrecognised efforts of some people that provide the freedom for others. The feminist politisation of artistic work is an effort to demystify the obscured economy of love and passion, and to give concrete value to the calculated and concrete, yet invisibilised efforts behind seemingly autonomous artist genius. I claim that a feminist awareness has met the neoliberal demand of quantification in a

subversive way: when all hours are counted in a total economisation of life, the otherwise invisibilised and obscured grey-zone hours of artistic work – maintaining, preparing, preserving, healing, resting – are also accounted for. The practice of accountancy reveals the logic of value-production within artistic production. Ideally, this feminist sensibility towards the unrecognised work reaches beyond one's own problems, into a generalised departure from precarity on a global scale, in solidarity with what Butler has theorised as our 'unwanted' neighbours[390].

Summing up, the recent rule of numbers within the arts calls for a revision of how we historicise and theorise artistic creation. My theoretical proposition is an account of what has been left out of the conception of artistic creation: the dependency on time, sociality and economy. I theorise on artistic production as something always-already in relation, materially, to the world. When I suggest a theory on a materialist aesthetics of production, it is both a reaction to immediate economisation of time, sociality and economy within individualised artistic work in times of austerity policies, but moreover, I claim that the Western tradition of the prominence of aesthetics of reception and – behind that – a pure and idealist aesthetics of production as promoted by Immanuel Kant, have paved the road for neoliberal expectations of self-exploitation within cultural production. The artist genius has over centuries generated a model that allows an obscured economy of work where the necessary and bodily work of others (and oneself) is both subsumed and ignored, invisibilised in the name of virtuosity and freedom. To depart from a materialist aesthetics of production is to depart from precarity and politicise artistic work: it is to reappropriate the invisibilised value of sociality and time; it is to intervene in a logic that depends on life in the production, but does not credit it. To politicise artistic work is urgent in our historical present, when individual capacities are simultaneously exhausted and overrated.

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[390] I have stated that the particularity of artistic study and the feminist 'answers' of infrastructural performance have generalisable patterns of both precarisation and solidarity. Yet I never wanted to universalise nor fetishise the conditions of artistic study and artistic work. Silvia Federici and George Caffentzis criticise the hyped and universalised notion of "cognitive capitalism" in 2007 – developed and represented by Italian autonomists - as something that should not assimilate other, very distinct and embodied notions of work. Federici and Caffentzis are cautious of ignoring the disparities and divisions built within the working class when forefronting a 'turn' in notions of work. Capital accumulation is nourished by distracted attention and disunity amongst workers, globally, and continues in the face of struggle. And despite neoliberal technologies of the self, governmentality and precarisation across many fields of work in the West, old school slavery, physical exploitation, and top-down hierarchies still exist where our technical devices and clothes are made, where our trash is sorted, where our soya beans grow. Within the spheres that I myself have worked and researched in – the art school, the professional freelance scene of performance art, and the university in Denmark and Germany – I have looked for organisational and infrastructural ways of including what has been left out, whether it is time to heal or being with one's family, a sociality of friends and allies, or racialised bodies. To me, the political challenge as a scholar continues to be how to be both precise in the particular critique and, at the same time, how not to become completely immersed in one's identified, privileged (but serious) problems. How can we come together and create solidarity across workers' identities, rather than assuming we all suffer under the same kind of exhausting work on the self? On my to-do list is now to look somewhere else, institutionally and globally, in order to connect the unrecognised struggles I have identified with other parts of the social factory. See George Caffentzis & Silvia Federici, "Notes on the edu-factory and Cognitive Capitalism," eipcp 2007, http://eipcp.net/transversal/0809/caffentzisfederici/en.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ENGLISH SUMMARY

An economic rationality, dating back to the early days of capitalism in the 18th Century, has since the financial crisis 2007-08 reached new dimensions: across work and private life, we are counting hours, optimising our profiles, investing in an uncertain future. In the arts, the production conditions have changed due to austerity policies, a thorough reform of artistic education – the Bologna Process – and an increasing number of professional artists in the field. The artist workers of the future are currently being educated to count hours, document and evaluate their activities, and they are getting prepared for a work market characterised by precarious terms of employment, increasing individualisation and growing international competition. In the dissertation *Everybody Counts,* I examine how these production conditions – structural precarity, educational reform and austerity policy - shape the genre of performance art in northern Europe 2015-2019.

Whereas a theoretical arsenal describing the professional artist worker in capitalism is offered by scholars from various disciplines, I contribute with analyses of artist subjects educated within the structures of the Bologna Process and continue by analysing how *alumnae* form performance art collectives. Consequently, my take on cultural analysis departs from a selection of what Lauren Berlant has termed 'silly objects': In higher artistic education I analyse new study regulations, documentations of self-study, performative responses by students as well as their assessments. When looking at performance art collectives, I analyse work schedules, artistic forms of organisation and economical negotiations, as well as more common artworks. My focus is the notions of work negotiated during education and responded to by young professionals. The performance artist has been described as a role model of the neoliberal, entreprenant individual – a passionate, flexible and underpaid worker without rights, creating value with their body and their private life as material. I identify a current resistance towards this model amongst art students and professional artists. Rather than just making critical artworks within the art institutions, they politicise their own precarious working conditions by operating and redistributing within the infrastructures of art. The 'infrastructural performances' of our historical present can be interpreted as artistic responses to the individual artist signature, economic inconstancy and structural racism in cultural production. Instead of dwelling at the reception of artworks, I propose to analyse artistic production as a performative and political action.

Synthesizing theory from both historical materialism (Karl Marx, Walter Benjamin, Bertolt Brecht) and feminist theory about unrecognised work (Silvia Federici, Kathi Weeks, Bojana Kunst), I construe a theoretical foundation of a materialist aesthetics of production, departing from the claim that the artwork is co-created by the economical, temporal, and social circumstances of its historical present. When I suggest to define the aesthetics of production as materialist, I argue towards an interdependency of artists and their surroundings, and I simultaneously dismiss idealist assumptions of a pure and free artistic creation.

With the category 'infrastructural performance' I define the artist worker as not only a precarious and exhausted figure in our historical present, but also as a powerful worker subject with influence on their own working conditions, especially when signing 'in concert'.

DANSK RESUMé

En økonomisk opmærksomhed, der kan dateres tilbage til kapitalismen spæde begyndelse i det 18. århundrede, har siden finanskrisen i 2007-08 antaget nye dimensioner: på tværs af arbejde og privatliv tæller vi timer, optimerer vores profiler, investerer i en uvis fremtid. I kunsten har nedskæringspolitik, en gennemgribende reform på kunstuddannelser – Bologna-processen -, samt et stigende antal færdiguddannede kunstnere, skabt forandrede produktionsforhold. Fremtidens kunstarbejdere skal trænes til at tælle timer, dokumentere og evaluere hvad de laver, og de skal rustes til et arbejdsmarked præget af usikre ansættelsesforhold, en stigende individualisering og en øget international konkurrence. I afhandlingen *Everybody Counts* undersøger jeg, hvordan produktionsbetingelser former performancekunsten, set i lyset af strukturel prekaritet, uddannelsesreform og nedskæringspolitik i Nordeuropa 2015-2019.

Hvor forskere fra vidt forskellige discipliner tilbyder et teoretisk arsenal, der gør det muligt at beskrive den professionelle kunstarbejder i kapitalismen, bidrager jeg med af analyser af kunstneriske subjekter, der uddannes i Bologna-processens strukturer, og med undersøgelser af praksisser blandt nyuddannede i performancekunstkollektiver. Afhandlingens kulturanalytiske greb finder derigennem nye og umage kulturelle artefakter: På uddannelsesinstitutioner undersøger jeg nye studieordninger, dokumentationer af selvstudium og performative kommentarer fra studerende, samt deres eksaminer. Når jeg undersøger performancekunstkollektiver, analyserer jeg arbejdsskemaer, kunstneriske organisationsformer og økonomiske forhandlinger, samt mere egentlige værkformater. Jeg fokuserer på hvilken forståelse af arbejde, der forhandles under uddannelse og responderes på af de nyuddannede. Performancekunstneren er blevet beskrevet som rollemodel for det neoliberale, entreprenante individ - en passioneret, fleksibel og underbetalt arbejder uden rettigheder, der skaber værdi med sin krop og sit privatliv som materiale. Jeg identificerer nu en modstand mod denne model, både blandt studerende og professionelle kunstnere. De politiserer deres egne prekære arbejdsforhold ved at operere og omfordele i kunstens infrastrukturer, frem for blot at skabe kritiske værker på kunstinstitutioner. Samtidens 'infrastrukturelle performances' skal fortolkes som kunstneriske modsvar til bl.a. den solistiske kunstnersignatur, økonomisk usikkerhed og strukturel racisme i kulturproduktion. Jeg foreslår at analysere kunstnernes produktion som et performativt og politisk virke, og ikke blot dvæle ved en reception af deres værker.

Ved at trække på teori fra både den historiske materialisme (Karl Marx, Walter Benjamin, Bertolt Brecht) og feministisk teori om usynligt arbejde (Silvia Federici, Kathi Weeks, Bojana Kunst) udvikler jeg et teoretisk fundament for en materialistisk produktionsæstetik ud fra den påstand, at kunstværket co-produceres af de økonomiske, temporale og sociale omstændigheder i kunstnerens historiske samtid. Når jeg foreslår at kalde en produktionsæstetik for materialistisk, argumenterer jeg for gensidig afhængighed mellem kunstnere og deres omgivelser, og affærdiger idealistiske forskrifter om en ren

og fri kunstnerisk skabelse. Med kategorien 'infrastrukturel performance' definerer jeg kunstarbejderen som ikke blot en udsat og udmattet figur i vores samtid, men også som et magtfuldt arbejdersubjekt, som har indflydelse på sine egne arbejdsbetingelser, især når der signeres i flok.

APPENDIX 1

Process Paper: *Research design for practice-informed research at the Inter-University of Dance Berlin (HZT).* Reflection 17 November 2017

Research problem examined at HZT:

In frame of the assumption, that the artist has become the role model of neoliberal work ethos[391], I examine how conceptions of work are described and practiced by students and alumnae of the BA-study Dance, Context, Choreography in Berlin.

Biased in Berlin

With my former employment as lecturer and associate researcher in the BA *Dance, Context, Choreography* at HZT from 2011-2016, I have a deep insight in the institution, its priorities, daily language and the everyday of the students. Before I started my research, I used to have conversations with students about their studies, I often caught myself telling them that they were 'behind' on module points. I saw them 'investing' in unpaid collaborations and 'boosting' their CV with workshops led by well-known artists. Exactly this self-observation, of how I, my colleagues and the students were practicing a discourse of financial growth and performing an accumulative, unstoppable productivity within art school, made out my motivation for this very research. Are we, already in the art school for self-critical, independent performance- and choreography makers, training the neoliberal work ethos, which so many theoreticians observe in the life of the artist? I struggle with the idea of the art school training the neoliberal subjects of tomorrow, since I thought that with criticality and reflexivity along and in the artistic work in the educational institution, we could exactly prevent this unsustainable, competitive and lonely life form.

This PhD is what I call 'practice informed', that is: informed, concerned and indeed deeply inspired by my experiences and observations at HZT. This makes me, compared to other institutions which will be examined later on in my research, absolutely biased in the sense, that I know whom to ask for what and which words to choose in order to get rich answers. I definitely have my blind spots. I hope that the exchange with other PhD-fellows will lead me to further and more distanced analysis and reflection on this art school. On the other hand, I am also to some degree what in Qualitative Method

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[391] As proposed by amongst others political theorist Isabell Lorey in *Governmentality and Self-precarasation. On the Normalisation of Cultural* Producers (2006), art theoretician Bojana Kunst in *Artist at Work* (2015) and cultural sociologist Angela McRobbie in *Be Creative* (2016).

terminology could be called a "member" of this social world, where I collect my data (Miller, Glassner 1997): I am not a student, but I've been employed in and co-forming the institution, actively contributing to its epistemology and structure in the past years. Therefore, I am, as former mentor, teacher and staff-member, also a person associated with authority as well as confidence, i.e. definitely not an unknown researcher from 'outside'.

Design of Qualitative Method

Descriptivity

In the design of my qualitative method, I chose to start out by interviewing individual informants, with the option of later developing a group conversation format for in-depth discussions on motives or terms, which the individual interviews would prove central in the discourse on each school.

For the individual interviews with students at HZT, I chose to follow the ethnographic method of the *descriptive interview* (Spradley) in order to attain as much vocabulary of the interviewed as possible. Here very simple questions are posed with the interest in "typical" everyday at the school, often starting out by "Could you describe…" or later in the conversation, picking up on their own vocabulary in order to make them explore their own experiences within their familiar discourse. I made use of what James Spradley calls "Grand Tour Questions" (Spradley 1979, 50), where the informant would verbally take me through a day at school, a work process or even the rhythm of the school year. Likely, I asked an informant to literally show me a couple of work spaces which are important to her way of working. In that way, I wanted to not only rely on language as a forming actor of the identity of work, but also the infrastructure and the architecture of the educational institution.

Selection of informants

To study at art school is a rollercoaster trip of emotional and artistic ups and downs. My experience from teaching at HZT Berlin in the period 2011-2014 is that students have a major personal crisis in their 3rd semester, when they've settled, but not at all have found an artist identity or own interest yet, which makes them doubt if they're at the right place. At HZT in Berlin, my first location of data collection, I chose to first make interviews with students in their 4th semester, where the students have arrived and got accustomed to the everyday and structure of the school, and still not see the end of their study at the horizon too strongly. I invited the 4th semester students to participate in my research by writing an email to the group. I ended up having two informants (F), both 23 years old and with the

nationalities of Estonia and Lithuania. They are by chance both East-European, the one being in her first study programme, the other having switched from dance pedagogue to HZT. The two informants I interviewed both seemed confident with their status of being a student, not knowing where it will lead artistically, but with great interest in studying in a broad field. In other words, the 4th semester students are to me the perfect informants on how you learn to work in the program without too much disturbance of personal 'beginners questioning', nor anxiety for the future work horizon.

During my four months at HZT as research fellow in spring 2016, I came across other students and had a lot of informal conversations, which made it obvious that other segments in the students' body were worth interviewing. First of all, I realised that I needed to talk to two of the '4th year' students: students who are studying part-time and beyond the regulated amount of study time; that is, students studying more than 6 semesters on the BA. I became aware of the particularity of this 4th year, as a BA-teacher and accessor of "Module 12"/ the BA-project said, that the artistic proposals of the fourth year were "remarkably good" in the sense of material explored in-depth and rich in artistic reflection and expression. In her words, their artistic level and reflexivity were what you as staff of HZT would wish for the students to have, when they leave the education: a level ready to meet the young professional field.

For me, being interested in the notion of work in the durational study (Harney & Moten 2013) rather than education, I thought this 4th year 'outside the rhythm' of the regular study is an interesting case showing the possibility of maturing work beyond modularised standards. The two 4th year students, who became my informants, I approached directly, them being the only two of their "year". Beside of studying in their 8th semester, they are both 27 years old, M and F, i.e. both literally 'mature' BA-students, one having none and the other having finished a long higher education before HZT, with the nationalities Israeli and French.

During my research stay, I also encountered alumnae students from HZT, whom I know from my time teaching here. Students, who graduated in 2014 and thus have two years of post-school work experience. Without asking for it, they started telling me about how difficult it is to make a living from artistic work in Berlin, since the city is a magnet for artists. One alumna, F, 29 years old from Mexico, told me how she during her studies never thought of which working structures and everyday rhythm, she was preparing for. While being occupied with artistic research questions, theoretical meditations on representation and trying out different forms of physical training, she never asked herself structural questions on work such as: "Does my personality fit the rhythm of the project-work, where artistic focus, colleagues and geographical location shift every two months?" and "Can I stand the pressure of not knowing, if I have an income next month?"

The encounter with this and other alumnae students made me curious to hear their experiences: did the art school prepare them for 'entering the market'? And can, in any case, an institution prepare students for a context of low employment and precarious living? I therefore invited five alumnae for conversation and, although all were very eager to contribute and seemingly in need for a context to talk about their work situation, of course only a few could make their calendar match due to touring, residencies and research-travels. Despite mobility as obstacle of getting together, I managed to have a conversation with two alumnae from the year 2014, F, aged 29 and 31, nationality Mexican and Austrian.

For the two latter cases, 4th year and alumnae, I chose to deviate from the interview into a conversation format, where I myself say as little as possible. First of all, because I am biased having taught both the 4th year students and the alumnae from 2014. I did not want to influence their language more than necessary (it is already influenced by the questions posed, by the time we've spent together before the interviews), nor make them recall and tell stories, I wanted them to tell. Secondly, I was curious to see which kind of language and considerations emerge, when the informants listen to each other and 'inspire' each other. So, for both sessions I prepared three questions, still departing from Spradley's descriptive style, which they would get beforehand on email and then have rounds of 10 minutes to answer and discuss, when we met. In that way, the conversation format created a little "social world" (Miller, Glassner 1997), but opposed to traditional interview technique less because of the interaction between interviewer and informant and rather, a temporary social world between the two informants set by the interviewer, and – importantly - imitating the already existing social world of the educational context.

Especially the alumnae situation, but also the 4th year, can be states of precarity and anxiety: after art school the financial sustainability is insecure and the possibility of 'living out your artistic dreams' might be scattered. Therefore, the informants also talk from a vulnerable position. I considered the risk, if they would tell less about their situation, when being in company with each other, or even, the opposite, dare say more. I chose the conversation, since there the combination of the informants turned out to be also couples of friends with a high degree of confidentiality. But also, from an ethical perspective, I put them together in the conversation instead of inviting for solitary interviews, because they then would be in a situation of 'not being alone' with their precarious experiences. I believe that there is a solidary act happening when uttering your suffering in company. And being in the context of an educational institution, I wanted to structurally recall the possible collectiveness of peers, even if

post-graduate. Secondly, the concerns they might utter about difficulties entering the professional art scene will occur in a shared context as possible structural problems rather than individual failure.

Note, 30 September 2019.

At the end, I did not use the qualitative research interviews made at HZT in my research. I think the interviews were less 'thick' with information and had no complex materiality to analyse, compared to the protocols of self-study. I wonder now, if the information from the interviews, has leaked into the general reflections in this dissertations, albeit unstructured and involuntarily.

Re-reading my sensibility from 2017 towards the situated precarity of students throughout this research design, I think my reflections portray well how research interests grow out of an attentive and present position in a milieu, over time, beyond the temporality of focussed 'research-projects'. The reflections on my own practice-informed position as a former 'member' of the institution HZT are preliminary in order to understand the final methodology in the dissertation.

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*Note: All links have been accessed 26 September 2019.

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