

THINGS



THINGS

An exhibition for performances

brutproduktion

Erstaufführung

24, 25, 26 February 2010
from 19.00 till approximately 20:18
at Carla Mittersteig*
Mittersteig 10, Vienna

Artistic director **Anat Stainberg**

With performance contributions from the artists

Hans Bryssinck
Radek Hewelt
Otobong Nkanga

and

Styling, Appearance **Yasmina Haddad**
Dramaturgy **Erwin Jans**
Light **Jan Maertens**
Music **Martin Siewert**
Guest appearance by **Burkhard Stangl**

Stage manager **Angela Scholz**
Stage assistants **Philipp Landauer, Philipp Scheibmeir**
Production **Ina Ivanceanu**

THINGS is a co-production of Anat Stainberg/mediated meetings and brut Wien.
Supported by the Kulturabteilung der Stadt Wien and the Bundesministerium für
Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur.

* The shop is open for shopping throughout the performance.

THINGS

„In this place *THINGS* just happen one after the other.
People should follow the signs.”

A.S.

THINGS

The performances:

Every thing will survive me **Hans Bryssinck**

At the age of 17 Vladimir Nabokov inherited a country estate that would nowadays amount to a couple of million dollars. Shortly afterwards, with the outbreak of the Russian Revolution, the era of aristocracy that determined his childhood would perish forever.

After living the life of an émigré in Europe and America, he spent the last 16 years of his life in a hotel room in the Montreux Palace in Switzerland. While pondering over how a person can experience the loss of things I wondered how things might experience the loss of a person. My performance will be a meditation on the intimate relation between people, things and death.

Soft Cowboy **Radek Hewelt**

At this point in his life, Radek Hewelt has very little material property and even less personal attachments towards it. As a dancer his most important possession is his body. Especially for this event, Radek Hewelt decided to rent his body and soul for artistic purposes. He signed a legal rental contract, and for a period of 81 days he abandoned the ownership of his property (the body and soul mentioned above). He gave the renter (the artistic purpose) the full rights to dispose of the „body and soul” in any way necessary, including its modification (to create a new image), destruction of „real self” and experimenting with exterior guidelines for interiors. In the performance (i.e. the artistic purpose) he will present his new creation.

End of Things **Otobong Nkanga**

„This could be my last moment here with you! I have to speak out!

What ever happens, I have been silent for too long –

You do not know where I come from and how I have been put together to function... the way you always wanted me to do.

Now is the time to say what I have seen and kept away for so long!

I might be displaced or given a second chance, I might be crushed or cherished as relics from the past, destroyed or recycled – Who knows!

One day I will come back to this place as pollution or as a gift to the next generation ... depending on how you take me apart”

Fragment from *The Interview*, January 2010

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no expiration date **Anat Stainberg**

and she would tell me
when I'm gone
when I'm no longer here
you will always have this
reminiscence from me
us sitting at the window
under the lamp, on this sofa
drinking this tea

and she would tell me
you can use it,
when your 40
In the middle of your life
when your doubting
how to go on,
when you're wondering
who you are

its only meanings you attach
to the things you have
that make them what you take
back for yourself
its only the law of the country
that makes your thing yours
imagine now what would happen
when the law of the land transforms

like I am „Egyptian mummy”
I'll be buried with my things
wanna wear my mama's money
so you'll know what I mean
where I come from,
what I'm made of
and how far am I to go
who's my people
what's our story
how to cut this chain and flow

I have no expiration date

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The secret life of things ***Some reflections***

Nothing seems to be more familiar to us than „things“. We are surrounded by objects. They are with us always, everywhere, in all kinds of forms, sizes, colours, functions... Some of them we need to exist and survive as individuals and as a species, others are there just for our fun and pleasure. Some objects we use often, others only once. There are objects we value highly, others have no value at all. We are submerged by objects. Modern urban civilisation has increased and accelerated the production, the consumption and the transformation of objects. Compared to the dynamics in which objects are caught, the human species seems to be almost unchanging and stable!

We have many relationships with objects. They order our world. They define our space. They give us a sense of belonging. They are our daily co-ordinates. Our GPS. We produce them, we use them, we value them, we transform them, we exchange them, we collect them, we destroy them, we recycle them... The world is the collection of all these objects and our relationship towards them. Our whole economic system is built on the life and death cycle of objects, on the desire to possess them and on their unequal distribution among people (the haves and the have-nots!)... Is it an exaggeration to call the world a „hell of things“? Although a certain discourse would have us believe the exact opposite: with every advertisement we are promised heaven, or at least an easier and happier life if we possess this or that object. Objects draw us into the world of desire, seduction, passion, jealousy, hatred and violence. As much as we need them to build our world, they have an alienating and destructive potential.

Tell me what you possess and I'll tell you who you are! We are defined by our possessions, socially and individually. We identify with them: house, car, furniture, clothes, jewels, art work, decorative objects,... These objects are part of the identity construction we call „I“ and „self“. We cling to objects as to our own lives. Does this mean that we have „more“ identity or a „stronger“ identity when we possess more objects?

Objects can be read as a public diary. They tell about our status, our financial situation, our cultural taste, our place in society, but also about our desires, our fantasies, our traumas. And what does waste tell about us? Tell me what you waste and I'll tell you who you are!

When we lose an object that belonged to us, do we lose a part of ourselves? How much of ourselves do we invest in an object? Does the object take something away from us? Does something of us stick to the object? A part of our history, our identity? And why not get rid of parts of our history? Like objects, history and memory can take too much space and become an obstacle, a dead weight.

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Are objects not always to a certain extent haunted, in a positive or a negative way, by their previous owners? An object that belonged to a deceased loved one, has a value for us that goes far beyond its objective value. A stolen object keeps making us feel uncomfortable as if it tell us: „I belong to another”.

And what happens when we move and leave objects behind? What we call migration is the movement from one set of objects to another set of objects. What happens if our world of familiar objects is replaced by a strange world of unfamiliar objects? How many objects have to change before one starts feeling uncomfortable and a stranger? What is the object that is crucial in the shift from familiar to strange? Would that be the most important object in our life?

The exhibition of performances curated by Anat Stainberg is called *THINGS* not „Objects”. Is a „thing” the same as an „object”? An object is an instrument, something we can define, use and control. A thing seems to be more anonymous, more undefined and therefore more mysterious and more threatening. An object can become a thing when it loses its familiarity, when it withdraws from the daily context in which we were used to it. Things can cast a shadow. They can even disappear and still cast their shadow over our lives. They belong to a shadow world, a parallel universe of traumas and obsessions. They lose their daily function completely and are only a symbol or a symptom.

And we, human beings, can we become an object or a thing ourselves, to ourselves, to others? And if so, what does it mean to be a Thing?

It is not by chance that Anat Stainberg chose Carla Mittersteig for her exhibition of performances. A shop full of objects that already have a history, a past. Objects that were once connected to a unique constellation of people and other objects. Now they are here, piled up and lined up, disconnected from their first environment and exposed again to the desire of new buyers and consumers, unaware of their past.

This space filled with thousands of forgotten stories hidden in these silent objects – a mortuary of *THINGS* – becomes the scene of performances. For a short time this shop will also be a museum, a gallery, a stage. These objects are no longer exposed just for sale, but also for contemplation. For a moment they are taken out of the infernal cycle of desire and consumption and handed over to the inner eye. We are asked to listen to their „secret stories” which are our stories, but often the one’s we forget, repress or just consider to be unimportant.

Erwin Jans

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Anat Stainberg performance artist, writer and video maker, with traditional theater and film background – originally an actress from Tel Aviv and since 2004 based in Europe (Amsterdam and Vienna), a graduate of DasArts .

Projects: September 09: *Hide and seek* in the frame of *X Wohnungen*, brut Wien; October 08: *THE LOOP*, site specific performance at brut Wien; November 07 *A Concert Performance*, music concert, Wien Modern Vienna; June 07: *The Way In*, a video registration of intervention in public space at Platform 21 Gallery Amsterdam; October/November 06: *Now Or Never*, an installation performance at Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam; April 06: *Holiday Pictures Project* an installation performance at Tanzquartier Vienna; September 06: *Art in War festival*, a production of the 'Vrede Van Utrecht' at the Schouwburg Utrecht and November 09 at theater Nestroyhof Hamakom; 2005 – 2006: A multi media self portrait *Untitled Yet* performed in De Apple Gallery in Amsterdam, the Frascati theater Amsterdam and the Filmhuis Den Haag as part of the PEK film festival Den Haag and at brut Wien in June 09. *Exactly a week since we spoke last*, a short fiction documentary broadcast on the Dutch TV, the channel VPRO, participated in the Italian film festival UNIMOVIE (2004) and in the videoexperimental 08 in Bangkok and in the Kunstfestival, Scheltma Leiden, Holland November 08.

Hans Bryssinck earned a graduate degree at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Ghent and a postgraduate degree from DasArts in Amsterdam. He produced several solo works ranging from lecture performances to site-specific interventions. Together with Diederik Peeters he formed an artistic partnership that began in 2001. Ever since they have staged a series of performance and installation projects of various kinds. He has embarked on several other collaborations with Danai Anesiadou, Antonia Baehr, Dolores Bouckaert and Christoph Hefti. He works as a dramaturge and a performer for various companies and he's a guest teacher at KASK (Royal Academy of Fine Arts Ghent).

Selection: 2010 *Zanahoria*, creation in collaboration with Diederik Peeters, Beursschouwburg (Brussels), Vooruit (Ghent). 2009 *Los Viernes*, video installation as part of a group exhibition Time as Activity, Netwerk (Aalst). *Safety Instructions*, creation in collaboration with Brecht Bryssinck, Beursschouwburg (Brussels), Vooruit (Ghent). *Johnson & Johnson*, advice and assistant director performance by Manah de Pauw. 2008 *Werner, what a coincidence!*, creation in collaboration with Werner Hirsch, Beursschouwburg (Brussels). *One Man Snow*, creation in collaboration with Christoph Hefti, Beursschouwburg (Brussels), The Game is Up/Vooruit (Ghent). 2007 *Chuck Norris doesn't sleep, he waits ...* creation in collaboration with Diederik Peeters & Danai Anesiadou, Timefestival/Vooruit (Ghent), Beursschouwburg (Brussels), Les Grandes Traversées (Bordeaux)

2nd price for *The Mall*, 1 minute Film & Sound Awards, Oostend 2004

1st price of *Gestoorde Vorsten*, Timefestival, Ghent 1999

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Yasmina Haddad lives and works in Vienna as photographer, musician and stylist; Studio Bercot, Paris, Schule für künstlerische Fotografie Friedl Kubelka, Vienna. Scholarship for Photography at Cité des Arts, Paris. Award, Kunstraum Niederösterreich, Vienna. Römerquelle Award, Kunsthalle Wien.

subatomar Wuk Vienna. *among others* Kunsthalle Exnergasse Vienna. *long cuts shirt stories* Spex Köln/Berlin. *like a virgin* (with maroussia rebecq) Oktagon Jakarta. *1%* French Cultural Ministry Paris. MAK NITE *koloniale landschaften* with Beatrice Dreux and K. Goldt, Vienna. *now* (with Maroussia Rebecq) Air de Paris. *wunschwelten* (Visuals for Florian Horwath) Kunsthalle Schirn Frankfurt. *Slant Medienturmshows* MQ Vienna. *fishing for* Römerquelle. *suns.shadows* Rashim Album on Mosz Records. *my light casts a shadow, was schweigt* the Forum Thing Vienna. *the bootlegs* Hotelito San Rafael-Glasshill Projects London. *THE LOOP*, set for a performance by Anat Stainberg brut Wien LIVE- and DJ-ACTS as RASHIM (together with Gina Hell) *liveforms*, Museumsquartier/Wiener Festwochen, Netmage Festival Bologna, Viennale, Französisches Kulturministerium Paris, Ideal Festival Nantes, Szene Wien, Wien Modern, Medienturm Shows, wien-kbb, Barcelona Dispatch Festival Belgrad.

Radek Hewelt, choreographer, dancer and performer; born 1973 in Poland. Radek Hewelt started to dance at the age of 19 joining the dance-theatre group Dada von Bzdulow. He studied social work at Postgraduate School for Social Workers in Gdansk/Poland, social rehabilitation at Pedagogical University of Bydgoszcz/Poland, dance and choreography at Performing Arts Research and Training Studios (P.A.R.T.S.) in Brussels/Belgium. Since 2003 he lives and works in Vienna; member of BART – an association initiated by emerging Vienna-based artists working in the field of contemporary dance and performance.

as a dancer and performer worked with i.a. Leszek Bzdyl, Katarzyna Chmielewska, Cristian Duarte, Magdalena Reiter, Sara Gebran & Carmen Mehnert, Elio Gervasi, Katarzyna Kozyra, Thierry de Mey, Sebastian Prantl, Cezary Tomaszewski, Matsune & Subal, Editta Braun & Rebecca Murgi, Pathosbuero, Nature Theatre of Oklahoma, united sorry (Robert Stein, Frans Poelstra) & Anne Juren & Pieter Ampe, Andrea Bold, Ewa Bankowska, Cooperativa Performativa, Magdalena Chowanec, Anat Stainberg; some of choreographic works: *Zoom In* (2001), *enter.same places* (2002), *21 minutes* (2005), *About a boy* (2006), *Close-up* (2008) and *Tonight's Tune* (2009);

www.radekhewelt.blogspot.com

Ina Ivanceanu lives and works in Vienna as a producer, film maker, cultural worker and journalist. She works at the interface of science and culture, documentary film and participation, visual art and performance, image and text. She was project manager for Peter Sellars (visual arts with the festival *New Crowned Hope*) and the Wiener Festwochen, and numerous other art and cultural institutions.

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Erwin Jans studied Dutch and English language as well as literature, Drama and Theater at the University of Leuven (Belgium). Worked as a dramaturge in theatres in France, Holland and Belgium. Currently working as a dramaturge at Toneelhuis in Antwerpen. Teaches theater in the program of Cultural Studies at the University of Leuven, Belgium. Writes on literature, theater and culture. He published 'Interculturele intoxicaties. Over kunst, cultuur en verschil' (Intercultural intoxications. On art, culture and diversity) (2006). He is the co-author of an anthology of post war Flemish poetry (2008) and of a forthcoming book on democracy (2010).

Jan Maertens works predominantly as a lighting designer within the international contemporary dance and performance field. He recently created designs for Meg Stuart, Arco Renz and Claire Croizé and for different theatres and operahouses. Other than designs for formally staged performances, there have also been collaborations on site specific projects, such as recently *THE LOOP*, a theatrical event by Anat Stainberg on Kiesler's Raumbühne for brut Wien and *ALL TOGETHER NOW*, a participative performance by Meg Stuart for the Helmut List Halle in Graz.

Otobong Nkanga is a visual artist and live performer currently living in Paris and Antwerp. Nkanga initially started her studies at the Obafemi Awolowo University in Ile-Ife, Nigeria and continued at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts Paris, France. She was at the residency program at the Rijksakademie Amsterdam and has finished her post graduate program at DasArts Amsterdam.

Her works and performances have been shown in international events and exhibitions such as the Taipei Biennial [2004]; *Africa remix* museum kunst palast Düsseldorf [2004] and the Hayward Gallery London [2005], 1st Architecture, Art and Landscape Biennial of the Canary Island [2006]; *Snap Judgments: New position in Contemporary African Photography* ICP New York [2006] and The Tamayo Museum Mexico City [2007]; *FLOW* The Studio Museum in Harlem New York [2008]; Kunsthalle Bern [2008]; *Re/presentaciones: ellas* Casa Africa Las Palmas de Gran Canaria [2008]; AiM International Biennale Marrakech [2009] and *Animism* Extra City Kunsthalle and M HKA Museum Antwerp [2010].

Martin Siewert musician, composer, producer; Improvisation and composing activities in both acoustic and/or electronic contexts; Music for film, performance, dance & theatre as well as various remix and sound Installation commissions. Member of the bands (selection): „Trapist” and „Heaven And”.

art/performance/dance/film collaborations (selection): Yosi Wanunu & toxic dreams, Robert Steijn, Frans Poelstra, Milli Bitterli/artificial horizon, Annja Krautgasser, Dariusz Kowalski, Gustav Deutsch, Billy Roisz, Siegrun Appelt and Jan Machacek.

Movie soundtracks (a selection): *A girl and a gun* by Gustav Deutsch (2008), *ERASE REMAKE* by Jan Machacek/Martin Siewert (2006), *VEGAS* by Annja Krautgasser (2005), *SEQZ3*, *Void* by Annja Krautgasser/Dariusz Kowalski (2005). *Spectrum* by Gustav Deutsch (2003), *Film.lst 7-12* by Gustav Deutsch (2002).

Many thanks to Elisabeth Mimra, Marianne Fritz, Karl Kiczka and the whole crew of Carla Mittersteig; Thomas Frank and Haiko Pfost for the support! toxic dreams, Family Siewert, brut production people and technicians, the Mr. and Mrs. X, Heidi Dumreicher, Stefan Nemeth, Gabri M. Einsiedl, Alexander Gottfarb, Satu Herrala, Michael O'Connor and Heidi Wilm.

Weitere Veranstaltungen im brut

brut im Künstlerhaus • 26. Februar, 10 und 19 Uhr
Kopergietery • *Als der Tag verschwunden war*

brut im Künstlerhaus • 28. Februar, 15 Uhr und 1. März, 10 Uhr
Laika, Inti & Cultuurcentrum Hasselt • *Nu*

brut im Künstlerhaus • 2. März, 10 und 20 Uhr
Kabinet K/Kopergietery • *Unfold*

imagetanz 2010
Festival für Choreografie, Performance und Party
5. bis 19. März

**Mit François Chaignaud & Cecilia Bengolea, CLUB BURLESQUE
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Deutschbauer, EVERYBODYS, Alix Eynaudi & Agata Maszkiewicz,
Alexander Gottfarb, Anna Jermolaewa, An Kaler, ÖFA-kollektivet,
Martina Ruhsam, TURBO, Kris Verdonck, White Horse und
Zoë Knights**

brut

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