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# Interakcje 2012 : Artists' Statements

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Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej [bazhum.muzhp.pl](http://bazhum.muzhp.pl), gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

## AKENATON

### ALLAH IL'ALLAH

This project continues on from other 'install'actions' already presented by Akenaton. These were entitled Still Time (Festival of Tarascon, 1988), Operation (Island Dance Festival, Ajaccio, and the Festival of Performance Quebec, 2007) and Oukssava (Centre Pompidou, Paris, 2004). In these cases as in others (see the installation Mal de Terre Patrimoine Museum, Corte, Corsica Marittima). The work is in the form of a circle, which in our view in the space, and, in time, is the suspension of the ordinary diachrony. Thus the work, coloured by pigments, paints, powders etc. - unfolds itself on the ground. This is performed live, on the basis of a specific protocol executed by the artists. Gestures should be sober. It is not theatre but moreover a tense ritual where materials, objects and actions fit together to build what we call a "space of language".

The circular shape is justified according to the meaning; the source (sometimes very indirect) of such works includes socio-political events which have recurring characters: their images have massive media coverage (press, TV) that has propelled them in contemporary culture, they belong to the collective global memory: the head-to-head between a unarmed man and a tank in the centre of Still Time is one of "Images of the twentieth century" (Ziem Museum, Martigues). The man's head and the tank could be Prague, Budapest, Moscow, Tiananmen Square or, today in Syria, the streets of Homs which "Allah ill' Allah" refers to and where the same scene takes place, the same duel between a man in shirtsleeves and the war machine. We arrive, all equipment necessary for the intervention is with us, stored in containers, plus two military bags, & an Arabic bag . From these packages are extracted substances, objects or tools necessary to achieve the install'action. A laser pen suspended from the ceiling "traces" on the ground a circle 6 or 7 meters in diameter, the red dot comes to rest after swirling and marking the centre from which the "tragic circle" is materialised in colour pigments (red, white), subsequently adding a star in green pigment on a sandy bottom to signify the colours of the Syrian flag. The work, conducted together by both performers, takes place in phases that are like "acts" that converge the plastic & visual work into the "outcome".

5 tape recorders, arranged as "snipers" to 5 points of the star broadcast audio tapes which contain records related to Homs shots, shouts of protesters etc.. The bands meet each other in a "musical", sometimes solo, sometimes duo, trio, quartet or quintet. We hear, an obsessive litany, the cry for help which serves as the title: Allah ill' Allah these words are spoken by the man in a white shirt, which in this street of Homs, is trying for several minutes to recover the corpse of his mother and brother killed by a tank, which remains motionless, at the other end of the street holding the man in its sights. "My god my god have mercy on us ..." All this footage is from a film some "amateur" posted on the Internet during the Syrian events; film we chose to submit in the form of a slideshow running in a silent loop in a digital picture frame placed on the sand and uncovered at the end, when tape recorders are silent and when we establish an "arm to arm" with twelve shirts placed around the circle.

We are not activists. We do not "position" and do not issue a message. We presume that is: the unbearable. We show and are trying to identify the structural and permanent features.

### **Miss Universe**

Appears as a figure who reaches her audience through her joyful presentations, combining action, text and music with pop-culture, making references to politics, art history, using choirs, children songs, fashion and show business elements. The content of the performances touch upon elements of human rights, politics, gender issues, domestic violence and history of art. She performed her works such as Macbeth! Love it or leave it!, Fuat- Ali- Kemal- Harun- Burhan- Mehmet, Fistula, Miss Universe at Guantanamo Bay in international festivals such as the Vienna Art Week, INX (New Castle), Body Navigation (St. Petersburg), Visibility Project (Istanbul), Dimanche Rouge (Paris), Raw Matters (Vienna), and the International Meeting of Action Art at Pumarejo (Sevilla).

The Diamond Ring

Performance by Miss Universe, 2012

Every Miss Universe has a diamond ring and a red dress.

Every Miss Universe smiles but is unpredictable, actually.

Every Miss Universe must talk about Istanbul and Africa.

Memories - dreams - disappointment - anger and hunger!

Miss Universe is there with ten white cups, searching for her lost diamond ring.

A performance about black and white / male and female / silence and breath / motion and stillness / rhyme and text / repetition and climax

### **KAROLINA KUBIK**

wire-pulling

I'm already at the starting line for some time.

I decided to wait before the crowd gathered.

With the promised fox tail. When the time comes I will pull branches to the inside.

Like pulling teeth.

Meanwhile, I fill days with biting.

The wet soil beneath me will shrink and settle before I run.

Performance art stigmatises the space and the people. Affecting and being affected in a continuous loop of exchange. The rhythm is difficult to identify, unveiling or not, it remains important for the regeneration of time.

During a performance art action a viewer can define himself/herself. Live action takes attention, but it also forces us to focus and to look inside. Time is divisible.

The performer and the viewer are the witnesses to each other's true story. The importance of the subject is fluent and bipolar - an artist goes unnoticed as the viewer of the viewer.

You can avoid a potentially embarrassing situation simply if you stick to the rules. But an embarrassing situation verifies the attractiveness of the rules by becoming more demanding and finally destroys the audience's life experience.

### **DRAVKOVIC**

The performance XXX YU reflects the phenomenon of the war crimes of the former Yugoslavia through a gender perspective. Who actually performed the breastfeeding of the war criminals? Although the war's violence was strongly rooted in the principle of the patriarchal male from the psychoanalytical background a hidden Oedipus is screaming, which is however, caused by the Mother. Her Sin was ultimately transferred to the Son by her very own breast milk, the milk of the Nation, which perverted both male and female principles and finally lead to the travesty of the War.

## **IZABELA CHAMCZYK**

I consider the act of painting a live process, where the works are developed over time, a process which generates changes and thus is devoid of the status of a static art object. By applying different media as well as performance and action, I attempt to stretch the borders of painting itself. I apply organic substances of a destructive character and bring new media to my work in order to give my art a conceptual and at the same time anchor it to the ground.

## **ROBERTO ROSSINI**

Zeitgeist is the consciousness of matter in the realms of the fragmentary, the parcelled-out, the discontinuous; it is a reparation ritual, the plague of the spectacle world; the materials used are elements of sign, parts of sense, traces of thought, shadows of meaning.

## **BARTOSZ ŁUKASIEWICZ**

Most of Łukasiewicz's previous actions were considered to be a form of dialogue within an interactive game where there are no winners or losers. At the same time all of his present actions shift the borderline between our understanding of an artist versus the public. The result of this thinking is to convince the public to be artists; to put art in their hands; to let them decide what is and what is not art. Some say that this kind of art is called 'happening'. Others say that this is just an interactive performance - but the truth is that it is neither happening nor performance. It is also not theatre. This is pure information which is generated by people through creative activities.

## **SANDRA STERLE**

In the performance Apparition of the Virgin Mary, the artist explores the new face of religion appearing in Middle and East European countries in transition. There are specific relations between religious icons and social aspects of the accumulation of capital. In many cities, a new urban landscape often consists of the architecture of new churches in parallel with huge shopping malls. In the performance, the artist, dressed as the figure of Virgin Mary stands on a pedestal made from a pile of free supermarket catalogues, the ones we so frequently find in front of our doors. After descending from the pedestal, the artist spreads the catalogues around the floor and walks over them.

## **ANA MATEY**

My work is made up of investigations upon personal worries on the subjects of time and identity in society. I construct poetic imagery through the use of physical imagery, irony, intensity and silence. I am interested in revealing or searching for the image of what surrounds us. For this purpose I use all available tools, the first being my own body, the one that follows me at all times and through which I think and feel the world. Connected to my body, the central axis of my actions is the notion of time. I search for an empty space where time slows down, for according to my experience, the mind is incapable of generating its own thoughts when confronted by fast and continuous stimulus. I invite others to observe, to pause, and this exercise transports us to a mental state out of the ordinary. It is a space where a new mind frame towards which surrounds us can grow.. For all these reasons, my work tends to be durational.

## **PETER BAREN**

Blind Dates With The History Of Mankind; a meeting ground between sensual bewilderment and political commentary.

During "Currency 2004, an International Festival of Contemporary Performance" in New York, Peter BAREN started an ongoing series of performances entitled ARK (...), that has continued to evolve and change shape over time. It has subsequently been performed in the United States, Europe, Canada, Middle East, Asia and Central America.

BDWTHOM is part of this multi-sensory series and practices the public assumptions of performance – the promise of drama, duration and theatricality – to evoke a disquieting sense of primordial mystery, public yearning, fear and cultural reformation. The involvement of the audience is triggered by mobilizing all the senses.

Radioda creates music out of what is seemingly not music; plays on devices, not instruments, because it believes that there is also an artistic potential in them. It uses something, that is constantly present all around – radio frequency.

## **SHANNON COCHRANE**

In my performance work I strive to engage reflexively with the audience, strategically with humour, and methodically with material to create situations and images that are concerned with the formal presentation of art action, the aesthetics of social interaction, and the investigation of authorship, repertoire and the archive in the practice of performance art itself. My most recent performances are collages created using everyday materials, gestures, and the body, to illustrate invisibility, and trace objects and map phenomenon that are not actually there. The intent is to mimic fleeting images familiar from performance and remembered from the everyday, in a singular action or series of actions that appear and disappear in the exact same moment.

During the week leading up to my performance at InterAkcje, I noticed how addicted the audience was to taking photos, and as a result, to watching performances not with their eyes but through the lens of their phones and cameras. As a response, I decided to propose an experiment to the audience. Just before my performance began, I told the audience that the performance consisted of three actions and was approximately 30 minutes long. I asked the audience to raise their hand if they intended on taking pictures. Many people raised their hands. I proposed this experiment: rather than taking pictures throughout the entire performance, instead they should choose one moment during the 30 minutes, and only take only one photo. In addition, I asked that they email me the image. In the end, the audience took less photos than they normally would (but more than one photo per person), and no one emailed me their pictures.

## **MONIKA SZYDŁOWSKA**

For sometime I have been enamoured by the idea of and problems concerning, universal fear and emergency situations. I'm inspired by the instructions regarding how to behave in emergency situations and health and safety legislations. How might it be regarded to be contrary to these instructions? My practice is in some way a research into „where is fear?“

My new work "Hold on tight" analyses how a disregard for safety can be tantamount to disrespect for all involved.

## **LUIS PROBALA**

My intentions in my artistic practice at this point are that of a nympholept, hunting a nymph and being unbothered by fact that possessing a nymph equals possession by the nymph. Obviously, at this point, there is little chance to achieve that, nonetheless, my intentions point to something else in this ridiculous goal. I believe that continually and constantly facing the possibility of possession could, in paradox, give me the

self-consciousness needed to act in life and art in an equally spiritual and strong manner. I somehow regret not knowing another way, and I despise that regret. All my intentions or ideas are starting to penetrate through a prism (which they at the same time crystalise), I call it KYNCBRAŁT and it is born out of the figure of the Childwife (in French femme-enfant), or more accurate in my comprehension, German KindsBraut, with all its paradoxical or bi-polarising qualities. Thus my work speaks mainly of human motivations, projections and their consequences, but also about the lack of them.

### **MILIJANA BABIC**

One of the biggest companies in the world, Coca-Cola, promoted the fictional character of father Christmas in his red and white uniform presenting gifts to children, as the biggest icon of the modern consumer society. This icon witnessed a significant transformation in the post-socialist Croatia. Previously an atheist, he is now reborn as a church lover, his worldly name (Djed Mraz) changed into a Christian (Djed Božićnjak), and his time of arrival has been moved from New Year's Eve to Christmas.

Produced by the City of Women in 2004, this work has been performed during Christmas time and out of season in various countries and cities, experiencing different reactions in different contexts and time, and from a variety of encounters with different individuals, from police, from beggars to other Santa Clauses.

### **ŁUKASZ TRUSEWICZ**

In my performances I draw from the experience of sculptural practice. A construction as a main body which thereby creates a composition axis is what is important for me. Like in sculpting there are also added or subtracted values.

I'm interested in social issues but I'm trying to refer to them indirectly, by simple means and gestures, with a grain of salt. Eliminating redundant matter, I'm moving on issues such as exclusion, aggression and domination.

### **VIDA SIMON**

Through drawing, writing, objects, gesture, and sound, I create context-sensitive performances and installations. My work explores the tension between intimacy and theatricality, often playing with scale extremes, for example through live projected drawings or situating the body in relation to miniature worlds. My work is improvisational and questions how to compose a space in which the audience may empathize, or even become part of the tableau. Recent performances have incorporated live drawing, for example drawing with charcoal over a period of several days, or on an overhead projector – the moving image unfolding right before the viewer's eyes. For me drawing is the most direct form to express my interests in visual storytelling, elemental materiality, and gesture. I approach drawing as an embodied language, a process of excavation, a way of wandering and wondering.

My performance choosing to save or dispose was mainly concerned with the challenges of arriving in a place and as an outsider making work in response to the context. I began by climbing a precarious ladder with the help of the audience, in order to retrieve a pair of rubber gloves hidden on a high shelf. With the gloves on I drew a mind map using a large quill pen and ink: a sort of inventory of how we choose one thing over another. I then peeled the layers of a cabbage; making separate piles of the leaves I chose to keep or dispose. I was interested in working with the cabbage both as a stereotypical association with Poland, and as a raw material through which to reflect on questions around what we do or don't value, and why.

## **PATRICIA & MARIE-FRANCE MARTIN**

The form is that of a conference, the medium is that of Powerpoint software. The re-appropriation of this system – considered rigid and limited – allows us to deal with basic sources such as words, sounds, colours, film extracts. The current international events (the presidential elections in France) constitute the motor of our work, a deconstructed diary in which history and our current histories are mixed. The slide texts are in English, French and Polish and our comments pronounced during the projection are translated live.

Money, power, or the way politicians waffle, are topics approached with humour. Subjective connections create the conditions in which meaning can be triggered and conveyed with the conspiracy of active spectators.

## **PETER GRZYBOWSKI**

Evidence

The proposed performance is in part an answer to certain trends in the history of art that I have observed, which attempt to interpret the documentation of performance art as a creative process and serve as an independent work of art in its own right.

Peggy Phelan wrote; Performance's only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representations of representations: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance. To the degree that performance attempts to enter the economy of reproduction it betrays and lessens the promise of its own ontology....<sup>1</sup>

However, James Elkin wrote; Visual documentation, whether it is video or photography, brings with it an ideology and an aesthetic which prevent it from functioning simply as evidence... The visual becomes suspect: it is no longer evidential, but contentious. ... Performance art is, in this sense, immune from the danger of being reduced to documentary evidence...<sup>2</sup>

Generally speaking on the one hand, the documentation of a performance contradicts the very nature of this art. However, on the other hand, a performance is completely resistant to such treatment as it is something entirely different from its documentation.

In my performance, I will try to show the differences between these two concepts. It is part of a larger series dealing with the same subject. The focus of the piece is the collection of documentation in the form of video and photographs. The live action itself is simplified and secondary to this goal.

The action consist of moving on stage in view of the video camera, gesturing and slowly manipulating objects which I typically use, such as a computer monitor, lit light bulbs, newspapers, books or cans. They are manipulated by either carrying or dragging them along the stage, repositioning them by shifting and dropping them on the floor, or hitting or rubbing them against each other. It is in part improvised and adjusted to the existing environment.

The video camera records the action and the video feedback is simultaneously projected on the screen. It is accompanied by a background soundtrack.

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<sup>1</sup> Peggy Phelan, "The Ontology of Performance: Representation without Reproduction", in *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 146.

<sup>2</sup> James Elkins (<http://www.jameselkins.com>).

## **BRANKO MILISKOVIC**

I've always been interested in a very direct contact with the public, intending to establish a special charismatic presence, fuse with them and finally take them over. I work in the field of live art , cabaret , video installation and film. I see my work as a linear system of designated and highly self controlled situations in progression,



through which I am passing , aiming to leave a permanent trace and bring my own standards. At last, my major intention is to use my body as an independent territory with full integrity and sovereignty, a territory with its own rules and own gravitation.

## **ANA GESTO**

Performer and visual artist, she works between performance, video and sculpture, with interests focused on the environmental and performative documentary. Her work develops around cultural and social practices in a passionate way, working regularly with symbolic materials and focusing upon sound processes that are generated through the action and interaction with objects. Thus, her work has a strong component on the processual, leading each project in several ways.

VARIACIONES HÍBRIDAS works with the idea of refuge and transformation over time, with the fusion of the body and with the objects from the action; the changing of the skin; the disorientation of the absurd; the offering and the ritual and the sound and experimental exploration of the idolised objects. With objects picked up in the place or brought by local people.

## **RE: COLLECTIF**

On May 8, 2012, at the INTERAKCJE festival organised in Piotrkow Trybunalski, members of the collective RE: (composed by Boris Dambly, Elisa Espen, Julie Gilbert, Valentin Périlleux, Madely Schott, Britta Vossmerbäumer), gathered around a table. They started to bite each other on every part of the body, accompanied by shouts which blended together their pain and pleasure. Then in the second phase of the event, they gathered together outside the gallery to dig their own grave. They would be in fact buried by local residents attracted by their orgasmic scream.

Once back in Brussels, they discovered in the daily press that a man named Rudy Eugene, aka the zombie of Miami, had devoured the face of a homeless person on the beach.

Three days later, it was the turn of Alexander Kinyua to make headlines by eating the heart and brain of his roommate in Baltimore.

The same month in Canada, a pornographic actor Luka Magnotta Rocco put online a video of the murder of his lover, Lin Jun. On this video, we saw the victim being stabbed with an ice pick before being slaughtered and eaten.

This series of disturbing coincidences lead our group members to question the meaning of their act.

Did they also succumb to this epidemic of cannibalism?

According to psychological analyses developed in the press:

- a. These actions intend to undermine the sanctity of human flesh monotheist religions.
- b. The instigators intend to transform themselves into an absolute figure of otherness, the "primitive" against the "civilized".
- c. This act was the result of problems present in the group.
- d. The individuals concerned look for nothing but to create an unbreakable link with those they love. Once eaten, they will never be separated.

The issue remains unresolved.

## **JUSTYNA SCHEURING**

This is a performance about an effort that follows an extreme effort or an effort that only seemed extreme for a moment.

Objects and myself. Myself and people, as if all those borders vanish without bringing unification but just the separateness of each element. This to the extent that all meaning tears away to expose the new: familiar, but strange. I become a stranger and I do not try to be comparable or recognized. I want to be a stranger when



I perform, exactly for the purpose of finding connectivity within all the obviousness such as: we are alive to coexist with all that surrounds us.

But what is an egg with the torch's light on it? My friend remarked that the empty coca-cola bottle is like Facebook attached to our wrist.

In my performance I have used:

1 egg

1 torch, turned on

1 rubbish, viz. an empty coca-cola bottle with a wristband that fastens it to my wrist

1 microphone with its stand

1 set of drumsticks

1 deep blue swimsuit

1 glass of water

1 scream into the ceiling, as if animal

1 scream into the wall, yet human

2 pre-recorded sentences played from a CD

many bangs by rubbish (the empty coca-cola bottle) onto the soles of shoes

sight, breath, muscle tension

and "of course, I understand"

I am interested in the scale of an individual's resistance towards all that is obvious (unobvious). I am also interested in the scale of an individual's effort in reducing a function towards specialization or disfunctionality as well as in finding/loosing individual meanings that really exist only when they float into everyone's lungs as air. I would like to be such air for a while, for a while to stop being human, which anyway I only will be forever.

That is what my performance was about.