COURSE PROGRAM MOBILE ACADEMY WARSAW

CHOREOGRAPHY & DANCE

Xavier le Roy:The Phantom of Freedom!

The freedom of the artist is an illusion. Avoiding that problem is impossible. Let's try again. At the beginning of a process of work involving more than one person, there are instructions, not only ideas. Ideas are always intertwined with methodologies, certain traditions, and even ideologies of methods. A closer and critical look into this relationship could be useful, reminding us to check what is between experiment, invention, and manipulation. Is that the space where the illusion of freedom hides itself?

Let us observe the very first (conscious) moment at stake in the process of choreography: the very first sentences and signs, the first instruction that one gives or receives. Negotiation or contemplation of the given instructions and scores never avoid the desire to be free or to do what one wants. Who does what? And from where does one take it?

This workshop is based on an analytical approach, mixed with the wildness of experiment. The major activities will be based on writing scores for movements, rehearsing, and performing them; writing scores and instructions for others, for yourselves, for your favourite performers, and also scores for strangers. A series of exercises will question the relationships between modes of production and their resulting products. We will create choreographies that will be performed by the participants or others, and these will help us to explore some aspects of the above-mentioned questions. Each participant will be successively dancer, choreographer, and spectator. Hundreds of great shows will be placed into perspective.

Meg Stuart:Anorexic Spaces. The Ghostlines in Private and Public Spaces

Certainly the ghost is unfinished business, unresolved issues, the wanting and not daring, the reaching out but not grabbing. The desire for the second chance - but it's too fucking late. The dance of the ghost is one of suspension, a body hanging and floating nowhere. Perhaps an overly romantic view, as if it were affordable and easy to hang around today. It must be someone moving too fast, their accelerated existence so blurry that you can't recognise them anymore.

Feeding the Ghost. Anorexia could be seen as the ultimate refusal to be human (fleshy and desiring) or could be thought of as feeding (nourishing and inspiring) the ghost. How do we feed the ghost in performance and in life? And aren't we always ghosting our lives in our work?

Anorexic Spaces. Places that make one feel too large, too needy and too hungry for one's own body. Part of the workshop will be to visit those empty spaces, those vacuums in the middle of town, decompressing chambers encountered by just walking around the corner. These are the places that refusal seems to haunt. How can we flirt with death and the dead? How hungry are you and for what?

The Method of Ghosting Oneself. There is an exercise that I use: I call it ghosting oneself. It explores the consequences of detaching presence from action; the mechanics of ghosting yourself, playing with believing and doubting, desiring and refusing simultaneously. Flirting with emptiness, working with one's own presence as something physical and malleable, and experiencing the ghost in everyday life are the starting positions for this workshop. How is absence marked on the body? Moving to a new city, not knowing the language, returning home after a long trip (or from a hospital, from war), having sex with a partner you no longer love. Near-death experiences....

The course will take place indoors (the rehearsal room) and outdoors (the city) with the uncanny omnipresence of ourselves and others, and will be realised in collaboration with the video artist Jorge Leon.

CITY AS STAGE

Stefan Kaegi: Cargo - Ready-Made Machine Intervention Lab

In the northernmost village of South Korea, they say, there is an open-air grandstand from which spectators from the capitalist south are given a glimpse of their northern neighbours beyond the border.

As the communist neighbours are aware of their audience, they are said to be outfitted with exceptionally nice clothes: a 'fence' theatre. These days the fear of surveillance cameras has been replaced by the fear of not-being-observed. The society of the spectacle has rid itself of the last hiding places in order to create a mise-en-scène for consumerism. Here public space has become part of a continuation of the life of the customer, whose future public space project can be seen as the manifestation of a digital architectural model.

In the film The Matrix, the entire city is frozen for a moment. Walking amongst its petrified pedestrians, the protagonists of the film reveal life to be a simulation. Artistic interventions can be such pause-buttons: for moments, the theatrical gaze slows down the confused flow of capital and special interests, the architecture of the urban sociotope is deconstructed into snapshots. In contrast to the flaneur - the purposeless observer - the intervention-spectator is more of a voyeur who focuses on the public theatre. This zooming-out gesture from public life contains the impulse of context art which, in lieu of reproducing reality, frames and focuses on it instead. A cargo of content instead of a cargo of goods.

The Cargo Ready-Made Machine is the flipside of a protected rehearsal room. It is a custom-rebuilt Bulgarian truck that transports gazes instead of goods: a container on wheels with a big window. A mobile audience space that focuses on cities like a microscope. Wherever the truck stops, the city becomes a stage, a performance, the patient on the couch of analysis, the topic of discussion, the subject of criticism. The Cargo Ready-Made Machine can fictionalize cities and gives them a soundtrack. The intervention lab goes on a search for the theatre of the streets, where the street theatre is created by everyday life. The intervention lab is always only one step away from the city; the fourth wall of this theatre is a window, a pedestal and a frame, and every passer-by in front of it becomes an actor. It is a mobile research unit, exploring relevance and interference with every face of the city. The course will take place in the truck itself and will seek out sites of intervention in Warsaw.

IMAGES / PHOTOGRAPHY ON ARCHIVES, WARSAW AND THE UNDEAD

Akram Zaatari:After Presence

Akram Zaatari will use his work on intangible concepts such as invisible borders (geographical and psychological), manifestations of desire (through dress codes and political gender activism), and his work on collecting and studying photographic and

other archives as a tool to further explore the ties between art and politics on the one hand, and facts and documents on the other. The participants have to choose between different areas of study, eventually narrowing down their work on specific interventions.

These interventions include:
- City locations charged with intense past experiences, such as military, social or urban violence.
- The personal histories of individuals whose recent lives were marked by constant mobility, immigration, and displacement, such as in the case of worker immigrants, also known as the invisible class.
- Historical events and facts, such as particular incidents that happened in the city - collecting data, and developing narratives around them. The course will collect data from various media including the Internet or from one-to-one interviews; the students will take pictures, look in archives, etc., with the goal of developing methodologies of work approaching different topics.

The course will establish stimulating concepts that cut across different disciplines, and is an initiation into working in politically- and socially- charged situations.

Hans Weigand: Warsaw Condensed

Snapshots: the Old Quarter of the city restored after the war, the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage: a backdrop; the MDM, the Marszalkowska residential quarter: "national in form - socialist in content" from 1952; the Palace of Culture, an unwelcome present from Moscow: Soviet neoclassicism with a Polish attic pediment 230 metres above the ground; the foreign hotel chains that came with the construction boom of 1990, all the "Centers" everywhere; Communist- Capitalist - City: Helicopter architecture; the huge parks with their wild beauty: the whole city can be crossed along leafy paths - Warsaw still has a strangely torn look to it, with empty spaces, deserted areas, places that cannot speak, decompressed, riddled with the asphalt strips of vast highways, with gigantic pedestrian labyrinths below them where people lose their way only to re-emerge into the daylight at the wrong location.

The most recent large-format works by Weigand are psychedelic picture puzzles, collapsing views of the city surrounded by superimposed layers of landscape containing numerous scenographic details. You surf through the pictures as you would through the

architecture of Venetian visionary Giovanni Battista Piranesi, or the Dutch psychodelic Hieronymus Bosch.

The course will take a cautious, critical and detailed photographic look at Warsaw, using a hallucinatory technique to capture the essence of the city. The objective is to create a collective picture story.

Olaf Breuning: Zombies: A Collective Photograph at the End of the Mobile Academy

"There should be a photo. It should include about 30 extras that are dressed up in cardboard boxes. They will remind one of robots or of zombies who have just climbed out of the garbage bin. Each of them will be wearing a large box over the body, a small one over the head, and yet an even smaller one for the hands and feet. A text will be written on the large box reading from the upper left to lower right. All of the other boxes should be painted in bright colours. The whole thing should have the effect of an oversized kindergarten project, i.e. it will appear harmless, but the text will be to the contrary. Some parts of the photo should come from completely miscellaneous sources, and nevertheless, the overall forms a coherent yet strange landscape. What will be will be. Perhaps the concept will change completely. Ideas have to be adapted to the time when something happens, and as the photo will be done in September, it is difficult to predict. Whatever finally ends up being in the picture, the most important thing is that all participants should have a good time working on this crafty and elaborate photo." (Olaf Breuning)

INVENTING / EXPERIMENTING / DOUBTING CONCEPTS AND IDEAS

Georg Schöllhammer: U.F.O.s

For the past forty years, U. F. O. s (Universal-Cultural Futurological Operations) have occupied the art space above Bratislava. U. F. O. s are realistic, anti-illusionist objects and actions, anti-happenings and anti-images, which, ironically, are fully embedded into a cosmology of the uncertain and, as part of the pseudo-sciences, embedded into an

empire of extraterrestrial flying objects, designed and navigated by the 'Ufo-naut'
Július Koller.

After 1960, the landscapes and cities of former Eastern Europe are replete with spirits
and forms that transmogrify, transform, and then dissolve into thin air. The star-maps
that are used to survey these artificial worlds often serve to navigate the private
public. The world is full of eerie displacements, gestures of the uncanny, and the
constellation of the real exists in a plethora of doubled forms: one speaks of near-death
experiences, and the roaming of subjectivity in 5 dimensions meets noontime fauns.
Question marks, meanders, rows of numbers, and persons of the line belong to the
inventory at hand. Communication machines emerge and shut themselves up before
they have the chance to become immaterial and disappear. Inconspicuously, poses and
gestures from private photo albums appear in the photographers' studios of Vanity Fair.
The stories and spirits of a parallel avant-garde, whose silhouettes have yet to be found
on the walls of the Western canon, lie at the heart of the teachings of Georg
Schöllhammer.

Dorothea von Hantelmann & Tino Sehgal: Peep Show – Technologies of the Self

'Technologies of the self' are techniques or practices that allow individuals to work on
themselves by regulating their bodies, their thoughts and their conduct. Referring back
to ancient philosophy, the notion of technologies of the self was introduced by Michel
Foucault, who posited it in relation to three major types of technologies: first,
technologies of production that serve the production and transformation of things;
second, technologies of sign systems, which enable us to manipulate signs and symbols;
and third, technologies of power that serve to determine human conduct with the aim of
exceeding power. To this he adds a fourth type, the 'technologies of the self', by which
he means those operations that individuals perform 'with their own bodies, with their
own souls' in order to shape their existence, or to enable their subjectivity to reach
specific states of being such as 'happiness' or 'clarity' or a certain kind of spiritual
power.

There are multiple traditions for self-technologies in our culture and in others, e.g.
techniques of self-analysis or Christian techniques of confession or mediation.
Foucault's motivation to explore those techniques was to readdress the question of the
subject and its self-knowledge in relation to its concrete existence in practices and

modes of self-transformation. He notes that in ancient thought, philosophy and spirituality are never separated, and that an act of knowledge is always accompanied by an act of self-transformation that entails some kind of action on one's very being.

This is a line of thinking we would like to follow: in which way or how far are forms of knowing oneself related to practices of transforming oneself? What is the relation between knowing and doing, between theoretical reflection of, and a practical acting upon, reality? Which kind of practices and technologies are available to us today to shape our subjectivity, our conduct, and our modes of being? The idea is to explore these questions in three parts: first, by becoming familiar with theoretical approaches to the concept of technologies of the self; second, by visiting different people in Warsaw (intellectuals, activists, artists) who introduce, reflect upon as well as realize practices and technologies of the self; and third, by thinking about the possibility of inventing new practices, conducts, rituals or habits that could lead to a further differentiation of our subjectivities.

Bojana Cvejic & Jan Ritsema: Police or Disagreement: The Politics of Aesthetics. Rehearsing Thinking

When art declares that it's political, there is a good chance that it's doing something political on account of doing nothing political at all.

Everyone wants you to represent yourself, to appear visible, to include yourself in a role within an order which could be called 'police'. 'Police' is the term the French philosopher Jacques Rancière employs to denote the general law that determines the distribution of parts and roles; in other words, time, space, and attention in a community as well as its forms of exclusion. 'Police' is the distribution of what can be seen, heard, said and thought. The distribution applies to everything: it is the city or your TV, your food diet or your choreographic regime. However, contrary to what is often said and heard, not everything is political. Politics are only there where laws, rules, habits, values, mechanisms, and protocols for perception and cognition are disrupted. The political is the dispute that challenges the established framework of identification and classification, for instance, what art, theatre or dance is or could be or isn't allowed to be. So police is always there, while politics only occur sometimes, in the acts of disagreement.

During the week of this course, we will explore the art and thinking which have been rendered invisible, or at least less representable, because of their disagreement with the

dominant modes. We will explore why certain artistic and discursive practices have become invisible, or were so. There are many images we can attribute to the ghostly invisible: the inhabitant who becomes trespasser (and vice versa), the itinerant nomad, the one who shifts shapes with the shifts around him, the one who persists in speaking a minor language, the one doing not-quite-the-right-thing, not being the right-person-in-the-right-place, the one who prefers not to…. It's interesting that invisibility occurs everywhere, but always for specifically different reasons.

We will begin with a selection of texts that we will give you in advance. Likewise, we ask you to bring in materials - i.e. works of art in whichever medium, cultural artefacts or other texts - which could be the starting-point for a conversation. We will do the same. And we will then see where this leads us. Our discussions may also take off into performance: interventions, speech-situations, lectures for other academy participants, or any other form we would like to act out. Ultimately, we would like to practice thinking out loud, allowing ourselves to think beyond received opinion, and even to think about the conditions in which we can expand possibility beyond opportunism, or our relationship with the possible in so far as that is feasible.

PERFORMING / ACTING / DIRECTING

Due to the war, or the post-war situation in Lebanon, we have not been able to bring Lina Saneh and Rabih Mroué from Beirut to Warsaw. So we invited Olga Stanisławska to provide us with material and information on the Lebanon and the current situation in the Middle East including its historical aspects in order to work on our knowledge and non-knowledge in this context:

Olga Stanisławska: Reality and Fiction

"Guided or misguided by images and texts, feature films and art videos, poems, songs, historical analyses and breaking-news reportages, postcards from places burdened with national symbols and excerpts of transgressive novels, we will try to navigate the dangerous waters of the Imaginary Lebanon.

We will begin with the beginings of the Lebanese statehood, trying to recognize different founding myths and to map their symbolic territories. We will also get a glimpse of the Arab Image Foundation, a Beirut archive creating a mosaic image of the collective past.

With the outbreak of war in 1975, we will follow different attempts to preserve some sense in the apparent chaos. Among other texts: a journalistic testimony by a foreign war correspondent; a poem by another foreigner, a Palestinian refugee in a besieged city; an autobiographical account of an Israeli activist; a literary theory where the war is the time of transgression, a liberating force dismantling the conservative society and empowering women's literary creativity; and finally excerpts of novels stemming out of powerlessness of those who are hiding in the cellars, but "gnawing at the foundations like rats".

As the shooting stops, we will try to see how one can deal with the dead who are haunting the living. What is necessary for them to rest at peace? Knowledge? Justice? Reconciliation? Remembrance? Forgetting? We will get a psychiatrist's opinion, and watch the fictitious documentary sources of the Atlas Group, which undermine the self-evident character of any historical documents. Does the serious doubt about the possibility of gaining access to any "reality" and establishing any "truth" mean that any moral judgement has to be suspended?

Rich with these reflections – or may be deeply confused – we will turn to the present. Here we will listen with particular attention to individual voices. We will encounter a new narrative form – the blog, with its wild stream of official and semi-official reports, rumours, political analyses, personal stories, outbursts of emotions.

What to do with this accumulated knowledge and non-knowledge? Is there a way to respond to the mass of flowing information? What kind of exchange/communication is possible between here and there now? How can we address Lina Saneh and Rabih Mroué, whose absence has shaped three days of our lives? Is there a message we can send out to Beirut? Can performance, acting, directing offer a language to formulate this message?"

Lina Saneh & Rabih Mroué: `Reality and Fiction`

Documents are essential to any power. They reaffirm its authority and make it official and legitimate. Documents are also symbolic of the need of any authority to authenticate its discourse, to establish its institutions, to root them, to stabilize the system, to control the situation, and to give itself an everlasting existence. In the face of this, there are various facts and events that perturb and disturb this power and its pretensions, such as ghosts, vampires, rumours, monsters... not only because they are insubordinate to certain strategies and injunctions, but simply because they can be

neither captured with cameras nor consigned to documents. They have the capacity to leak out from any rational, unique, and unilateral explanation.

Consequently, one should ask about the role that documents might play between these two poles: 'power,' and those irrational 'dissidents'? Can we consider documents as a demarcation line between reality and fiction? And is it true that, by essence and nature, reality and fiction are condemned to opposite poles in an irreconcilable dichotomy? Does the absence of documents therefore mean that something is 'unreal' or fictional? How can one distinguish documents from non-documents? What kind of stories, discourses, narratives and daily life experiences cannot be considered as documents – and why? Reflecting on documents means to analyze their role in political discourses, and to examine how, through documents, the authorities can interfere with the personal and intimate details of our life (or lives) in order to control or even orchestrate them.

This course will work on scenes and sketches based on anything considered as a 'document' or as 'scientific evidence' (statistics, plans, images, diagrams, photos, films, scans, laboratory analysis reports, official papers, texts, etc.) and work on a performance style between fake authenticity and real acting: playing on the notions of truth and untruth, reality and fiction, trying to blur the traces, passing from one side to the other without borders, reversing the signs, stirring up the norms and shaking up certainty, discovering the role of politics in order to create a new 'unreal' reality or a virtual one. This course will address these questions: how much reality can the stage take? How should we frame reality in an artwork? How much authenticity, polemic, and/or falsity is needed for the 'real' to show its face?

The city of Beirut and Lebanese artworks will be presented to give some ideas and information on how to deal with war, memory, disappearance, rumours, death and ghosts.

Catherine Sullivan: The Ouija Board

Ouija (pronounced wee-juh or wee-jee) is a letter and number board for spiritualistic séances, where the fingers of participants move over the board generating messages from the dead.

The course will produce a performed choreographic work, which in some sense will interpret the theme of the topic 'Ghosts, Spectres, Phantoms, and the Places They Live' as it relates to notions of the 'after-effect' generated by strategies for composition and

content. Originally interested in compositional methodologies from the 1960s, composer Sean Griffin and artist Catherine Sullivan recently generated a series of performed sequences by teasing ambiguity out of very reductive scoring strategies (for example The Chittendens, Audimax/Neustadt Manifestation, 2004 and D-Pattern, 2005) It is a performative strategy that is interested in questioning reduction - working on units, individual actions, separate poses and gestures, and rhythmically combining/translating them into compositional strategies. The ambiguity lies in the sense in which reduction leads to greater possibilities for recombination and paradoxically, accumulation.

This choreographic work automates the dramatic tasks (physical or emotional circumstances or 'attitudes') of actors using numerical sequences combined with interpretive treatments, which would ergo vary the execution in size or intensity. Gestural and emotive content is rendered in repeatable units similar to a percussionist playing phrases of beats.

The Ouija board - a conjectural machine spelling out something that isn't really there - generates psycho-social connotations at random; so too our choreography which will change at random as one phrase of a character's attitude encounters another.

Specifically, the course will work to advance the function of the 'historiographic after-effect': those autobiographical, cultural or sociological details which, when combined with an overtly self-conscious attitude toward composition, can be likened to the pretenses of the Ouija - to invite the dead to converse with the living.