

Editorial

With the autumn season «Fall 2021», for the first time Tanzfabrik Berlin presented its stage programme as a theatre season instead of in the usual format of the OPEN SPACES festival: «Fall 2021» went on throughout all the autumn months of 2021 with premieres, reruns, guest shows, audiowalks and works-in-progress. Writers who are part of the collective *STREAM. Live Art Writing*, or who are loosely associated with it, wrote texts about the autumn performances, which are collected in this publication.

The writers from *STREAM* understand writing as movement, as forming their own artistic relationship to live art. The texts about «Fall 2021» bring the shows to life in written remembering, they take us back to the dance walks and lead us through imaginary (art) landscapes. The texts are memories and collages, they are conversations and correspondences, often created in a joint writing process. The writers reflect on the performances in their own artistic writing and also take a look at their own positioning as spectators and writers in order to find links to their own identity. In this way, these texts demonstrate once again that the reception and understanding of live art cannot be separated from our own specific biographies, our own experiences and vulnerabilities, but rather are connected to our personal backgrounds and legacies, and thus continue to write our own stories.

In their work – both in the performances and the texts – the choreographers and the writers share their diasporic life stories, displacements and heritages with us. In these narratives, the performances and the texts about them come together to form a tightly interwoven structure of references and stories, whereby the shared experiences never remain on the superficial level of the accidental or purely private, but form links to historical contexts, to the political, the collective. Because history and histories are contained with the personal, the autobiographical implies the political; private spaces are haunted by history, as Homi K. Bhabha wrote in 1994 in his *The Location of Culture*: «the borders between home and world become confused; and, uncannily, the private and the public become part of each other, forcing upon us a vision that is as divided as it is disorienting» – the personal *is* the political.

The in-between spaces, gaps and discontinuities that Bhabha focuses on in his book run through these texts like a common thread. The performances in the autumn programme and the reflections on them in the articles ask about precisely these positionings, about the spaces in between and the «beyond», by addressing displacements, literally tracing colonial inscriptions in urban space and activating remembering in the practice of walking. Some works focus on bodily movement as such, drawing attention to the individual paths, steps, impulses of movement that allow us to navigate the city. On our paths, monuments reveal historical visions, urban space, with its arrangements and architectures, creates collectivity and isolation, forms identities and conveys colonial history. Those histories, patterns and senses of belonging (or not belonging) are embedded in the bodies that navigate through these material and ideal monuments.

The question of locating oneself can also be found in the autumn performances in the form of an ironic positioning of the self within the culture industry and in the literal deconstruction of theatres and of an essentialist understanding of bodies and «originary identity».

Other pieces deliberately break with our habitual patterns and thereby disrupt our ways of perceiving; they question our chronological organisation of time: tennis is not being played on the tennis court, we hear audio recordings of dead people and the voices of bird species that have gone

extinct. If the present is revealed, in Bhabha's sense, by «its discontinuities, its inequalities, its minorities», this is shown here in decaying monuments into which visions of the future have been inscribed, in stories of migration that are stored in bodies for generations or in pastoral poetry from Greek and Roman antiquity, projected into dystopian images of the future.

In the preface to the German-language edition of *The Location of Culture*, Elisabeth Bronfen points out that our «master narratives» of home and kinship are to be understood merely as a protective seal that serves to spare us the traumatic knowledge that we all have no solid ground beneath our feet. This is to be understood as an appeal to recognise that our identity is constituted in a «third place», an in-between space that can no longer be covered over by homogeneous histories, but which is composed of intersubjective narratives, personal biographies. We must say goodbye to the illusion of a «safe ground» under our feet. Instead, we can only move carefully and step by step on organic tissue that exists in a delicate balance.

That which the performances and the texts span together has the effect of this «organic tissue», a hybrid web of ruptures and discontinuities. To this web, finely woven out of the performances and the texts, a third component is added: in the practice of reading, we add another layer; we augment the fabric with our own understandings, and we connect (or disconnect) with our histories and legacies. Thus, we temporarily move with a common reference point, spanning an in-between space together, an interstice that we must tread on carefully, in a delicate balance.

Felicitas Zeeden

All quotes from: *The Location of Culture* by Homi K. Bhabha (1994, 1st edition, London & New York).

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The «Fall 2021» programme was largely planned and put together by Ludger Orlok, who has since withdrawn from the operational business of the Tanzfabrik Berlin. We would like to thank Ludger here once again for the many years he worked for the Tanzfabrik, for his warmth, his commitment and especially for laying down the groundwork for us to implement our autumn season.

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Full disclosure: The writer of the editorial is herself a founding member of the collective STREAM. Live Art Writing. She invited other writers from STREAM to write texts about Tanzfabrik's autumn programme for the present publication.