

WHO CARES?

Symposium



AS PART OF GRENZENLOS KULTUR VOL. 18

SATURDAY 24TH SEPTEMBER 2016, 10.00AM–6.00PM

SUNDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER 2016, 10.00AM–3.00PM

STAATSTHEATER MAINZ

WHO CARES?



Drawing: Rosie Cunningham

Central to the activities of late capitalism, the contemporary body faces constant demands to perform as a highly functional independent system in endless competition. Is this how we want to live? With service assistants, animals, machines and other varied systems of support, people with disabilities and people who need high levels of assistance often find themselves in generatively complex relations of dependency. Without fetishizing disability, the symposium „Who Cares?“ asks: to what extent can these experiences of interdependence – the acknowledgement that we need one another – serve as a model for new relationships? What kind of alternatives can be derived through approaching care as political potential? In a landscape that coldly assumes ‘self-sustainability’ within a ‘level playing field,’ care (often flanked by egoism, paternalism, altruism and shrugging shoulders) becomes a privilege for those who can afford it rather than a basic human right. What we are looking for is a „crip future“ (Alison Kafer) in which disability and care are not only seen as medical issues but as social and political methodologies of resistance that call for all bodies in crisis to move towards an inclusive interdependence. A critical and political version of care founded on the relational ethics which disability demands is essential to challenge neoliberal fantasies of independent individualism.

For the first time Grenzenlos Kultur, Germany’s oldest inclusive theatre festival, hosts a trans-disciplinary symposium. Theoreticians, activists and artists with and without disabilities from the areas of commerce, post-humanism/disability studies, art and sex work will offer lectures, performances and controversial positions on the question of care while inviting audiences for discussion and participation.

PROGRAM

SATURDAY

10:00 OPENING AND WELCOME (ASTRID KAMINSKI / JEREMY WADE)

10:15 PANEL 1: ART AND ACTIVISM

Robert McRuer: Keynote Speech

James Leadbitter: "Madlove: A Designer Asylum"

14:00 PANEL 2: SEXUALITY AND SEX WORK

Keynotes and performances from Dasniya Sommer & Silke Schönfleisch-Backofen ["Bondage Show"], Matthias Vernaldi ["Body Culture and "Sexybilities"], Judith Aregger ["By and for Women? Sex Work in Switzerland"], Siegfried Saerberg ["Sexistence – Close-ups"], Nina de Vries ["Sexual Assistance"], Maximilian Haslberger ["The Humanitarians"]

17:00 PANEL 3: POST HUMANISM AND CRIP FUTURE

Doran George: "Disabling Relationality", Lecture

After the Symposium on Saturday

19:30 Jeremy Wade: „Together Forever“, Performance

Tickets for this performance are not included in the registration fee for the participation in the symposium. They have to be acquired separately. Please make sure to book tickets in time – the number of tickets is limited. A vegan dinner is included in the ticket price. (For concessions and discounts please refer to terms of participation.)

SUNDAY

10:00 PANEL 4: BASIC INCOME AND WELFARE STATE

Panel with Daniel Häni (Basic Income Campaign), Adrienne Goehler (Basic Income and Art) and Matthias Rösch (Participation Act)

12:15 CLOSING EVENT: PUBLIC BRUNCH

Saša Asentić/Dalibor Šandor: Social Choreography Case Study Brunch (until 15:00)

After the Public Brunch

15:00 Regulars' Table TheaterRaumMainz

After the symposium on Sunday

19:30 Jeremy Wade: „Together Forever“, Performance

**All panels are held with simultaneous translation into German and English.
For the complete program please visit www.grenzenlos-kultur.de.**

PANELS AND SPEAKERS

PANEL 1: ART AND ACTIVISM

Art is increasingly used to realize political aims with methods different than politics, becoming part of today's socio-political discourse. How do artist/activists with disabilities and other marginalized bodies identify key issues and manifest their work?

Robert McRuer and James Leadbitter aka „the vacuum cleaner“ approach this question. Under the title “Crip Times,” McRuer researches resistance movements of people with disabilities in the U.S., Britain, Mexico, Spain and Chile. “the vacuum cleaner” presents his “Madlove: A Designer Asylum”, a platform for people with mental illness to collaborate with medics, academics, artists and designers to contemplate the ideal anti-institutional site for going mad. “MLDA” creates a space where mutual care is possible, stigma is reduced and „madness“ is experienced less painfully.

Robert McRuer is a professor of English at George Washington University whose research focuses on queer and crip cultural studies and critical theory. He has been published as a writer and editor in numerous mediums. Forthcoming from New York University Press: Crip Times: Disability, Globalization, and Resistance.

the vacuum cleaner is a London based artist and activist who has been commissioned by Tate Modern, Wellcome Collection and others. His process is largely based in public and private non-art contexts such as mental health hospitals and he advocates for radical approaches to experiencing mental distress and the politics of mutual care, neurodiversity and environment.

PANEL 2: SEXUALITY UND SEX WORK

Nearly every form of sexuality eventually finds its equivalent on stage, however the needs of those who can only live their sexuality under great restriction (if at all) have been heavily constrained by social conditions including laws, social mores, and institutionalization. Thanks to swinger clubs founded by disability rights activists, dating sites, training for sex workers and the impact of social media, these issues are gaining attention.

The panel “Sexuality and Sex Work” shares multiple view points: Sex workers (or assistants) talk about their experiences providing assisted sex to those with multiple disabilities, activists about their fight for self-determined sexuality, and artists about their creative/political potential. The panel faces this exciting material with a plea for fierce conscious raising, making use of relational ethics that fight for intimacy and pleasure for all.

Dasniya Sommer was a model for Vivienne Westwood and is a dancer, choreographer, performer, yoga teacher and bondage artist. In 2007, she co-founded the Berlin project space “schwelle7” as a research center for art and sexuality and the Institute for Applied Rope Sciences in 2016. She has collaborated with Romeo Castellucci, Schubot/Gradingner and Das Helmi.

Silke Schönfleisch-Backofen is an attorney from Frankfurt/Main, part-time performance artist and active volunteer for the Bundesverband Kleinwüchsige Menschen und ihre Familien (German Association for People of Short Stature and their Families).

Matthias Vernaldi studied theology and began his professional career as a preacher. He has worked as a tarot consultant, author, public relations manager, editor for „mondkalb – Zeitschrift für das organisierte Gebrechen“ and chairman of ambulante dienste e.V.. In 2000, he launched „Sexybilities – Sexuality und Disability,“ and since 2002 has served on the “Landesbeirat für Menschen mit Behinderungen in Berlin” (Regional Advisory Council for People with Disabilities in Berlin). Because of a muscular disease, he depends on 24-hour assistive care.

Judith Aregger worked for nine years as a prostitute in massage parlors. Since training in sexual accompaniment for people with disabilities she has accompanied people with multiple disabilities and age related impairments. She also works as a translator/mediator/street worker in the field of street prostitution. This year she completed her master’s thesis in „Sexologie clinique“ at the University of Geneva.

Siegfried Saerberg is a publicist, visiting lecturer at several German universities, exhibition designer and artist. He works with organizations for blind people and has completed a PhD on the “Spatial Orientation of a Blind Person”. He is the editor of “Sexistenz” (Sexistence), a text, picture and audio book.

Nina de Vries has worked as a visual artist. Following a training program in body therapy and sex education, she works as a sexual assistant for people with disabilities. Since 2004, she has trained sexual assistants by request of the Fachstelle für Behinderung und Sexualität (Unit for Disability and Sexuality) in Basel and gives lectures and workshops across Europe about sexuality and disability.

Maximilian Haslberger studied at Film Academy Baden-Württemberg and Columbia University and works as a director and film producer. In 2010, he founded the production company Amerikafilm. His semi-fictional film “Die Menschenliebe” (The Humanitarians) was shown at Berlinale 2015 and tells the story of two people with disabilities and their struggle for a self-determined sexuality.

PANEL 3: POST HUMANISM AND CRIP FUTURE

Lecture: Disabling Relationality – Thinking of ‘post human’, a hybrid of technology and flesh comes to mind that seems to hold promise for disabled people – a cyborg in which dependence on technology (such as wheelchairs) is no longer denigrated. Cyborgian possibility thus extends a definition of civilization put in place by colonial ideologies that categorized social groups and races based on a perceived capacity to be productive. As global capitalism performs its ritual of ecological and political cannibalism for progress, how might recuperating disability help reject this destructive agenda? By toward each other, can we jettison neoliberal individualism by disabling relationality? Let’s look for a post-human future through mutual care, generated by a conscious pleasurable stasis, designed to incapacitate the imperative of capital gain.

Doran George earned a doctorate in dance history from UCLA in 2014, and has been publicly funded for their choreography and performance since 1999. Doran is a Professor of Dance History, Theory, Studio Practice and Cultural Studies at the California Institute of the Arts, School of Dance and Professor of Dance, Gender, LGBT and Disability Studies at UCLA. Their scholarship is published in journals and anthologies and they are currently writing the first social history on the influence of Somatic training on contemporary dance.

PANEL 4: BASIC INCOME AND WELFARE STATE

The idea of an unconditional basic income received renewed support this year as a result of the Swiss referendum on the matter and is presently the only

concrete and tenable basis for an overhaul of socio-economic conditions. If work and wages can be decoupled for all citizens, the societal status of people with disabilities could also change, putting an end to the stigma surrounding support based on one's ability to work.

Can a basic income move the social status of people with disabilities towards one of economic equality? If a minimum income were already secured, would professions in the care and assistance sector still be attractive? Would a basic income in a state that still follows neoliberal principles lead to greater exploitation of workers abroad?

Daniel Häni is a Swiss entrepreneur and activist. In 1998, he founded the coffee house and platform "unternehmen mitte" in Basel. In 2012, he launched the People's Initiative for an Unconditional Basic Income, which was put to vote in June 2016. During the campaign Häni and his team drew acclaim for their performances bridging art and politics, including the "robot rally" in Zurich and the crowd funding-based slogan project "The Biggest Question on Earth".

Adrienne Goehler, publicist, curator and certified psychologist in Berlin. She is the former president of the Academy of Fine Arts in Hamburg and was Senator for Science, Research and Culture along with serving as a curator for Cultural Capital Funds of Berlin. She is the author of several publications and books on the relationship between basic income and cultural society.

Matthias Rösch, a State Commissioner for People with Disabling Conditions in Rhineland-Palatinate, works to implement the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Participation Act. He is a certified psychologist, peer counselor (ISL) and co-founded the Centre of Independent Living of People with Disabilities in Mainz.

SOCIAL CHOREOGRAPHY CASE STUDY BRUNCH

Human beings never experience reality directly, but through symbols, discourses and socially constructed narratives. Starting from this frame, performance maker Saša Asentić invites you to a Sunday brunch incorporating live action and role-playing games through which audiences are invited to investigate collective social configurations from a set of individuals, to groups, teams and proto-communities.

Celebrating the symposium, this brunch will offer a chance to reflect on the political potentialities of being-together in today's society, taking into consideration the challenges of the incomprehensible present. This unfolding social choreography will work to create new narratives of social organization that encompass the array of concerns shared as the main subjects in "Who Cares?"

Saša Asentić was born in Bosnia and has worked in Serbia as a performance maker and cultural worker. Asentić is interested in exploring the relationship between the individual and society and analyzing it in terms of social choreography. His work has been presented across Germany and internationally. He is a founder of Per.Art disability arts program. After being a victim of right wing street violence and fundamentally disagreeing with the corruption in public sector of Serbia, he moved to Germany in 2011.

Dalibor Šandor is a member of Per.Art inclusive group in Novi Sad. He is interested in video games, epic fantasy, and the social reality of his position as a disabled person in Serbia. He believes that one has to be brave to perform in public, but also thinks that this is the only way to foster change.

INFORMATION

Date:

Saturday 24th September 2016, 10:00–18.00

Sunday 25th September 2016, 10:00–15.00

Location:

Staatstheater Mainz

Gutenbergplatz 7, 55116 Mainz

Registration Saturday at Foyer Kleines Haus

Registration fee for both days:

EUR 60.00, EUR 30.00 (concessions), for group tickets please contact us.

The registration fee includes the public brunch with performance on Sunday, as well as tea, coffee, cake and refreshments on both days.

Ticket Prices “Together Forever” Saturday and Sunday, 19:30:

EUR 14.50, EUR 7.25 (concessions). The performance is conceived as part of the symposium. However, please be aware that you need to book tickets separately – a meal is included. Participants of the symposium who are paying the full registration fee are eligible for tickets with concessions for “Together Forever”. Include your request when booking, please.

Please pay your registration fee in cash during the registration on location.

Lunch Saturday:

The cafeteria of the theatre offers a reasonably priced lunch on Saturday. Please register!

Registration:

Please register by September 10th by sending an email to:

symposium@grenzenlos-kultur.de

Please indicate your name, address, registration fee applicable and if you would like to book lunch.

If needed some parts of the symposium can be translated into simple language. If you need this please let us know in your application. Assistants have free access. However, please do send a co-application so that we can plan for space accordingly.

Further Information:

Lebenshilfe gGmbH Kunst und Kultur

Drechslerweg 25, 55128 Mainz, 0 61 31-9 36 60 18

symposium@grenzenlos-kultur.de, www.grenzenlos-kultur.de

The symposium is curated by Astrid Kaminski and Jeremy Wade.

Astrid Kaminski works as journalist, moderator and speech writer within the fields of dance, literature and social politics.

Jeremy Wade is a performer, performance maker, curator and teacher. His most recent works include "Dark Material" (2013), "Together Forever" (2014), „Death Asshole Rave Video" and „DrawnOnward" (2015). Among his curational works are the "Politics of Ecstasy" Festival 2009 at the Hebbel am Ufer Berlin (together with Meg Stuart, Eike Wittrock, and Brendan Dougherty), the queer performance series "Creature Feature" (2009 to 2011) at Basso, Berlin and "The Great Big Togetherness", a focus on participatory group experiences at the Donau Festival, Austria in 2014. www.jeremywade.org