



the sense of being watched

anxious to act

Workshop, Performance and Lecture

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Exposé

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the sense of being watched

ANXIOUS TO ACT

A workshop, a performance and a lecture dealing with always being under scrutiny

1. Introduction

DO YOU EVER HAVE A SENSE OF BEING STARED AT?



The discussions on the nature of vision have a long tradition that can be traced from the antiquity to current theories that encompass interconnections between the observer and the observed in quantum physics. There were earlier ancient greek theories - extramission theories - according to which rays of light are emitted by the eyes and transmitted towards the objects of sight making them visible. The current common knowledge - an intromission theory from mechanistic science, with its roots in the 17th century - is that light reflects on an object and is captured by the retina, and so, we see. This leaves out many details of what happens afterwards. Beyond the mechanics of vision there are more things to visual perception that are not fully explained.

WHAT INTEREST US IN THIS RESEARCH IS THE RELATION OF OBSERVER AND OBJECT.



Many people report that they can sense when they are being watched. There are some scientific observations of this phenomenon. Does that mean that there is some kind of exchange also coming in the direction of the observed? Many people seem to agree with this concept, even though we have no scientific explanation for it. Watching a living creature becomes thus a form of communication. Experienced performers can attest the power of having many eye balls focused on their performance. Performers, specially dancers have an uncanny capacity of establishing a dialog with their spectators by tapping at the power that being watched possesses. The core of this work is to shape the perception of the observee through many channels of communication.

SHAPING THE ACT OF BEING OBSERVED MINIMIZES THE ANXIETY OF BEING UNDER SCRUTINY.



Being watched, in this sense, is an active part of communication, addressing and resolving basic challenges in an individual's experience of the asymmetrical power constellations. Suggesting that this is a level of possible change: a physicalized level - an individual learning more about her-, himself in the process of being watched, implies potentially different macropolitical activism. Being watched, and comprehending the sense of it, reveals a very specific contemporary form of discourse or technology of the self: a cultural technology concerning our bodies and our actions. A simple example is a case of a disease - a person finds her-, himself in a specific condition, that is perceived as not healthy or unbalanced, with some physical symptoms. Usually immediately we "invite" the medical eye, the staff, the anonymous bodies to watch and observe us in our mind's eye. Isolating ourselves with our condition to understand it better, before we share it with the experts seems either wasting time or at least belonging to technologically less developed cultures or even esotherical.

MASTERING BEING WATCHED IS A CULTURAL TECHNOLOGY



What occurs before the gaze of a viewer, a judging other, (sometimes we ourselves can be our viewing other), is crucial for social awareness and moral development. Scrutiny of an observer's eye generally produces negative consequences, such as shame, guilt and related anger and rage due to the exposure. It is, therefore, necessary to inhabit this space of being observed and familiarize oneself with the sense of being watched, incorporating it into one's soft skills set. Claiming this space is a form of acknowledging the shame as inherent in living under oppressive power structures. Building a more dynamic political movement is therefore possible when the observed one is not only a receiver, and the observer not only an intruder in the communication model. What makes people act will, then, shift from reacting out of the confines and urgency of their own specific condition outlined by "the observing other", into acting out of the acknowledged and accepted constellation to "the other", somewhat relaxing in this space, understanding the potency of skill of how to accept the gaze and act from there on. These are the fundamentals of some of the wider known social movements confronting oppression, exclusion, etc.

2. Proposal

the sense of being watched - anxious to act

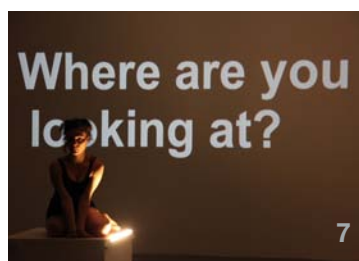
We are proposing a 3-day workshop plus a 4th day with a performance/installation and a talk/discussion.

The workshop would explore the relationships of people in

shared spaces and the implications of it in the act of being observed. In the talk possible strategies for incorporating this tacit knowledge of performers into a concept of a sustainable future.

- Day 1 Observation **workshop - Open public space**: Some basic principles of observation will be explored, repeating some of experiments of perception: single stare experiment, group stare experiment, proxemics and the dynamics of group behavior in shared spaces.
- Day 2 Performance Skills **workshop - Studio environment**: Reviewing the concepts and observations of day 1 and transforming these observations in skills. Somatic perception exercises, relational exercises like push hands and flocking. Moving to a next phase: describing observations. Exploring a vocabulary of describing observation of body activity - description skills. Projecting thoughts through body language.
- Day 3 Performance rehearsal **workshop - Studio environment**: exploring how the gaze transforms the object and the object shapes the gaze. Combining the observations (day 1) and skill development (day 2) into a specific performance concept: the piece *scAlpture* will be recreated as a group collaboration effort.

scAlpture



1. a performer is placed in space (table in the library, pedestal, small stage, dormitory), vulnerable, as an object of observation
2. text projections and blended in as if it the performer would be talking to the audience.
3. in a detached area there is a team of people observing the "performance" room through cameras, preparing the written text as a reaction or provocation of the audience, and feeding this inner voice of the performer.

- Day 4 **Performance and lecture/talk - Open public space**:



In the fourth day the performance will be installed and presented followed by a reflection phase and talk about its elements as well as the work of the prior 2 days. The possible implications within strategies for the development of sustainable economies and the mediation of tacit knowledge through verbalisation. This exposition draws elements from two talks (*why.* and *what.*) by Ricardo Viviani (see links).

3. Objectives - macroeconomic frame of this skillset

the sense of being watched - anxious to act



is a proposal based on the sense of being watched as one of the key components in most general form of contact/conversation to be further studied and researched. Understanding both sides of such dynamic or even change the perspective into something more multidimensional than a simple observer-observed-vector is an essential part of a potentially changed inter- and intra-relations that can stimulate new effective assemblages of action.

The painting 'The Family of Sir William Young' by Johann Zoffany is an example of "conversation piece" - Meaning of the phrase later shifted to objects interesting enough to spark a conversation. Apart from this fitting background, the photo also alludes to John Berger's thought on the ways of seeing.

SOCIAL CHOREOGRAPHY AS AN INSTRUMENT OF RENEWAL

The skill of sensing gaze and using this sensation as a cultural technique is part of the toolset of performers. These skills can be integrated and discussed in the frame of the *Economia Criativa* project as delineated by Lala Deheinzelin in the *Crie Futuros Movement*. *Economia Criativa* is a concept different from 'creative economy' concepts. It does not reduce to the financial aspects of the 'creative branch' economy as in the british and german models. *Economia Criativa* aims to integrate creativity and soft skills into all areas of the economy.

Brazilian Choreographer Lala Deheinzelin made a career switch to creative economist, futurologist, political consultant and activist by redefining the concept of creative economy. Her concepts have, a definitely non-european angle, and she has worked together with South-America, African and Asian government institutions.



In her book ***Desirable New World*** she outlines the concept of an economy based on, surprisingly radical, views of incorporating intangible values of cultural heritage, creativity and well being, into a sustainable and attainable economy: *Economia Criativa*.

To contextualise our workshop, choreographer and researcher Ricardo Viviani will expose the basic concepts of this book and indicate possible strategies of its implementation within an european context, supported by his artistic, theoretical and pedagogical practice. The talk elaborates on Lala Deheinzelin's concepts and focuses on the tacit skills present in the field of dance.

Slides of this talk and a transcript can be previewed here <http://www.frankdances.org/you-are-not-alone/>

4. Formal requirements

Technical equipment, spacial and time requirements vary from day to day of the proposal as follows:

Day 1 (approx. 2h) is intended to take place in an open public space. Which could mean intruding into other work spaces or public spaces related to the festival. These spaces should be inhabited with people for the time of the festival - like a library. In case of many participants it would of value to have many options, so the participants of the workshop can split into smaller groups, go into the field research with the set score of observation. The group gathers after 2 hours in a common space - studio/ classroom, where the results of the experiments can be compared and discussed.

Day 2 (approx. 2h) requires a studio space, where the group can comfortably immerse themselves into somatic practice-based exercises. For that, a studio with a dance friendly floor would be necessary.

Day 3 (up to 3h) is the re-creation moment of the whole proposal, where the work of the first two days and the format of an existing performance are brought together, based on the findings and interest of the group. Since this day means thinking and testing a reinvented format, it would be necessary to spend some time in the spaces where the final performance will take place. This can just as well be shared space, where the group exposes itself further to the activity of being observed while creating, which usually takes on a more hermetic stance in the development of a work.

Day 4 (performance duration is flexible, talk/discussion 45 min) starts with the performance - which is preferred to happen in an open public space, where people can stay with it longer, but can also pass by - meaning the space has a transient character and not a final destination - people do not necessarily enter the space to see something particular, but can pass through. This space has to have a surface/wall that can be used for video projection next to a pedestal and performers using the space as a stage as well. A video projector (beamer) and a camera are necessary as well as an extra space, where the second group of participants are observing the "audience" from observing the performance and can therefore interact with the text they send to the screen.

The performance is installed for some restricted time, although it can as well be durational. After the performance is established, Viviani moderates a talk with a short lecture on the 'Create Futures Movement' and a discussion reflexion phase, simultaneously with the performance.

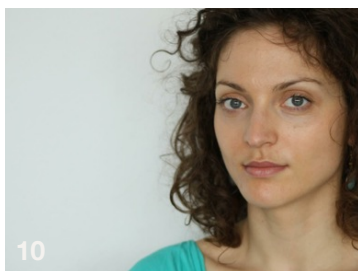
For further requirements such as travels and acommodation please contact us.

5. The Team

A biologist and a physicist, both dancers, Ricardo Viviani and Lili M. Rampre met in Frankfurt as members of the artists community ID Frankfurt. In a series of meetings called the *Biweekly Meetings* they found common intellectual and artistic concerns.

the sense of being watched - anxious to act is an exploration of these afinities.

This workshop, perfomance and lecture explores Viviani's lecture series *why.what.how.* in dialog with Rampre's *scAlpture* performance.



Lili M. Rampre comes from Slovenia, where she received her BS in physics. She received a MA in dance education in 2012 from the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Frankfurt, Germany - MACode - Master study program in contemporary dance education.

Her recent engagements include performing in Marina Abramovic's pieces. Lili, currently, is focused on her own work. She has been supported by various venues and programs: Nomad Dance Academy, ReRc (Centre Choreographique National de Montpellier - WILD CARD Jardin d'Europe)

2009, Mousonturm Frankfurt as a part of their program for emerging artists, and by ID Frankfurt, 2011. Apart from winning the first prize of National competition of young dance creators Slovenia, Lili became a Modul dance artist in residence 2013/2014 and was awarded an artistic research grant by Hessische Theaterakademie in Frankfurt for a short documentary in collaboration with film maker Anatoli Nat Skatchkov (Platform Sarai), 2014.

In April 2015 Lili pre-premiered her work in progress created in Sprungbrett residency, a part of tanz nrw 15 festival. Current projects include continuation of the Modul dance initiated project - *As We Begin, So Shall We Go* in coproduction with Akademie der Künste der Welt in Köln, a research residency in PACT Zollverein as part of Choreographische Dialoge and tanzrecherche residency in city of Bochum in November 2015.



Ricardo Viviani is a choreographer, director and pedagogue born in São Paulo, Brazil. Based in Frankfurt, Viviani studied biology and theater direction at the Universidade de São Paulo, went to ballet school at the Joffrey Ballet in New York City. Viviani was a choreography student with the legendary, Hannover born, Bessie Schoenberg both as a scholarship student at Jacob's Pillow and at the sessions at Dance Theater Workshop in NYC. As a performer he was engaged at the internationally renowned Balé da Cidade de

São Paulo, at the Deutsches Nationaltheater Weimar. He also worked as a musical performer on Broadway and internationally. He produced dance evenings for 7 years in Cologne, was in the Board of Directors of Tanz Performance Köln producing yearly dance festivals. He has extensive experience in the commercial field of Trade Shows, Event Staging, and Gala evenings, and choreographed for the past 10 years for Operas and Musicals.



His current project is an elaboration of strategies and testimonials for the art dance in the 21st Century: why.what.how.

why. explores strategies of insertion of dance and dance knowledge within sustainable economy strategies from the 'Crie Futuros' movement.

what. is a primer for the mediation of corporeal knowledge, opening a transfer channel of the 'secrets' that only dancers know.

how. exposes a specific creative process of artistic creation developed by german dancer and pedagogue Rolf Gelewski.

6. References

Images

1. Johann Zoffany - The Family of Sir William Young (circa 1768)
2. Drone DJI Phantom FC40 - <http://www.dji.com/product/phantom-fc40>
3. Woodcut from Descartes' 1644 Principles of Philosophy illustrating his theory of vision.
4. scAlpture with Lili M. Rampre
5. <http://chrisowsley.deviantart.com>
6. Edward Snowden screen capture <https://www.flickr.com/photos/gageskidmore/16525688221/>
7. scAlpture with Lili M. Rampre - Photo Martin Streit
8. Lecture presentation screen shot - Crie Futuros Movement 3. Dec. 2013 ArtEZ, Arnhem, NL
9. Cover *Desejável Mundo Novo* (Desirable New World) by Lala Deheinzelin
10. Lili M. Rampre portrait
11. Ricardo Viviani portrait
12. Postcard lecture series *why.what.how*.

Links

- This proposal links:
<http://www.frankdances.org/conversationpiece/>
Password: 2016conversationpiece
a link to 'Crie Futuros Movement' talk, preview and transcription of talk slides, scAlpture description
- Lili M. Rampre
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