

FFT Kammerspiele, Saturday 20 NOV at 20:00

# JA JA JA NEE NEE NEE

Four performances  
Duration: 3 hours, two intervals

The title of the performance originates from Joseph Beuys piece titled JA JA JA JA JA, NEE NEE NEE NEE NEE performed in Staatliche Kunsthakademie Düsseldorf on december 14th 1968. "In the essay „How the piece was created“ Stüttgen reports of an encounter with Beuys. His academic colleagues had just published the „mistrust manifest“ against him. Beuys was just returning from a funeral at the Niederrhein region. Instead of discussing the political situation at the academy he enjoyed talking about the elder women at the funeral meeting with coffee and cake and that they were sitting around the table, murmuring the same pitch for hours: „Ja ja nee nee“. Laszlo Glozer wrote: "The silence by Marcel Duchamp - Beuys said - was overrated". In fact Beuys invalidated the actual subtexual anti-arts-attitude for himself. Duchamp insisted on his "no" and used this spirit of negation for a series of ingenious creations of art." (quote from www.ubu.com)

"To make people free is the aim of art; therefore art for me is the science of freedom." This is one of many Beuys's statements about the meaning of art. We can agree or not. Contemporary artist is under constant pressure to define his own work. At least from Duchamp onwards the art is what the artist succeeds to define as art. And this is what the art is preoccupied with for the whole century: to create new definitions of art. Is this art or pure bullshit? Is this artist or bluffer? Yes (ja) or no (nee)? Today the answers are vaguer than ever. We do not have to pretend anymore to know answers. The first rule of the game we are playing is: never allow the question to trick you with an answer. We feel we are most real when we touch upon something that can no longer be rationalized, when we no longer have to pretend to understand something we don't. To make people free from art is the aim of Via Negativa



## Boris Kadin: WHAT JOSEPH BEUYS TOLD ME WHILE I WAS LYING DEAD IN HIS LAP

Duration: 40 min.  
**Solo performance on categorisations in art.** "There are three basic categories of artists: those who have earned the theme they are dealing with; those who might earn it, and those who definitely have not earned their theme. In my view, the artist can only be worthy of the theme if he unconditionally takes it into himself and provides evidence of it with his own body. To confirm this thesis, I will need a knife tonight." According to Boris Joseph Beuys is an artist beyond all categories. The only one able to talk about Beuys is "the dead rabbit" which at the opening of his first independent exhibition lay in his lap and listened to Joseph Beuys explanation of the work of Joseph Beuys.



## Kristian Al Droubi, Boris Kadin: GAME WITH TOOTHPICKS

Duration: 35 min.  
**Documentary performance about "Serb and Croat cut each other on the stage."** The Knife-Game scene, a part of the performance Not Like Me, is in the heart of this performance, which in its course also reflects upon the media response of its staging. "Slobodna Dalmacija, August 16th 2007. Title: Horror in Zadar. A bloody performance by theatre group Via Negativa in St. Dominic church horrifies audience. A Croat and a Serb cut each other up on stage." Game with Toothpicks deals with its media "exterior" as if being its "interior". The performers adopt two radically different positions in this turn: while Kristian is convinced that the audience still wants blood, Boris plays only the game about the game and because of the game - turning the performance into an absurd self-referential machine.



## Bojana Kunst, Katarina Stegnar: NO ONE SHOULD HAVE SEEN THIS

Duration: 45 min.  
**Lecture performance. The theorist and the performer enter a relationship** where they do not "seek for a common language" but do the exact opposite - they do not even out their discourse differences, they exaggerate them. Bojana Kunst: "Dear Katarina, I as viewer of your performances, which deal with the radical body and energy consumption, connect to them my feeling of deep unease, which can be so strong that I rather decide not to see some of your performances, even though your work is of immense interest to me..." Katarina is inexorable: "Dear Bojana, I know from the very beginning all of this is bullshit. Why are the two of us here today? Who put us together and why? Instead of producing a new performance, Jablanovec combines old material into some kind of lecture performance bullshit we've seen a hundred times before."



## Uroš Kaurin: TONIGHT I CELEBRATE

Duration: 45 min.  
**A concert for performer and his audience.** On theatricality of relationship between a performer and his audience; on its depth and profanity, its authenticity and illusion. The title song "Tonight I celebrate my love for you" (Michael Masser, Gerry Goffin, 1983) is the introduction into B popular song adapted by musician Tomaž Grom, with which the singer and the performer Uroš Kaurin, accompanied on contrabass by Tomaž Grom, celebrates his love for his audience. "Today's viewer seems to be used to almost everything. He has already seen, experienced, and consumed everything tangy the theatre had to offer. Tragic faith, live violence, nudity and sex... and now he is only ready to enjoy theatre." (Blaž Lukan) Only one question remains: If the audience of today is ready for everything, does it mean that a performer of today must be ready for everything too?

### Via Nova via FFT Düsseldorf

Performances conceived and devised by the group • Events concept and performances direction: Bojan Jablanovec • Performers: Katarina Stegnar, Grega Zorc, Barbara Kukovec, Boris Kadin, Kristian Al Droubi, Uroš Kaurin, Marko Mandić, Jaka Lah, Tomaž Grom • Lecturers: Bojana Kunst, Bojan Jablanovec • With participation of Christoph Rech • Producer: Špela Trošt • Performances originally produced by Via Negativa with support from Ministry of Culture of Republic of Slovenia and the City of Ljubljana • Via Nova via FFT Düsseldorf produced by FFT Düsseldorf and supported by Kunststiftung NRW as a part of "Exposed - Grenzen der Schauspiel!"

via negativa

www.vnthetheatre.com

## via nova via FFT Düsseldorf

Via Nova via FFT Düsseldorf is conceived as three different events with three different contents at three different venues:

FFT Jura, Wednesday 17 NOV at 20:00

# HUNT FOR THE REAL

Kunsthalle Dusseldorf, Friday 19 NOV at 19:00

# NAKED PRESENCE

FFT Kammerspiele, Saturday 20 NOV at 20:00

# JA JA JA NEE NEE NEE

**VIA NOVA performance series** (17 works at present) is a project in which we are engaged in questions about relations between old and new, creation and destruction, theory and praxis, contemporaneity and tradition, presence and absence... Via Nova is a working platform that allows performers autonomous investigation of different performing strategies: lecture, dance, video, interview, auction, concert, radical body practices, visual theatre etc. In Via Nova collective presentations we link together these mostly small format performances into new integrities and more complex structures to directly address the context in which they are presented.

**VIA NEGATIVA** is a performing arts project based in Ljubljana since 2002. Our work is focused in the relationship between the performer and the audience in real space and time. We deal with this relationship as a complex flow of points of view, expectations, judgments, conclusions, recognitions, stereotypes, fallacies, prejudices, tolerance or intolerance, knowledge or lack thereof; all these trigger various emotional, rational or irrational responses. We work as a collective in which each individual fights with his reasons, his body and skills, his imagination and courage for his own sense and position on stage.



FFT Jutta, Wednesday 17 NOV at 20:00

# HUNT FOR THE REAL

Lecture with simultaneous performances  
Duration: 2 hours, one interval

One of the major characteristics of the 20th century is a passion for the real, says Alain Badiou in his collection of lectures entitled 20th Century. "This is one of the reasons, why the art of this century is so reflective, why this art wants to show its own process, to idealize its reality so visually... And because of that 20th century proposes such artistic gestures, which were impossible before - to present as art something that was before considered only as its own drags." But Badiou warns that "passion for the real necessary means doubt too. Nothing can prove, that real is actually real, except the system of fiction where it can play the role of the real." That's why the theatre is the medium where we hunt the real with the biggest passion.



Frame for **HUNT FOR THE REAL** is a lecture entitled Erasing the Audience by Blaž Lukan, one of leading Slovenian theatre theoretician. In his lecture he takes a stroll through strategies that Via Negativa has developed in years 2002 - 2008 to establish the relationship with its audience. It consists of the following chapters: Viewing Itinerary (Starting Point: Anger, 2002), Viewer as Accomplice (More, 2003), Performative Economy (Incasso, 2004), Game of Conditionals (Would Would Not, 2005), Viewer Seduction (Viva Verdi, 2006; Not Like Me, 2007), Death in Viewers' Lap (Four Deaths, 2007), Viewer as Leftover (Out, 2008). By analyzing these strategies the lecturer launches a series of performers' demonstrations that put him in the centre of the effects he talks about. The audience finds itself in a double role: the lecturer addresses it as his student, and the performer as his viewer. • The lecture written by Blaž Lukan will be presented by VN artistic director Bojan Jablanovec • **Blaž Lukan, Ph.D** is a professor for dramaturgy at Ljubljana Academy of Theatre, an editorial board member of theatre journals Maska and Amfiteater and the president of the Slovene theatre critics Association. • Scenes created and performed by Katarina Stegnar, Grega Zorc, Boris Kadin, Kristian Al Droubi, Barbara Kukovec, Uroš Kaurin

Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Friday 19 NOV at 19:00

# NAKED PRESENCE

Gallery installation of five solo performances  
Duration: 3,5 hours

"Today, there is no longer any "ontological" difference between making art and displaying art. In the context of contemporary art, to make art is to show things as art." (Boris Groys, Politics of Installation, e-flux journal #2, 01/2009) Gallery performance NAKED PRESENCE is about displaying live presence. We use a gallery space as a set up for installation of five solo performances. In total duration of 3,5 hours viewers will travel through the Kunsthalle from one performance to the next.

NAKED PRESENCE is not about naked bodies - although they are dominant in the performances, nakedness is just another mask of presence. Our question is what is real in our presence. Namely, live presence in front of a viewer is full of paradox: in performing arts situation the live presence can never exist solely as a presence for itself; live presence is always a presence for some absence. It always represents something absent. NAKED PRESENCE treats a performance as a process of creating an artifact. Each performer exhibits the trails of his/her presence as the artifact in the context of current Kunsthalle exhibition entitled "Real Presence."

When Marcel Broodthaers presented his installation Musée d'Art Moderne, Département des Aigles at the Düsseldorf Kunsthalle in 1970, he put up a sign next to each exhibit saying: "This is not a work of art." With NAKED PRESENCE we would like to add: This is not a work of art - this is work of presence.



## Marko Mandić: EXTRACT MANDIĆ

Beginning: 19:00 • Duration: 15 minutes

**Real presence as a contact with the self.** "Mandić speaks about how to catch an actor and goes even further: how indeed to catch Marko Mandić. It has to do with the relationship between the existence and the role, between the human "base" and the actor's "superstructure". Mandić illustrates the problem with his on-stage onanism... An activity as intimate as self-gratification has nothing to do with the pleasure taken in mastery or control; it has nothing to do with the increased attention that the actor receives in his place on the stage; it has nothing to do with the exploitation of a position of power. It has rather everything to do with the contact with the self, with what we have termed above as "existence" or the human "base". (Blaž Lukan)



## Jaka Lah: PURE PERFORMANCE

Beginning: 19:20 • Duration: 50 minutes

**Reduction of live presence to the pure form.** Pure Performance is visual performance. It questions the form as a basic tool of artistic expression - performer puts himself and the viewer into the position of being trapped in form. We find ourselves in an absurd situation, where the performer categorically doubts his form of expression. Because no thought exists until it is expressed through some form, no thought exists in its pure form. Because of being expressed through form it can swiftly turn into its opposite and thus it turns out - in performance discourse - as pure shit. The way in which Pure Performance is trying to catch hold of this short circuit between the thought, the uttered and the understood, is a negation.



## Marko Mandić: VIVA MANDIĆ

Beginning: 20:20 • Duration: 45 minutes

**One existence - triple presence: public, intimate, physical.** Viva Mandić is video work combined with body-artistic gesture. On two video screens Marko presents his public theatre achievements from the beginning of his career up to the Slovene national award (2009) and his intimate artistic experience from two nights spent in Slovene National Theatre repository. During this time Marko exhibits his body in plastic bag and literary extracts his artistic life into one single glass of sweat. In the core of his performance three unuttered questions sprout: 1: Why am I doing this? 2: Who is this meant for? 3: What is my purpose? Marko remains radical and uncompromising: 1: Because of me. 2: For Me. 3: Me. Viva Mandić! Exhibitionist, narcissus, jester, intellectual, animal, egoist, entertainer...



## Barbara Kukovec: SPOTLIGHT ON ME

Beginning: 21:15 • Duration: 25 minutes

**A victim of the real presence.** "Richard Wagner, The Valkyrie. Louder. Louder. Louder. And - boom. The gallery explodes. The walls collapse, the ceiling falls to the ground. But you and I survive. And now - explosions travel further: Berlin, Paris, Madrid, London, Moscow - boom. And further, and further... Only you, I and she are left - the memory of everything that is gone. La Ribot." La Ribot, Portugal performing artist, is one of the last victims in this story about erasing of the masks of our presence. The last victim in this hunting of the real presence is the performer who performs the story. The real presence always eludes the performer; in front of a viewer you are never just who you are, you are never just here and just now. Barbara becomes a victim of his own live presence. All she could create is only a memory about what she creates.



## Kristian Al Droubi: INTERVIEW WITH THE ARTIST

Beginning: 21:50 • Duration: 40 minutes

**About impotent presence.** Interview performance about political powerlessness of radical art practices, about confession as a media spectacle, about the imperative of pleasure in contemporary post-industrial society, about the impotence of communication, about the impossibility of subjectivization, etc. Questions based on the text by Bojana Kunst, Ph.D. (Powerlessness of Radical Consumption, 2009), drill deep into the problem core which Via Negativa has always been concerned with. Kristian answers as a performer - he argues for his believes not only with his words but also with his whole body. • With Kristian will talk Christoph Rech.