

Private Lecturer Dr. Martina Leeker

Associated Centre for Digital Cultures and ICAM

Leuphana University Lüneburg

Private: Goebenstr. 8, 10783 Berlin, Germany

Mobile: 0049-170-5437604

Mail: leeker@t-online.de

Portfolio

Institut for Expanded Enlightenment

“Prof.” Martina Leeker

Content

Theory Theatre. Discourse Theatre	3
Performing Knowledge and Science	7
Epistemological Apparatuses	12
Posthuman Chances Lab	18
What are Digital Cultures? A Video-Interview Research Project	22
Future Plans	28

Please see for all projects, documentations and analysis our web-publication:

<http://projects.digital-cultures.net/e-i/>

Theory Theatre. Discourse Theatre

In this category, contemporary discourses and theories on culture and on technology are presented and discussed through performance. The aim is the sharing and discussion of state of the art in research. In doing so, theatre becomes an own kind of discourse.

Borkman und andere anti-kapitalistische Held_innen (Borkman and other Anti-Capitalist Heroes)

Hamburg, November 2014

<http://projects.digital-cultures.net/e-i/portfolio/theorietheater-mit-borkman-denkfiguren-des-neoliberalen-performen/>



In this *theory theatre*, discourse on neoliberal subjects and neoliberal governmentality is reflected by a performance of Ibsen's "John Gabriel Borkman." Borkman is traditionally seen as a hyper-capitalist. In our theory theatre, he becomes, in contrast, a revolutionary accelerator of capitalism through his hyper-affirmation of it, intent on its destruction.

Theories proposed by Andreas Reckwitz, Ulrich Bröckling, and George Bataille, among others, are used to perform contemporary research on neoliberalism. We questioned the un-reflected negative understanding of an economisation

of human relations. Research was undertaken by discussing and performing the inventive potential of a neoliberal subject and the commodification of affects and emotions.

One question driving our research was how theoretical texts should be performed to make them understandable and open for reflection. While engaging with such questions, it became clear that the performance of theories could be a powerful pedagogical method. The processes of performing and *mis en scene* help to deepen students' understanding and reflection.

Kontakthof 2.0. Embodiment of Remix

Seminar, Leuphana University Lüneburg, 2015

<http://projects.digital-cultures.net/e-i/portfolio/kontakthof-2-0-embodiment-of-remix-und-theorietheater/>



This piece involved the testing of remix as well as its embodiment as a method of forming bodies, identity, and subjectivity for living in digital remix-culture. While remixing in music or film is—except for questions of copyright—quite harmless with regard to the human body and identity construction, in theatre and performance it becomes deeply challenging. Theatre and performing are still seen as existentially close to authenticity and realness.

What happens if performing becomes a re-performing of bodies, movements, and the language of others?

Clips of Pina Bausch's "Kontakthof," taken from the Internet, served as an embodiment of remix. During this project, the Internet was unlocked as a living archive for theatre and performance, replacing drama and the ingenious creative power of a human being.



Marianne and the Rolling Stones. Remix-Theatre

Potsdam, January 2018

<http://projects.digital-cultures.net/e-i/portfolio/remix-theater-marianne-und-die-rolling-stones/>



This piece furthers the hypothesis of posthuman performativity found in "Kontakthof 2.0."

The actors remix Pina Bausch, Maguy Marin, Flipper, Ryan Trecartin, Barbie, and Falk Richter. The remixed material is, again, taken from the Internet.



The regime of a remix-culture is sharpened. What happens if memory itself is remixed? An experiment is undertaken. "Marianne" speaks about her memories of the legendary 1965 Rolling Stones concert at Waldbühne, Berlin. As the other actors take over this memory and transform it, "Marianne" loses her authentic and private memory. This leads to the insight that memory has always been a remix and never the personal property of (individual) human beings.



Remix Theatre becomes, within its aesthetics, an epistemological apparatus for living in digital cultures. Their posthuman conditions promote remix and re-embodiment.

But up until now, theatre had always strengthened the concept of the uniqueness of actors. In this context, *Remix Theatre* becomes research on theatre and performance in digital cultures, focussing on its losses and its profits, which include the freedom de-personalisation.

Performing Knowledge and Science. “What-if-Scenarios” for Reality Check and Future-Speculation

This category consists of testing and reflecting research, knowledge production and the generation of reality. The premise is that creating theories in writing is easy; the consequences of those theories become evident only when they are embodied and experienced in performances.

At the same time, theories and discourses often provide imaginaries for another reality and future. By performing knowledge and science, these aspects can be both further developed and tested.

“What-if-scenarios” are used as a method, affirming and hyperbolizing theories and utopias, detecting and reflecting their regimes, as well as recognising the potential for their transformation.

Im Krankensaal von Radio Schreber (In Radio Schreber's Hospital Ward). Performance and Installation

Bauhaus University Weimar,
in Cooperation with National Theater Weimar, 2006
Documentation 2015

<http://projects.digital-cultures.net/e-i/portfolio/mit-foucault-im-digitalen-mysterium/>



Artistic methods were employed to conduct research into spiritistic implications in media theory and media studies and their effects on contemporary media theories. The resulting performance/installation was based on the experiences of Daniel Paul Schreber, a nineteenth-century judge who believed he was a medium

for voices and connections with God, as described in his "Memoirs of my Nervous Illness" (1884). Schreber understood his medial experiences as linked to the latest research on electromagnetism in physics, which led to new technologies as radio.

Modern media theories such as Marshall McLuhan's ideas of a direct connection between humans and media, Sybille Krämer's ideas on media as angles, and Friedrich Kittler

assumption that only mad people could "hear" contents of media instead of noise were placed within this genealogy.



Older facets of a spiritistic media history were placed in the installation with Loie Fuller's light-dances and Heinrich Hertz' "dance" with electromagnetic waves.

A Chinese student performed a human medium that had been possessed by a ghost.



Versehrte Dinge (Disabled Things), Performance and Installation, Trickster Guides

Leuphana University Lüneburg, 2016

<http://projects.digital-cultures.net/e-i/portfolio/versehrte-dinge-eine-ausstellungs-performance-im-uebergang-zum-technosphaerischen/>



In this performative installation, contemporary theories on the symmetrical relation between humans and technical things were tested for consequences. The question was whether disabled or broken things could be thrown away under the conditions of these new relationships and statuses.

They can't. On the contrary, we have to deal with a world of dysfunctionality.

A new business model in the form of a company that stores cherished, broken smart phones was invented, and new academic disciplines such as electro pedagogy, electro therapy, and technic health studies were defined.



Epistemological Apparatuses

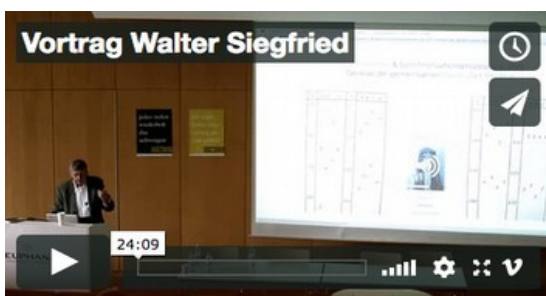
This category sets up environments that train thinking and feeling, especially for the techno-epistemological conditions of digital cultures.

“Epistemological Apparatuses” can be exhibitions, installations, texts, lectures performances, and so on. Methods and formats depend on the foci and aims.

Messe der Medien (Media Fair). Epistemological Apparatus

For the conference "Medien der Wissenschaften"
at Leuphana University Lüneburg,
Gesellschaft der Medienwissenschaft, 2013

<http://projects.digital-cultures.net/e-i/portfolio/messe-der-medien-eine-ausstellung/>



While scholars gave academic inputs during the conference on "Media of Science," the "Things Fair" featured things performing their own inputs. A blind robot touched visitors and electronic toys generated sound. The question was: How can scholars speak about things and methods without noticing the very things they are talking about?

Walter Siegfried performed an intriguing lecture, and by smuggling singing parts into it revealed the performativity of presenting a paper on an academic conference.



Medien&Paranoia. Performative Video Installation

Seminar, Leuphana University Lüneburg, 2014

<http://projects.digital-cultures.net/e-i/portfolio/medienparanoia/>



Paranoia becomes an existential epistemological model and competence in digital cultures. This is required in a context of fake news, surveillance, data mining, and performances of trolls.

The performative installation was developed as a training base for a playful and reflected paranoia to survive the leakiness and creepiness of digital cultures.

Living in a Smart House. Workshop

University of Applied Science Hamburg, 2014
Documentation 2016

<http://projects.digital-cultures.net/e-i/portfolio/living-in-a-smart-house-best-practices-fuers-leben-in-digitalen-kulturen/>



A workshop undertaking research on life in a smart house, being monitored all the time.

"Best practices" were developed as protection in the environment, and performance and

storytelling were also used to test the performing and acting competences of the smart house, the so-called agency of a smart house.

Yes Men und die Barbiehaare. Dramaturgien von Interventionen in digitalen Kulturen (Yes Men and Barbie's hair. Dramaturgies of Interventions in Digital Cultures)

Performative Introduction, Intervention, Scientific Chapter
Leuphana University Lüneburg, 2015

<http://projects.digital-cultures.net/e-i/portfolio/yes-men-und-die-barbiehaare-kuenstlerische-interventionen-in-digitalen-kulturen/>



This project arose from an intervention during the "Terms of media" conference at Leuphana University Lüneburg. I introduced Igor Vamos (Yes Men) alias Mike Bonanno, using Yes Men's aesthetics of fake. At the end of Igor's talk, I handed him a shaven Barbie as allusion to his project "Barbie Liberation Organization" (1993), plus as reference to the site of the conference. It took place at the "Ritterakademie" in Lüneburg, where the trial against the former SS-guard Oskar Gröning (the bookkeeper of Auschwitz) was being held.

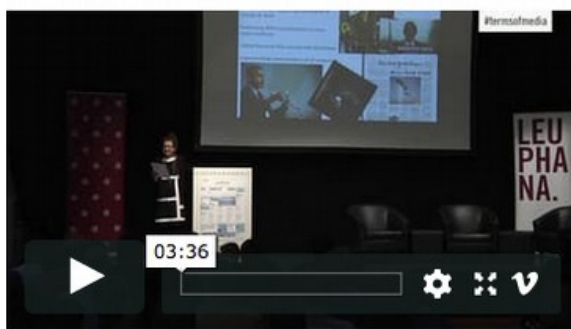
After this intervention, taking into account the suffering during the Holocaust, I realised it had been an unfortunate symbolic gesture. I decided to bury the hair to atone for the performance/intervention.

This led me to do research on the relation between interventions by the Yes Men, mostly undertaken in media, and so-called reality. The Yes Men's Bhopal chemical disaster intervention (2004) was representative, revealing that under technological conditions of ubiquitous digital cultures, political intervention could become a self-recursive action that hurt the

people affected by disaster. On the twentieth anniversary of the 1984 accident, Andy Bichbaum appeared on the BBC as “Jude Finis-terra” and announced that Dow Chemicals—owner of Union Carbide, who was responsible for the accident—would liquidate Union

Carbide and use the resulting \$12 billion to pay for medical care and site clean-up. It was two hours before the hoax was uncovered; the people of Bhopal believed it. Later, the Yes Men went to India in order to meet the people involved.

Vorstellung Martina Leeker



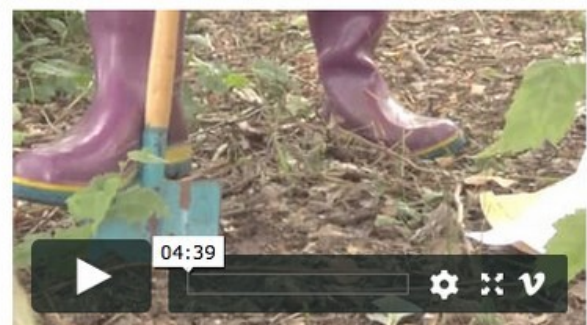
Ausschnitt aus dem Grußwort des Präsidenten



Überreichung der Barbie



Beerdigung der Barbiehaare



Posthuman Chances Lab.

Norma C.

The “Posthuman Chances Lab” belongs to the category of “Epistemological Apparatuses” as well as to the type of “Performing Knowledge and Science”.

It is at the same time its own category, which provides—as a company—several projects/ products.

The “Posthuman Chances Lab” is an *epistemological apparatus* that aims to inform recipients/participants about discourses on Posthumanism. Posthumanism is a discursive field constituted by the idea that we must re-design ourselves as “more than human” enabling us, apparently, to understand ourselves as an integral part of the environment having a symmetrical relation with others: animals, technical things, flowers, or minerals. Such an attitude should make us more humble and responsible for the Earth in light of the crises and catastrophes (Anthropocene) that will befall it.

This model is ambivalent. On the one hand, it supports the discourses and regimes of crisis

and resilience (e.g. Rosi Braidotti’s model of an “Ethics of Affirmation”) instead of featuring problem solving. On the other hand, it offers the possibility of re-thinking the human and the technological condition.

Projects that dealt with this ambivalence, took positive and productive options, and avoided negative ones were developed in the “Posthuman Chances Lab.” Methods and aesthetics of the projects were constructed from “What-if-scenarios.” Posthumanism is taken as real and, in a hyper-affirmation, its consequences were performed.

Project 1

Seminar: Open your Body

<http://projects.digital-cultures.net/e-i/portfolio/posthuman-chances-lab-kritisch-performative-spekulationen/>

POSTHUMAN CHANCES LAB

PHCLab

Seminar: OPEN YOUR BODY

Norma C.

Geschäftsführerin/CEO

“Project 1” is a talk/lecture performance about a fake seminar, “Open your body.” Via electroshocks and muscle-hyper-activation, participants had to learn to live with other species, to build eco-communities with them, and to become more sensible and open to the environment.

After these procedures and experiences, participants were supposed to be ready for the implementation of RFID-chips and other sensors,

which will enable them to connect directly with their technological environments and to live a modest, real posthuman existence in accordance with their surroundings, an environment filled with other beings and non-animated materials.

The project was performed in various formats depending the venue, which included universities, theatres, galleries, and museums.

First Appearance

Black Market, Hamburg, Kampnagel, 19. October 2016



This performance took place in the setting of "Black Market" invented by Hanna Hurtzig and the "Moving Academy." It was a 1-to-1-situation

in which Norma C. informed a single person about the seminar, trying to recruit this person a visitor for it.

Transformation From Art to Science

Lecture Performance
Museum Albertinum Dresden, November 2017



In this project/ lecture performance, the fake talk promoting the seminar "Open your Body" was combined with a traditional academic talk on "Aesthetic Education 2.0".

Interestingly, the audience was more attentive and open during the epistemological apparatus talk than in the academic part.

What are Digital Cultures?

A Video-Interview Research Project

The project

Leuphana University Lüneburg,
since 2013



WHAT ARE DIGITAL ? CULTURES

DCRL

QUESTIONS | RESEARCH INTERVIEW SERIES



The purpose of the research interviews QUESTIONS of the Digital Cultures Research Lab (DCRL) is to start specifying the broadness of the term "Digital Cultures" by asking scholars as well as practitioners in various fields to further define the notion and its implications. In a five-minute timeslot, the interviewees answer four standard questions:

- What are Digital Cultures?
- What are the potentials of Digital Cultures?
- What are dangers of Digital Cultures?
- What lies beyond Digital Cultures?

The primary aim of this project was to provide material that could be organized and analysed in further inquiries. To facilitate this aim, the same four questions were asked in each interview and the footage was designed to be preferably neutral and consistent so that, for example, compilations for comparative analyses could be produced (split screen).



The interviewers took the position that the statements made were not to be understood as ontological descriptions of the state of digital cultures today. Instead, statements interplaying with different approaches are complicit in bringing forth certain notions of digital cultures. It is therefore an aim to construct a

discursive landscape, which is then to be assessed in terms of its productivity and desire. This corresponds to the status of digital cultures as that of a discourse-analytical aesthetics, which is to be investigated with these very methods.



Experiments and Intervention with “Questions”



With the projects “Interventions and Experiments in interview videos” a media-reflexive approach to the “Questions” shall be made, as the technological conditions of the interviews as well as their narrative and aesthetic orchestration influence that which is said and received.

Methods used in this artistic research are, among others, fakery, over-affirmation, contrasting, and the production of ambivalences and irritations. It is about research that can only be done with artistic and technological means and processes.

One format is the adoption of video-essay into a discourse-analytical epistemological apparatus, an experimental film/ artistic research done by Oona Braaker: <https://vimeo.com/185711696> (Also practical part of Oona Braaker's BA).



„Technosphärische Spiele“ (Video-Essay: Oona Braaker) mit dem Interview von Mark B. Hansen



Still from the Video-Essay:
Reality of affective computing and sensible media.

Still from an artistic research on backgrounds of the mobile version of the “Questions”.



Links to the projects, consisting:
Split screen, experimenting with voices, or Video-Essay

CDC Questions on website of Leuphana University:

<https://www.leuphana.de/en/research-centers/cdc/people/research-topics/cdc-questions.html>

CDC Questions: What are digital cultures? Research Interviews:

<http://projects.digital-cultures.net/e-i/portfolio/dcrl-questions-what-are-digital-cultures-analysen/>

DCRL Questions: What are digital cultures? Konstellierungen:

<http://projects.digital-cultures.net/e-i/portfolio/dcrl-questions-what-are-digital-cultures-konstellierungen/>

Interventions in interview videos „What are digital cultures?“:

<http://projects.digital-cultures.net/e-i/portfolio/dcrl-questions-what-are-digital-cultures-interventionen/>

Experimente mit Interviews „What are digital cultures?“:

<http://projects.digital-cultures.net/e-i/portfolio/dcrl-questions-what-are-digital-cultures-experimente-split-screen-videoessay-und-co/>

Interview on DCRL Questions (in: “Digitalität der Geisteswissenschaften”, german only):

<http://digitalitaet-geisteswissenschaften.de/von-der-selbstverstaendlichkeit-digitaler-kulturen>

Future Plans

Posthuman Chances Lab

I will train your Robot. Lecture Performance and Workshops

Crisis Survival Training. Lecture Performance and Workshops

Toolkit for Critique in Digital Cultures

Exhibition, Performances, Workshops. Online-Archive of Best Practices

New project/new artificial figure: Lotte Leaker

The truth machine

Would you hire me?

Performing and Exhibiting a Secret Diary on Sexual Abuse

Being Margin – Be Happy. Lecture Performance on a Mediocre Life

I wanna be Part of the Game.

A Theatre Piece on Neoliberal Regime and Power Play
in Academic Education

(Already written, looking for a theatre for performance)