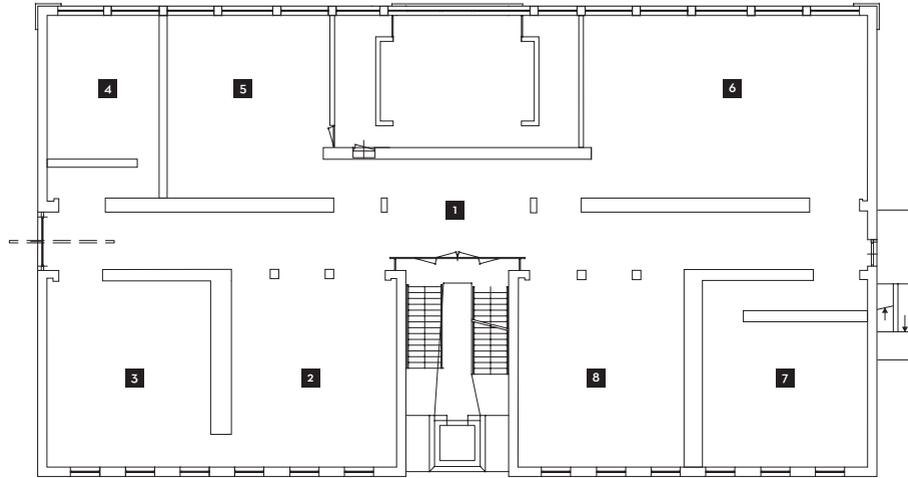


Floor Plan

THIRD FLOOR



Relational Stalinism – The Musical Michael Portnoy

How restrictive are the languages, both physical and linguistic, that we use to negotiate the world and our relationship to each other? How can ruptures of logic create new imperatives of thought? Foregrounding confusion as a generative subject position, *Relational Stalinism – The Musical* seeks to unsettle hierarchies of display, taste, and mediation induced by the museum space and to provoke shifts in perception that might open up new relations, meanings, and forms of behavior.

Relational Stalinism – The Musical does not appeal to absurdity in a nihilistic disavowal of the possibility of truth or knowledge, but seeks to militate against the habitual use of language and gesture that limits thought and expression. The exhibition deploys various modes of performance – dance, theatre, comedy, song – crossed with language and movement pushed to breaking point, to open up a new poetics and frustrate attempts to instrumentalize or apply a 'value' to the performances. In this it positions that which takes place in the museum as able to transmute, distort and stretch reality in some imperceptible way through the incantatory power of words and their novel combinations; revolutions of the mind which have implications for reality outside.

This exhibition has been prompted by a response to the current trend of staging performance in museums. It is the contention of the artist that performance has increasingly been brought into the art institution as a neutered form; safely packaged, aestheticized, co-opted and yet unquestioningly framed as 'transformative'. These claims should be up-ended, held up to scrutiny, and perhaps even laughed at.

Caution: Some of these performances ask for your active participation. Due to the use of stroboscopic light, the show is not suitable for visitors suffering from epilepsy.

RELATIONAL STALINISM – THE MUSICAL

Directed by Michael Portnoy
Choreography Michael Portnoy
in collaboration with Mark Bellamy, Thomas Dudkiewicz, Jimmy Guacamole, Margo van de Linde, Keyna Nara, Evelyne Rossie, Loveday Smith, and Gerrie de Vries
Performers Mark Bellamy, Thomas Dudkiewicz, Jimmy Guacamole, Margo van de Linde,

Keyna Nara, Evelyne Rossie, Loveday Smith, and Gerrie de Vries
Curators Defne Ayas and Natasha Hoare
Dramaturgy Advisor Maaïke Gouwenberg
Lighting Andre Goos and Jorg Schellenkens
Costumes Nadia van Luijk, Marieke Pruis, Yoeri Guépin
Production Assistant Sten Saarits

Two cycles of 2 hour duration, starting at 2pm and 4pm (during opening night, 5pm and 7pm).

RUNNING ORDER

Mental Footnotes, 7 mins

100 Big Entrances (WdW), Part 1, 15 mins

An(al) Lee(k), 8 mins

The Citibank Sessions (A Dance of Logic), 12 mins

The Agglutinators (Rigoberto), 15 mins

&

Loveday - The Room, 5 mins

DARSTELLERZWANGSLAGE, 8 mins

Advanced Touch, 10 mins

&

The Citibank Sessions (A Dance of Logic), 12 mins

77 Blinks, 7 mins

Rooms In Which..., 6 mins

Blues on Blues, 5 mins

100 Big Entrances (WdW), Part 2, 15 mins

ROOM 1

Mental Footnotes

The dance curriculum used to be fairly straightforward - courses in ballet, jazz, Graham technique, Labanotation, etc. Now to be a competitive worker in the immaterial marketplace a dancer must spend winters in PAF building an encyclopedic knowledge of theoretical discourse; Deluzian Disco, Foucauldian Foxtrots, Meillassouxian Mambo, Lacanian Lambada - so much so, and with demanding schedules, to keep up they must research their next show whilst dancing the current one, in 12/4.

ROOM 2

Rooms In Which...

This immaterial archive is the world's most comprehensive collection of breeds of "Rooms in which..." some form of participatory performances take place; usually within white walled spaces, usually with members of the public and performers challenging them to take part in activities they wouldn't normally undertake, usually investing things that are totally mundane with meaning, or usually witnessing things that are difficult to do with your body (or really quite easy but not permissible in such spaces.) Uniquely available to Witte de With visitors throughout the duration of *Relational Stalinism - The Musical*, we invite you to add to the archive by visiting the head archivist during exhibition hours.

An(al) Lee(k)

Note to the reader; we apologize for the malfunctioning of this AI. She is suffering from the traumatic effects of her political persecution at the hands of a major Dutch museum. We are proud to offer her safe haven, having thoroughly assessed her asylum status. Lexically challenged and lacking in naturalistic movement, parts of this young Japanese robot's speech have been outsourced to a British West-End Theatre actor.

ROOM 3

DARSTELLERZWANGSLAGE

A Post-Fordist worker languishes in Airbnb's around the world, stuck in an endless, melancholic packing and unpacking of her suitcase. A ghastly orchestral soundtrack accompanies her every move.

ROOM 4

Advanced Touch

A highly limited number of people (twelve per cycle) are allowed admittance to this improvement of Yoko Ono's *Touch Poem for a Group of People* (1963).

ROOM 5

Loveday - The Room

Somewhere, in the bowels of Witte de With, one woman, one trumpet, one audience member, no way out. Will it be you?

ROOM 6

The Agglutinators (Rigoberto)

Agglutinative languages have a severely limited number of roots which must be combined in novel ways to create meaning. A tribe of lost performers attempts to communicate through truncated vocabulary and movement. In fact, each of them only have 30 words with which to communicate new concepts; brutally lit by the brilliant white glare of 90s Belgian Dance Theatre. This piece is dedicated to Seventeenth Century philosopher Rigoberto Ballitestera and is indebted to his work in the field of "semantic primes".

Blues on Blues

Cross breeding two forms of blues - American Blues and Greek Rembetiko - this piece fittingly mourns the end of the *Relational Stalinism - The Musical* show.

ROOM 7

The Citibank Sessions (A Dance of Logic)

"Hello this is Adrienne at Citibank, I'd be happy to help you today." As an immaterial laborer Michael Portnoy is paid through wire transfers. After 19 years of banking with Citibank, Portnoy stumbled across a loophole in their telephone banking system that enables him to recoup nominal international transfer fees through stretching call center communiqué logic almost to breaking point. Taken further, this performative technique may indeed finally end rampant sub-prime mortgage lending across the US. No call center workers were harmed in this piece.

ROOM 8

77 Blinks

On November 11, 2011, Portnoy invited Yvonne Rainer to join him for one glass of tea inside the dormant Thrihnukagigur volcano of Iceland. He videotaped their conversation and later composed a score for taiko drums to the exact timing of her 77 blinks. Each performer has undertaken 3.5 years of eyelid elasticizing boot camp training in the mountains of northern Holland.

100 Big Entrances (WdW)

A dancer performs a series of choreographic permutations on the theatrical trope of the "big entrance". Starting quite simply the directions become progressively complex pushing the dancer's expressive and interpretive powers to the limit. In a mixture between hyper-realistic acting, dance and pantomime, the performer draws us into the many types of territories (geographic, psychological, political, theoretical, etc.) that one might "enter". An ongoing performance in Portnoy's oeuvre, a selection of speculative spaces boldly promised by Witte de With's recent press releases are added to the directives in this current iteration.