WHAT IS LIVENESS AND WHAT CAN IT BE?[1]

1 The following trajectory has excerpts from the previously published text Ruth, Charlotta; *Meta-Liveness, Innovative Perception of Liveness in Online Environments,* in: Elias G. Carayannis et al. (ed.): *Encyclopedia of Creativity, Invention, Innovation and Entrepreneurship* (New York, NY: Springer 2020)

CONTEXTUALISATION

research and positioning of the

BACKGROUND

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As a non-digital native I cannot stop feeling that the online realm has a magic potential. Online, time and space folds in ways I otherwise only experience when reading science fiction, fantasy, and magic realism.

As with any assimilation process, my PhD adventure has been about learning online languages and trying to understand how to relate to a foreign culture. At the same time, I've also come to know more about being an alien in this online environment. I recognise that the body is being forgotten in the planning of online interaction, and that activities in the online realm are based on binary thinking. I know that the online semi public space that we, on a daily basis depend on, is primarily driven by the Big Tech's (the owners') economic interests. Little care is given to the side effects this "click-economy",[1] has on human communication and how it makes us participate in our social interactions and our lives at large.

It's more interesting and believable to attend research from those who really know - but who really knows? Which perspective do we use to examine digital and networked technology which we all experience on a daily basis?

James Bridle has said that *"What is needed is not new technology but a new meta-language for describing the world that complex systems have wrought."*[2]

I believe choreography can support understanding complex systems.

1 Click Economy means that companies of all sizes, in all industries, are competing for a single, specific user action: a click.

2 Bridle, James; *New Dark Age: Technology and the End of the Future* (New York:Verso 2018) p. 5.

" What is liveness and what can it be?" [2]

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Most of the time I have a golden wall behind me when writing. It's the best video call background I have found in my apartment and this has become more or less my permanent position also when doing other things on the computer. On the other end of the table is my kitchen. If you have the possibility, move to a kitchen...

...OR GO TO THE EXERCISE WITH KITCHEN DRAWER p. 29 IN APPROACHES, PRACTICES, EXERCISES

Or you can stay here no matter if it's a kitchen or not but it might get a bit private and not so objective what I will say now - we're in a kitchen after all. One of the reasons, that I have felt alienated or unmotivated to participate in the type of communication that happens on social media, has been that the idea to speak with one message to many seems like a misunderstanding of conversation. Maybe because I work as a performer, the idea to perform my "private me" online creates short circuits in me as a person. I didn't join Facebook in 2006 and cannot restore this unlived part of my life. Back then I was afraid that I would spend even more time behind my screen - the contemporary illusion of saving time. I don't regret my choice not to join, but I have to face that this means I have not participated. Sometimes I tried other social media formats or hoped that maybe the more alternative ones would give me a chance to reenter. It always ended with me not sending friend requests. Before social media, I never sent mass christmas cards, or excessive amounts of postcards bragging about my holidays. How can I just scribble *Merry Christmas* onto… - this is not enough. At the same time, this pressure to really *mean* something makes me sometimes not communicate at all. For five years I owned a web domain without knowing how to begin inhabiting it. Needless to say - now what it looks like feels already old. It's hard to keep current online.

But where paradoxes arise a space of creative challenge occurs. To reach through to you while actually communicating with many others at the same time has now turned into one of my artistic endeavours. To try to imagine the specific reader of this text, just as I always remind myself that the audience - even when there are several hundreds of people in the theatre - is not one mass but a complex constellation of individuals. This is not something I know exactly how to do, but as a practice and perspective I believe this idea of not communicating into a black void but being in touch with individuals, adds *liveness*. It also reminds me to stay in an active communication process when writing, minimising the risk of repeating things that are not necessary to say at this stage of the research anymore.

Playing with communication has been part of my way of leading life since I was a child. A more work-related background to this research project is that for more than ten years I have worked intensely on the friction between what takes place live and not live[3], with a special interest in creating reality-glitches. Putting real life in friction with recorded material. This can be seen for instance in the experimentation with video-walk treasure hunts (2014-2016) where in the format of a site specific video walk - objects could be retrieved in the real world. It can also be seen in the series of

3 The first concrete output in relation to liveness was "We do it by hearts" a shared evening with Dominik Grünbühel at Tanzquartier Vienna, 2009.

LIVENESS IN THE DICTIONARY

LIVENESS CAN BE UNDERSTOOD AS "THE QUALITY OR CONDITION OF AN EVENT, PERFORMANCE, ETC. OF BEING HEARD, WATCHED, OR BROADCAST AT THE TIME OF OCCURRENCE."

The Oxford dictionary has three other definitions of liveness:

1. The quality or condition of being alive,

2. in Acoustics liveness means the property of a room or enclosure, or of a recording, of having a long reverberation time.

3. In Computing liveness is the property of a circuit, program, or process of giving a good or useful outcome.

In the…

-> ALIVENESS p.4

-> PERFORMANCE STUDIES p.5

live installations *Living Documents* (2017-2020 in collaboration with Dominik Grünbühel[4]) where we examined the difficulty to document and capture live performance and artistic practice.

In 2015, when I was struggling to describe the friction between what takes place now, live, and parallel (often through technically layered) experiences, I came up with the concept of *meta-liveness*. *Meta-liveness* tries to fathom how the multiple interconnected perspectives of a moment can be described.

In order to go deeper into this concept I decided to further investigate what *liveness* is and this curiosity was the starting point for committing myself to completing an artistic PhD. I SET OUT TO UNDERSTAND HOW TO CREATE LIVENESS OR, AT THE LEAST, A SENSATION OF LIVENESS IN ONLINE ENVIRONMENTS. I AIMED TO RESEARCH HOW TO INHABIT THIS OTHER TIME–SPACE THROUGH CHOREOGRAPHIC THINKING AND KNOWLEDGE FROM TRADITIONAL LIVE FORMATS.

IN PARALLEL, I HAVE TRANSFERRED ONLINE EXPERIENCES TO OFFLINE ENVIRONMENTS AND INVESTIGATED HOW THE CONSTANT ONLINE MODALITY AFFECTS TRADITIONAL LIVE SETTINGS. To support the research, I have conducted studies in the areas of computational thinking, media activism and web-design. I have also had the chance to collaborate with programmers and philosophers of technology both as part of my own PhD-research and also as a contributor to the FWF funded PEEK research project Neuromatic Game Art: Critical Play with Neurointerfaces led by Margarete Jahrmann 2020-2022. I have also engaged in reading phenomenology, media science, digital ethnography and history of internet art as well as performance studies discourses that relate to the concept of *liveness*.

The goal has been to map contextual and temporal circumstances as well as developing methods for creating on- and offline encounters. This reflexive documentation is about understanding the thinking within my artistic work and through this articulation make methods, obstacles, and practices available to other choreographers, artists and teachers interested in working with hybrid forms.

Another ambition I have is to make choreographic thinking available beyond the arts. This PhD project does not yet include how to do this…

… but the seed for these thoughts can be seen in the paragraph on **-> SYSTEMS AESTHETICS p.23**

Or you can also call me if you
want to hear my most updated thoughts:
+43 660 3440966

4 Dominik Grünbühel is a performer and video artist working at the intersection of choreography, music, video and lately VR. Since 2009 Dominik Grünbühel and I live, exchange thoughts and sometimes work together.

" What is liveness and what can it be? "

…first year of the PhD I stated in a hypertext piece[2] that aliveness of course was necessary for experiencing liveness but that I wouldn't specifically explore being alive. A bit more than half way into the PhD…

-> DEATH p.23

-> LIVENESS AS A PROCESS p.10

2 Meta-Liveness text developed in twine as part of my practice based research into working with different existing ready made interactive formats 2018 - https://charlottaruth.com/stage/meta-liveness

IMPORTANT PARALLELITY

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari speak in their book *A Thousand Plateaus* about the Rhizome as networked thinking. It fascinates me how also non connected, parallel activities, even if they are not strategically planned to influence each other - do.

In the first year of my PhD studies I worked in parallel in the choreographer Alexander Gottfarb's year long project *Negotiations*[5]. For an entire year a group of 13 people danced in a shop 8 h a day in the 7th district of Vienna (a hipster area with many cafés). The basic principle of the choreographic practice was to repeat and transform from 10-18h everyday. The dancers were divided on daily workshifts. In total I practised repetition on 55 full working days in 2018. Thanks to working with this dance practice I grew more and more curious about the similarity between memory and reproduction media and I began experimenting with creating analogue versions of works previously depending on digital technology - looking at memory as an unstable technology for creating glitches and meta-layers.

5 Gottfarb, Alexander; *Negotiations*, Tanzquartier, Vienna 2018 https://tqw.at/en/event/negotiations-feb/

5 PANDEMIC SPECIAL EFFECTS

For approximately two years of the PhD I was disappointed with myself for not finding *my way* into the online environments. I would describe this as not having carved out the experimentation context for myself.

I remember my dear critical friend Cordula Daus[6] asking in 2018: *"Online, but where online?"* This question worried me. I thought about it a lot. Even though at some point during the research I recognised that establishing a social media practice of posting regularly could have provided me with an additional contextualization, I knew that I didn't want to do an anthropological study on how to use facebook or instagram in a more intriguing way. The truth is… I cannot do such a thing. I seem to be ill suited to communicate in this way. My tendency is rather to open a social media account and misuse it. Use it internally as an infrastructure for testing some idea. A few years ago, in the first version of Treasure Hunting, Martin Engström[7], Peter Mills[8] and I used Twitter to document the three of us exclusively. The documentation practice on Twitter took place through always documenting what we did in the form of questions and even if I wouldn't have minded that somebodyelse followed us, my curiosity was on how the questions created a space of resonance

6 Cordula Daus is a language artist and performer. Since 2017 when we both began the PhD in Artistic Research at the University of Applied Arts our work is very entangled. Since 2019 inside the common ongoing project Questionology.

7 Martin Engström is working as a communication strategist with a background in film studies and also a devoted gamer. During my final MFA project at DOCH Uniarts Stockholm in 2015 I invited him in as an expert on social media and gaming.

8 Peter Mills, choreographer, whose own work is always called PETER has been a close recurring collaborator of mine since 2014.

…1990s, the concept of liveness was informed by a debate inside performance studies surrounding the ephemerality of performance and live art.

"What we nowadays call live or liveness is a construction of our mediatized age. BEFORE THE FIRST TECHNICAL RECORDING THE WORD LIVE DID NOT NEED TO EXIST. IT ONLY BEGAN TO BE USED AROUND THE TIME WHEN THE RADIO WAS INTRODUCED, to make explicit to the listeners, the difference between live transmitted sound and that of a recording."[3]

Now, knowing that things can be live or not, I find it interesting to think what non-live could mean in an analogue setting and what live in a non-live setting can possibly be. If this…

-> IMPROVISING p.14

-> NON LIVE LIVENESS p.6

3 Adaptation of text inspired by a lecture from Philip Auslander, Transmediale Berlin 2011, https://archive.transmediale.de/content/digital-liveness-philip-auslander-us-about-digital-liveness retrieved 5.6.2022.

that fed the ongoing work. It's also nice to be in the same room as those you communicate online with, this extra layer of the space always feels a bit magic.

Increasingly, during the PhD, I have recognised that what I'm interested in, is not the content inside the communication, but rather the spaces this distributed communication creates: how it feels to be both in your own, and somebody else's kitchen at the same time; how we get used to hovering parallel *nows*; how just knowing that I can check social media changes how I live my life *in* the moment.

Quite late, I began to understand that *surfing*, to actively go online to look for something, had for many people ceased to exist as a metaphor. If we are all the time online we are not catching the wave when we need it, we are rather surrounded by the whole ocean in all its dimensions all the time. As Annette Markham writes in Metaphors of the internet *"...our actual social realities are constructed not just how we use the internet but also on how we rely on it, and what we expect, which in large part emerges from the imaginaries we're using to frame the situation in the first place. [...] What we called surfing is now called sharing"*.[9]

I was used to creating things for a theatre audience and it was difficult both practically and financially to move into another art context. In order to create a context for my transition to online, I tried to apply for micro grants

announced by the organisation Rhizome and also a residency by Blast Theory. My applications were not taken. Then in 2020 Corona came and the research-context that I hadn't properly carved out for myself was served to me on a silver-tray. All my normal to-dos and ongoing practical engagements had to also be online. Colleagues from the choreographic world, who in many cases had misunderstood my practice to be about technology (not the body in relation to awkward space and time conditions) alongside myself, and I, who had struggled to follow my research score *to be more online* - all of us were forced to spend hours online. But we were online in a different way than before the pandemic. We literally *needed* to move the planned *live* situations to online. I had to rework five live installations to be performed in hybrid versions due to the inability for some performers to travel. I was commissioned to make a video-work for a theatre that needed online content. I had to teach dance training online. I had to perform and give workshops at conferences online. Groups that previously never had reasons to communicate through video conference calls had to become digitally integrated. We all had to turn the sound off when our kids began fighting in the background or excuse ourselves for farts that somebody next to us did in the offline environment. I felt excited and prepared. As much as I suffered from missing the normal life, now, thanks to the pandemic, I can refer to an online context that you all intuitively understand.

9 Markham, N. Annette; *Ways of being in the Digital Age* in *Metaphors of the internet: Ways of Being in the Age of Ubiquity*, edited by Markam, N. Annette & Tiidenbergh, Katrin (New York, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Oxford, Wien, Peter Lang, 2021) p. 9

NON LIVE LIVENESS

...text appears to be speaking to you... I have managed to go beyond the meaning liveness has inside media and communication studies. Inside media and communication studies, liveness is actually just the result of applying reality effects which give the mediated material an "authentic" touch. Reproducing aesthetics of live events. This constructed authenticity can, e.g., be seen in translations of analogue aesthetics through digital filters for photography, or sound, e.g., dust on a camera lens or the crackle of a vinyl record. It can also be noticed in methods and aesthetics of how you shape situations in the re-production moment. In dogma filmmaking the shaky hand camera suggests that what we are seeing is a real situation unfolding in front of us, not a planned rehearsed scene reproduced and mediated by the camera. An example of non live liveness could also be...

-> DEADLY THEATRE p.24

-> KAREN p. 39

-> ONLINE / DIGITAL LIVENESS p.7

DEGREES OF PRESENCE[10]

IT SEEMS LIVENESS SHIFTED FROM A SHARED SPACE TO THE VIEWERS AFFECTIVE SPACE. ONLINE LECTURES, ONLINE MEETINGS, ONLINE PERFORMANCE, ALL THESE FORMATS STILL HAPPEN IN REAL TIME, BUT ARE NONE-THELESS DIFFERENT FROM THEIR PHYSICAL REAL LIFE COUNTERPARTS. AT FIRST SIGHT PRIMARILY THE SPACE SEEMS TO BE AFFECTED. AUDIENCE AND PERFORMER, STUDENTS AND TEACHER, ME AND YOU ARE NOT PRESENT IN THE SAME PHYSICAL SPACE, BUT STILL IN THE SAME MOMENT. A TEMPORALITY THAT IS CONSTITUTED AND CARRIED BY INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION. IF WE LOOK CLOSER, WE SEE THAT NOT ONLY SPACE, BUT ALSO THE TIMELINE, THE DRAMATURGY OF EVENTS ONLINE, IS CHANGED BY THE TRANSFER INTO THE DIGITAL WORLD. WHAT HAPPENS?

Missing. The lack of physical co-presence makes visible what we've taken for granted until now. Actively observing what we lack when physical presence is missing can function as an instrument of analysis of what we need inside social structures. Many of us have experienced how a classical lecture, either as a teacher or student (a sender or receiver) is very draining. Not noticing the small gestures and other sensorial information is an even greater loss than the actual missing bodies. The two dimensional stamp sized faces reveal facial expressions that we don't know if they belong to the actual shared experience or to private comments in the chat. Intimacy can be carried by words and silence in long distance relationships. But how can that mediated touch be translated to other types of content?

Mediated presence. We don't have people behind or beside us that we sense without looking at them. We need to create a sense of presence. Faking or performing co-presence, looking into the camera

10 This text is an adaptation of a text originally accompanying *Living Documents degrees of presence*. Original text conceived by Ruth in writing conversation with Domink Grünbühel and Georg Eckmayr.

lens pretending to look people in the eye. When we can hide and be there at the same time, the dynamics of a group shift dramatically.

Invisibility. To be invisible is to be absent, but still have means to interact. Like ghosts or gods or mass surveillance, who can see without being seen themselves. Like the invidible audiences dropping up and down in the numbers of viewers of an online live broadcast. To write or to not write in the chat. To reveal yourself or not. To be part or not be part. It's not a problem anymore that you can be and not be at the same time. Drop out, commit online suicide but still live in two other places at the same time. The digitally transported eye-sight creates an omnipresence not only granted to the people with power. We can practice that sneaky power ourselves. As an online ghost or the owner of a special "skin" a magic invisibility cloak, you can more than ever practice secret presence.

Distributed-presence. On the top 10-list of everyday experiences *online presence* could be the constant nr one if we remember how magic it actually is to distribute our presence with digital means. Multiple Layers of operable reality give us the possibility to take part in more than one situation at the same time. We learn to master the skill of "here and there presence". Exceeding the limit of having only one single body. We take part in a conversation and simultaneously converse to someone else typing off-screen. An ambivalent possibility. On the one hand we are scattered on the other hand we look things up while talking, possibly making our conversations more informed.

Doubled Presence. We can recognize that situations nowadays are often both experiences and acts at the same time. LIVING AND DISTRIBUTING OUR PRESENCE THROUGH DIGITAL MEDIA, RANGING BETWEEN SELFIE POSTINGS DURING HOLIDAYS TO WORK RELATED

" What is liveness and what can it be? "[7]

…what sociologist Nick Couldry has called online liveness and Philipp Auslander digital liveness. TODAY DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY IS INTEGRATED IN OUR LIVES TO THE EXTENT THAT IT ACTS AS THE EXTENSION OF OUR SKIN AND SENSES. DUE TO THIS CHANGED MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENT, THE MEANING OF LIVENESS IS ALSO EXPANDING AND SHIFTING. DIGITAL OR ONLINE LIVENESS IS NOT ONLY HAPPENING IN A TRADITIONAL SENSE. IT'S RATHER A NEGOTIATION WITH ONE'S OWN IMMERSION OF A SITUATION.

One concrete example of this immersion - is the notion of presence which in the realm of VR (Virtual Reality) stands for the phenomenon of believability. The online world adds a constantly present parallel reality. Mixed reality games and experiences play with possibility. In the blockbuster game *Pokémon GO* the Augmented Reality mode "…uses the camera and gyroscope on the player's mobile device to display an image of a Pokémon as though it were in the real world."[4] With other techniques but also sometimes conceived as apps, the artist group Blast Theory creates scenarios mixed with input from the player (see for instance *Karen* that you play over several weeks). In the transformation from the Internet having depended on a stationary location to become woven into the world, the effect on how we perceive reality is shifting and…

-> META-LIVENESS p.8-9

-> PRESENCE p.26

4 Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pok%C3%A9mon_Go retrieved 20.06.2022

VIDEO CONFERENCES MEAN THAT WE ARE CONSTANTLY FED WITH AN OUTSIDE PERSPECTIVE OF OURSELVES. WE ARE OBSERVING OURSELVES PERFORMING OUR EXPERIENCES. Enacting ourselves through our digital double and no matter how well we control that presence we almost never know how this digital version performs on somebody else's screen. The copy begins performing on its own. *"This makes clear that images do not only substitute the real on a visual level, but they create a sign with a life of its own."*[11]

Automation versus autonomy. Transformed into a data stream our digitised body gets cut up into fitting pieces for distribution via the network. Bits and bytes which then travel via protocol. The way they take, the nations they pass through, the borders they cross are not ours to decide. We can communicate from one end to the other, but the space in between stays for most of us dark. A dark black hole.

Co-presence. To only *sort of meet* with our friends also means to little by little not sense their full presence. We can share words, images, sounds and gestures, but this sharing only helps to understand; Communicating online is a placeholder. A substitute that potentially sustains time and space, but which cannot substitute the experience of co-presence.

11 Boehm, Gottfried; *Wie Bilder Sinn erzeugen. Die Macht des Zeigens* (Berlin: University Press 2008) P. 43 (Translation Eckmayr)

DIGITAL CONDITIONS & NEW PUBLIC SPHERES

"..the theatre must take account to how technology (from the phone and the walkman upwards) has rewritten and is rewriting bodies, changing our understanding of narratives and places, changing our relationships to culture, changing our understanding of presence." Tim Etchells[12]

"Making, promoting and buying art are real time activities … they happen within the day-to-day flow of normal experience. Only Art Appreciation happens in ideal, nonexistential time." Jack Burnham[13]

ONE PART OF MY PHD HAS BEEN TO OBSERVE HOW DISTRIBUTED PRESENCE AND NEW TYPES OF LIVENESS TRANSFORM OUR WAY OF BEING AND IMAGINING THE WORLD AND HOW THIS AFFECTS HOW WE ATTEND TO ARTWORKS.

I think a lot about how my participatory works are inviting an audience when they first hear about it online. The best example is the *Questionnaire* Cordula Daus and I developed together with Simon Repp as a teaser for the participatory work Questionology.

The traditional onboarding created by the architecture and the traditional rules or rituals of the theatre venue is, no longer enough to make people transition from everyday life. People only go offline right before the performance begins - if even. I have often sat behind people that

12 Etchells, Tim; *Certain Fragments* (London:Routledge 1999) p. 97

13 Skrebowski, Luke; *All Systems Go: Recovering Jack Burnham's 'Systems Aesthetics*, Tate Papers no 5, 2006 https://www.tate.org.uk/research/tate-papers/05/all-systems-go-recovering-jack-burnhams-systems-aesthetics retrieved 29.04.22

" What is liveness and what can it be?"

META-LIVENESS

,,, A FEW YEARS AGO I DEVELOPED A CONCEPT TO BE ABLE TO GRASP WHAT IS PHENOMENOLOGICALLY HAPPENING WHEN I EXPERIENCE THE FRICTION BETWEEN MY REAL LIFE EXPERIENCE AND THE DIGITAL PERSPECTIVE. I CALL IT META LIVENESS.

The meta-liveness concept has its origin in the live versus not live practice. This has been an ongoing fascination in my work to create reality glitch effects by using the dramaturgical friction between what is taking place live and that which is recorded or mediated.

TO CONSCIOUSLY ATTEND A SITUATION FROM SEVERAL PERSPECTIVES IS NOT NEW. These inand outside perspectives of oneself echo qualities of processes belonging to time consciousness and cognitive reflections. META LIVENESS CONNOTES TO SOME EXTENT THE EXPERIENCE THAT IS DESCRIBED AS META COGNITION, BUT THE COGNITIVE STATE OF META LIVENESS IS PROCEDURAL. I DON'T JUST EXPERIENCE THE MOMENT FROM IN AND OUTSIDE OF SPACE AND TIME, I ALSO BECOME AWARE OF HOW THIS MOMENT RELATES TO A BEFORE AND AFTER AND IN THE PROLONGATION, HOW EVERY MOMENT IS MALLEABLE. THIS PLACE IS LOCATED BETWEEN THE BEFORE, THE NOW AND THE AFTER. . .

META-LIVENESS continues on p.9

keep on checking messages during performances. This creates other dramaturgical conditions.

When creating works for the stage nowadays, I have to be aware that the people in front of me came not just from their home or work, but possibly from ten other places online and in their mind as well. I don't want to adapt to the style of online attention economy but I have to be aware that the way we experience time and place is affected by this on- and offline modality, also by those who temporarily fully devote their attention.

Before Corona, the standardised way theatre and art institutions used networked technologies had audience outreach purposes. In more rare cases it has been about how to extend the experience beyond the walls of the museums and theatres. During Corona, content that should have been attended to *live* was transferred from the stage to an online audience caused by the sudden impossibility to keep the repertoire going. In my opinion, the examples that worked the best were considering the participatory nature of the online space-time. Liveness during this period was, for instance, better experienced inside audience talks that framed the online experience than in the either pre-recorded or live streamed performances themselves.

Douglas Kellner argued already in 1997 in his article "Techno-Politics, New Technologies, and the New Public Spheres"[14] that intellectuals had a responsibility to adapt to and to critically act within the new public spheres online, especially pointing at the participatory development in online environments. Already when applying for the PhD in 2017, I used this source to point at how art institutions seem to approach the internet and social media in reactive ways. As an artist, when producing works in collaboration with state financed institutions, I am expected to deliver advertising materials for the theatres' standardised social media channels. For some theatres it's a problem that I don't have a Facebook account as it's widely known that material coming from accounts of real people gets more attention than the material of a venue.
But why is it OK that state financed institutions (not only art-venues) depend on Facebook?

Even though I don't think it's OK, the answer can be traced to the fact that taking technology into your hands is extremely time-consuming and/or expensive. Not even big media-houses like The New York Times have the means to be sufficiently proactive with how their online features function. They end up doing what the theatres are doing - adapting their material to existing social media formats.

The tech industry is also carrying a culture that is in constant beta-mode and more traditional institutions have difficulties being proactive due to the rapidly changing digital conditions. In the fight for non-western narratives and other bodies on stage and in galleries, it seems paradoxical to advertise on platforms that allow and algorithmically favour extremist thoughts based on how many clicks they receive. ON AN INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL, THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE DISCUSSION AND RESOURCES FOR THE QUESTION OF HOW ART CAN CRITICALLY ACT, AFFECT, AND CHANGE THE USE OF THE INTERNET.

14 Kellner, Douglas; *Techno-Politics, New Technologies, and the New Public Spheres* (1999) https://pages.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/essays/technopoliticsnewtechnologies.pdf retrieved 29.04.22

5 Tromans, Steve; *Improvising Music Experience: The eternal Ex-temporisation of Music Made Live*, in Reason, Matthew; Mølle, Anja Lindelof (Eds.), *Experiencing Liveness in Contemporary Performance. Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, New York: Routledge, 2017, p. 183.

-> PHENOMENOLOGY OF MUSIC p.13

-> PHENOMENOLOGY OF DANCING p.16

-> NOW p.11

I've become...

As a tool meta-liveness has supported me dramaturgically in creating conditions for step by step emancipating visitors inside my participatory work. The aim is to bring you to a place both inside and outside of a moment and in the best case invite you to play inside that gap that different perspectives on a situation produce.
STEVE TROMANS SPEAKS ABOUT IMPROVISING MUSIC THAT "... THERE IS A SENSE OF CONNECTING UP WITH NON LINEAR TEMPORAL ASPECTS, "BEING IN THE BEFORE, NOW AND AFTER AT THE SAME TIME.

As thoroughly described in the book *Internet är trasigt* (*Internet is broken*[15]) published in 2018 by journalists Martin Gelin and Karin Pettersson, the effect Big Tech has on democracy is terrifying. By thoroughly examining how data, as raw material, has become a resource fully in the hands of a few tech industries, Gelin and Pettersson make a thought provoking comparison to colonialism.[16] Big Tech operates without caring for how their services weaken democracy, make local news media collapse and how aggression and hatred is being catalysed on their platforms (as for instance in Burma in 2017 where the UN could prove that the violence had increased due to the activities on Facebook).[17] Big Tech make its money on selling our attention and data traces - or what George Soros at Davos in 2018 pointed towards; Big Tech *"exploit our social relations."*[18]

OUTLOOK LIVENESS

Inside performance studies the canonical research on *liveness* has to a large extent been written from the perspective of the spectator. The performance and media studies scholar Philip Auslander focuses on an analysis of the technical conditions for *liveness* to happen. The ontological comparison he makes between the mediatized and the *live* point towards an interest in the time-based ephemeral quality rather than digging into the heightened "here and now" experience. In my encounter with Auslander in the frame of a 5-day workshop at the Research Academy at the Zürich University of the Arts (ZHdK) in 2021, Auslander's entry point - though having a background as an actor and interestingly engaging in a 3rd revision of his work from 1999 -came very much from framing and less from experiencing. This leaves room for exploring liveness as an experience or a sensation from a philosophical and phenomenological position. Theatre studies scholar Erika Fischer-Lichte's work is very relevant here for understanding the different degrees of spectatorship and how the feedback loop between performer and spectator creates a certain energy. When engaging with Fischer-Lichte's material, I felt that the perspective of the maker: the process of both planning for *liveness* (i.e. choreographing or creating performance) and constructing liveness in the moment (i.e. performing and improvising) - appears to be missing. Andrew Crisell professor of Broadcasting Studies writes *"the need for co-presence is primarily felt by the receivers rather than the senders"*. I don't agree with Crisell and interestingly a few pages earlier the same author has commented on the medium of writing and written *"there is a hankering for liveness, a need on part of the writer [...] to invest it with some modicum of the personal."*[19]

Liveness traditionally occurs when people are co-present in a space. It is specifically present in the quality of the unexpected: risk in a circus performance, glitches that break the flow in online environments or technical mistakes in a theatre performance. *Liveness* is a phenomenon that is difficult to pinpoint because the conditions for it to emerge can be there even in the absence of the actual sensation.

15 The title originates from a quote by the co-founder of Twitter Evan Williams

16 Gelin Martin & Pettersson Karin; *Internet är trasigt* (Stockholm:Natur & Kultur2018) p. 254

17 Gelin Martin & Pettersson Karin; *Internet är trasigt*(Stockholm:Natur & Kultur 2018) p. 20

18 Gelin Martin & Pettersson Karin; *Internet är trasigt*(Stockholm:Natur & Kultur 2018) p. 92

19 Crisell, Andrew; *Liveness and Recording in the Media* (London:Macimillan Education 2012) p.10

LIVENESS AS A PROCESS

...I began approaching the concept of *liveness* as a process rather than as a phenomenon. *Liveness* appears when we go somewhere. The experience of *liveness* is present in the symptoetic togetherness of deeply engaging in play - as a child or as an artist engaging in "wordling with"[6] others in a creative process. I WOULD ARGUE THAT LIVENESS IS NOT PERFORMED. IT CAN BE CONSTRUCTED BY PERFORMANCE BUT AS ERIKA FISCHER-LICHTE WRITES , IT IS EMERGENT. I'M NOT FINISHED THINKING ABOUT THIS EMERGENCE...

Liveness traditionally needs a sender and receiver - but I believe we can send and receive also alone. In the...

-> FICTITIOUS TIME p.28

-> PERFORMANCE STUDIES p.5

6 Harraway, Donna; *Staying with the Trouble* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016) p. 58.

DEADLY THEATRE -> p. 24

WHAT IS LIVENESS AND WHAT CAN IT BE?

Looking at radio and television as newsmedia the value of *liveness* is also in its *truthfulness and authenticity* (Crisell).[20] The terminology was introduced in order to not confuse a live radio broadcast for that of a broadcasted recording.[21] *Online liveness* is also at play inside i.e. instant messaging and live broadcasts. The two perspectives, when combined, add a participatory dimension to collectively watching a concert or big sports event. Now being in the endphase of this PhD-project I found out that a book on live-coding is coming out later this year.[22] This is something I have not written about. In 2019 I was considering going to a live-coding event in Spain but partly because I didn't feel savvy enough, and partly because of everyday logistics, I didn't. Caused by the pandemic the research took turns in other directions.

Let me briefly interrupt this outlook by giving you a snap-shot from a lived experience I've made as a dancer inside the yearlong project Negotiations. This anecdote is important to how my understanding of *liveness* has developed. In the aforementioned shop (see IMPORTANT PARALLELITY p.5) in the 7th district in Vienna that hosted a year of durational daily dancing, the choreographic practice was to continuously move and repeat regardless if there was an audience present or not. Sometimes I would be dancing for several hours only having somebody peeking inside from the window. Other times people entered and were engulfed by the performance time-space that was created, and stayed for more than an hour and also coming back on several days. One time I heard somebody entering the shop, but as I had my back turned towards the door and since I was inside of a repetitive pattern I didn't force a frontal connection but rather continued developing the movement pattern I was busy with. I remember engaging in "expressing with my back" (this is something we learn as dancers: to not only communicate with words, face, and gestures but to be aware of how our bodies relate to others and how in space and time we can modulate this relationship). I remember that because a person had entered my awareness was enhanced. I was not only busy with the movement in space but also with how my body and what I was working on had a resonance with that person and that this person also created a shift in the space. After maybe five minutes or more, I had little by little integrated a spiral into the movement pattern that allowed me to turn towards the presence I felt. But nobody was there. Later, I realised that the wind sometimes grabbed the shop door making it sound as if somebody entered. The presence I had experienced was only in my mind - it was virtual. Yet to me this experience serves as a perfect example of how merely imagining somebody is there creates presence and when you actively engage with this presence and it shifts you - *liveness* is created.

20 Here it's interesting to consider the activism by Russian state media employee Marina Ovsyannikova who during live broadcast, in March 2022, protested against the war in Ukraine. Because of the live-situation the autheticity of the action was underlined.

21 See Auslander, Philipp; *Live Performance in a mediatized culture*, 2nd Ed. (New York: Routledge 2008) p. 59

22 Blackwell, A. F. Cocker, E. Cox, G. McLean, A. Magnusson, T; *Live Coding: A User's Manual* (2022) https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/live-coding#:~:text=Live%20Coding%3A%20A%20User›s%20Manual,cultural%20production%20and%20computational%20culture.

" What is liveness and what can it be?"

MON

... VERY NERDY WITH TRYING TO SPEAK THROUGH THE SITUATION WE SHARE RIGHT HERE YES RIGHT HERE I WRITE AND RIGHT NOW YOU READ ...

TO TURN THE TEXT INTO A WORMHOLE AND TO AT LEAST TRY TO UNDERSTAND HOW THINGS ARE FOR YOU IN THAT CONTINGENT FUTURE THAT I CANNOT CONTROL. I OFTEN OVERWORK THE FORMULATION OF SIMPLE MESSAGES WITH THE AIM TO CONSTRUCT LIVENESS.

POSSIBLY IT'S LESS ABSTRACT WHAT I TRY TO DESCRIBE IF I CALL IT TOUCH. TOUCHING NOT NECESSARILY ON AN EMOTIONAL LEVEL BUT SIMPLY LOOKING FOR WAYS TO SITUATE WHAT I SAY IN A LESS TIME DEPENDENT REALITY SO THAT WE CAN ASYNCHRONOUSLY ATTEND NOW, NOW.

Don't you think...

-> DOCUMENTATION p. 32

-> PRESENCE p. 26

-> VIVID PRESENT p. 12

and the research question "What is liveness and what can it be?" is about stretching the limits of how *live* a sensation can get in a traditionally *non-live* situation. Choreographic Contengiences for on- and offline is also about how practices from choreography and participatory art can be bridged to the online and how *liveness* can be increased in asynchronous communication. The research also tries to fathom how new ways of being together online has effects on *liveness* in traditional "here and now" settings. How distributed presence creates other conditions for relating and spending time together and how this needs to be considered when creating live performance. How, for instance, the theatrical contract and the *onboarding* to theatrical experience is shifting due to the time-line of online advertisement and to how the "here and now" is being shared with parallel online reality.

With this research, I contribute to the research on *liveness* from within my practice. Rooted in contemporary dance, expanded choreography and participatory performance, I approach the concept of *liveness* and what it can be in on- and offline space-time, from a practice based perspective as a choreographer, performer, and facilitator. The concept of *liveness* and my own concept of *meta-liveness* serve as entry points for investigating how on- and offline conditions have affected the spatio-temporal conditions for live experiences to exist.

The *liveness*, and in prolonguation the *meta-liveness* sensation I'm specifically curious about, is emerging when we grasp ourselves, or our position in the passing of time. When we experience transformation in and sometimes due to our presence. How I approach *liveness* is in Fischer-Lichte's text hence more present when she examines the topic of liminality. LIVENESS CAN BE FELT AT THE BORDER OF BECOMING SOMETHING ELSE THROUGH EXPANDING MY UNDEFINED BORDERS OF CONSCIOUSNESS. THE EXPERIENCE OF LIVENESS IS PRESENT IN THE SYMPOIETIC TOGETHERNESS OF DEEPLY ENGAGING IN PLAY AS A CHILD OR AS AN ARTIST ENGAGING IN WORDLING WITH[23] OTHERS IN A CREATIVE PROCESS. *Liveness* for me can be that beautiful moment of feeling touch without touching. It can be an aha moment when something falls into the right place even in asynchronous communication. Sometimes it's also the extreme "here and now" feeling I can experience when dancing and being *with* time. *Con-Temporary.* If you want to know a bit about the etymology of Contemporary...

-> CONTEMPORARY p. 36
«WHAT IS LIVENESS AND WHAT IT CAN BE?»

Liveness is not the same as presence but it depends on the sense or imagination of presence. *Liveness* depends on communication. Technically there might not be a real connection happening - but the one standing in front of a surveillance camera waving to a potential surveiller will feel *liveness*. Caused by a sense of togetherness with others, a togetherness with things - but also a togetherness with our mind or something higher as in spiritual practice, *Liveness* is a sensation that makes us go someplace new in ourselves before we have cognitively judged where to.

23 Harraway, Donna; *Staying with the Trouble* (Durham: Duke University Press 2016) p. 58.

VIVID PRESENT

…that seeing yourself inside a live video stream creates an awkward here and now situation?
To me it's similar to what phenomenological sociologist Alfred Schütz called the partial self. In 1945 Alfred Schütz wrote about the time structure of the self through borrowing G. H. Mead's language and dividing the "I" who has an experience and the "me" who is being observed by the "I".[7] Schütz discusses how looking back at an experience disrupts the feeling of the undivided self.

When reflecting (back) on an act it breaks what Schütz calls the vivid present and instead creates a series of performed acts.

What happens to the act of living when we are both in and outside of our experiences simultaneously - and how do these simultaneous reflections transform our capacity to experience?

When…

-> DURATION p.15

-> TIME CONSCIOUSNESS p. 34-35

7 Schütz, Alfred; *On multiple realities in Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. 5, No. 4, June, (1945) pp. 533-576, https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ge/schuetz.htm, retrieved 29.04.22.

While digging into source material I have also enjoyed the discovery that the problem of documentation is almost always part of the discussion scholars have on *liveness*. For example, the question of how, when being captured, the live performance is not *performance* anymore (Peggy Phelan). The performativity of documentation has also been written about thoroughly by Auslander, who describes documentation as incomplete. How documentation cannot capture *"the unrepresented, unrepresentable and liminal"*[24] of a live event has been discussed by Matthew Reason. Matthew Reason has further, together with Anja Mølle Lindelof, edited a very inspiring volume on *liveness* where artists have been invited to contribute.[25] This book has been a great source of inspiration, particularly Reason's text *Affect and Experience* which has inspired Cordula Daus and myself to begin writing a chamber play. Steve Tromans text about improvising music is also magnificient. I coined the concept *meta-liveness* through my need to phenomenologically grasp digital technology and the online realm, but the more I read about how it feels to improvise music, the more I understand how profoundly connected my concept *meta-liveness* is to my dancing practice. To be inside of an experience and at the same time being able to reflect what my actions (movements) do to my surrounding. But what happens in all the literature I've read is that when trying to describe *liveness* it either feels too narrowed down or when the description is working it disappears in my hands and becomes something else; like presence, proximity, affect or touch.

In one of the PhD seminars I attended this spring, a guest student who had insights in physics said that in physics you describe phenomena through what they are not. My colleague performer and neuro scientist Imani Rameses later pointed out to me that this is a typical scientific approach called deductive reasoning. It's fascinating that science uses the same approach as apophatic or negative theology. *"…to speak only in terms of what may not be said about the perfect goodness that is God."*[26] I cannot say what it is, but I can tell you what it is not. I have not chosen to go fully for this deductive or apophatic approach, but to some extent the idea to also make you experience *liveness* and not only read about it has a resonance with this idea, to not always describe but rather circle around the phenomena.

Choreographic Contingencies for on-and offline is a research project that reflects upon the basic conditions and mediality for *liveness* to take place also in non-traditional live environments. Important for the understanding of this reflexive material is to mention that I always think about *liveness* but I never engage in artistic processes only to create *liveness*. In this way the artworks that are central to this research and reflexive documentation are not *research results; they* are rather the environments for studying *liveness*. The parallel research on *liveness* has through a more and more articulated methodology, almost subversively performed itself into the works. In a second very different step, I have then articulated how practices shaped through my artworks relate to *liveness*. Inside this feedback loop of practice and reflection, I began applying

24 Reason, Matthew; *Documentation, Disappearance and the Representation of Live Performance* (Springer 2006) p.27.

25 Reason, Matthew & Mølle Lindelof Anja; *Experiencing Liveness in contemporary performance* (Routledge 2017)

26 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apophatic_theology I originally thought of bringing this concept in due to the text A Voice Comes To One by Ronald Jones, describing artist duo Lundahl & Seitl's work.

PHENOMENOLOGY OF MUSIC

…aware that the sensation I try to fathom as "meta-liveness" can be compared to Edward Husserl's phenomenological description of how we experience music. We don't perceive music as single separate tones after each other. What we perceive is how the tone/s we hear, together with the tone/s before and after, shape a melody. META LIVENESS AS THE IN AND OUTSIDE PERSPECTIVE OF THE PERCEIVED MOMENT IN RESONANCE WITH MEMORY AND THE ANTICIPATED ACTION TO COME. A COGNITIVE PROCESS THAT MAKES YOU THE DIRECTOR AND THE SPECTATOR OF YOUR OWN SEQUENTIAL EXPERIENCE SIMILAR TO HOW AN IMPROVISING MUSICIAN CONTINUOUSLY BOTH LISTENS TO WHAT HE OR SHE AND THE OTHERS ALREADY PLAYED, AND ANTICIPATES THE CONTINUATION.

-> AFFECT p. 20

more and more *form* to the reflexive content. This development, was a stimulating side-effect of the frame provided by the PhD where we regularly lecture but seldomly are given the time-frame to present or participate in experiences of durational kind. In order to make my colleagues grasp my artistic thinking realm I had to develop new ways of expressing my work. In this process of translation, I little by little found my own way of dealing with reflection, language, and articulation of artistic research.

ARTISTIC RESEARCH

Prior to working within the context of artistic research I seldomly tried to articulate the choices I made. This signifies one of the few differences between me conducting research and me making art. Reflecting upon and being aware of which choices I make is crucial to the epistemology that is being developed and how I in the next step can disseminate the practices and insights I develop. Ingrid Cogne has articulated that *"…re/search, for me [Ingrid Cogne], is analysing the doing while being in the doing.*[27] Cogne has been an inspiring figure for me to imagine how to make tacit knowledge more explicit and to question what knowledge in artistic research can mean (*see "The object of communication" Cogne, Grünbühel, Ruth 2019).*[28] The articulation process Cogne speaks about is also in line with phenomenological practice. After exploring how to approach phenomenology as a tool for articulating my concept of *meta-liveness*, I have come to the conclusion that analysing "the doing" best happens for me with a bit of delay or distance to my art practice. When being engulfed in my artistic work it actually doesn't feel as if I make active choices. The work happens more on an intuitive affective preconscious level. I really enjoy the moment in an artistic process when the inner logic establishes and I don't have to decide anymore - when it's rather the material that is driving the process. I can be nervous about finishing on time or tying it all together but when being in "the doing" I seldomly question what the next step is. If instead trying to analyse "the doing" simultaneously it might produce relevance for research but if the focus is on the artistic outcome or endeavour - it risks becoming what Cordula Daus has stated in our common publication *"...smart-ass, over-explanatory, boring art works that try to do good while being scientifically and socially completely irrelevant."*[29] Doing the PhD has hence been about becoming aware of what research does to my practice and more importantly what I can do with research. In the prolongation this means also taking a stance towards how I want to contribute to the field of Artistic Research.

"Some things seem to resist being put into words." Matthew Reason[30]

"..articulation of the pre-reflective, non-conceptual content of art.." Henk Borgdorff[31]

27 Cogne, Ingrid; *Format is Knowledge. Exhibition - Activation and Trace* in *The question of Exhibition*, issue 13.2 Parse 2021 https://parsejournal.com/article/format-is-knowledge/

28 Cogne, I., Grünbühel, D., Ruth C.; *The object of Communication* (2018) published on youtube.com/watch?v=QcaIRDH_oMk in the frame of Six Formats FWF/PEEK AR291

29 Daus, Cordula & Ruth, Charlotta; *Questionology - Are you here?* (Berlin:Errant Bodies Press 2022). Forthcoming

30 Reason, Matthew; *Affect and Experience* in *Experiencing Liveness in contemporary performance: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* ed. Reason, Matthew & Mølle Lindelof Anja, (Routledge 2017) p. 84

31 Borgdorff, Henk; *The production of knowledge in*

IMPROVISING

…word above means to make or do something using whatever you have or without having planned it in advance, what do you want to do now?

With the knowledge I bring from dance and choreography my aim inside artistic research is to communicate my research not only with words but through the composition of that which is at stake. Often words initiate us to, metaphorically speaking, go "someplace". But research inside humanities or performance studies will aim to explain that place. For me, the *artistic* in the part of *artistic* research dissolves when I tell you what that "someplace" is intended to be. My position is that art is always communicative and becomes what it becomes in the meeting with the receiver. Art performs on us. A scientific text does too, but in its form it has the ambition to explain the world. Art for me has the ambition to reinvent the relations to the world (or a tiny detail of reality) or, if ever so temporally, make us experience the world differently. As I cannot know what world phenomena different art-audiences pay attention to, exactly where we move from and go together is contingent. Also knowledge is malleable and depends on, to a large extent, with what pre-knowledge it is being approached with.

'Art does not reside in material entities, but in relations between people and between people and the components of their environment.'
Jack Burnham[32]

METHODOLOGICAL INSPIRATION

CHOREOGRAPHIC PRACTICE p.16
TREASURE HUNTING p.17
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artistic research in *The Routledge Companion to Research in the Arts* (Routledge 2012) p. 46

32 Burnham, Jack cited in; Skrebowski, Luke; *All Systems Go: Recovering Jack Burnham's 'Systems Aesthetics* in Tate Papers no 5 (2006) https://www.tate.org.uk/research/tate-papers/05/all-systems-go-recovering-jack-burnhams-systems-aesthetics retrieved 29.04.22

DURATION - DURÉE

…philosopher Henri Bergson and scientist Albert Einstein hundred years ago, met in Paris on the 28th March 1922 to publicly debate *time*, Henri Bergson, though accepting the relativity theory from Einstein, insisted on a world perspective that wouldn't only be approached with science.

Science measures an immobile, complete line, whereas the experience of time is mobile and incomplete. For the individual, time may speed up or slow down, whereas, for science, it would remain the same.

Because we can all relate to experiencing music, music might also function as a way to approach Henri Bergson's thinking around duration (durée) – Bergson became aware that the moment one attempted to measure a moment, it would be gone. How time consciousness is shifting due to being with our minds and bodies in several places at the same time can also not easily be grasped only through philosophy.

" What is liveness and what can it be?"

DANCE, MUSIC… ART HAVE TOOLS TO EXPLORE THE EXPERIENCE OF TIME. CHOREOGRAPHY IS TO MY OPINION A GREAT LANGUAGE FOR RESEARCHING AND MAKING TIME GRASPABLE. THIS ONGOING EXPLORATION IS PRESENT IN MOST OF MY ART WORKS.

If…

-> ARTISTIC RESEARCH p.14

-> CHOREOGRAPHIC PRACTICE p.16

-> TIME CONSCIOUSNESS p. 34-35

CHOREOGRAPHIC PRACTICE

The PhD has strengthened my belief in choreographic practices to embrace and develop knowledge of interrelations. Historically the meaning of the word *choreography* has gone through many transformations.[33] Outside a non-expert field the word *Choreography* has settled in the meaning of organising human movement in time and space. Choreography as dance-making is also how I, as a child, first got in touch with choreography. I've been working as a dancer and dance-maker for 25 years but I'm also applying choreographic thinking in other ways. With choreography I can prepare a room so that it better facilitates meetings. I can restructure the sense of time in a lecture through repetition. I can let immaterial materials - like memory - guide an experience. For me choreography is a language that can express and rearrange the in-between, the behind, the before and after - and the imaginary.

When formulating this PhD project my focus was that the research would take place in the realm of *expanded choreography*. Anna Leon says:

"Contemporary expanded choreography widens what choreography is and can be; from customers moving in a shopping mall to birds migrating for the winter, and from the structure of a building to the spatial distribution of sounds, the notion of choreography stretches to encompass a wide range of phenomena and actions."[34]

33 Originally the word choreography comes from notating dance, as can be read in; Leon, Anna; *Expanded Choreographies - Choreographic Histories* (Bielefeld:Transcript Publishing 2022).

34 Leon, Anna: *Expanded Choreographies - Choreographic Histories* (Bielefed:Transcript Publishing 2022) p. 310.

16 I am fascinated by contingent relations. The movement and social organisation that happens in the everyday - *social choreography*[35] - is also highly relevant to my work and to how I experience reality. Mårten Spångberg has described expanded choreography as *"...an open cluster of tools that can be used as a generic capacity both for analysis and production."*[36]

Choreography is hence not only a tool I apply inside my artworks, but choreographic thinking is something I practise when moving around in the city, when navigating how to place myself, choosing if to express myself with other means than words, and choosing if people experience a phenomenon before I describe it or not.

Choreography in this reflexive documentation is also the invitation to cut into, navigate and turn my research around. In my mind's eye, I see choreographic practice like a moving network that is able to pause in *tensegrity*. If you zoom in on one node - maybe a human - you see how this node is in the middle of its *amongness*[37]. Through choreographic thinking I can render phenomenological and temporal aspects of new technologies graspable and displace online space-time to the "here and now".

Intrinsically this whole reflexive documentation is a choreographic one.

35 See Hewitt, Andre; *Social Choreography: Ideology as Performance* in Dance and Everyday Movement (Durham/London: Duke University Press 2005).

36 Spångberg, Mårten: blog post https://choreographyasexpandedpractice.wordpress.com 2012. retreived 25.05.22

37 Amongness is a concept Rebecca Schneider develops in her work on Gestures and how gestures exist between or among bodies. Schneider, Rebecca; *Amongness Besideness Withness* (Duke University 2017)

PHENOMENOLOGY OF DANCING

...hyper aware that the concept of meta-liveness draws on the multisensorial awareness I experience while dancing. Meta-liveness, as I have continued applying it to support my thinking, can be used to describe complex time-based developments in general, but at its core the concept is an attempt to translate a dancer's way of attending to the world into written language.

As I might have said...

-> PRESENCE p.26

-> REPETITION p.17-18

-> TRANSLATION p.31

TREASURE HUNTING

Constructing treasure hunts is something that I have done regularly in my childhood together with my father Walter Ruth.[38] For nearly 20 years it was a resting practice. During the time of my master in fine arts at DOCH / Uniarts Stockholm, I began approaching it again. As an artistic practice, Treasure Hunting, for me, involves a meticulous analysis of in-between spaces and how to pay attention to what is there but might easily be overseen. I practise treasure hunting daily in my encounters with ideas, with people, with social systems, and with the architectural and institutional frameworks that support the work that I do. Treasure Hunting and especially the performativity of clues is also the basis for how my interest in instruction based art has grown.

INSTRUCTION BASED ART

During the PhD I have experimented with how to compose instructions.

'...as a series of prompts for the audience to break off from habitual ways of perceiving the world.'[39]

What I have learnt from engaging with different types of instruction based art is the never ending fine tuning between openness and preciseness. What has been important for me to recognise is the performativity of instructions also when they are not followed. This can be seen in some of Yoko Ono's poetic instructions, and more recently also has resonance in what Peter Liversidge has said about his proposals that all proposals don't have to be carried out for them to turn into live objects.

. . . CHOREOGRAPHIC CLUES p. 27

APPROACHES, PRACTICES, EXERCICES

From the well documented and canonical Fluxus era, I am especially fond of George Brecht whose instructions create freedom through often being so open that any interpretation is correct. This is for instance different from the freedom Allan Kaprow sought; *"Real freedom is a consequence of real limitations"*. Kaprow was of the opinion that too much openness in his happenings created confusion for the participants. Brecht has said that his earlier instructions had been "dictatorial"[40] mentioning how John Cage, who was playing the piano inside an earlier score based performance of his, had felt controlled by the instructions.

Even if I'm aesthetically drawn to the development of Brecht, I think what Kaprow has stated is true too. Some situations become very confusing or even

38 Apart from being my father, Walter Ruth is an artist, theatre-carpenter, architect and before his pension he was a researcher in the field of ergonomics and lecturer at the Technical University in Luleå.

39 Sperlinger, Mike; *Afterthought: New Writing on Conceptual Art* (Rachmaninoff's 2005) p. 11.

40 Interview with Michael Nyman, 1976, cited in Robinson, *In the Event of George Brecht* p. 30. also cited in Kwastek, Katja; *Aesthetics of Interaction in Digital Art* (London:MIT press 2015) p.19

REPETITION

...as a dancer, the work with repetition makes meta-liveness very graspable. Both repetition as in paying attention to what is happening in your body so that you can inhabit the same movement again. Or repetition as in for instance training as *I have done this movement beforeand* I go deeper in the *now* through the experience of carrying both last time and now with me in my body and knowing that I will do this again. Or as in repeating a performance and maybe beginning to learn and anticipate not only how you and your collaborators on stage will behave but also anticipate the reactions of the audience.

REPETITION OPENS FOR ME WAYS TO PERFORM IN POLYPHONY WITH MEMORY. I CAN FOLLOW ONE THOUGHT AND STILL HOVER CONTENT BELONGING TO OTHER TEMPORAL DEVELOPMENTS THAN THE TRAJECTORY I CHOSE. If you repeat something, there is a collision in time between what you are grasping in the now and how this now acts in friction with the memory of the previous time.

HOW OFTEN DID YOU GO TO THE SAME DANCE OR THEATRE PERFORMANCE?

WHEN I DO, I ENJOY THE SECOND TIME A LOT. THE INNER LOGIC OF ART WORKS OFTEN REVEAL THEMSELVES WHEN ATTENDING TO SOMETHING MORE THAN ONCE. AS AN AUDIENCE OR PARTICIPANT I AM AUTOMATICALLY THROWN INTO A MORE ACTIVE ANTICIPATION OF WHAT WILL COME.

REPETITION continues on p.18

uninviting if the rules are not clearly defined. The key is whether the aim of the instruction is intended or open ended. Also intended results can be instructed in non dictatorial ways. It would be strange to think that a food recipe or the instructions of a furniture or a lego-toy would be "too strict". The dictatorial is often rather a side effect that the participant has been given *too little* transparency to the reasons for following the instruction. The nature of instructions are naturally also different depending on if they are to be attended to as a group (where a group based on the instructions can act together) or if contingent individual interpretation is welcomed.

As has been deeply experimented with in relation to how nuclear waste is being labelled for protecting a far future population as well as the 1977 Nasa experiment when sending a message to outer space in the shape of a Golden Record with sound and inscriptions; instructions always exist through their contingent performativity inside the context and the pre-knowledge with which they are received.

In everyday settings, oral instructions are a good example of this contingency. The room for (mis) interpretation is depending on what receivers hear, their amount of attention, previous knowledge, possible interpretation, and mood. The beautiful thing with human beings is that in most situations we have the instinct to make sense of the little information we get. Instructing a human is hence a potential unwritten adventure. Based on my practice of *choreographic clues* I have more and more moved away from giving oral instructions when I teach, challenging myself to instruct in other ways - through how the space is organised, how the order of the assignments builds up a logic and how the materials are inviting participants to engage with them. What could be instructed through speaking I often prepare through writing short assignments for sub-groups to engage and make sense of. Inside teaching, I can expect and sometimes even demand engagement, but when creating art proposals the starting point for an invitation or instruction is very different. Speaking about his work, Solitaire, existing of 27 playing cards, Brecht has said "*Solitaire belongs to the more temporal, process-like works [...]. It may open out into the participant's experience, literally involving him, greatly or slightly, according to his nature.*"[41] This openness, taking into account the different degree of engagement of the person that is attending to the instruction, is key to composing an invitation that is not too controlled.

TUTORIALS

One specific type of instruction that inspires me are video tutorials. Tutorials often make you engage with something in your real surrounding. Similar to instruction based art a tutorial creates a heightened engagement even if you don't perform the task. I have applied this approach in a video work for Youtube called the Ultimate Front Figure Audition.[42] The idea of video tutorials was also the approach I proposed to Ingrid Cogne when working with her and Dominik Grünbühel on the video documentation of the Object of Communication/Six Formats.[43]

41 Brecht, George *Solitaire* (brown paper bag with 27 cards) Walther Koenig

42 Clélia Colonna & Charlotta Ruth 2012, https://charlottaruth.com/video/the-ultimate-front-figure-audition

43 Cogne, I., Grünbühel D., Ruth, C.; *The object of communication*, Six Formats FWF/PEEK AR291 2018.

-> META-LIVENESS p.8-9

-> LOOPS p.19

... ANALOGUE AUGMENTED REALITY p. 33

To perceive several layers of reality at the same time fascinates me and...

When we watch our favourite movie several times or when listening to a favourite song over and over we also begin connecting memories to the situation we are in. For several years my circle of friends in Vienna had a tradition to watch the feel-good movie *Love actually* on thanksgiving. It always threw me to the outdoor cinema at a beach in southern Australia where I watched it for the first time.

The effect of the internet on aesthetics, culture and society, and the different types of communication and participation we experience in online environments make the description *participatory* nowadays a more ambiguous concept. Participating or belonging to a group is not necessarily based on people meeting IRL. Groups can consist of a distributed crowd, where intersubjective (common) reasoning is established around a shared interest or a communication topic. In the last few years, it has become known to the general public that for instance, sharing, to voluntarily participate through generating content, inside social media, at the same time aggregates data. This collection of data can be seen as non agreed participation and when companies like Google, in a 2nd step monetises this participatory source - a huge leap away from the free participation that marked the online realm in the 90s has been made.
In her book, *Crowd and Art Kunst und Partizipation im Internet*, artist and researcher Manuela Naveau writes that the motives for artists to engage with participation are manyfold.[44]

My entry point to participatory practice was not through the online realm - rather I was confused by the online realm as an extended public sphere where I or my art bumped into potential audiences in ways that had effect on *how* and *if* they would come to the theatre. I increasingly began working with participatory formats because of my curiosity to create artworks that are more like artistic processes rather than artistic outcomes. This exploration began around 10 years ago through noticing that it was difficult to bridge the sympoietic collaborative and playful logic that my collaborators and I had, to a one hour linear experience that is to be watched/visited/engaged with once.[45] I didn't just want to summarise or provide a perfect version of reality.[46] Also, earlier works of mine broke the fourth wall and inside the international collective Move Project[47] our creative process and methodology was based on street-theatre and experiments in public space. These gradual developments made me more and more curious about the contingency of performing in less controlled and institutional spaces. Increasingly I also became aware or even self-conscious of the power-distribution in the contexts I invited audiences into - noticing that the framing either was working against my proposal or that I myself hadn't created enough transparent conditions. Inspired by the invitation to research the format of workshop inside the PEEK project Six Formats[48] I began considering different modalities of participation in everyday life and the wider art context.

44 Naveau, Manuela: *Crowd and Art Kunst und Partizipation im Internet* (Bielefeld: transcript Verlag 2017)

45 1h performances inside a black box theatre is the norm inside contemporary dance and performance.

46 Words freely after Peter Mills who thinks it's strange that so often choreography organises itself on stage as a representation of a perfect reality rather than the mess reality actually is.

47 *Move Project* was an on the road travelling collective of Norwegian, Russian, Swedish and Ukrainian artists in choreography, performance, music, visual and light design that I project managed and participated in, 2006-2009. The other artists are Alexander Andriyashkin (dance, performance), Johannes Burström (music and programming), Tobias Leira (light & visual design), Katya Zavoloka (music and graphic design). We travelled and worked extensively in Sweden, Norway, Russia and Ukraine. With deep sorrow and frustration I look at the war in the Ukraine and the geo political developments since 2014.

48 *Six Formats* FWF/PEEK AR291, Felicitas Thun-Hohenstein, Ingrid Cogne, Focus Workshop: Igor Dobricic, Tobias Pilz, Charlotta Ruth, at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna 2018.

…has made me, has made me, this has made me do things in a loop. If you repeat something over and over in a loop, the logic of the loop operates as an organiser of the material and instead of beginning and ending the different points inside the content start developing parallel relationships. My loop practice is shared with my partner and collaborator Dominik Grünbühel. The first time we worked with loops together was in a temporary exhibition in 2009 at Tanzquartier Vienna. Then for a long time we were busy dancing hoochie-coochie[8], a very repetitive dance practice, based on deep slow knee bends which proved good for making small babies fall asleep. A shorter loop that exists inside another loop is called a nested loop. To some extent life is like this. Even hearing myself laughing like my mum to some extent relates to this bigger perspective of repetition. WE ARE FED WITH BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS. BUT ONE CAN QUESTION IF A POINT IN TIME IS REALLY THE END OR JUST THE BEGINNING OF ANOTHER SITUATION.[9]

Possibly because of an enhanced suspicion to the construct of endings, I actually prefer to be and go deeper inside the situation I am rather than moving onto the next thing. But of course deepening also means having more and more layers around. When…

-> DURATION p.15

-> QUEERING TIME p.21

8 My American colleague told me this has a sexual connotation. I guess one of these other examples of something being creatively but happily mistranslated…

9 Paraphrase of "But one can question if a point on this wall is marking the end of this space or if it's the beginning of a new space". Originally spoken in my solo piece *Twice upon a Time* premiering at Tanzquartier, Vienna in 2009.

CARE, SERVICE, AND TRUST

The term social practices, more commonly used for art with participatory elements in the United States, hints, according to Claire Bishop[49], at comparing it to real work practices like medicine or law.

My partner: *Lotta is in love with the doctor.*
Me: *Yes I am - but it's a different type of love…*
My sister in law: *I know the feeling I have it with my gynaecologist and she's a woman.*
Me: *The one you feel when you're like; hello ok, I have no choice, I trust you to cut me up even though I never met you before.*
Father in law: *ahh a bit like the Stockholm Syndrome..*
Me: *..and then the doctor says; It all went well, good bye!*
AND I will never see him again.
Family dinner conversation anticipating C Ruth's upcoming surgery after a kitchen accident 2018

A very natural submission to the situation happens when we go to the hairdresser or seek medical advice. The hairdresser is given the allowance to decide your look for the next couple of weeks and other more acute conditions make you sign papers that allow a doctor to drug you to unconsciousness.

Borrowing real life contexts for creating participatory theatre is a common and effective tool for easily establishing or training participants how to interact; but, rather than applying these as fictive framings I have become curious in how certain professional framings allow completely different relations to emerge. It doesn't have to be as extreme as in the medical or therapeutic setting. Consider, for instance, the simple difference between watching a performance or participating in a workshop with the same choreographer.

Even though live performance is to a certain degree always participatory,[50] I'm convinced that experiences and in effect also the sense of *liveness* becomes deeper when people are practically engaging, than when only attending through watching. This has led me to also recognise the participatory work I do, when engaging culture politically, as art and how some of the practices and exercises that I originally have developed as art (e.g. Questionology) make even more sense in real contexts of moderation and teaching.

During the research project *Choreographic Contingencies for on- and offline*, intersubjective skills at play when facilitating participation, little by little, developed to become its own research topic. Since 2021, I have conducted a research project called *Withdrawing the performer* where we look at participatory sense-making. Some of my thoughts in relation to participation I hence temporarily pause here to be further developed inside the frame of this other project that I conduct together with visual artist/performance artist Jasmin Schaitl and in close collaboration with neuroscientist and performer Imani Rameses.

49 Bishop, Claire; *The social turn: Collaboration and its discontents* (Artforum International 2006)

50 This was discussed in a lab with Dennis Johnson, Anne Juren, Imani Rameses, Jasmin Schaitl and Christian Schröder in the frame of *Withdrawing the Performer, INTRA* research project Charlotta Ruth/Jasmin Schaitl 2021-2022 at the University of Applied Arts, Vienna.

AFFECT

"Affect, [...] is an experience so immersive that it is (nearly) impossible to differentiate between what is happening to ourselves and the self it is happening to."[10]

-> LIMINAL SPACE p.38

10 Skjoldager-Nielsen, Kim & Edelman, Joshua; Liminality, In Ecumenica 7 (nos. 1-2), (Pennsylvania: Penn State University Press 2014) p.3.

E-POETRY

Through participating in a course in 2018 at Valand Academy, Gothenburg, I became familiar with the genre E-poetry which is short for electronic poetry but also embraces the term digital poetry. In short, it is a genre of poetry that is enabled through digital possibilities and henceforth cannot be printed. *"More than being marked by digitality, electronic literature is actively formed by it."*[51] E-poetry is embracing a wide spectrum of digital tools: Generative Poetry, Code Poetry, Visual Digital Poetry, Kinetic Poetry, Multimedia Poetry, Interactive Poetry, Hypertext Poetry. This openness, yet preciseness, that it deals with, the experience of words, made me recognise that the online works I developed during the PhD (*questionnaire*, *Dear Presence* as well as my try-outs, *cracks* and *bookshelf)* can be labelled as E-poetry. To some extent this also came as a relief as I had huge difficulties to identify as an internet artist.

NET ART

The discourse surrounding early net art and the conceptual investigations of space, time, and immateriality are very inspiring to me. *"It almost seems as if the earlier in the short history of Net art these pieces were created, the more conscious they were of the special qualities that the medium they worked with entailed."*[52]

51 Hayles, N. Katherine; *Intermediation: The Pursuit of a Vision, New Literary History*, vol. 38, no. 1 (The Johns Hopkins University Press 2007) p. 99-125.

52 Baumgärtel, Tillman; *Immaterial Material: "Physicality, Corporeality, and Dematerialization in Telecommunication Artworks* in *AT A DISTANCE Precursors to Art and Activism on the Internet*, edited by Annemarie Chandler & Norie Neumark (Massachusetts:Mit Press 2005) p. 63

Early net art, to a large extent, questioned the medium itself - drawing attention to the space time travel that occurred when, for instance, messages could be sent and accessed immediately. Relying, to a large extent, on text based computer processes, the early net art works were conceptual and *antiretinal* (Duchamp). As Baumgärtel in 2005 described "early Net Art projects from the mid 1990s showed a strong sensitivity to the issue of immateriality and its artistic consequences."[53]

As internet, after web 2.0, has turned to more visual content and the logic of platforms, the online reality has also shifted. The former sensation of connecting one place to another is not happening in the same way - internet is just there, you don't really connect with it. Rather the different platforms create their own type of place, (*are you on* Instagram? *Shall we meet in my link?*) and have their own performativity that has been described as platformativity.[54] Communication to a large extent conforms to the intended use of these platforms. Artist duo !Mediengruppe Bitnik in discussion with Felix Stalder, professor in digital cultures and network theory, describe how network art nowadays needs different approaches.[55] On the one hand it has become more difficult to

53 Baumgärtel, Tillman; *Immaterial Material: Physicality, Corporeality, and Dematerialization in Telecommunication Artworks*, in *AT A DISTANCE Precursors to Art and Activism on the Internet*, edited by Annemarie Chandler & Norie Neumark 2005, p.63 the Mit Press Massachusetts

54 Lamarre, Thomas; *The anime Ecology: A genealogy of television, animation and game Media.* (Minneapolis:University of Minnesota Press 2018) p.206 Cited in Senft, M .Theresa; *Metaphors of Internet: Ways of being in the Age of Ubiquity*, Edited by Markham, N Annette & Tiidenberg, Katrin (New York, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Oxford, Wien:Peter Lang 2020) p. 192

55 #Algoregimes – *Post-work, Online Labor and Automation online* conversation organised by Hyperemployment in 2020, https://vimeo.com/525579812 retrived on 26.05.2022.

...engaging deeper with the topic of time, I realised that what has become my everyday retreat of temporal twists has its wider politicality in the discourse surrounding queer and non western history writing.

"Queerness is that thing that lets us feel that this world is not enough, that indeed something is missing."

"We have been cast out of straight time's rhythm, and we have made worlds in our temporal and spatial configurations."[11] José Esteban Muñoz

In alternative game-design queering of time, manifests in for instance non-progressive game mechanics (progressive-mechanics relate to the logic of better, stronger, faster).

-> FICTITIOUS TIME p.28

-> QUEERS AT THE END OF THE WORLD p. 39

-> REALITY GLITCH p.22

11 Muñoz, José Esteban; *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York: NYU Press 2009), p.1, p. 181, quoted in Russel, Legacy; *Glitch Feminism* (New York:Verso 2020) p. 25

" What is liveness and what can it be?"[21]

intervene on a code-level due to the seamlessness and "black box" of big data (Frank Pasquale 2016). On the other hand, the participatory nature means that the technologies are layered and to some extent completely open. Stalder mentions how it's been debated whether during the 2016 U.S. election Russia hacked Facebook *or just used it how it was intended to be used*, and how if you have money, you can also buy machine intelligence - you don't need to build it on your own. !Mediengruppe Bitnik and Stalder describe how art and activism, without any code intervention, can make use of the algorithms by simply misusing the algorithms' own mechanisms. Legacy Russel writes; *"...if we assume that Audre Lorde's 1984 declaration that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" still holds true, then perhaps what these institutions - both online and off - require is not dismantling but rather mutiny in the form of strategic occupation."*[56]

In the beginning of the PhD I tried to apply the concept of *Post-Internet Art* to my art-making to see if I could identify myself with it. *Post-internet art is* an idea referring to modes of interaction following the widespread adoption of the internet. The often criticised term was first used by artist Marisa Olson in 2008. Her performative net-art approach made more use of playing with existing online formats than constructing things through code. It has also been described as art that fluently move between screen and the gallery,[57] which reflects the internet's effects on aesthetics, culture, and society. Hito Steyerl also referenced *post-internet*, in an essay on e-flux, posing the question *is Internet dead?*[58] Pointing to how awkward the internet has turned and that the internet has lost its possibilities. When going after the answer of the possibly deceased internet, Steyerl develops how the internet *"rather gone all-out." "moved offline"* is *"undead"*, drawing attention to how the internet is there also when we don't think about it and urging for other *internets*, with more possibilities, to still develop.

"Why not slowly withdraw from an undead internet to build a few others next to it?"[59] *Hito Steyerl*

I also wish for other internets. I wish for internets that have more in-depth purpose rather than earning money. Looking into early Net-art has made me understand that we could have had a completely different internets and that web 2.0 is just a format (see among others Jaron Lanier[60]). The internet we have, and its side effects on what now constitutes the world, including problematic power structures, seems to have been a random development of decisions that were made by neo-liberal interests.

NETWORKS

"Nobody set out to create the network, or its greatest built exemplar, the internet. Over time system upon system, culture upon culture, were linked together, through public programmes and private investments; through personal

56 Russel, Legacy: *Glitch Feminism* (New York:Verso 2020) p.26

57 Goldsmith, Kenneth; *Post-Internet Poetry Comes of Age* (The New Yorker 2015-03-10) https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/post-internet-poetry-comes-of-age retrieved 20.05.22

58 Steyerl, Hito; *Too much world: Is the Internet Dead?* #49 2013 https://www.e-flux.com/journal/49/60004/too-much-world-is-the-internet-dead/ accessed 20.5.22.

59 Steyerl, Hito; *Too much world: Is the Internet Dead?* #49 2013 https://www.e-flux.com/journal/49/60004/too-much-world-is-the-internet-dead/ accessed 20.5.22.

60 Lanier, Jaron; *You are not a gadget* (Vintage 2011)

REALITY GLITCH

...digital realm glitches are momentary errors often caused by inadequate soft-ware functions or corrupted signals e.g. visible in live-broadcast situations. The ephemeral nature of the glitch makes it hard to trace and the short-lived flaw also mostly corrects itself. All systems including human organisations and nature are prone to glitches. Etymologically Glitch derives from Jiddish glitsh and German glitschen - to slip.

I'm curious in creating in-stable circumstances for reality glitches to occur as well as simulating this phenomenon through imagination.

The time-space twists that I'm interested in touch the edges of reality. Some of my practices can maybe be described as AFK-glitch art. The glitches we experience "away from keyboard" but with the mindset of that we all the time can be online again and...

-> DEATH p.23

-> GAP p.29

-> META-LIVENESS p.8-9

" What is liveness and what can it be?"

relationships and technological protocols; in steel, glass and electrones; through physical space and in the space of the mind. In turn, the network gave expression to the basest and highest ideals, contained and executed the most mundane and the most radical desires, almost none of it foreseen by its progenitors - who are all of us." James Bridle[61]

As is described in the foreword of *"The internet does not exist"* the internet we rely on mainly has its roots in the United States. *"It was ARPANET that implemented the first successful packet switching network for the US Department of Defense in the late 1960s."*[62] As with any design, ideology shaped the systems aesthetics.

SYSTEMS AESTHETICS

"…when systems analysis, information theory and the like are utilised as resources for making art, it is generally done so in the spirit of a productive misreading."[63] *Michael Corris*

This has been previously true to my approach to systems theory and in its prolongation, systems aesthetics. I'm not an expert - or at least not an expert in systems thinking. In the chapter on different translation-processes I also describe my, generally positive approach to the processes of mistranslation.

61 Bridle, James; *New Dark Age: Technology and the End of the Future* (New York:Verso 2018) p. 9.
62 Aranda, J. Kuan Wood, B. Vidokle, A.; *The internet does not exist*, e-flux journal, (Berlin: Sternberg Press 2015) p.5
63 Corris, Michael ed.; *Conceptual Art: Theory, Myth, and Practice* (Cambridge 2004) p.197 https://www.tate.org.uk/research/tate-papers/05/all-systems-go-recovering-jack-burnhams-systems-aesthetics, retrieved 02.06.22.

-> TRANSLATION p.31

During the PhD and especially when working with the Neuromatic Game Art research group[64] and the interdisciplinary art project Questionology - programme for applied Questioning[65], I began recognising that my possible misinterpretations shouldn't be, by science, misunderstood as obscure and irrelevant; but, rather approached as the fruit of another way of thinking. This other way of thinking - about relations, about time, about technology, about systems - comes from a whole life of dancing.

Moving as part of a Choreographic Score is an example of how complex systems can be made physically graspable. The classic game *Triangles*[66] where you as a collective move in a space and choose two people that you try to keep equal distance with (as to keep a right angled triangle) is conveniently present both in performance practice and practical systems thinking. In the workshop Procedural Acts, that I developed together with Art Historian Ulrike Payrhofer and Sustainability Scientist Maximilian Muhr, how tools I have worked on can function as entry points to grasp complex systems directly related to real world phenomena became graspable. Practically touching the edges of knowledge that can make actual change to how we perceive the world, is a magical place to be. After this workshop that focused on practice based approaches to understanding sustainability, I feel how my art practice is moving towards questioning real systems - not only reflecting and translating systems into artworks.

64 FWF/ PEEK AR 581 Maragrete Jahrmann 2020-2022
65 Daus/Ruth 2021, co-production brut-wien.
66 Sweeney Boot, Linda & Meadows Dennis; *The Systems Thinking Playbook*, (Vermont:Chelsea Green Publishing Co 2013) p. 205

DEATH

[Imagine a ticking countdown of 30 seconds]

…I had to admit to myself that my own motivation to do this research is more about aliveness than I thought. The realisation came when actress Pia Herzegger randomly chose one of 110 questions and posed it to her guest: How often do you think about death?[12] As often with questions you answer them for yourself even if they are posed to somebody else.

This research very much touches the wish to communicate beyond my own range of physical presence. To be present also where I am physically not - or in the prolongation when I am not around anymore. If I was to leave this world soon I know how to prepare birthday greetings for my kids that will still feel somewhat live in ten years. I'm practising writing context specific messages and instructions independent of exact time and exact location. This research is an experiment in removing myself from the act. I'm practising disappearance.

POFFi*

*„Designing death also designs the experience"[13]

It seems that games that investigate the experience of death as a game mechanic often have temporality as a topic. Reliving and hence creating a perpetual behaviour is normal in game-design. It's just to start all over with the question :

-> „WHAT IS LIVENESS AND WHAT IT CAN BE?" p. 1

12 Zu Gast im Brut, Radio Kulturhaus 18.02.2020
13 Huremovic, Matija; *Designing Death, 2019,* https://2game.com/en/community/designing-death retrieved 20.05.22

What is the system? Who plans the planning?[67] *Who decides how we act?*[68] *Daus&Ruth (Questionology)*

My supervisor Margarete Jahrmann pointed me to how once one begins to observe reality through the perspective of game-theory it becomes difficult to not see what rules and systems are in action also in the normal world.

Working at a university, I sometimes have to shut this lens off so as not to make myself and people around me go crazy - or I turn to Treasure Hunting - searching for the non-occupied in-between places where ideas can stir without being already formatted by hierarchical systems that originate from the church.[69] As a matter of fact, lately I have begun thinking about how strange it is that we act inside democratic systems that are not compatible with the new online reality - where power is not only in the hands of nation states but in the hands of Google, Meta and Amazon. My arguments are not sharpened yet but I'm happy to engage in dialogue to find out more.

DIGITAL ETHNOGRAPHY

Looking into digital ethnography, I am surprised at its rigorous documentation of the online mundaneness. It makes me feel less uncool. First of all, since many people use the internet like I do: for work, for communication, for finding things out. Many people of course also perform and search for their identity there. A minority are creative with code. Even fewer try to understand digitality through choreography. For the research it's been a relief to accept that I don't have to make all online experiences myself - I can also translate and be inspired by the situations I read about. Two researchers have been especially inspiring; Annette Markham and Sara Pink.

Most of my online experiences are quite mundane. If they are not seamless - as most apps and sites try to be, they are socially awkward - luring me to create accounts or give away private information to use their services. Some things have a playful potential like pop-up windows.

And then there are these sudden moments where my son suddenly calls in panic asking us to use the function "find my phone" because his phone is missing. Things turn very urgent and *live* and suddenly we're surveying the area where somebody unknown is moving, sending screenshots to my son's friend for them to trace the phone. This is what I meant in the beginning (the background part of this contextualisation) - this to me feels like magic. To my son, it's how the world functions. When I look for my phone, I trace my memory. Somewhere in this collision of how I perceive reality and how the reality now unfolds, my artwork takes place. My artwork is trying to grasp the world and at the same time invite people to visit the everyday magic I seem to access thanks to being next to or beside, or maybe behind, the reality many people perceive.

67 Burckhardt, Lucius; *Who plans the planning? Architecture, Politics, Mankind*, Eds. Fezer, Jesko & Schmitz Martin (Basel:Birkhäuser 2019)

68 The three questions are in a slightly different way part of the forthcoming text *Notizen zu Questionology – Programm für Angewandtes Fragen.*

69 This part originates from a conversation with my colleague [M] Dudeck who in 2022 finished their doctoral thesis *Make Belief: The Art of Inventing Religions.*

DEADLY THEATRE

…what director Peter Brook in the 1960s called deadly theatre, boring theatre that though it takes place in front of us lacks the quality of liveness. The reciprocity of co-presence, that we are in a situation together is missing.

Nowadays…

-> GAP p.29

-> PRESENCE p.26

CODING AND LACK OF AUTONOMY

I began this PhD being impressed with the Finnish school system having coding at an early age, as part of the curriculum. I was thinking that a bigger variety of people who know how to code and have access to the skill of coding is needed for democracy to survive. This thought was based on mixed emotions towards smart technology. I was also increasingly fascinated with the performativity of code and also the ontological difference between how machines and humans follow or *perform* instructions.

As part of my artistic research endeavour, I studied a bit of python, html and computational thinking. Enough to translate some of my ideas in communication with programmers and enough to have improved my thinking through code, but not at all enough to make it my language, my medium. When having ideas for creating digital magic I always need to engage in collaboration.

When conducting an interview with my colleague, programmer Simon Repp, who invests approximately 50% of his working time into open source coding projects, I asked what he thought about the fact that coding is, to such a large extent, still a specialised knowledge and whether he thought coding should be more generally taught - especially at art schools. His reply, after hesitating a bit, was that he doesn't know if it's worth the effort. To really use code you need to invest so much time that it's maybe better that not everyone does this. In a second step, we discussed that nowadays when the user experience is aimed at being as convenient as possible the devices themselves don't invite that we get behind the software and speak straight to the machine. I can buy a computer and it just works without me having to know how to communicate with the device and connecting to the internet happens more or less also automatically. Similar to how Annette Markham writes that *"The internet is just there, like electricity…"*[70], the user friendliness of the devices doesn't even invite that we knock on their surfaces to understand how they work. This bothers me. Maybe you've begun to see a pattern here. I want to know how things work in order to grasp, maybe not necessarily where I am, but where in the larger system I belong.

Based on my experience, a problem when collaborating with programmers inside artistic processes resembles the hen and egg situation. Do we first create the system or do we create the content? When I ask Simon about this he immediately agrees that it's indeed a difference when he's working on his own projects compared to collaborative projects, as he has the power to also change the system - *and then you do that,* he says laughing and he continues explaining how nerdy he can get, running in circles changing small details. I laugh too, but this is also the crux of the issue. To touch and move and change a bit, maybe throw large chunks away and run in circles for a while until you feel that it's right - this is when coding also becomes an artistic process. When the programmer is not in charge of the content these nerdy adjustments seem arbitrary and not crucial and are in some collaborations difficult to achieve.

70 Markham N. Annette; *Metaphors of Internet. Ways of being in the Age of Ubiquity* Eds. Markham, N Annette & Tiidenberg, Katrin (New York, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Oxford, Wien, Peter Lang 2020) p. 11.

" What is liveness and what can it be?" 25

(NON)PLACE

"These technical advances created a space, or rather, nonspace, that was previously beyond the imagination: a (non)place in which time and space collapsed into one another and which was accessible potentially from everywhere, by everybody and at all times".[14]

When we don't need a place anymore in order to be present, other forms of touch develop. Despite the abstraction, the translation of the audience into numbers in a youtube live broadcast or a black zoom-window makes me feel that someone is there…

-> LIMINAL SPACE p.38

-> PRESENCE p.26

14 Baumgärtel, Tillman; *Immaterial Material: Physicality, Corporeality, and Dematerialization. In Telecommunication Artworks in AT A DISTANCE. Precursors to Art and Activism on the Internet,* Chandler, Annemarie, Neumark, Norie, (Cambridge: MIT Press 2005) p.61.

PRESENCE

…the meaning of live presence might need to be expanded…

In the oxford english dictionary it says that presence means:

1. [uncountable] (of a person) the fact of being in a particular place

2. [uncountable] (of a thing or a substance) the fact of being in a particular place or thing

3. a group of people, especially soldiers, who have been sent to a place to deal with a particular situation

4. a person or spirit that you cannot see but that you feel is near.

5. [uncountable] (approving) the quality of making a strong impression on other people by the way you talk or behave

Number four seems very much like online presence

-> CHI p. 27

-> DEGREES OF PRESENCE p.6

Simon's and my discussion leaps a bit, but it circles around autonomy. Simon speaks about how automated services, like Spotify, tags your entire music collection and how this imposes a different system to attending to music. It changes both the logic of how the artist might have intended the music to be listened to and also changes the logic of how you as a listener might have engaged with the material if the listening had happened in a different format. The convenience software provides us with in many other areas makes us hand over control. I out myself to Simon saying that many of the irrational things I do with technology, as opposed to the informed and curated use Simon conducts based on his knowledge, is based on me becoming emotional about losing autonomy. This loss of autonomy meets me at different levels in both private and work life: how I don't feel comfortable ticking different checkboxes when setting up social media profiles, how I feel a bit fooled when after a year or two my website starts to cost more unless I remove some of my pages and how helpless I feel when I realise that the questionnaire Simon, Cordula and I worked so hard on, could not stay online as it demanded maintenance.

. . . QUESTIONNAIRE p. 25
APPROACHES, PRACTICES, EXERCICES

After the performances of Questionology had finished in June 2021, the Questionnaire was only activated for specific events. As the questionnaire is participatory and not static it also becomes less safe to simply keep it online. It needs maintenance. The experience of having to lay down the questionnaire has made me much more aware that also digital objects that seemingly operate without humans need humans behind the scene. The questionnaire, to me, manifested digital *liveness* but I understood that the type of interactivity I was after cannot be a completely self running system. For the digital *liveness* to be provided it needed human support - if yet asynchronously. Through speaking to Simon about maintenance I learn that this is one of the biggest issues for independent projects to stay *live* online. Simon concretely mentions an automated 3D vizualisation tool he was part of developing. No matter how much time could potentially be saved with automating this process, the project died because they realised that none of the people involved were willing to host and take care of the maintenance on their respective servers. As a developer you continuously develop new things and if you would also always maintain your old projects, time to do new (and creative) work would then disappear, little by little. It's not as different as I thought to keeping a performance alive. In our studio, we have old scenography of performances that are unlikely to play again. Artists that don't have a storage place need to get rid of their set-designs.

I am not sure anymore that the world needs more programmers in total. The more I have faced thought structures of coding the more I have begun to think that rather completely different skills may be necessary. As the world needs different, more complex and relational thinking I think dance and choreography is more needed in school than coding.

COLLABORATION & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Sometimes I do things on my own. The few times I do - I get surprised that I'm actually quite capable. But, I'm never as good as when I am more than myself. My art exists through relations. When I am developing thoughts together with people. This reflexive documentation would not be what it is if I had not had the beautiful possibility to both work with people inside the artworks and had support when completing this articulation both on a meticulous work level and on an everyday social level.

I want to thank Dominik Grünbühel, the one I am in love with, my partner both in life and in several projects and for the PhD important project Living Documents: *"Cause your love is my love and my love is your love…"*

I want to thank Cordula Daus, my partner in nerdiness and the co-authored project Questionologogy, PhD-ing and a lot more; *"Cause your words are my worlds and my worlds are your words.."* (still sung to the melody of Whitney Houston's song).

I want to thank my close collaborators in finalising the format of this reflexive documentation: Johannes Burström (sound, programming, collaborator since 2006), Clélia Colonna (graphic design, collaborator since 2009) *"Cause this format is my format but this format is (only thanks to you) my format, it has taken an eternity to create this and I think only you could help me mould this"*

I want to thank my supervisor Margarete Jahrmann, professor in experimental game cultures, for always trusting a playful approach, and for making me recognise how in the process the border between the artworks and the reflection sometimes blurred. I also want to thank you for the trust and support in inviting me into your own research project Neuromatic Game Art (FWF/PEEK AR 581) which created a more sustainable frame-work for my research practice to develop at the University of Applied Arts, Vienna. *"Cause Academia turned my game and this game is a tricky game, it will take an eternity to transform it (even if the rules don't really suit me…)"*

I want to thank my dear colleagues and friends who have read and given me crucial and detailed input on the content, form and language: Cordula Daus, [M] Dudeck, Imani Rameses *"your input refined my output and my output might now turn input."*

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I also want to thank my main co-production partner brut-wien and the curating boards of the main financial supporters of the projects that have

" What is liveness and what can it be?"

CHI

…how liveness could be approached through the concept Chi in chinese philosophy. Chi or Qi translates vital life force but goes beyond this meaning. I understand Chi as the binding contingent relation between things, between me and my surrounding or other nodes in the Universe. Chi means breath or air and also translates with energy flow. If ever so slightly, I think liveness can be thought of as riding the wave of these connecting energies. There are several ways to ride on the waves of reality, I enjoy creating…

-> BILOCALITY p.37

-> MAKE-BELIEVE p.39

been realised during the period of the PhD: Ma7 Stadt Wien, Bmkös Austria, Arts Council Sweden. *"Cause your trust (in the form) of resources made my guts gain creative forces…"*

I want to thank Ruth Anderwald and Leonard Grond professors in artistic research at Zentrum Fokus Forschung since 2021 who have given me crucial and thorough input in the final year. I want to thank Alexander Damianisch head of ZFF who despite always *eventing* is a true supporter and enabler of artistic research and who believed in my weird and often non-event-like approach. I want to thank Barbara Putz-Blecko, vice rector of research at University of Applied Arts Vienna, who somehow magically managed to be at more colloquiums than most supervisors and who is, when she is somewhere, *really there*. I want to thank all my PhD colleagues and of course specially those of you whom I have had the pleasure to be in deep and regular exchange with at the Colloquiums; Erik Bünger, Cordula Daus, Barbara Graf, Verena Faißt, Ralo Mayer, Rizki Resa-Utama, Anahita Rezvani-Rad, Barbis Ruder, Katarina Soskic, Hinnerk Utermann, Anna Vasof and Fabian Weiss. I also want to thank the kind and ultra qualified team of ZFF Felipe Duque, Wera Hippesroither, Wiebke Miljes and Marianna Mondelos. *"Cause this journey was my journey and you were all part of my journey… it seems difficult to improve the frame work but it's ok..."*

I want to thank three friends and inspiring women that in different ways helped me in the last days before this document was finished: Nina Kusturica, Anne Juren and Litó Walkey *(this thank you list I wrote already a bit earlier... let's just hum a bit, knowing that I'm very thankful).*

Last but not least I want to thank my my mother Ulrika Majs for providing me with a completely different relationship to artistic process than what I learnt at ballet school and who always is there to support me. I want to thank my father Walter Ruth for reading Ursula Le Guin to me as a child and for teaching me how to treasure hunt, write applications and continue learning. I want to thank my brother Alfred Ruth who as a teenager and when being interested in coding said *"I feel like the misunderstood artist in the family but the other way around"*, his deep knowledge of the digital blur I try to engage with has provided me with a crucial clarity both when I speak to him and when I just imagine that he reads what I write. I want to thank my half siblings Karolina Lundberg and Kristoffer Sahlhold who among many things have had an enormous effect on manifesting fantasy in me through their amazing meticulous boxes with relabelled sweets that I received at important birthdays. I also want to thank my parents in law Ruth and Ferdinand Mayrhofer-Grünbühel for supporting our family which allowed me to be in my workaholic mode even more than usual. AND a special big thanks to my children Ritva and Gilbert Grünbühel for being with me in the *now* with everything I do regardless if I'm physically with or without you; *"För er kärlek är min kärlek och min kärlek är er kärlek…"*

This is probably the cheesiest I have been so far in text (apart from all the transcribed text messages I have of me and my husband) - so thank you also dear reader for being a collaborator at the moment of this liminal place of work and personal affairs. *"Cause my now is yours now and your now will continue now…"*

FICTITIOUS TIME

…book "Artist at Work" Bojana Kunst writes: "Theatre takes place and is organised in the gap between its fictitious time and the time of the audience"[15]. If this is not played with well I think we get…

-> DEADLY THEATRE p. 24

15 Kunst, Bojana; *Artist at Work, Proximity of Art and Capitalism* (zerO books 2015) p.135

REALITY GLITCH 28.05.2022 CA 20.00
I HAD TO STOP THE SOUP THAT IS BOILING ON THE STOVE. IN MY INTENSE WEEK-END RETREAT IN STOCKHOLM I ONLY WORK AND WORK AND WORK ON THIS REFLEXIVE DOCUMENTATION. MY KEYBOARD IS ALL FATTY FROM WRITING TOO MUCH. I KNOW I HAVE TO DO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TO REALLY BE CONNECTED, BUT TOO OFTEN LATELY I POSTPONE THIS REAL *LIVENESS* IN MYSELF TO ANOTHER TIME. SO I DID TAI CHI WHILE COOKING. LIKE THE STEREOTYPIC MULTITASKING MUM THAT I AM. ON A SELF CARVED-WEEKEND RETREAT. WORKING, WORKING, WORKING, THIS WAS WHAT MY SON SAID SITTING IN FRONT OF THE COMPUTER WRITING A TEXT LIKE ONLY A 2-YEAR OLD CAN WRITE WHEN I CAME HOME ONE EVENING AFTER PLAYING A PERFORMANCE AND HE HADN'T FALLEN ASLEEP. AHH WHERE WAS I? I STOPPED DOING TAI CHI BECAUSE IT ALL BECAME CONNECTED. THIS MUST BE THAT CHINESE MEDICINE LIFE-FORCE *CHI* I THOUGHT WHILE TRYING TO FATHOM ALL THOSE THOUGHTS THAT WENT THROUGH MY BRAIN. A TRUE META-LIVENESS SENSATION OR DÉJÀ VU OF NOT KNOWING IF THESE ARE NEW THOUGHTS OR MY BRAIN PLAYING A TRICK ON ME. DID I ALREADY WRITE A THANK YOU LIST OR DID MY MIND TRICK ME? OH I WANT TO GO BACK BUT I ALSO WANT TO CAPTURE. HERE WE ARE AT THE MIDST OF THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF DOCUMENTATION. AS SOON AS WE TRY TO CAPTURE IT DISSOLVES. I WROTE THIS TOO, RIGHT? WHERE? WHEN? MY WHOLE DISSERTATION

SEEMS TO COLLIDE INWARDS AND BECOME KAFKAESQUE. WHEN DID I THINK THIS THOUGHT BEFORE, IT MUST BE SOMEWHERE IN MY BRAIN? OR DID I EVEN WRITE IT ALREADY? WHERE? IS IT ALREADY IN THE TEXT SOMEWHERE? THIS WHOLE SENSATION FEELS LIKE A META-LIVENESS EXPERIENCE DELUXE… AM I IN THE NOW OR BEFORE AND AFTER? IT REMINDS ME OF A TRIP I HAD ON MUSHROOMS WITH MY X-BOYFRIEND WHERE I WAS JUST RIGHT BEFORE THE NOW ALL THE TIME. HAVE I WRITTEN ABOUT THIS BEFORE SOMETIME OR IS MY BRAIN TRICKING ME? WHAT A MARVELLOUS FEELING TO GET LOST IN THE PASSING OF TIME. THIS IS ALL I WANT TO ACHIEVE WITH MY ART. META-LIVENESS AS AN ARTISTIC TOOL FOR GETTING LOST IN TIME. DID I WRITE THIS TOO? OH MY KEYBOARD IS SO GREASY, I HAVE TO THINK ABOUT A COLLEAGUE OF MY PARTNER WHO TOLD HIM THAT HE CANNOT UNDERSTAND HOW EVEN VERY CLEAN WOMEN CAN HAVE SUCH DIRTY COMPUTERS. OR I THINK THIS IS WHAT HE SAID.. I DIDN'T REALISE THAT MY KEYBOARD HAD TURNED GREASY UNTIL NOW WHEN I WANTED TO WRITE FAST AND CATCH MY THOUGHTS AND THE FINGERS ALMOST SLIP BETWEEN THE KEYS. SOMEHOW THE WHOLE DAY OF WRITING MADE MY KEYS DIRTY. SO HERE I AM IN AN OLD T-SHIRT THAT I DUG OUT OF MY DRAWER IN STOCKHOLM, NOW THINKING ABOUT THE GREASY KEYS AND HOW LONG THE T-SHIRT HAS BEEN IN THE DRAWER MAKES ME A BIT UNEASY. IT USED TO BE MY GRANDFATHER'S. HOW

GAP

…one of the strangest glitches or gaps of contemporaneity is how life seems to be organised between living and documenting the living. One example is how we can already look at the photos of a situation immediately or even while experiencing, projecting the possible online presence/performance of that situation/photograph. Also, our own, not only theatrical, experiences take place through the spectators' perspective. Experiences, though they take place in front of us and IRL (in real life), displace the quality of liveness or aliveness to outside of us.
How often have you felt…

-> DOCUMENTATION p. 32

-> VIVID PRESENT p.12

MALLEABLE TIME

"Time is not linear for me, it is always emotional. We are never only in one place".[16] Mike Mills

I could have said this but I didn't manage to translate that feeling and relation I have towards time before one morning when I read the above quote by the film director Mike Mills. The next thing that happened was that I ran around the house looking for my phone because I wanted to take a picture of the newspaper. The phone was as if gone. Just like that. Through a worm-hole. I tried to go back, trace my memory. The whole time I had Cordula Daus absurd mono-logue about different types of questioning in my ears. "Where is my phone?" A monologue she wrote but that we in the end never used inside Questionology (2021). I also had the choreog-raphy of my piece Twice Upon a Time (2009) in my body as in that piece I actively addressed the audience with that thing that I do - and that I think we all do - physically retracing or reenact-ing where we were in order to pop out in that place (space) where in this case my hand put the phone on the shelf. Yes that's where I found it, but I needed to walk in my footsteps a couple of times and only somehow when relaxing - when almost giving up - inside my memory I suddenly found it / that place / that point in my memory.

-> MALLEABLE TIME continues on p.31

16 My translation (although the original quote from director Mike Mills must have been in English) I read it in an article by Dominik Kamalzade in Der Standard on 24.3.22 *"Zeit ist für mich nicht linear, sie ist immer emotional. Wir sind niemals nur an einem Ort."*

" What is liveness and what can it be?"

IF I HAVE WRITTEN ABOUT MY AUNT LENA AND THE DETECTIVE STORIES BEFORE - HOW CAN THIS BE - WHEN - OR DID I ONLY THINK THESE THOUGHTS - DID I WRITE IT IN PREPARATION FOR THE LIVE VERSION OF THE DISSERTATION THAT I TRIED IN APRIL? OR IS THIS JUST AN IDEA I HAD? MAYBE.. I BOTH WANT TO CHECK AND NOT CHECK AS THIS IS AN EXCITING PLACE TO BE AND I'M NOT ON DRUGS. I'M ALMOST NEVER ON DRUGS. MUM, DON'T BE SCARED IF YOU READ THIS FAR THE MUSHROOMS WERE ONLY A FEATURE… WOW 20 YEARS AGO. CRAZY. HOW CAN A GROWNUP EXPERIENCE BE 20 YEARS AGO? MAYBE THE MUSHROOMS ACTUALLY IS AT THE ROOT OF MY META-LIVENESS CONCEPT, I NOW THINK WITH THE ARTISTIC RESEARCHER DETECTIVE MAGNIFYING GLASS THAT I HAVE IN MY HAND. THAT ONE TIME WHEN I WAS BEFORE TIME AND SOMEHOW KNEW WHAT WOULD HAPPEN, IS THIS WHAT I TRY TO DO IN MY ART EVER SINCE? I ALMOST HAVE TO CALL MY X-BOYFRIEND TO CHECK IF HE REMEMBERS - DO I REMEMBER HIS NUMBER? 070784665? 0709784665? WHAT WOULD HE REMEMBER? MEMORY WHAT AN AMAZING RECORDING MEDIA. I ALMOST DON'T WANT TO CHECK IF THE NR IS CORRECT BECAUSE IT FEELS LIKE IT IS AND IT ALSO ALMOST FEELS AS IF I HAVE WRITTEN THIS TEXT BEFORE. I LOVE ART MAKING - IT'S BETTER THAN DRUGS. BUT I'M REALLY THIRSTY AND I WAS ACTUALLY COOKING. THANK GOD I'M NOT WITH MY KIDS THIS WEEK-END. WHAT DID I TRY TO CATCH?

OLD IS IT? I CHOSE A T-SHIRT THAT WOULDN'T MAKE ME SWEAT AS IT'S BIG BUT NOW THAT I GOT SO EXCITED I DO ANYWAY. WHERE WAS I? DÉJÀ VU. I HAVE TO THINK ABOUT MY AUNT LENA PERSSON AND THAT OLD COMPUTER GAME THAT I PLAYED WHEN SPENDING NEW YEARS WITH HER AND MY UNCLE ARNE - WHY DOES IT FEEL LIKE I HAVE ALREADY WRITTEN THIS? LENA LOVED DETECTIVE STORIES. IS THIS WHAT I'M DOING? CREATING A DETECTIVE NARRATIVE FOR MYSELF. THIS IS ALMOST AS BEAUTIFUL AS WHEN MY SON, WHEN HE WAS AROUND FOUR, INSPIRED BY MY WORK TREASURE HUNTING, BEGAN PREPARING TREASURE HUNTS FOR HIMSELF. WHERE THE HELL AM I IN MY BRAIN? IT FEELS AS IF I AM BOTH IN THE BEFORE AND AFTER, GETTING MORE AND MORE NERVOUS ABOUT NOT BEING ABLE TO TRACE THAT THOUGHT THAT I GOT WHILE DOING TAI CHI. CAN I DO THAT TRICK OF GOING BACK PHYSICALLY AND CATCH THE STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS? - I MIGHT TRY A BIT LATER. I ONLY REMEMBER THAT I SOMEHOW THOUGHT THAT I HAD ALREADY WRITTEN A THANK YOU LIST - BUT WHEN? OH NOW THIS FEELING COMES AGAIN. IT'S ALMOST AWKWARD… WHERE IN MY BRAIN IS IT? IS IT ALREADY IN THE DOCUMENT? I BOTH WANT TO RIDE AND ALSO CAPTURE THIS FEELING, IT'S SO EXCITING - DID I MAYBE DREAM IT? DID I ALREADY WRITE A THANK YOU LIST, YES I MUST HAVE - BUT WHEN - DID I EVEN THANK THE POWER OF COINCIDENCE THAT TIME? OH DAMN IT EVEN FEELS AS

TRANSLATION

ENGLISH TRANSLATION p.31
MY HUMAN (MIS)TRANSLATION p.31
MEDIA TRANSLATION p.32
OFFLINE TO ONLINE TO OFFLINE TRANSLATION p.33
MACHINE & ARTIFICIAL TRANSLATION p.35
CASE STUDIES p.38
QUEERS AT THE END OF THE WORLD p.38
KAREN p.39

"Nobody sees the same: an artwork is a translation."[71]

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I'm really excited by the process of sharing my choreographic methods and thinking, to find ways to articulate this reflexive documentation, but it is a translation. These things I now put in words were previously conceived in trial and error, in practising and doing. I estimate that 75% of the words that you are, you were or you will read are thoughts originally from another media - not writing. These words are trying to fathom fleeting sensations. For instance audio-visual relationships and aesthetic approaches in my work that prior to artistic research contexts, I seldomly tried to pin down with words. In most cases my work in its original form wasn't conceived as writing and when translating something we all know how things transform.

MY HUMAN (MIS)TRANSLATION

James Bridle's book *"New Dark Age"* pointed me towards Walter Benjamin's essay *"The task of the translator"*. Benjamin's essay deals with the complexity of translating literary artworks. He writes about how language and content, when being translated, are not working together and how a foreign language can be almost in the way of thinking the thoughts of the original work. It was originally published as a foreword to Walter Benjamin's German translation of Baudelaire's "Tableaux parisiens". I have read this essay both in English and German which, as a native Swedish

71 Cogne, Ingrid; *Format is Knowledge. Exhibition - Activation and Trace*, in *The question of Exhibition, issue 13.2* (Parse 2021) https://parsejournal.com/article/format-is-knowledge/ retrieved 29.04.22

MALLEABLE TIME (2)

Time is considered a fourth dimension for locating points in space-time. Time and in effect the everyday narrative that is constructed through time, doesn't only travel between reality and memory. We are in several places at the same time. Performance maker Tim Etchells has said that the work of Forced Entertainment can be *"understandable for anyone that grew up in a house with the television on"*.[17]

ANNETTE MARKHAM, SPEAKING FROM A DIGITAL ETHNOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE SPEAKS ABOUT HOW PEOPLE TREAT TIME AS A SORT OF "MALLEABLE" CONSTRUCT, YOU ARE ABLE TO START AND STOP TIME IF YOU DON'T CLICK ON A MESSAGE TO OPEN IT AND WAIT UNTIL A BETTER TIME TO DO SO OR ON THE OTHER HAND REPEATEDLY OPEN A MESSAGE OVER AND OVER AGAIN TO RELIVE THE MOMENT TO GO BACK IN TIME...[18]

-> META-LIVENESS p.8-9

-> (NON)PLACE p.25

17 Etchells, Tim; *Certain Fragments* (New York:Routledge 1995) p. 95.
18 Annette Markham lecture "Digital Ethnology" 16.50 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z-EQ6begTms retrieved on April 22 2022

speaker, creates an understanding between what I read and what I understand in those two languages through the thinking I have from Swedish.

Walter Benjamin writes: "A real translation is transparent [...]. It does not cover the original, does not block its light, but allows the pure language, as though reinforced by its own medium, to shine upon the original all the more fully ." [72]

When I first read this excerpt of Benjamin in Bridle's book and probably in combination with what Bridle afterwards writes (and as I was all the time thinking about my own research) - I first misread it. I like this with human intelligence, even when we misunderstand, the outcome of our thinking can be of relevance.

What I understood was that in the translation process from one language to another, a certain underlying truth is revealed. As you can see in the quote above this is not really what Benjamin said, it's rather what I thought when reading that page 147 in Bridle's book.

When being in a translation process, I can feel how I can grasp the edges of the thinking expressed in the original. Whereas when being in the language, when simply using the language as an interface, language sometimes carries the thoughts along so smoothly that I hardly notice what I read or what I think. Or rather: *what I experienced when including what I read into my own thought realm*. This thinking *with* the text, without noticing that one is actively transferring what one is reading into one's own thought realm is a place of excitement for me. Already when applying for the PhD I addressed the contingent performativity of text (*see J. Derrida developing thoughts from J.L. Austin on performativity*). My understanding of Derrida's essay *Signature Event Context*[73], is that it speaks about the performative utterance as an action that produces further actions. During the research this has become even more apparent to me when constructing clues inside treasure hunt-like situations or as choreographic starting points.

. . . CHOREOGRAPHIC CLUES P.27
APPROACHES, PRACTICES, EXERCISES

Everything we read (or hear) goes through human contingent translations. With high respect for what might get lost, I see this reflexive documentation as a chance to apply one of my favourite artistic methods; media translation.

MEDIA TRANSLATION

If a certain underlying truth can be revealed in translation processes, what happens then if it's not language that is being translated? What happens if I translate the non human process of a computer algorithm into physical space? What happens if the complicated actions of a human activity like making coffee is deconstructed to the level of instructing a machine?

72 Benjamin, Walter; *The task of the translator* foreword published in the German translation of Baudelaire's "Tableaux parisiens" cited in Bridle, James; *New Dark Age: Technology and the End of the Future* (New York:Verso 2018) p. 147.

73 Derrida, Jacques; *Signature Event Context*, written text of presentation given at Sociétés de philosophie de langue francaise, Montreal, August 1971.

DOCUMENTATION

…that documentation interrupts and destroys the moment? When working with art in live situations, documentation feels like the necessary evil process where the material is forced to change to something rather static. A filmed dance piece, the documentation, is often as a format, something non precise, it is neither dance nor video - the ontology is changed (Peggy Phelan). This neither dance nor video creates a sadness similar to how it feels when a mathematical equation ends up with minus. During the years when Dominik Grünbühel and I were busy with Living Documents (2017-2020) we also realised that something similar happens in everyday life. We became hyper aware of how the act of documenting interferes with the moment. The experience is projected into the documentation and somehow dissolves. For a while on vacation we posed and only took mental photos or photographed photographers. The project Living Documents…

-> LOOPS p.19
. . . LOOPS p. 5
- > PASSING ON p.33

Marshall Mc Luhan's famous phrase "The medium is the message" was one of my artistic curiosities during my Master of Fine Arts studies that I carried out in choreography 2013-2015. I never theoretically went any deeper into this concept. I rather went into it practically by trying out how the same content feels, depending on how it is transported and what interface is used. For instance, I have explored how time travel can be created through the interface for communication getting younger and younger inside an experience.[74]

I first began being aware of how ideas transform due to their mediality when beginning to work with video or what was called "dance for camera". The relation between what takes place live and what is being recorded was dealt with in depth in the evening I shared with Dominik Grünbühel at Tanzquartier 2009 and in the translation of the live-solo respective video-work *Twice upon a Time*.[75] The extent to which choreographic material needs to be changed when adapted for camera, made me more and more aware of the contextual situation mediality brings. This is an awareness I have brought along also when beginning to translate choreographic thinking into words or in some cases to sound.

One choreographer that I find inspiring is Mette Edvardssen. I have not attended all her works live but I find even the imagination of the works I haven't seen to be inspiring. It's often about translation. The same thing as a book, as a performance, as a radio broadcast, simultaneously. Or maybe it's about something else but translation is key to the situation. I actually said I would talk to her during the PhD about translation. I haven't yet - maybe because it's so difficult to put words on what it is that I want to know more about. I somehow just want to experience translation. Probably I should. Wait a bit. I will send her an email.

[Away for a bit]

I'm more aware of my own writing now as I made a screen recording of the thinking/formulating/sending. Those 23 minutes it took me exist now as a video file. I notice now how I make spelling mistakes because the camera was watching me when writing that email. It's as if I feel *through the experience of the camera*. Translating an idea to another media has a similar effect.

OFFLINE TO ONLINE TO OFFLINE TRANSLATION

The computer is a good example of real life to desk-top translation. It's organised and labelled how a business-office used to operate half a century ago. The starting place is called *desktop* and this so-called desktop has many folders holding files or folders in folders in folders… holding files. This metaphor is so inscribed in

74 Conceptual try-out during my MFA - never used in public - due to limited amount of functioning old devices.

75 Grünbühel, Domink & Ruth, Charlotta *We do it by Hearts*, Tanzquartier 2009. See also *Karaoke-discussion* a video installation based on an interview with dance film director David Hinton about live vs not live. Hinton, D. Grünbühel, D. Ruth, C.; *Karaoke-discussion, We do it by heart*, Scores NO 0 The skin of movement, A Tanzquartier Wien Publication 10.

PASSING ON

…made me aware of passing on (German tradition) as a central notion within the genre of folk tradition. To pass on means that knowledge and material, over time and on winding roads transfers from person to person and from context to context. A collective and multi sensorial transfer where repetition and re-interpretation are central in order to stimulate oral and physical practices to live and evolve, rather than being a static archival process. This transfer is always filtered through and colored by the social, political and cultural contexts where it takes place. Passing on can be seen as a person to person archival practice of translation and transference based on participation and repetition.[19]

-> Repetition p.17-18

-> TRANSLATION p.31

19 Excerpt from work in progress, Öberg, Anna and Ruth, Charlotta; *Passing on*, forthcoming 2023

us that it feels as if the names almost belong more to the computer than to the AFK scenario of a real desk or a shelf. If I think of a file, I think about the files I have on my computer, not the documents that I have filed in one of my few folders holding real paper documents. But interestingly - the metaphors don't quite match the activities we do undergirded by the internet anymore.

Working inside a video call situation, we are actually offline but meet together online. This becomes specially recognisable when teaching dance online[76] as neither me nor the participants are using the online connection for anything else than a transmission of information. Choreographically one of the biggest challenges is that when we go online we visually transfer to two dimensionality. When teaching dance online it's sometimes better to turn off the camera and find ways to instruct that allow a sensorial understanding rather than a physical imitation. Often professional dancers live in shared flats and the capacity to move in their own rooms is very limited. Hence I have worked thoroughly on how to both consider the conditions and bring the multiple real spaces into the common online gathering. I have also thought about what we can do in this other situation that isn't as easily trained in a dance studio. I changed my floor based crawl-like practice to be a distribution of weight and pressure to other things than the floor; instead distributing weight on all fours in an improvisation between dancer, bed, sofa, walls, chairs, tables. Taking the lockdown into consideration and because it's almost impossible to get the pulse going on six square metres unless you have a treadmill, I've also used the opportunity to invite the practitioners to leave their own environment on an approximate 5 minute run into the staircase or neighbourhood. For dance teachers, I don't think these tricks come as a great surprise, but to me having spent a lot of time in an online academic context I realised that in most other online places I connected myself to, I had to leave my body behind in the real world.

Due to the changed conditions caused by the pandemic, performing artists around the world began investigating translating their knowledge from the live studio and stage situation to other media like podcasts, video, and video livestreams. In the end of March 2020, actor Stephen Rappaport had transformed his *Intuition in Action Workshop* (normally a live teaching concept) to zoom. When I talked to him about this translation and invited him to talk about his experience through both a live video connection and through writing in an interactive document Stephen among other things expressed;

"The space seems to have more dimensions than usual for better and worse. I work in my bedroom. Others work in their room. One guy worked in a cafe. All the different time spaces in turbulence with your own [...] and then the total emptiness when you switch that window or rather close that window to the rest of the universe out there…"[77]

76 The weekly training I gave at Tanzquartier Wien in January-February in 2021, was shifted to the online due to the lockdown in Austria.

77 Stephen Rappaport in communication with Charlotta Ruth on 14.05.20

…we are focusing on the next thing to come rather than going into the moment, the experience of the now feels shorter. We run behind.

"In the present, we actually run out of time, we do not have any. It is no coincidence that our daily 'I do not have time' paradigm is so connected with the organisation of time, time management and work in the future. Projective temporality strengthens work in the future still to come while taking time away from the present - present time which Henry Bergson describes as duration."[20]

With the help of Deleuze and Guattari, Steve Tromans develops thinking around improvising music that looks at how duration and eternity coexist. How *"one is experiencing a temporality that is beyond the bounds of the rational/commonplace, and brings into play a sense of endless movement - of performance without end."*[21]

-> TIME-CONSCIOUSNESS continues on p. 35

20 Kunst, Bojana; *Artist at Work, Proximity of Art and Capitalism* (zerO books 2015) p. 161.

21 Tromans, Steve; *Improvising Music Experience. The Eternal Ex-temporisation of Music Made Live in Experiencing Liveness in contemporary performance* edited by Reason, Matthew & Mølle Lindelof, Anja (London:Routledge 2017) p.182

In discussion with Performatorium (Marlies Sutermann and Olivia Jaques) about archiving performance, I have begun to think that performance should not be thought of as ephemeral. The duration of the event might be over but the resonance of the performance is inscribed in those who were there. The performance is not gone, it is transforming somebody or something.

"It is our own felt experiences, in their living, multifarious intensity, that provide the most direct access to the eternal in the sensational" [22]
Steve Tromans

-> CONTEMPORARY p. 36

-> MALLEABLE TIME p. 30-31

22 Tromans, Steve; *Improvising Music Experience. The Eternal Ex-temporisation of Music Made Live in Experiencing Liveness in contemporary performance Interdisciplinary Perspectives* edited by Reason, Matthew & Mølle Lindelof, Anja (London:Routledge 2017) p.184

In November 2020 I was part of organising a teaching coaching project[78] that originally was planned to take place in a studio at Tanzquartier Vienna over two weeks. Instead of only working online which most institutional training settings relied on in this period, the participants chose to realise the project outdoors and in one on one situations[79] or digitally transmitted situations. Thanks to this, very different online to offline training practices emerged. One, for my research on *liveness*, interesting practice that emerged, was the training that choreographer and teacher Tomaž Simatović developed for the metro. Through a whatsapp group he could call several people distributed at different places of the metro system leading them through a spinal practice that at its basis used the adjustments that you need to make when standing in the metro without holding on. Simatović's example points towards how making use of real space in on- and offline situations can be rather simple. To know that several people are moving both across the city and in their bodies at the same time creates a deep sense of distributed togetherness. This temporal togetherness that is carried by the digital connection is also very beautifully present in the work *Unknown Cloud on its way to…* by Lundahl & Seitl[80]. In this work *flash mobs* (gatherings of people) at different places in the world can connect to an event that is located both in an app and at different geographic locations at the same time.

When translating contexts from the digital realm to the physical space my motive has been to make the unplanned "thinking" of digital technology graspable. When putting online situations to test in real life (IRL), the embedded often non-planned thinking (*see machine translation*) of digital systems becomes graspable. I have translated intrinsic online phenomena. For instance, how questions in the online realm pop up and how they are formulated and how this, if transferred to real life, becomes absurd behaviour when at regular intervals one has to sign contracts or sign up in order to continue (Treasure Hunting 2015, 2016).

The starting point for working with online reality in real life was my solo-work *Public Eremite* (2013)[81]. In this work, the different levels of participation and presence we experience online was the inspiration for the relationship between me (the performer) and the audience. The relationship went from watching to being lured for security question personal data; to participating in a questionnaire; to being invited to define your online-characteristic with the help of a couple of ticked boxes. You then find out that the material you had contributed was used in a completely different context and that you apparently had signed up for some strange companionship.

Tasting the online in real life can be seen in

78 Be/Well/Come Vol. 2 ViennaSchoolOFF 8+3 in organised by Wiener Perspektive training & education group. Participating teachers/artists: Bianca Braunesberger, Lisa Bunderla, Imani Rameses, Tomaž Simatović 2020

79 The Corona restrictions in Vienna in November 2020 only allowed individuals to meet one other person.

80 Lundahl & Seitl, *Unknown Cloud on its way to…* Multiple location flashmob synchronized by iOS/Android application, social & news media, 360 ambisonic sound, text-messages and the website: http://unknowncloud.com 2015-2017 http://www.lundahl-seitl.com/work/unknown-cloud, accessed 22.5.22

81 Ruth, Charlotta; *Public Eremite*, solo performance developed in close collaboration with composer and programmer Johannes Burström and artist Clélia Colonna 2013. https://charlottaruth.com/stage/public%20eremite/, retrieved 6.5.22

-> NOW p.11

-> LOOPS p.19

To be with and across time has made me...

"To be con-temporary does not necessarily mean to be present, to be here-and-now; it means to be "with time" rather than "in time." "Con-temporary" in German is "zeitgenössisch." As Genosse means "comrade," to be con-temporary – zeitgenössisch – can thus be understood as being a "comrade of time" – as collaborating with time, helping time when it has problems, when it has difficulties." Boris Groys

In the article Comrades of Time[23], Boris Groys looks at the etymology of the word contemporary;

23 Groys, Boris; *Comrades of Time*, in e-flux 11 (2009) https://www.e-flux.com/journal/11/61345/comrades-of-time/ retrieved 20.05.22. Thanks to Rebecca Hilton for pointing me to this article.

contemporary art works ranging between how digital aesthetics enter into the material world as in the meticulously carved wooden cabinet "Good Vibrations" with glitch effects, by architect Ferroccio Laviani. In 2012 James Bridle coined the term *New Aesthetics* to describe how this visual language of the digital blend with the physical world.

Recent choreographic works often play with a simultaneous online and offline presence as for instance in the choreographic installation work *#homies* by swiss choreographer Anna Anderegg[82] where audiences can both attend live through walking inside an apartment where four dancers perform, each isolated in a room, as well as attend the online live situation where another perspective of the dancers is made available through their online connection on instagram. Despite recognising the quality of Anderegg's work, this online-offline approach is troublesome for me as it depends on using existing commercial platforms as an extension of one's own artwork, and even when having other intentions – as in the case of Anna Anderegg whose female performers perform choreography based on male online behaviour – it risks being reduced by its framing and the polished, filtered, sexy reality we expect to meet on instagram.

MACHINE & ARTIFICIAL TRANSLATION

"Bridle's book investigates the fundamental paradox of our digital age: as new technologies allow us to gather more and more data on our world, we understand less and less of it."[83]

82 Anderegg, Anna #homies, 2018 https://annaanderegg.com/homies retrieved 28.05.22

83 https://www.blinkist.com/en/books/new-dark-age-en retrieved 28.05.22

When wanting to double check what James Bridle says themselves about their book New Dark Age, I instead stumbled on the website Blinkist[84] which uses the slogan *"More knowledge in less time. Perfect for curious people who love to learn, busy people who don't have time to read, and even people who aren't into reading"* and I have to admit that one of the first sentences provides me with the feeling of reading Bridle's book, that I had not yet put my own words on.

Thirteen years ago artist Clélia Colonna and I used to play a lot with google-translate[85] inside our project *Fan-Mania* (2009-2012). As we worked in English together it was fun to see how Swedish and French "languageness" became visible and absurd with the, back then, not yet smooth translation algorithm. In *New Dark Age*, James Bridle writes about the development of machine translation[86] and describes how in the beginning translation software relied entirely on data-driven correlation[87] between texts in different languages. Since 2016 this has changed. Google translate now depends on a neural network. An artificial neural network uses machine learning to simulate processes going on inside biological neural networks (i.e. the brain). *"In this new architecture, words are encoded by their distance*

84 Blinks Labs GmbH, commonly known as Blinkist, is a German book-summarizing subscription service based in Berlin, Germany. The service provides summaries of over 5,000 bestselling non-fiction books, 15-minute reads, otherwise known as Blinks or book-in-blinks. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blinkist retrieved 28.05.22

85 The software exists since 2006

86 Bridle, James; *New Dark Age: Technology and the End of the Future* (New York:Verso 2018) p. 146-149.

87 Bridle also speaks about how translation software was originally trained on the correlation between multilingual transcripts of United Nations and European Parliament which make the software biassed to the language of power and barbarism.

from one another in a mesh of meaning."[88] A mesh that only a computer can comprehend. It's impossible to visualise or understand what the computer is doing when operating inside a *"thousand-dimensional vector."*[89] Bridle also describes this impossibility to cognitively fathom how deep learning algorithms operate describing how computers that have been trained to outmatch chess and go-players nowadays make moves that are non-human. Moves that remain obscured from human cognitive capacities of how they have been calculated. This fascinates and bothers me, and has been a motive for some of the absurd human-computing systems that my participatory art-work relies upon. How can I understand where I am in relation to the world when I depend on processes that I cannot cognitively grasp?

Another popular example is the one where *facebook AI research* shut two bots off after they began speaking to each other in a language that only the bots understood. The bots were originally instructed to negotiate the trivial exchange of items in English language, but very fast they developed a language that wasn't understandable for humans anymore. As an article in the *Independent* suggests;[90] the same language development happens when AI is used inside trading and military operations. However, this language reduction is not exclusive to AI. Human language processes that demand efficiency also create language hybrids. If you are not familiar with the short cuts inside specific professional contexts like police commands or medical terminology, it will be partly incomprehensible. Language develops depending on how it is needed. The question is if two bots speaking to each other is still language when it turns to communication beyond our comprehension? I have not looked deeply into Ludwig Wittgenstein's concept of private language, a language that cannot be translated to any ordinary language. Still, this concept seems relevant to consider when machine communication is developing in ways our languages do not operate. It's also interesting to consider if machine language at all should be thought of as communication as it is rather an exchange and execution of prompts simulating communication.

When AI is trained on photo recognition, it is maybe easier to grasp this thought experiment. As I have learnt both from my PhD Colleague Fabian Weiss and in my work with the Neuromatic Game Art research group, AI, when in face recognition training, can simulate a new face. However, when giving image output this image is not a photograph anymore - it is the translation of a face through code and back. If the AI instead trains on photos of many kitchens, the AI can make a simulation of a kitchen that doesn't exist - a non existing kitchen where the real features are in place. I find it fascinating to imagine what type of place this generates. What is the bias of a kitchen? I write this text paragraph after having recently visited the exhibition *Ludwig Wittgenstein, Fotografie as analytische Praxis*.[91] What resonates with me strongly is the notion that how to think through a new media requires you to be exposed to this media. Wittgenstein could write through

88 Bridle, James; *New Dark Age: Technology and the End of the Future* (New York:Verso 2018) p.148.

89 Bridle, James; *New Dark Age: Technology and the End of the Future* (New York:Verso 2018) p.148.

90 Robertson, Douglas 02 August 2017, Independent https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/facebook-shuts-down-robots-ai-artificial-intelligence-develop-own-language-common-a7871341.html retrieved 02.05.20

91 https://www.leopoldmuseum.org/de/ausstellungen/122/ludwig-wittgenstein Thanks to Ruth Anderwald and Leonard Grond for organising the visit to this exhibition.

BILOCALITY

…time-space confusion… Cordula Daus pointed me to the concept of bilocality. This seems to describe very well what I have been working on artistically when being in two places at the same time. I originally started to work on it as a theme in the solo "Twice upon a Time", where I tried to get into another dimension to have time to watch TV. Bilocation is a phenomenon in religious mysticism describing how for instance a saint has appeared at two or more places at the same time.

-> DEGREES OF PRESENCE p.6

-> MALLEABLE TIME p.39

metaphors of photography due to photography being part of the aristocratic lifestyle he was born into. Let's go back to our kitchens: we all have them, and we have been inside many kitchens in our life. How could I recognise that an AI generated kitchen is a "deep-fake"?[92] To even consider that something is "deep-fake" we must have witnessed it and be aware of it as one possible reading. Little by little we begin learning to not believe in images that look like photographs, but what does this possible reading do to real environments? Do we, when walking through a new part of the city, see the 3D program that the architect used when drawing it? Do we use plastic surgery to look like our enhanced selfies? Is the real world also turning deeply fake?

Inside the PhD, I have not scientifically looked at the political implications of images and videos that, with the help of AI, can produce so called deep fakes or that the translations AI do always depend on what and how they are trained - creating AI biassed. As an artist, I am rather blurrily inspired by this dilemma that the border between what is real and not, is more and more diffused. My fascination is placed in a feeling between the uncanny and the fantastical. Mark Coeckelbergh writes;

"...via classification, prediction, and recommendation, AI links past, present, and future in particular ways, which has normatively significant consequences."[93]

92 This article is interesting for the topic of deep fakes: https://cocreationstudio.mit.edu/just-joking/#part-1

93 88 Cockelbergh, Mark; *Time Machines: Artificial Intelligence, Process, and Narrative* (Springer 2021) p. 2 https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13347-021-00479-y retrieved 15.05.22

When working with the GPT-2, a generative pretrained transformer, inside the Neuromatic Game Art research Group[94] I understood the importance of looking at what material the AI is trained on. It is also important to understand who has the technical power (or the financial means) to choose this material. Since a majority of texts written until today in English language carries a white western linear canon, the risk is that colonial thought gets into AI generated text. If the material the AI is trained on is not curated with awareness to work against racist and ableist language, language risks stagnating in old power structures the more AI is applied in writing. As a person or maybe as a human, I'm terrified by the fact that it is often invisible what material AI has been trained on and that it is easy to misuse for political purpose.

A growing problem is that we depend on algorithmic systems that designed to make money. But their side effects have enormous influence on how society operates and begins to think. One of the worst examples is how Facebook algorithms for pushing content to their users have been originally made to push things that other people like. The effect has been that the algorithm, conceived to earn money, makes you behave differently.

This is also not a PhD in computational thinking. Technical descriptions are limited and only transfer my understanding of computational processes to the degree I am capable of and where I find it necessary for describing how I have been inspired by these processes. Human misunderstanding and deliberateness is part of this process.

94 Neuromatic Game Art - critical play with neurointerfaces, FWF/ PEEK AR 581 Margarete Jahrmann 2020-2022

" What is liveness and what can it be?"

As a transition space the online/offline holds an interesting spatio-temporal potentiality. I'm curious to make the constant lingering between on- and offline more graspable. I'm here at the kitchen-table, I transition to online and I become distributed. Possibly, this transition can only be experienced as liminal for those who have had a slow transformation over years of increased digitality. Digitally natives are already distributed from birth. Nevertheless the online is a very important space for exploring your identity -specially in adolescence. Legacy Russel writes: "...a passage through which the body traverses toward liberation, a tear in the fabric of the digital.[24]

When this border is trespassed between the on- and offline let's not forget that we're in the middle of...

... EXERCISE WITH KITCHEN DRAWER p. 29

-> MAKE-BELIEVE p.39

24 Russel, Legacy; *Glitch Feminism* (New York: Verso 2020) p.18

CASE STUDIES

In this part I give insights to two games that have informed my research.

QUEERS AT THE END OF THE WORLD

After I quite early in the PhD familiarised myself with writing in Twine, a tool for creating hyper text games, I played several Twine games to better understand what I can do. If you can access internet I recommend you to play *"Queers at the end of the world"* one of the most famous twine-games. Probably it's also the shortest twine game - playing it takes 10 seconds - unless you repeat. The link is:

https://w.itch.io/end-of-the-world
(twine ANNA ANTHROPY)

Shorter games like this have the dramaturgical effect that one tends to engage with them over and over. So if you now have played (playing will always describe better what the experience is like) let me first express clearly that the way time and repetition is used in this game, I appreciate - a lot. To me this game is an example of conceptual best practice in relation to making the form and temporal nature of a digital tool part of the narrative. Every time I play I consciously or unconsciously build on the memory of last time. When you continue playing, the layers of the experience little by little create more complexity. The regular 10 seconds wipe carries the sensation of not being able to hold onto the moment even if we want to. An example of creating a frame for more consciously experiencing ephemerality.

KAREN

The app-based participatory performance/game Karen by Blast Theory that I played over Christmas Holidays in 2019.[95]

20/12 2019
I'm trying to decide how much the intention from the design is to make me believe that Karen is really talking to me. It's so obvious on a technical level that she's not. Still the device-specific videos (Karen turning image off and on like in a video call situation and sometimes moving around) makes me able to *pretend*. But what is this performative quality of pretending? What makes this nearly more fascinating than the same situation taking place live? Is it that I instead talk to myself and am given the freedom to participate as much as I can and want? Is it the uncanny valley effect?

What would this situation be like if somebody instead called me for real? Could I always be sure that this is not a live person if there is only a voice? OR what would happen if Karen suddenly rang my doorbell? It makes me think that I want to play with the agency distributed between human beings and algorithms in the research.

Being addressed with you, and that the follow up content adapts to my answers makes me more curious than if the conversation (the short video inputs) from Karen would be missing. If I was to be filling out the same questions in an ordinary form it would feel more purposeless. *The Question can be compared to the touch…*[96] But is it so that the question only touches when you can feel

95 https://www.blasttheory.co.uk/projects/karen/
96 Questionology project application Daus/Ruth 2019

" What is liveness and what can it be?"

MAKE-BELIEVE

…everyday-magic. When things are just a little bit off or beside reality it's easier to enter a state of make-believe. Make-Believe[25] is a framework used to describe games enacted by children, alone or in groups, wherein 'actors' perform elaborate fictions and ask those interacting with them to treat their fictions as real. Sometimes they permeate and crossover into reality (this is also what pervasive games do), such as a child's invisible friend or a sustained fictional avatar. In "make-believe" performances, the distinction between what's real and what's pretended is kept clear, but the foremost scholar on performance studies, Richard Schechner has said:

"When people go to the movies or the theatre, they know that the social and personal worlds enacted are not those of the actors but those of the characters. Of course, it is this distinction that first the avant-garde and later the media and the internet have successfully sabotaged."

It seems as if Schechner is not entirely happy with what the internet has done to this basic condition for theatre to take place. The online-performances of everyday life bleed into everything we do…

-> GAP p.29

25 Dudeck, Michael; Make Belief: The Art of Inventing Religions, PhD thesis, Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh, 2022. Thanks to my colleague [M]Dudeck for pointing me to one of their text passages and allowing me to remould their knowledge into my research on liveness. Make Belief, is a metaplasm derived from the vernacular 'Make-Believe', where the root-word (believe) is converted from a verb into a noun (belief).

another soul behind that question? Or does the question in itself produce touch? Is the question making me touch myself?[97]

21/12
Player me: Is the algorithm choosing to provide experience opposite of the one I'm leading?

22/12
I have the feeling that the design wants to provoke me, the player. This brings, of course, a stronger activation and through this emotional activation I automatically start to care in some sense. Even though I know that I have downloaded the app and Karen has preprogrammed alternatives, the feeling of being provoked and the feeling of wanting to somehow put things straight is very *live*.

24/12
My partner laughed at me when seeing the messages from Karen on Christmas eve.
Karen: "Call me now"
My partner: "Good you told me you are playing a game he said; imagine I had played that game and you would see that message from a woman."

The algorithm doesn't know it's been X-mas, this is clear.

4/1 2020
I was quite impressed today when finally "calling up" Karen again to see that the algorithm noticed that I hadn't been present for a while.
Karen: "We've missed a couple of sessions, haven't we?", a grumpy Karen says through text messages on the screen while she's staring at me through the camera lens.

97 *soul-masturbation*

One can wonder what a session is like in the world of Karen.. today when we "chatted" (me making choices through the tick-box options and Karen through her questionnaire like alternatives), I guess I finally understood that in the design every episode - also the short ones -in this game is considered a session.

Because of travelling to relatives where time was even more filled or maybe because another character popped up in Karen, "Dave", it made it feel as if the situation was less about discovering something about me and more about discovering Karen. Dave searched through her stuff - I might have agreed to that but am not sure. He also confessed he's in love with Karen. Somehow it started to feel as if the experience demanded more of me and I wasn't all up for it. Especially not when juggling relatives and kids running in and out of whichever room I happen to be when playing. It makes me think about the difference between playing games undisturbed and not and how also this is similar to on- and offline parallel living.

6/1
Karen: *When we started you said that you wanted to change your attitude to your relationships.*
Player-me: What!!!
Player-me: *I've lost track. A lot has happened since then.* But actually Karen, you lost track! I thought I chose: *I want to review my life goals*, at the beginning, is this a bug??

This was a really weird experience... It makes me wanna replay and do my real preferred choice again, but it was really frustrating to have

OTHER KEY-WORDS AND REFLECTIONS

thought that we were always gonna come to the life-goal thing. I thought making the turn over the partner issue was just part of it. Also the game must have reacted weirdly to me… as I don't actually consider myself having problems with attitudes in my relationships, or did the game even notice that I played weirdly?

I find this one of the most interesting things that the contingency planning, even in a case like this when someone (me) must have tapped the wrong button - or was it an algorithmic mistake? I should maybe have made more screenshots.. but the ephemerality is also what makes it feel somewhat real. It's gone now and I don't know if it's me or Karen (the app) who made the mistake.

7/1
First day of school after the Christmas holiday. Everyone out of the house. Karen makes me listen to a song and she tells me that I have helped her. Ok so it was about her. I still feel a bit confused about probably having played with not the topic that I chose and the topic which felt most important to me. Karen puts on headphones and the sound from the speakers in the space she is in, is gone. Beautiful end to a, for me, confusing experience. I will think about it now. And then probably try to play again - with my question. I feel "snuvad på konfekten" (*deprived of the candy*[98]).

Online / Digital Liveness -> p.7
WHAT IS LIVENESS AND WHAT IT CAN BE?

98 This Swedish idiom actually translates with "*taken for a ride*" but this again is an example of how much translation can deviate from the original.

Thanks for attending to the contextualisation part of my research, if you have questions please get in touch!

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OTHER KEY-WORDS AND REFLECTIONS (2)