

QUEER ARTS FESTIVAL

VRIJDAG 8 AUGUSTUS 2014**THEATER****HET JOACHIM FLAXER COMPLEX****Theater Het Klokhuis**

21u00

— *Ik weet niet waarom ik meegekomen ben.*— *Hoe oud zou je mij schatten?*

Neal Leemput werkte voor zijn afstudeerproject aan het Koninklijk Conservatorium van Antwerpen samen met Phedra Vandenberg en Raphaël Vandeweyer. Samen creëerden ze 'Het Joachim Flaxer Complex', een stuk gebaseerd en geïnspireerd op het werk van R.W. Fassbinder. Deze voorstelling zou kunnen gaan over opportunisme, bankjes in het park of het vleesje dat je vroeger bij de slager kreeg. Over waar voor je geld, 'boxes with emotions' en win-winsituaties. Over echte liefde en een hertendans of twee.

Welke prijs zou jij betalen voor een lichaam?

THE JOACHIM FLAXER COMPLEX: QUEER INTERVENTIONS IN PERFORMANCE ARTS

The theatre performance 'The Joachim Flaxer Complex', represents what has always been at the heart of queer theoretical interventions in cultures and societies; the disruption of common values through exposing their constructed natures. As the performance immerses the spectator in complete estrangement about the reason why this particular power game is going on between the different characters on stage, a powerful cultural critique gradually unfolds that relates to the current neoliberal obsessions with profit, status, management and control.

From the beginning, it has been the aim of queer theory to show how these powerful ideologies exert power over people's beings through disciplining and controlling feelings, bodies, pleasures and emotions. Although gender and sexual identities only play a secondary role in 'The Joachim Flaxer Complex', critiquing neoliberal values are equally at the heart of queer theories' project of deconstruction.

'The Joachim Flaxer Complex' shows how performance art is a preeminent medium to articulate queer deconstructions through the display of failing neoliberal values. 'The Joachim Flaxer Complex' creates a powerful parody and cultural critique of corporate logics through showing the extravaganza of a businessman

obsessed by money and power. The moment when corporate reason is overhauled by madness, the ethos on stage shifts to one of vulnerability, representing fragility and failing – or a deconstruction as queer theorists would say – of neoliberal logics.

Interestingly, 'The Joachim Flaxer Complex' plays with the dynamics of power in a particular way; that is through the use of the body. Within societies and cultures, bodies are far from only being biological or material in nature. Bodies are filled with cultural signs that categorize, train and cultivate people; which the performance symbolizes in a playful manner. The madness is acted out through dominating the body, through sexual domination and shame.

'The Joachim Flaxer Complex' offers a powerful queer critique on cultures and societies that are obsessed with neoliberal values. Therefore, it pushes the boundaries and challenges its spectators. However, perhaps the performance's greatest achievement is that – although representing madness – it produces images that are carefully crafted aesthetic pleasures.

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