



Peter Baren is one of the very few Dutch artists who came upon the stage as a performance artist around 1980 and one of the very few who has continually been doing performances all over the world to this very day. This does not mean that Peter Baren confines himself to doing performances only, his other works as well, like drawings, in the shape of sketches and 'reports', and photographic works and installations, are closely linked to his performances. His installations show the performing traits that are regularly noted in relation to a great deal of contemporary art. The phrase 'to this very day' is a curious one, because it is an observation that would not often be used with regard to a painter or sculptor, as it would be with regard to performance artists, especially if we imagine ourselves to be in the situation of that particular moment.

De Zwaluw Publishers, The Hague

PETER BAREN
Blind Dates With The History Of Mankind

Marga van Mechelen
 Bart Rutten
 Alex de Vries



PETER BAREN
Blind Dates With
The History Of Mankind



Performances



PETER BAREN
Blind Dates With
The History Of Mankind

© 2013 De Zwaluw Publishers,
Peter Baren, the authors

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

The editors have done their utmost to contact any rightful claimants directly. Claimants with whom no direct contact has proved possible, are requested to get in touch with the publisher.

ISBN 978-90-77794-12-8

Front cover: performance 'Ark, Discover Heaven, And Other Terminal Bodies', 2010
Inside front cover and inside back cover: bodypainted figure for the performance 'Dutch Gravity, Portrait Of Wubbo Ockels', 1985 (photography: Edo Kuipers)
Back cover: Performance 'Ark, Featuring Blind Dates, Orphaned Whisperings And Other Unknown Pleasures', 2007
Page 6/7: action by Peter Baren at the cemetery of Shipston on Stour, 1976 (photography: Ruth Schelfhorst)

Essays

- 37 Marga van Mechelen — **Silhouettes Like Shivering Ancient Feelings**
97 Alex de Vries — **Performance As Visual Grammar**
159 Bart Rutten — **Coming Back To Mist And Light And One's Own Presence**

Performances

- 1980 8 **Western Mantra**
1981 10 **The Living Room** Or Is The Approach Hardly More Important Than One Of The Objects?
14 **Groundroom** Lost And Found
16 **Eastern Mantra**
1982 18 **New China Reconstructs Domestic Kit**
22 **Wirra 1** Pari Mutuel
24 **Wirra 2** The Returning Type
26 **Wirra 3** The Great Kneefall
30 **Wirra 8** Panorama Faulhorn Concert / Benefit From The High Tree
1983 34 **Wirra 6** Panorama Faulhorn / Museum Of Mankind
49 **Wirra 9** Panorama Faulhorn
1985 52 **Dutch Gravity** Portrait Of Wubbo Ockels
1986 54 **The Gift**
55 Untitled **Endgame**
58 **Incident**
59 **The Royal Corpse** Or Say Hello To The Quark
1987 60 **Hearth** Here Gathers Nameless Energy
62 **Stations Of Nameless Energy** Silhouettes Like Shivering Ancient Feelings
1988-1991 64 **Stations Of Nameless Energy** The Human Condition
66 **Stations Of Nameless Energy** We Wanna Lose Our Heads For Anything In Time
1988 70 **Hearth** Here Gathers Nameless Energy
72 **Echo Of Histryria** Or The Man On The Clock
74 **Island Of Lost Souls**
1989-1992 76 **Lust** Garden For Lost Souls / Or The Mind Itself Attacks
1989 80 **Macbeth** Only Fools Die
1990-1992 84 **Spirit.**

1991	92	What Is Good For The Goose Is Good For The Gander
1993	94	The Living Room As Terminal Body / Ecce Homo No Performance
1995	109	The Living Room Or Is There Really Nothing More Than Just A Short Moment Of Joy?
1996	110	Caressing The Dike
1997	112	Misa Luba Lust, Desire And Other Terminal Bodies
	113	Lust, Desire And Other Terminal Bodies
1997	114	Progress Progress
2000	116	Abbey Road To Christianity
	120	Palestinian Pitfalls
2002-2010	124	Beggars Banquet Discover Heaven
2004	130	Ark Blind Dates, Venetian Blinds, Bitches Brew And The Exhaustion Of History
	132	Ark In Biel
	134	Ark Streettexting
2005	136	Ark Frozen Footage
	140	Ark Hope By Force By Far
	144	Ark Featuring Bridge Of Sighs, Sleep Of Reason And Wailing Wall
	150	Ark On Hope And Other Terminal Bodies Such As Bridge Of Sighs, Sleep Of Reason And Wailing Wall
2006	174	Deeper Knowledge / Orphaned Whisperings
2007-2009	175	Ark Fleet Of Arks Under The Arches Of Societies
2007	181	Ark Unknown Pleasures
2007-2008	182	Ark Featuring Blind Dates, Orphaned Whisperings And Other Unknown Pleasures
2008	187	Ark Under The Arches Of Societies
2009-2010	190	Ark Discover Heaven Under The Arches Of Societies / Harmonious Operation Of All Things On Earth
2010	196	Ark Discover Heaven And Other Terminal Bodies
2011-2012	204	Ark Hope, Lesser Heaven And The Exhaustion Of History
2013	210	Blind Dates With The History Of Mankind
1989-2013	214	The Pack Of Ting
	216	List of performances
	224	Colophon

Preface

Peter Baren was born in the city of Haarlem in 1954. After studying painting at the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam, he has manifested himself as a performance artist from 1981 onwards. This development originated more or less in his performance at the opening of The Living Room, an exhibition centre that was the talk of the town at the time. At that opening, Peter Baren expressly presented himself as a performance artist. Exactly at a time when painting was renewed and intensified everywhere – ‘wild painting’, ‘new painting’ – Baren chose a different path, revealing himself as a performance artist with his own visual language. He is now in great demand to do presentations at international art manifestations and festivals all over the world. Peter Baren is an artist who, in his work, always uses poetic texts that are ritual in character, as well as strong images that are presented as a ritual; he often does so in cooperation with various participants. His complete oeuvre is a coherent whole and is of permanent value for the significance of performance art and for the position of Dutch visual art in an international circuit. From his Dutch background, Baren chiefly focuses on intercultural exchanges with his work.

In his work, Baren always bases himself on extensive research into the cultural essence of diverse ethnic images and customs. Because these are combined in a personal visual language, his presentations look like shamanistic acts that bring about a heightened level of concentration and a raising of consciousness – and all this is further enhanced by an active interaction between the performers and the audience. Baren’s performances always consist of a complex intertwining of eastern and western spiritual beliefs, which he then combines with similar views of traditional tribes on the one hand and those of contemporary subcultures on the other, while putting himself forward as medium.

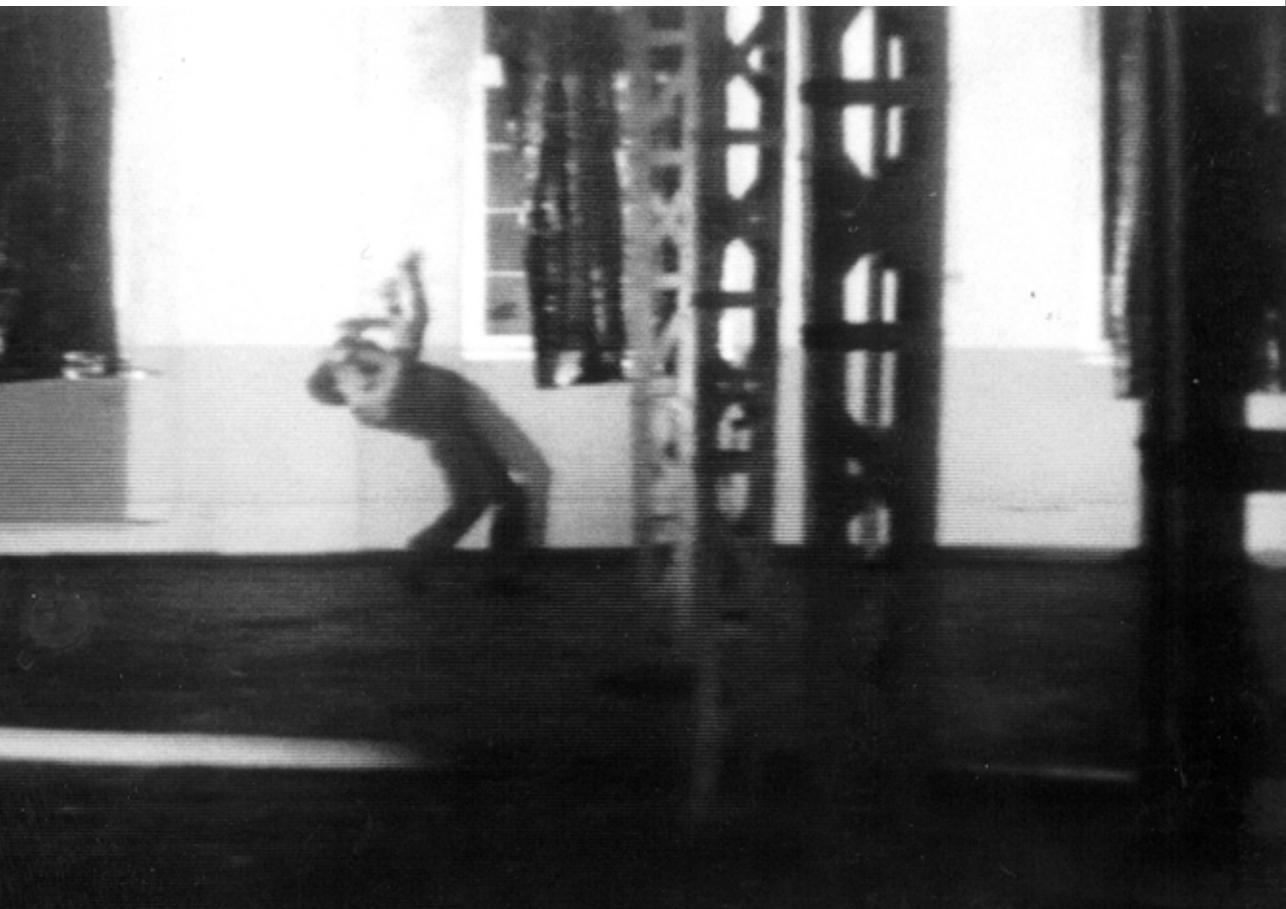
This publication offers the first compilation of Baren’s work; it features extensive visual documentation and also offers an insight into the intrinsic necessity of Peter Baren’s work and into its development over more than thirty years. Marga van Mechelen explores the context in which this development took shape. Alex de Vries places the work in the perspective of the developments in the avant garde of the performing arts. Finally, Bart Rutten enters upon a discussion with the artist about the latter’s motivations.



WESTERN MANTRA

Den Bosch NL, 1980

The exploration in Den Bosch bears the title 'Western Mantra'. In spite of the large space and a profusion of movement, the performance is over in 20 minutes. The montage of gesture and stance, which in themselves are scarcely related, takes place between steel pillars which form a barrier within the actual space. His black silhouette throws sharp contours onto the wall behind. The subtitle 'If You Are 21 We Can Have Some Fun' alludes to the first five minutes in particular, when the artist is throwing little darts from the top of one of the pillars into the circle of light, with the triangle made up of rows of guttering. The 21-year-old is absent, only the child is there. [Koos Dalstra, *Metropolis M*, Nr. 2, December 1981]



10 **THE LIVING ROOM** OR IS THE APPROACH HARDLY MORE IMPORTANT THAN ONE OF THE OBJECTS?

Amsterdam NL, 1981

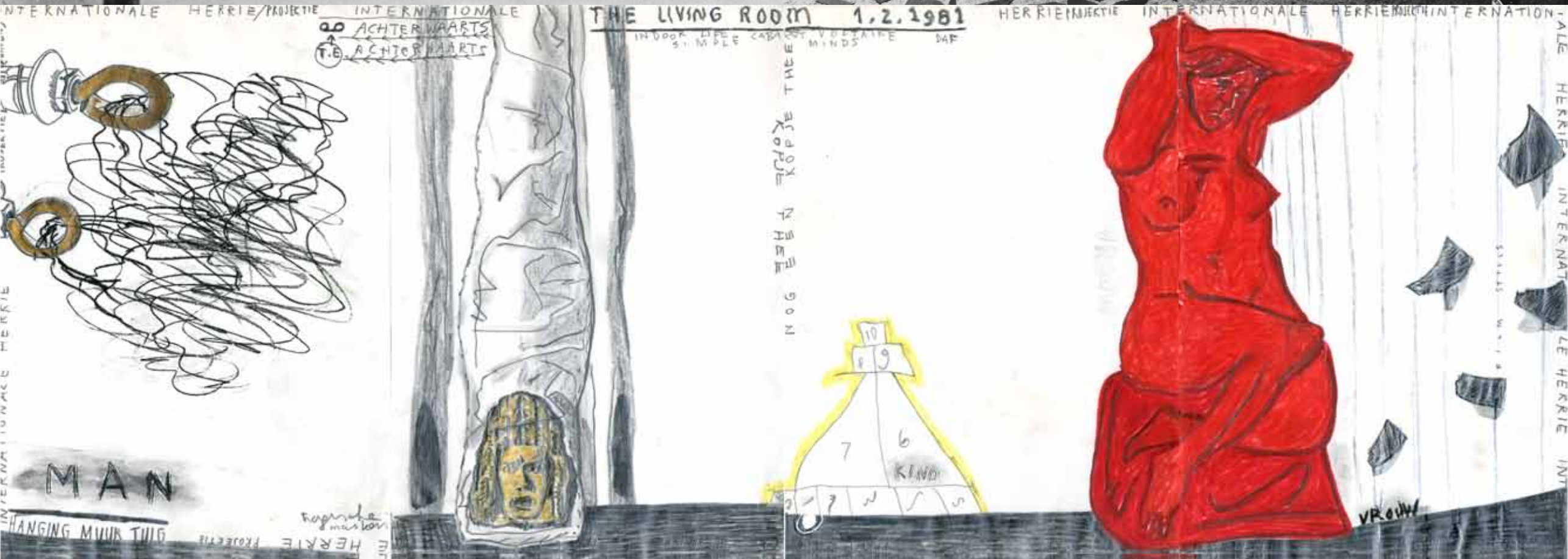
Peter Baren is hanging in the uppermost corner of a living room situated not far from the Royal Tropical Institute in Amsterdam. It is 1 February 1981. The Living Room opens with a performance. Two opposing projectors are throwing out light images; at knee-height dune landscapes appear, with the horizon and sky above. Electronic noises are reverberating from loudspeakers. In the small room, painted white, jam-packed with expectant onlookers, he is lifted onto hooks by three assistants and left suspended for 30 minutes; at first a filleted ceiling angel taken straight out of a classical freeze, then a hapless fly struggling to escape a web. Golden smudges have been smeared onto the walls with hands and feet.

The atmosphere, heavy with expectation, fills me with shame and I let my gaze drop. The floor leading to the dunes is studded with blue glass. Coming back via the same route, I arrive at a transparent plastic nimbus draped from ceiling to floor. In the circle seven masks of tragedy are weeping for a feminine sculpture on the floor.

I have been told that a literal interpretation of the name 'Living Room' forms the basis of this performance/installation. The gallery used to have the function of living room, the family domain. Somewhere in my mind the penny starts to drop: in its most elementary form the family consists of man, woman and child. I turn back to the set, this time in quest of the child. In a deserted corner over by the window I discover a pile of yellowing photographs featuring a group of cheeky little boys playing with hula hoops. The figuration is complete, the triangle closed. The masks weeping for the woman are supposed to represent the public.

[Koos Dalstra, *Metropolis M*. Nr. 2 December 1981]





14 GROUNDROOM LOST AND FOUND

Groningen / Eindhoven NL, 1981

The exploration takes place within the framework of a study in the ground room. The cellar lies under water, the public keep their feet dry thanks to a putty ridge. Baren, his eyes closed, is walking in a sea of light in front of the public, the line terminates and he steps into the water. Here and there, the reflection of broken umbrellas is seen. The artist, attired in a long coat, is wandering from object to object; a chair, bowed dumbbells, the head of a donkey, handkerchiefs, the wall. Sometimes gently laughing to himself, he puts up a finger in the air and declares 'Found'. Continuing, he wades through the water to another spot and we hear 'Lost'. The movements are slow and secretive. At the end of the series he is lying flat in the water, his hand under his chin. The concluding text: 'I Have Been Here Before'. An exploration of human dignity in undignified circumstances.

In Eindhoven this exploration is repeated in De Fabriek. Baren is leaning against a pillar, his head on his arms. The unavoidable impression is that he has no idea of where he is going or of what he is doing, but it is precisely this fact that allows him to move one step further. I realise that a visual artist can only comprehend stilled time or continuity, whereas an actor is only concerned with actual or unspatial time. [Koos Dalstra, *Metropolis M*. Nr. 2, December 1981]



16 EASTERN MANTRA

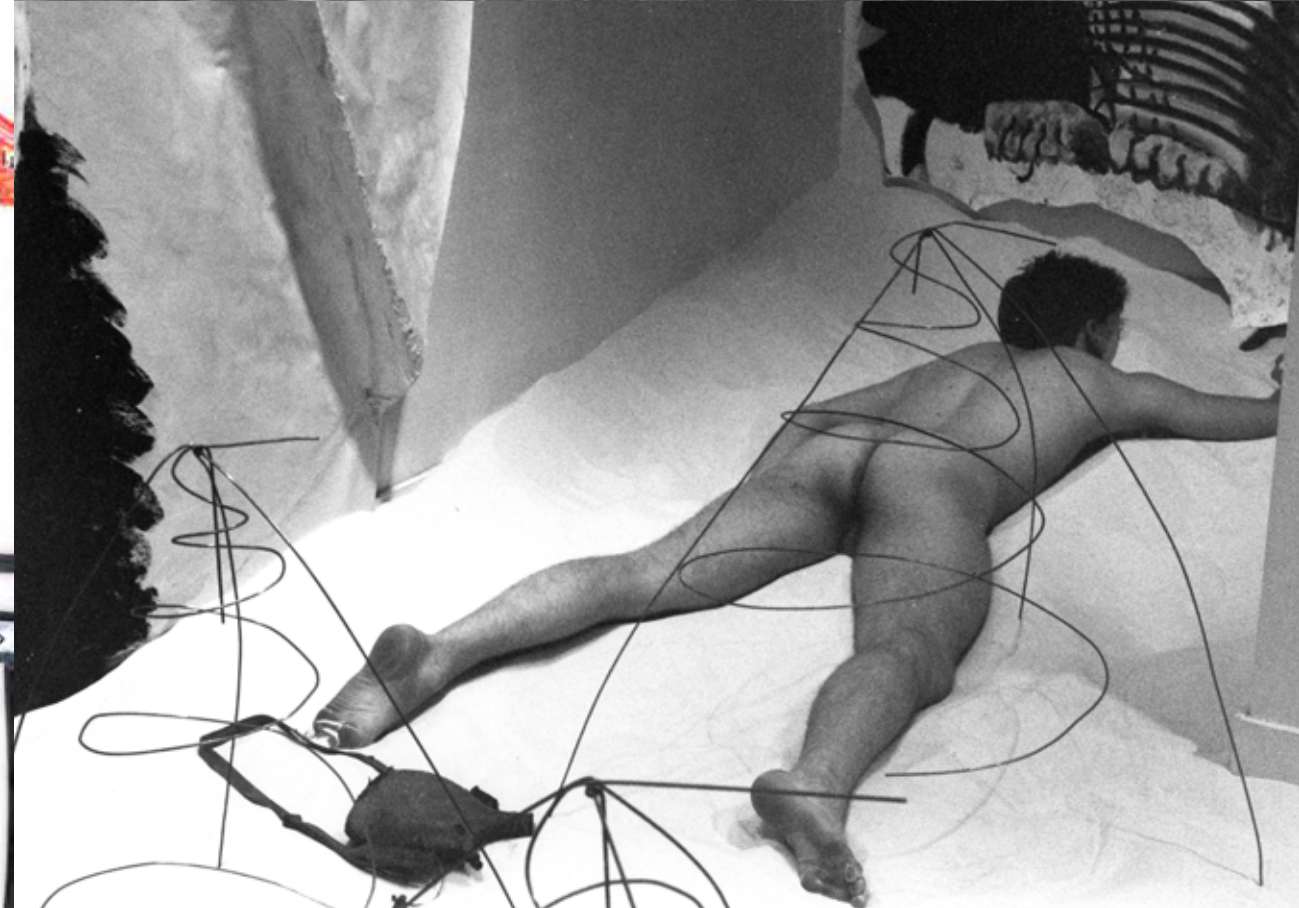
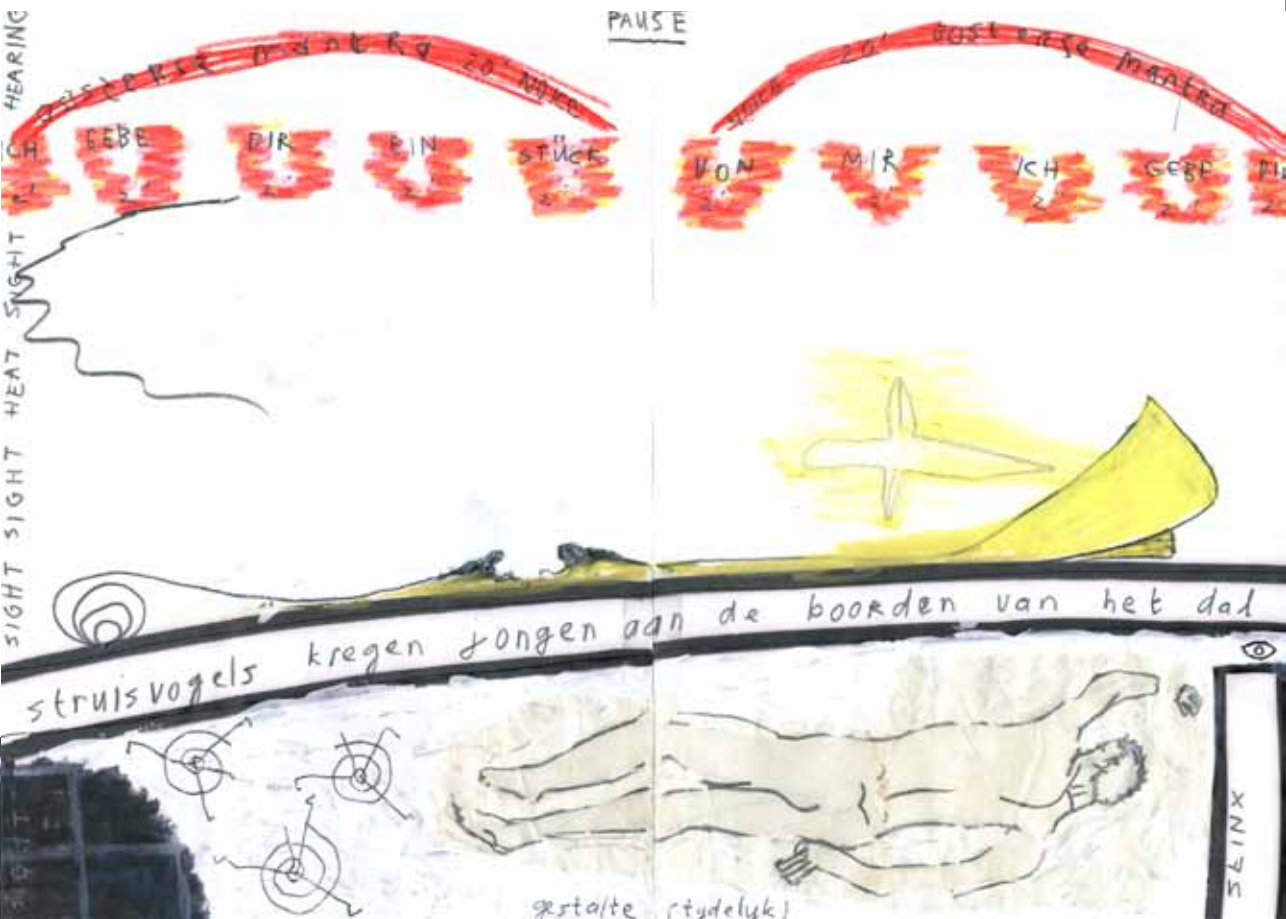
Rotterdam NL, 1981

In contrast to Den Bosch, the title 'Eastern Mantra' was opted for: the room is relatively small –30 square metres– by comparison, the duration is extremely long: the exploration continues for two weeks. This turn-about in fundamental dimensions is atmospherically amplified. The pillar rooms of factory and cellar –the submerged west– are replaced by intimate sandy areas found on the second floor of a house situated on a busy shopping street. The play on great and small is extended in the movement from open to closed. The gallery is virtually inaccessible, creating the impression of a sanctuary which no human eye has ever beheld. Through one narrow crack the observer is allowed a glimpse of the sepulchre, strewn with silver sand.

Upon entering the gallery the subtitle springs to mind: 'Ostriches Gave Birth To Young Ones On The Borders Of The Valley'. In the background a slowly beating pulse by DAF *Deutsch Amerikanische Freundschaft* ('Ich geb dir ein Stück von mir'): a constantly repeating tape dubbed with the international noise of Cabaret Voltaire ('Eastern Mantra'). I squint through the crack within. At the beginning of the deserted dunes I discover a sarcophagus. Walking inside on tiptoe, I feel the crunch of sand and see a set of four fragile constructions made of steel wire, rocking lethargically.

These must be the ostriches. Again I peer around the corner. A carelessly discarded field canister is lying in the sand, which is now at least half a metre high. In the furthest corner I diffidently notice a youth, his legs slightly splayed, his countenance buried deep in the fine sand. The figure is lying motionless. Above him, a sphinx is standing guard, its arms crossed.

[Koos Dalstra, *Metropolis M.* Nr. 2, December 1981]



18 **NEW CHINA RECONSTRUCTS DOMESTIC KIT**

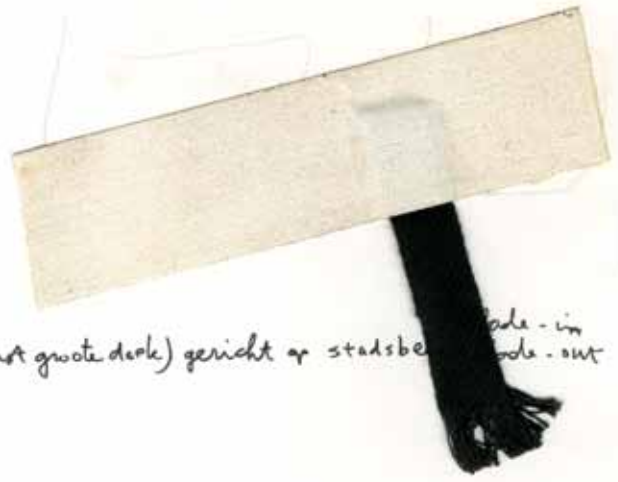
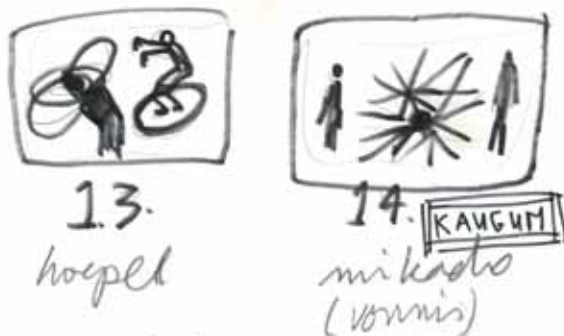
Amsterdam NL, 1982

This production shows facets from the life of Jiang Ging, Mao Tse-tung's widow, in nearly twenty scenes and is set against the background of her trial at the end of 1980.

The mikado game (spillikins) opens the cycle's images on the stage. Who has the most insight and the greatest dexterity in picking up the coloured sticks, in grasping power? The young Jiang Ging – still an actress at the time of her first meeting with Mao Tse-tung in 1926 – wins this game and then pictures appear, like a strip cartoon drawn in black and white, leading up to the notorious trial.

The players present the piece as 'a reconstruction of an attempt at regluing', in which the people in power want Mao's widow to confess that she has abused her position and then, out of gratitude, they will let her free. Her refusal to comply with these proposals means she thereby pronounces her own death sentence. The form of the trial and the events leading up to it take shape by means of a few simple props and the use of predominantly static images, which are often fine and sometimes tense. [Jan Baart, *Haarlems Dagblad*, 8 September 1982]





John gunsti (veer) → 1

2

cab. v. l. t. u. n. i. e. → 3

DAF. → 4

5

6

? → 7

8

WOLF → 9

10

MACHINE → 11. DONKER. +

WAVEN → 12. spot gericht in kabinet (p. schaduw valt over ti. heen, wanneer er passage is)

THIS HEAT → 13.

14.

NEW DOMESTIC KIT - 1982

side - in
side - out
DONKER.

(machine licht)



WIRRA SERIES 1982-1983

In collaboration with Koos Dalstra. In this series Baren and Dalstra manipulate this Wirra motif (the boomerang) in different ways. It is used in the figurative sense. A characteristic feature of boomerangs is that they return to their thrower. It is a means of making small excursions, for instance, to call up recollections which are then covered up again immediately afterwards. [Albert van der Weide, GBK magazine nr. 43, January 1983]

WIRRA 1 PARI MUTUEL

Amsterdam NL, 1982

During a crowded opening, there is a lot of hustle and bustle of people present; two figures detach themselves and walk into two spotlights. The two figures become engaged in a short, strategic game of interaction. Performed in sign language, the action reaches its climax with a wirra (boomerang) being thrown, but the action is transposed into sound. The figures freeze in their poses before disappearing into the crowd again. [PB]

Wagnoesstraat 139 AMSTERDAM
16.1 [23.1] 1982

tijdelijke exploratie

PARI MUTUEL » WIRRA «
PETER BAREN / KOOS DALSTRA
NO.1



• IN CARRYING OUT THE PLAN FROM THE MOMENT IT IS PUT INTO EFFECT TO THE END OF THE OPERATION, THERE IS ANOTHER PROCESS OF KNOWING THE SITUATION, NAMELY, THE PROCESS OF PRACTICE. IN THE COURSE OF THIS PRACTICE IT IS NECESSARY TO EXAMINE ANEW WHETHER THE PLAN WORKED OUT IN THE PRECEDING PROCESS CORRESPONDS WITH REALITY. IF IT DOES NOT CORRESPOND WITH REALITY OR IF IT DOES NOT FULLY DO SO, THEN IN THE LIGHT OF OUR NEW KNOWLEDGE, IT BECOMES NECESSARY TO FORM NEW JUDGEMENTS, MAKE NEW DECISIONS AND CHANGE THE ORIGINAL PLAN SO AS TO MEET THE SITUATION.

• THE ABOVE APPLIES TO A STRATEGIC ACTION, A CAMPAIGN OR A BATTLE! FROM SELECTED WRITINGS OF MAO TSE-TUNG VOLUME 1, 1936

Handwritten notes and diagrams for the Wirra performance. The notes are organized into two columns, each starting with 'BEGIN:' and numbered steps 0 through 6. The diagrams show a person's silhouette within a yellow triangular spotlight, with various poses and actions. The text includes instructions like 'FADE IN SPOT 1', 'WIJZEND ERHUYT NAAR 1', 'WIRRA GETROID TOEVAAR VERGROEID (VUUREN)', 'GESLOTEN HAND VOOR DOEST WIERA LANG LICHAAM', 'OPEN HAND (rearing) (VUURE)', 'NAAR WERF POSITIE: NIEK WIERA GEZICHT EN BEHOUD IN WERK POSITIE', 'FADE OUT NA 5'', 'DOKKER', 'DOKKER/EN', and 'DIE KLEINEN UND DIE BÄSEN'. There are also small sketches of a boomerang and a dog.

» WIRRA « NO. 1

Peter Baren / Koos Dalstra
WIRRA (RELATIE) 139 AMSTERDAM

DIE KLEINEN UND DIE BÄSEN

• kunstgaler met reproducible van gest.
• kunstgaler met disposable van gest.
peter Baren 1982-2



24 **WIRRA 2 THE RETURNING TYPE**

Den Bosch NL, 1982

The performance started inside, with both figures undressing, putting on a cotton thong and donning facial skull painting. Before going out, the two figures covered each other's body with oil. One figure lay down in front of a wooden pole with his hand stretched out. A wirra was on top of this pole. At this point the other took the wirra and left the building. After a while the recumbent figure started to move and stood up. The pose he showed was one of screaming without making any sound, hand over his mouth. After that he took a black cloth with him and also went outside. In the meantime, the other figure was throwing the wirra in the Market Square.

The second figure followed him with this cloth until he was close enough to cover him with it and then he brought him back inside. In reverse, the action finished with both figures cleaning their faces and bodies; then they changed into their clothes and mingled with the people present. This performance was repeated once more during the evening. [PB]



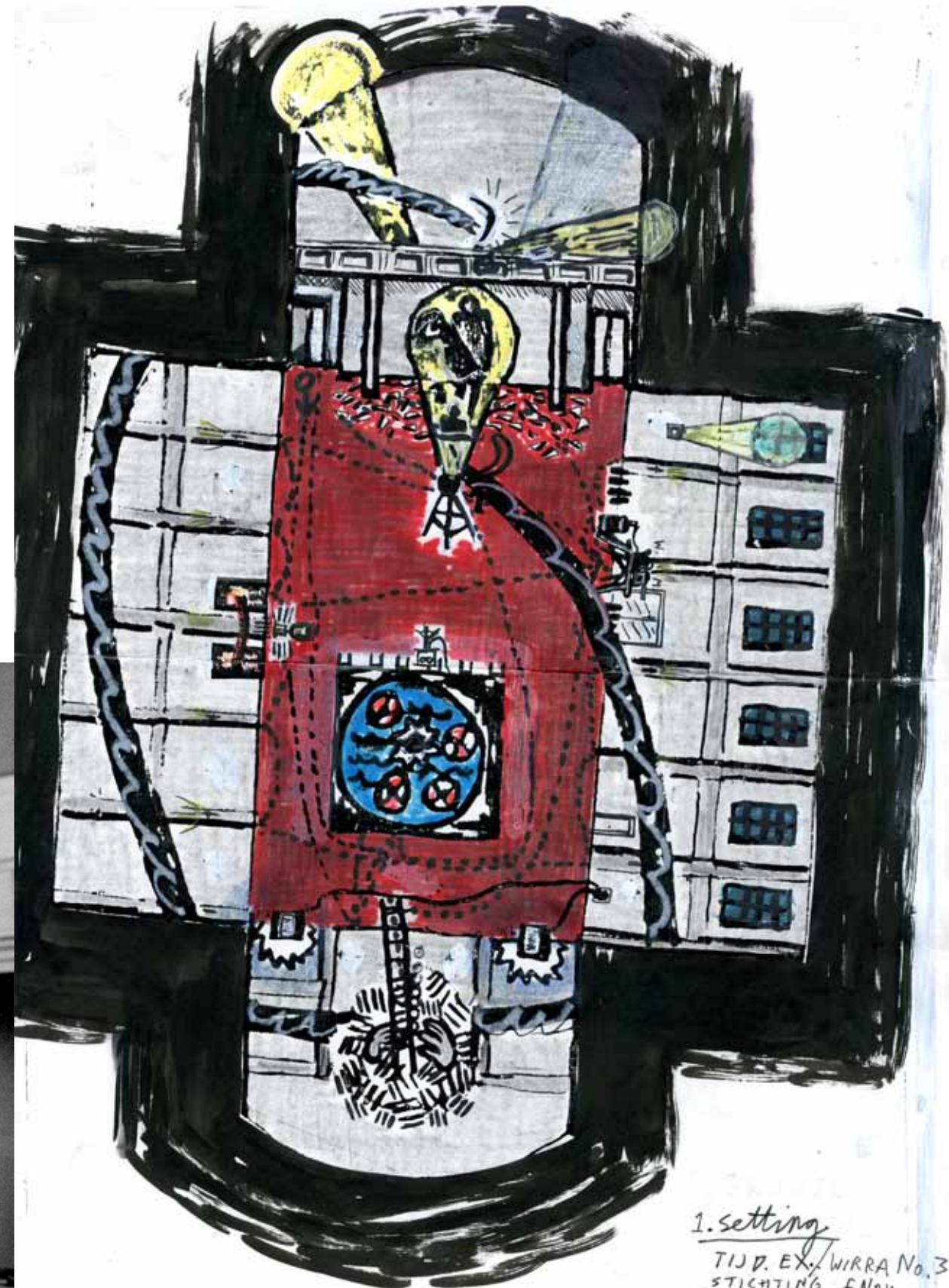
WIRRA 3 THE GREAT KNEEFALL

Tilburg NL, 1982

In a former chapel two major actions were performed. Over a period of six evenings, one figure depicted a wall-painting showing two hands holding a rosary, while the other was holding a lecture in a water basin, reading from plasticised text sheets floating around on the water. The following evenings, with the use of recorded material from the previous performance, spoken phrases were dubbed and re-used, in order to play with delayed synchronicity.

Fragment from the lecture entitled 'Golf Praxis' (Wave Praxis): "By means of this model we are able to show how a wave of agitation is built up, for instance. The vertical axis conveys the intensity of the mood. The latter varies from a desire for safety, the positive pole, to a fear of danger, the negative pole. With a maximum of safety, the fear of danger is minimal, with a minimum of safety, the desire for safety is maximal (...)."

Other minor actions consisted of the actors blowing canned spray of pure air into the space (Keep Your Vacuums Clean). In order to take care of the lecturer, the temperature in the water basin being quite low, water was boiled in the space and every now and then a kettleful of hot water was poured in, close to the figure. Towards the end, burnt milk gave the performance a sinister twist. [PB]



1. setting
 TIJD. EX. WIRRA No. 3
 STICHTING ENNU
 TILBURG APRIL 1982

PANORAMA FAULHORN CONCERT / BENEFIT FROM THE HIGHTREE

Tilburg NL, 1982

The visitors stand waiting in ENNU's long corridor. Suddenly, a young man appears, wearing a ski suit, with skis slung over his shoulder. It is writer/poet Koos Dalstra. With this beginning, he sets the course the performance is going to take. After a series of movements, (which look like a warming up) he opens the door to the performance space. After carefully looking around, my eyes light upon a track of artificial snow and a track of green soap. Other details include: islands with (for instance) uniform jackets, a pole, uncultivated coconuts, a light box with a factory complex, and large wall paintings. Wind directions have been set out on the walls in the corners. Lines of flames have been drawn above the central heating, but these could just as well be waves. On the balcony I see a person painted in silhouette, who is waving to the visitors below. Pleasant music (Rip Rig & Panic) is drifting up from a hatch in the floor and is experienced by vibrations through the soles of my feet.

When Dalstra's skis are buckled on, I see visual artist Peter Baren lying curled up. He, too, begins to move. He has a painted plaster eagle with him. They follow their own routes: Baren moving barefoot across the artificial snow, Dalstra on skis across the green soap. Dalstra is moving as if he is making a fast descent. Baren is teaching the eagle to fly, making signals, banging on coconuts. The two men have no contact with each other. They are in the same space but are working at different levels of consciousness.

[Albert van der Weide, *GBK Magazine* nr. 43, January 1983]



5 STATIEVEN
 10 SPOTS
 VERLENGSN. 10 mtr.
 VERLENGSN. 20 mtr.
 FILTERS ROOD/geel/Blauw...
 GROEN 2

HOLLAND EQUIPMENT

IN
UIT

JAGER

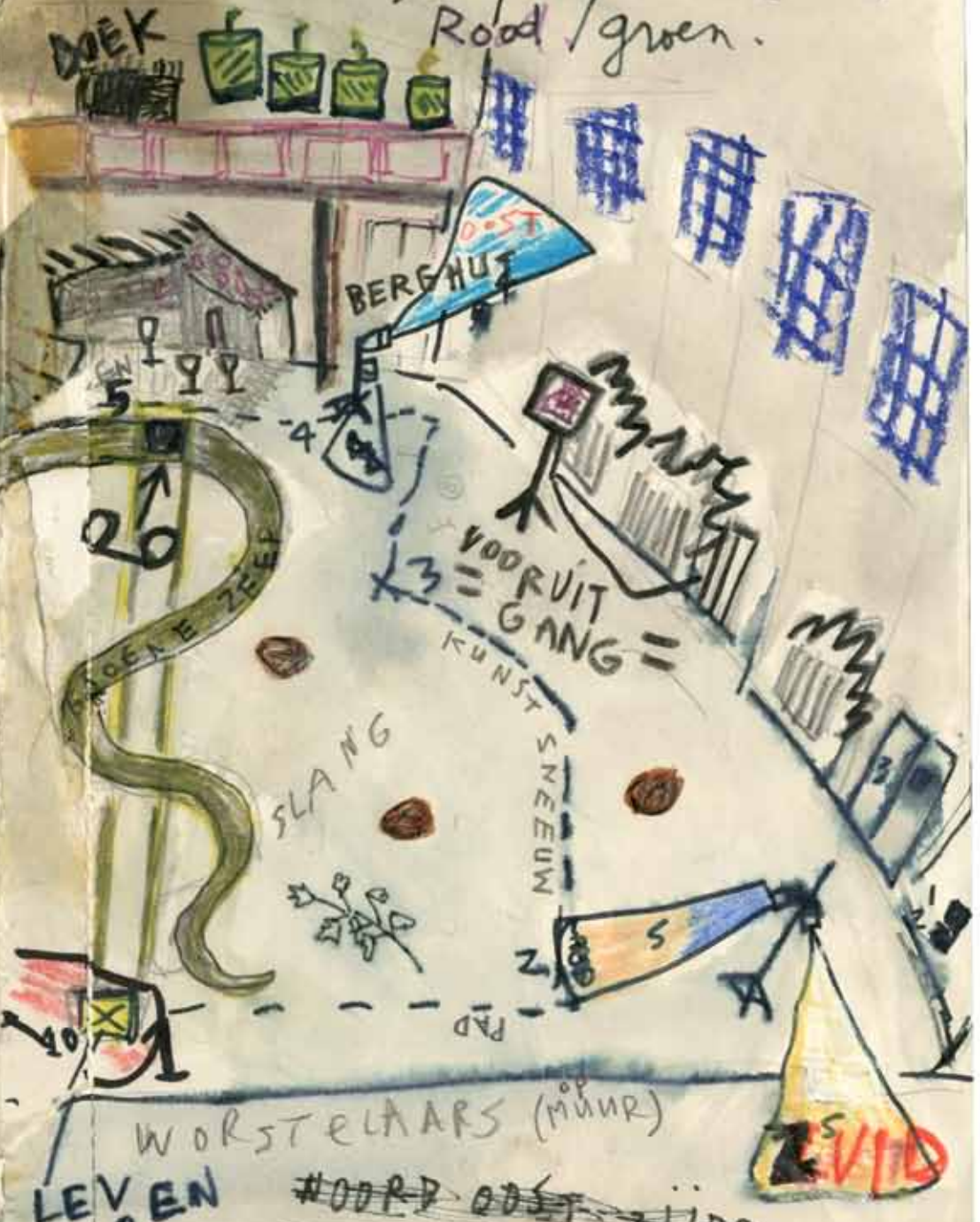
persoon die Bengaals vuur.
 aansteekt de één
 (uit) na de ander (aan)
 Rood/groen.

tekst tekst

RIP RIG
 & PANIC



PANARANA FAULHORN 1982



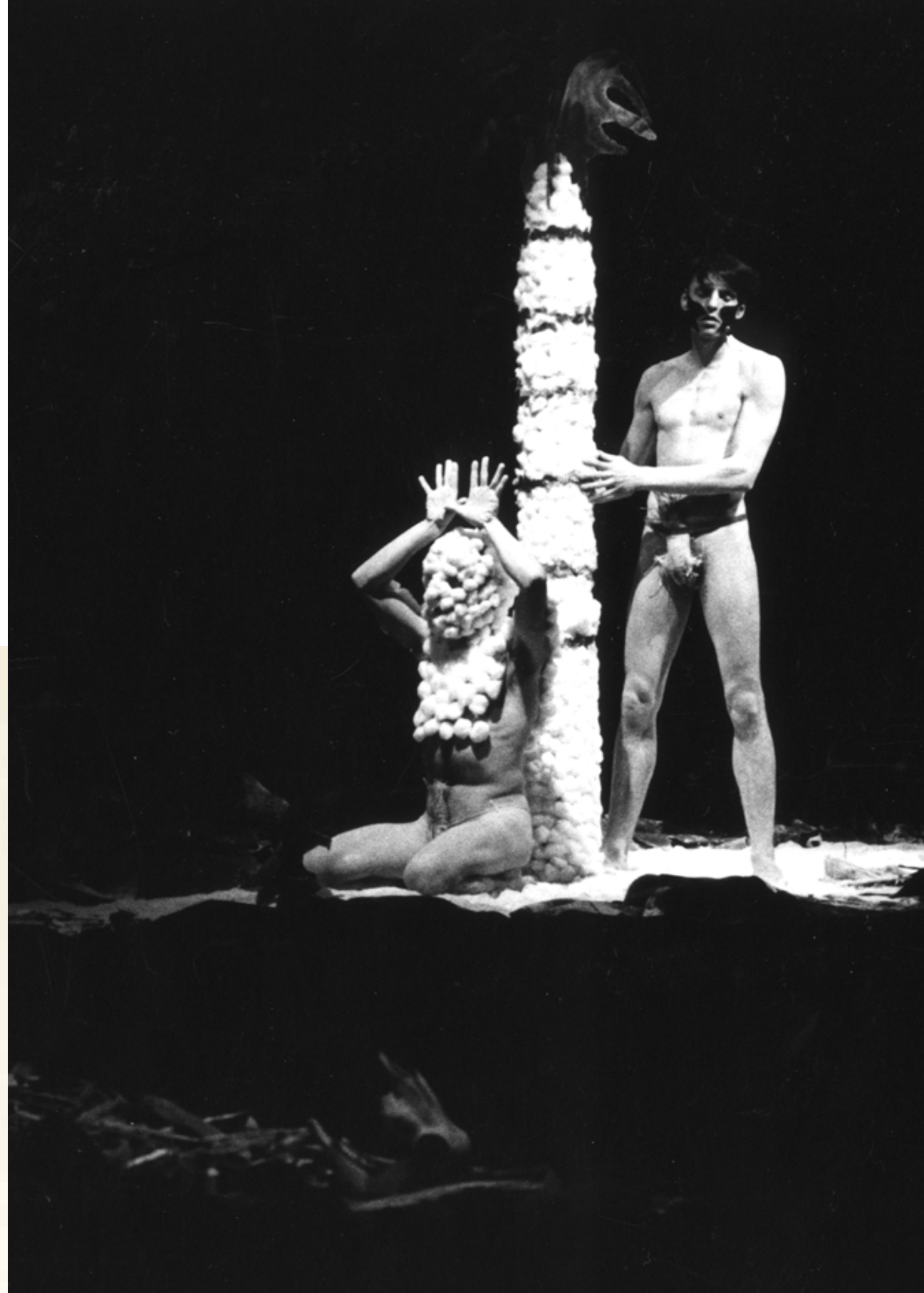
WORSTELTAARS (MUR)
 LEVEN & DOOD
 #OORP OOST ZIJDE
 KONCERT studie II

WIRRA 6 PANORAMA FAULHORN / MUSEUM OF MANKIND

Rotterdam NL, 1983

Peepshow and jukebox. During the performance the image is silenced and the spot-light picks out the machine, above which the word 'Throw-in' is visible. The show only goes on after a spectator has thrown in money. We ourselves determine what we want to see of this Faulhorn. The floor is littered with old Swiss army coats from dump stores. In the middle there is sawdust and a pole covered with balls of cotton wool (totempole, penis?). On the walls you can find the following directions: 'Test Your Abilities Here. Are You Fast Or Slow? Do Not Overestimate Yourself'. In the sawdust in front of the pole there is a figure dressed in some cotton wool, who boasts a large penis gourd. He is on his knees. He is the embodiment of the declamations of the man standing beside him, who is only wearing a rather large penis gourd, and who seems to be directing adjurations at a stone eagle positioned in front of him. The music is modern and haunting, full of rhythm and dark melodies. Attention. You are now entering the museum of mankind. An exhibition of notions such as primordial and passion.

[Paul Evers, *Perfotijd catalogue*]



Shape · up.
OR ·
ship · out

RIP RIG
& panic

ofo

lantaren/venster//Rotterdam / APRIL 1983

Silhouettes Like Shivering Ancient Feelings



ABEGGS
IM WALD
DA LIEGEN WIR
VERWILDET
REDUZIERT
DEIN WALD
ES HÖRT
IM RAUM
DEIN FRAGE
STREIHT
DEN TIEFSTEN
MÜNCHEN
DEIN RAFFINIERT
GEIST
ER SPÜRT DIE KONTE
TREIBT DINE
KURZSCHLUSSE MENSCH
SCHWALZ IM LICH
DIE SÜNNE

FIEBER
DER NASSE FREUND
GREIFT AN
VERBRENT METAL
UND TRIST
KEIN MITLEID
PER UNS ALLE
DEIN RAUM
IST HELTERNET
DU RICHT NACH VORN
DEIN BÄCKEN ZURECHT
IM NACKTES
SCHMEIGEN

amsterdam : AORTA



Marga van Mechelen (1953) read history of art and philosophy of language at the universities of Nijmegen and Groningen. During her studies she taught methodology and philosophy of art for a short period of time, at the Catholic University of Nijmegen. From 1978 to 1980 she was employed at the college of education in Utrecht, after which she obtained her current position at the University of Amsterdam, with the developments in the theory of art from the seventies onwards forming her special field of research. At an early stage, she specialised in the fields of conceptual art, performance art and installation art, as well as conducting historiographic and semiotic research. She published several articles on the theoretical concepts of the French psychosemiotologist Julia Kristeva. In 1993, her research resulted in her doctorate dissertation entitled *Form and Meaning: History of Art, Semiotics, Semanalysis*. In 2006 she published an extensive monograph on the legendary history of Foundation De Appel. *Performances, Installations, Video, Projects, 1975-1983*. She is a member of ASCA (Amsterdam School of Cultural Analysis), a member of the board of AICA Netherlands, a member of the Executive Committee of the International Association for Semiotic Studies (IASS/AIS), a member of the International Scientific Board of the International Association for Visual Semiotics (IAVS/AISV).

Silhouettes Like Shivering Ancient Feelings

What can have been the reason for an artist –Peter Baren in this case– to embark on a career as a performance artist in 1981? Why in that year, exactly, and why in the Netherlands? The artist has never been able to come up with an answer to these questions, but there is no doubt that the influence of the innovations in the theatre taking place at the time, played a part in it.¹

We could point out that it was 'pure chance', that 1981 happened to be the year in which a new exhibition centre, The Living Room, was opened by artists he knew well, who invited him to perform the opening ceremony. We can put it into perspective, for was it possible for him to know at the time that he would still be doing performances over 30 years later, and even would almost exclusively be doing performances after 2004? But more important than answers like these is the question itself, in this context at least. And why this question? In order to put this into perspective, we should go through a few facts and observations first.

The performance artist

Peter Baren is one of the very few Dutch artists who came upon the stage as a performance artist around 1980 and one of the very few who has continually been doing performances to this very day and who is 'still' going at it. This does not mean that Peter Baren confines himself to doing performances only, his other works, like drawings, in the shape of sketches and 'reports', and photographic works and installations, are all closely linked to his performances. His installations show the performative traits that are regularly noted in relation to a great deal of contemporary art. The phrase 'still' is a curious one, because it is an observation that would not often be used with regard to a painter or sculptor, as it would be with regard to performance artists, especially if we imagine ourselves to be in the situation of that particular moment.

In 1975, De Appel was founded in Amsterdam, a foundation aiming at bringing the public into contact with performances. In three years' time De Appel earned itself a considerable international reputation for being the hot spot for performance art and for what was then still called 'environments'. However, within four years after its foundation, it became clear to both the management and the artists most closely involved, that artists were shifting their attention to other media, while performance art was seemingly wearing itself thin. Installations and multidisciplinary projects, as well as

40 video productions, started to play an ever larger role.² In retrospect, this seems to be a conclusion drawn too quickly, for a number of these artists are still 'performing'. One of these is Marina Abramovic, undoubtedly the most influential and important advocate of performance art. However, this was the situation Peter Baren was confronted with. In 1975, when De Appel was founded, Baren was a student at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam, which in those days was an institute not exactly famous for being innovative. As far as I know, there was no –or hardly any– contact between the Rijksakademie and the circle of performance artists belonging to De Appel, whereas they did have contact with art institutes like AKI in Enschede and Jan van Eyck in Maastricht. Yet, Baren paid a visit to De Appel, attending Ben d'Armagnac's performance, which took place in June 1975, two months after De Appel opened. D'Armagnac enjoyed a certain amount of fame with the Dutch art public, because of his performances and installations in Mickery Loenersloot and the Goethe Institute in Amsterdam, among other things. Two years later the Dutch contribution to performance art had expanded and actually consolidated itself at the same time. After 1976, hardly any new names of Dutch performance artists were added to the list, at least in De Appel's stable. In 1981 De Appel underwent a far-reaching change of direction: the doors were to be open to the public for two days a week only and only for the purpose of consulting documentation on the spot. The staff concentrated on initiating and supervising –sometimes– 'invisible' projects that were realised elsewhere, in spite of the fact that many requests by performance artists were still streaming in. In 1981, the debut of a young Dutch artist like Peter Baren did not fit in De Appel's new programme any longer.

The Living Room

One of the arguments De Appel used to base its change in direction on was that other presentation institutes had taken over the role that De Appel had played for six years.³ There is no question that this was the case, but the fact remains that performance as an art form disappeared from the centre of attention. Certainly, there are very few moments in the history of modern art that feature such a radical and visible change as took place in that year: from a widespread interest in performance art on the one hand, to a complete disappearance of said interest, especially in the media, on the

41 other. De Appel's change in direction may be said to lie at the root of the problem, but it was definitely not the sole cause. De Appel's programme had always been able to count on the editors of papers like *Museumjournaal*, *NRC/Handelsblad* and *de Volkskrant* to show an enthusiastic interest, something which can clearly be seen on the covers of *Museumjournaal*, and this attitude completely changed practically overnight.⁴ An equally important reason was the increasing number of artists who sought out the old media –like painting and sculpture– again, and who could fall back on the well-known commercial channels, even though these were few and far between in the Netherlands at the time.

In 1981 the country was hit by a recession, which meant high inflation and unemployment rates and large budget deficits. The State Secretary of Culture, member of the Dutch Labour Party (PvdA) André van der Louw, had to come up with an answer to all this, but the real answer came a year later, with Elco Brinkman becoming minister of Public Health and Culture; he started advocating top art unreservedly, which resulted in a narrowing of the art on offer and which forced the art market to shoulder a greater responsibility. Certain art circles, however, and not the smallest ones either, remained curious and eager to experience new initiatives. One of those new initiatives was The Living Room: Bart van de Ven's and Peer Veneman's living room on the third storey of 5 Wagenaar Street, which in 1981 was given the added function of exhibition centre. In fact, this was quite an urbane initiative compared to the many other initiatives that were launched in squats during the following years, which were usually named after the location, the street and/or house number or its original function. W 139, located on Warmoes Street in Amsterdam, and De Fabriek in Eindhoven are two examples of this, and were both established in 1980; V2 in 's Hertogenbosch dates from the same year as The Living Room, but other initiatives, like Aorta in Amsterdam, de Paraplufabriek in Nijmegen, Hooghuis en Oceaan in Arnhem, were not in existence yet. It is true that artists had been living in squats for ten years, in Amsterdam especially, but it was not until the squatters had been violently evicted from Vondel Street in 1980 that the squat as a cultural hot spot really became the centre of attention. Two years later, The Living Room moved into an old plumber's workshop, a place Bart van de Ven was able to rent cheaply – so it was not a squat. The fact that The Living Room came to be –in Tineke Reijnders' words– 'the talk of the town', was perhaps due to its being bicoloured. It was an alternative gallery, where

▶ 10

▶ 14

42 –just like at De Appel– it was possible to establish a personal contact with the owners, the artists and the visitors, and it was also a place where one had the feeling one could still come into closer contact with other subcultures as well as with the wider, typical Amsterdam art scene. A remnant of that homey smell also clung to the performance with which Peter Baren added lustre to the opening.⁵

The Living Room Or Is The Approach Hardly More Important Than One Of The Objects?

Baren's performance was not a beginner's performance, even though all kinds of things went wrong. It was not well thought-out whether for the performer should be suspended in the air before the audience came in or whether that should happen after everybody had got inside. Actually, the performer was supposed to be no more than 'a subject' in space. Last-minute decisions proved to be the deciding factor, meaning that Baren, secured in a trapeze harness, had to be hoisted into the air twice. Cabaret Voltaire, This Heat, Durutti Column, Eyeless in Gaza and Indoor Life had been chosen as background music, but the tape recorder literally worked back to front, spitting out a hellish, electronic splutter instead. These are but details, which we do not think all that important at present. Our focus is on the concept, rather –for I cannot speak from my own experience in this, having not been in the audience– as well as on Koos Dalstra's rather detailed description, which was published in *Metropolis M* at the end of that year.⁶

The location: the living room of an apartment at 5 Wagenaar Street. The date: Sunday afternoon, February 1. The props: rotary cases with slides projecting light images –of dune landscapes familiar to Baren– aslant upon the wall, a path made of blue glass shards on the floor, masks, a female torso (plaster cast), old yellowed photographs (stills of children playing with hoops), a tape recorder. The action: the performer smearing smudges on the wall with gold-painted hands and feet. Two times 20 minutes he is hanging there, like a cherub at times and sometimes also like 'a desperate fly trying its utmost to escape from a spider's web'.⁷ This information will do for the moment: it was enough to show me, as did his later performances, that with this performance he defined himself, even though certain elements reminded one of performances given by other artists. Undoubtedly, the most important feature of the performance was the way in which Baren framed a

43 space within a space, the figure up high defining the vertical dimension, and the path made of glass shards defining the horizontal dimensions. In the large-scale performance 'Stations Of Nameless Energy, Silhouettes Like Shivering Ancient Feelings' in De Fabriek in Eindhoven, six years later, the majority of performers, secured in harnesses, were hanging above scaffolding, thus creating a performance block in the surrounding space, which people could visit in shifts, each lasting a couple of hours; this framing of space could also be seen in 'We Want To Lose Our Heads For Anything In Time' (Chisenhale Gallery and Dance Space, London 1988, Arti & Amicitiae, Amsterdam and Shedhalle Zurich 1989), in which scraps of paper covered –and hence demarcated– the floor, and bunches of balloons fastened to the long hair of the eight performers, defined the height. In a performance of his that I watched in 2009, in Frascati, during The Manifold (after) Lives of Performance, organised by De Appel and STUK kunstencentrum Leuven, Baren created this effect via a completely different route. There, (theatre) mist filled up the location of the performance. Baren's aim was to achieve a paradoxical experience: a stimulation of all senses by obstructing vision.⁸ At times Baren strove for the higher levels in a more symbolical manner, by using ritual objects, like the wirra, a boomerang or, rather in a more literal sense, by choosing to work with towers – but that is quite another matter. The examples given here also show that a performance could be done by other performers than the artist – in these examples people of flesh and blood, but sometimes in other performances and installations, they could also be dummies. Is it possible that this has something to do with 'the characterless compression in Baren's work', as Dalstra called it, in reference to Robert Musil's *The Man Without Qualities*?⁹ For Baren, in any case, it does not *necessarily* have to be the artist himself who is doing the performance. But Dalstra's observation goes beyond that: all he is concerned about is the post-romantic artist Baren for whom 'doing performances is a profession and not life itself'. 'No longer an emotional drama for the sake of a few of the initiated, taking place in a holy of holies.'¹⁰

A performer of a new generation

Dalstra's observations create a schism between Baren –as a performance artist– and the somewhat older type of performance artist for whom the performance indeed constituted life itself, in the shape of an emotional drama, to be seen in places manifesting themselves as sacred spaces.

De Appel, maybe, that white cell(a) in the back of that warehouse on Brouwersgracht? Dalstra phrased it even more crudely: 'Suicide as an artistic act is senseless, because it is taken from real life and stands in the way of the continuity of the profession.'¹¹ Dalstra, who was doing performances together with Baren at the time, seems to be talking here on Baren's behalf as well. Strikingly, Albert van der Weide, a performance artist somewhat older than Dalstra and Baren, quoted Dalstra's exact remarks in his review of the performance 'Wirra', performed for the ENNU Foundation Tilburg (*GBK magazine*, January 1983). So do the three of them want to emphatically distinguish, if not distance, themselves from an older generation of performance artists clearly modelled on Ben d'Armagnac? In what way and to what extent exactly are Baren's performances different? Looking at his performance in *The Living Room* again, we are struck with the difference in context first. It is true, *The Living Room*, like *De Appel*, aimed at facilitating a more personal contact with its visitors, but this living room could not be called a sacred space by any stretch of the imagination. In addition, the context among artists working with different media – painting and sculpture – created a completely different atmosphere. As is obvious from his later career, Baren easily hopped from one art context to another, from for instance the theatre (on location) or dancing to the artists' initiative, to more official art institutes like a museum or to public space. I think that the different atmosphere or mood, which the audience could definitely pick up on, was the determining factor in our feeling that we were indeed dealing with a new generation of performers here. This impression was undoubtedly strengthened by some objective factors as well, like the use of both contemporary music and music usually associated with the artist and his scene, and the use of 'neutral' assistants as performers. Yet we also come across various motifs that played a striking role in performances by the elder generation, though these were not always used in the period before Baren started out, and sometimes later. I am thinking of the boomerang, the hands painted gold, bandages, masks – spiritual elements, enhanced by titles like *Western Mantra* and *Eastern Mantra*, but set off by almost prosaic elements creating – in that particular context – an effect of both estrangement and irony at the same time, like a performer skiing down a path of green soap or the troating of a rutting buck issuing from the Mint Tower in Amsterdam, as was to be heard in a memorable light and sound installation during *Century 87*, for instance.

▶ 30

▶ 52

▶ 8, 16

▶ 60

In the eighties contemporary art went the alternative route. It was also a period in which artists' initiatives came to be ever more important and numerous festivals were organised to accommodate the more contemporary media like video and performance art – quite often out of sheer necessity, by the way.¹² A case in point was the festival *Perfotijd* (*Perfotime*), which took place in Rotterdam in *Lantaren/Venster* from 1983 onwards, with Wink van Kempen as its initiator. Baren was present at the first (with Koos Dalstra) and third edition *Perfo 3: A kind of beauty*. The theme of the second performance was *Dutch Gravity* and the first space flight undertaken by a Dutch astronaut: Wubbo Ockels.¹³ In addition to what I have mentioned earlier, I was struck by two things: whereas the first edition still featured a mixture of the older generation of internationally acclaimed performance artists like Chris Burden and James Lee Byars and younger, unknown artists, the third edition had a large number of both performances and installations and concerts on offer. The list of artists invited included only one name belonging to an older artist of international repute: Mierle Laderman Ukeles (1939). It is clear from Van Kempen's words and from the words of the festival critics that people were eager to emphasise the difference between performances from the sixties and seventies and those from the eighties: 'the amusement component has become more important. References to television and to entertainment, as well as an ironic sense of humour, are important, new ingredients. Artful acting takes the place of hard action; the performance is allowed to be a "beautiful" theatrical product.' (Jan Middeldorp in *De Volkskrant*, May 13, 1985). The difference between the theatre and the performance as visual art was still pointed out, a description that was well-fitted to Baren's position in this. However, he did not shun the theatre, as may be inferred from his taking part in *Hamlet (A Portrait)* by Stuart Sherman, which was performed in *Mickery Amsterdam* at the *Holland Festival* (1981) and '*New China Reconstructs Domestic Kit*', together with dancer and choreographer Truus Bronkhorst and poet and criminologist Koos Dalstra, at the *Shaffy Theatre* (1982).¹⁴

▶ 18

The location commissioning the art work

One of the most important developments in eighties' art in general was the art work being commissioned by the location. First let me explain what I mean by this in order to then list a number of examples from Peter Baren's oeuvre; the examples in point are (performing) installations mostly. The

46 formulation comprises two different fields, which, however, completely and neatly overlap in Baren's work: 1. Curators commissioning –for some manifestation or other– a work that is to focus on a certain theme or on a certain location, and 2. Institutes unrelated to art or government authorities commissioning a more permanent work of art for a public place. The development of both shifted the focus from art-immanent questions and personal, artist-bound themes, to themes with which the artist wanted to enter into a dialogue with a place, a client and an audience. As for the first category, the difference may perhaps be said to be a gradual one, in regard to the autonomy of the traditional situation, that is to say the artist exhibiting his paintings in a gallery or museum. However, this difference is more pronounced as soon as one focuses on the performance in this new context, comparing it to the performance of ten years before. The loss or absence of autonomy was intrinsic to the second category, but in Baren's work both categories –government commissions and curators' commissions for temporary manifestations– were in line. I have already mentioned his installation in the Mint Tower during Century 87; his contribution to a project organised by Franck Gribling, called 'Etant Donnés. Peepshows by artists' (1988-1989) in City Thoughts, situated on 131 Oudezijds Voorburgwal, smack in the middle of the Amsterdam red-light district, also belongs in this category. Baren tried to lure the passers-by with the following text, written on the front door in giant letters: You're My Baby, You're My Favourite Waste Of Time. Between three peepholes in the door there was a 'proviso' written in block letters, in two languages: For Your Eyes Only. Through the highest peephole you could see a stone turning round and round, through the two other peepholes you could see two identical pictures of a schizophrenic mental patient, forming each other's mirror image. The radio was on, tuned in to Hilversum 3.¹⁵ A much larger project in 1988, at which the social context was complemented by a politico-historical context, was 'Echo Of Histyria, Or The Man On The Clock' and 'Island Of Lost Souls' in Graz, in which the Nazi history of this Austrian city was the predominant theme. Bezugspunkte 1938-1988 was the title of the main exhibition Baren participated in during this yearly festival called Steirischer Herbst – about guilt and innocence of art (the theme of that year)¹⁶. Baren strung up a performer on one of the hands of the city clock, which had been stopped – this time the performer was a more than lifesize dummy dressed in an ordinary men's suit. This caused the time to stop at five minutes to 12. In the station hall Baren

▶ 72

▶ 74

▶ 74 would have loved to create –in the presence of the passers-by– the 'Island Of Lost Souls', a hand painted picture based on an advertisement dating from 1938, discussing the question whether or not Arian people and Jews should be permitted to marry. It was the only work for which no permission was granted – by the Austrian Railways in this case. Eight years later he

▶ 110 created another appealing work, 'Caressing The Dike', commissioned by the province of Flevoland celebrating its tenth anniversary that year. It formed part of an art and poetry project, for which five artists and four poets/ writers had been invited. He took a tractor, sought out people who had been working on the dikes, made casts of their hands and stuck these on to metal arms that were attached to the tractor, and in such a way that the dike was slowly caressed by the fingertips of these men's hands. Lastly, I would like to give an example that should make it clear that the chasm between the commissions in which location plays a crucial role and those which Baren himself calls his 'public works', is not all that wide. I chanced upon it one time, when I did not get off the train at Amsterdam Central Station for a change, but travelled further north. The project was called 'Angel. Dust, We Want To Lose Our Heads For Anything In Time' (2001-2003) and consisted of a large number of photographs of performances, printed on sandblast foil and affixed to the transparent platform roofing of Sloterdijk Station. Photographs spanning twenty years of performances forming a collection and, at the same time a review of his career as a performance artist. Was this a personal signature after all? And, moreover, a signature in the shape of a work in the most public place of all – the station? These pictures were labelled 'enigmatic' and I realise that I have encountered this phrase in earlier texts about Peter Baren, or at least phrases that are more or less comparable, like 'confusing' and 'alienating'. I had already noticed that there was not a single author who hazarded interpreting Baren's work, even though it was suggested at times that interpretations were around somewhere.¹⁷ Does this characterise Baren's performances or those of his generation? Or does it apply to the majority of the performances, which eventually makes the observer insensitive to the object of the performance and to the possible ways of interpreting it, replacing it instead with a personal, subjective interpretation of the event? I am well aware it sounds like a platitude, but the performance should just be experienced, felt, done.

47

- 1 A case in point is the Dogtroep; members of the group were living in the same studio complex on Wittenburg as Peter Baren. Another case in point is the Festival of Fools. Further on in this article, more examples will be given of Baren's closer involvement, shown by his contributing to several productions.
- 2 For more information on the history of De Appel, see: Marga van Mechelen, *De Appel. Performances, Installations, Video, Projects, 1975-1983*, Amsterdam: Stichting De Appel 2006. In 1989, Frank Gribling, involved in De Appel right from the start, organised an exposition in Arti & Amicitiae Amsterdam, that was at the same time a looking back at the history of performance art and an account of the state of art; Peter Baren participated in this show entitled Beyond Performance.
- 3 Although at the time De Appel was accused of being a closed circle, it did stimulate all kinds of initiatives, all over the country, in the field of contemporary art. It was involved in the launching of W 139, for instance, and also took the first step towards the founding of Time Based Arts.
- 4 See Van Mechelen 2006, p. 307 ff.
- 5 A good source of information on the eighties' art scene is Peter Giele's monograph, which features contributions by Anna Tilroe, Marina de Vries, Tineke Reijnders, Koos Dalstra and many others (Peter L.M. Giele. *Collected Works*. Amsterdam: Aksant 2003).
- 6 Koos Dalstra, 'Peter Baren', *Metropolis M*, Vol. 3, Nr. 2, December 1981, pp. 13-19. Peter Baren gave more information on this during an interview I had with him on Thursday February 14, 2013.
- 7 Dalstra 1981, p. 13.
- 8 This came up in the skype conversation I had with Peter Baren on March 11, 2013.
- 9 Koos Dalstra, 'Smaak en Macht; Macht en Smaak', *Metropolis M*, Vol. 3, nr. 5, October 1982, p. 44.
- 10 Dalstra 1982, p. 44.
- 11 Idem.

- 12 One of the three new media festivals that were launched in the mid-eighties, was the AVé-festival in Arnhem; Peter Baren took part in 1986, together with Erszi Hatvari. Baren also had contact with –among others– with Time Based Arts and Jack Moore of Videoheads in Amsterdam.
- 13 In the video conversation mentioned before (see note 8), he also mentioned having been inspired here by Rene Daniels' work.
- 14 His later contributions to theatre projects include: 'Zurich Theatre Spectacle' (1988) and 'Macbeth, Only Fools Die' a Prix de Rome production of the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam (1989).
- 15 This description is partly based on the one given by Mark Peeters in *De Volkskrant*, October 24, 1989.
- 16 In Graz this festival is organised each year, but 1988 marked the 50th 'celebration' of the Anschluss, the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany. The festival's theme was guilt and innocence of art. In the press, the bulk of the attention was focused on Baren and Hans Haacke.
- 17 I would like to refer to the texts by Koos Dalstra and Albert van der Weide, mentioned before, and also to those by Desiree Raemakers, in *Vrij spel*, 1993, as well as to statements by Bert Jansen in 'About The Exploitations Of Peter Baren' [unpublished 1988], Geurt Imanse (*Inszenierte Fotografie*, Neuss 1989), Rob Perree ('A Committed Search For Limits. Peter Baren's Ark-series', 2008) and IJsbrand van Veelen ('Peter Baren', *Hills and Mills catalogue*, Amsterdam/ Bratislava 1992).

WIRRA 9 PANORAMA FAULHORN

Arnhem NL, 1983

First day: Performance in former ticket office by activating a coin machine. Figure covered with cotton balls shows a bird how to fly. Soundpiece: Feeling Stupid (David Murray).
 Second day: walking on army coats covering the upper staircase one reaches the terrace. A figure, partly covered with cotton balls and army coats, is sitting motionless between stone eagle, coconuts, other clothing – every now and then you hear the sound of distant church bells. Now and then the figure stands up, undresses, throws a wirra and returns to his previous pose. [PB]





DUTCH GRAVITY PORTRAIT OF WUBBO OCKELS

Rotterdam NL, 1985

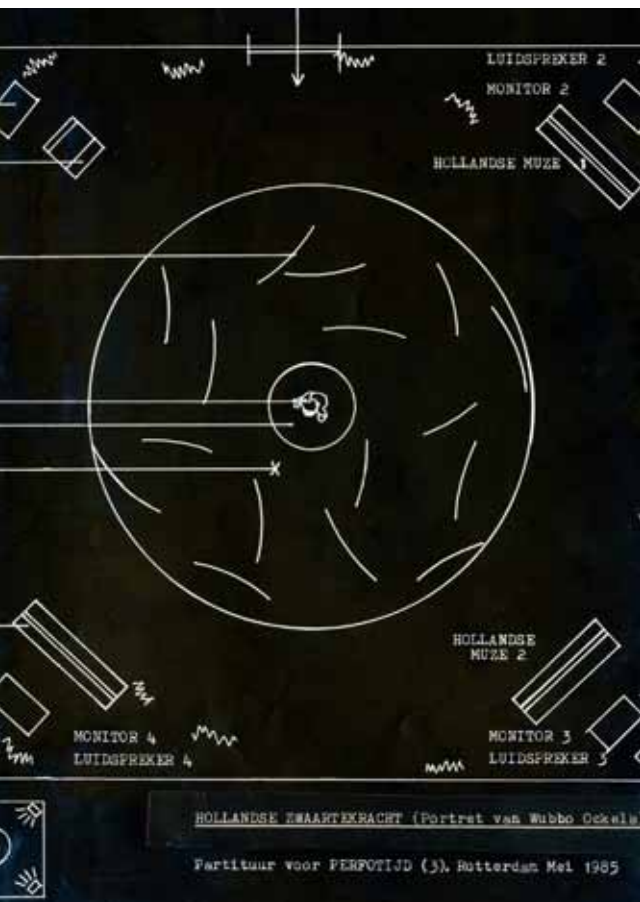
The event is an international performance festival. The performance lasts 50 minutes. When the audience enters, religious songs are heard. After the prologue two other soundtracks are used: one containing marching music, the other featuring speeches relating to Dutch society, including a sermon by Johan Maasbach.

The performance area is marked out in such a way that the audience is led around the set. They are also able to sit on the movable rostrums. A large number of seats have been removed and camouflage netting has been installed instead. On this netting a variety of Dutch allegories like Loyalty, Courage, Prudence and Faith are to be found. Up on high, a figure is rotating, whose body is painted with motives derived from Dutch national costumes.

The noise reverberating through the entire space is caused by the ticking over of a compressor. A water container is situated in the central area, in the middle of which a stuffed monkey is rotating on a pedestal, surrounded by floating black tulips.

Around the container, picked out by narrow beamed spots, one sees: The Hands Of Jesus, Dutch Muses, a pneumatic drill on an oversized cushion and video monitors on plastic crates – one of which is showing a survey of Dutch national events (like the *Elfstedentocht*, a skate tour going through eleven towns in the north of Holland). The other monitors show flickering fluorescent light, which illuminates the set. The performance ends when all the side spots are turning red. [PB]

Wubbo Ockels was the first Dutch astronaut who joined the Spacelab mission in 1985.



Amsterdam NL, 1986

On the occasion of the opening of De Appel's new venue.
(Westkunst versus Dutch Graffiti, rotating close to each other). [PB]



Amsterdam NL, 1986

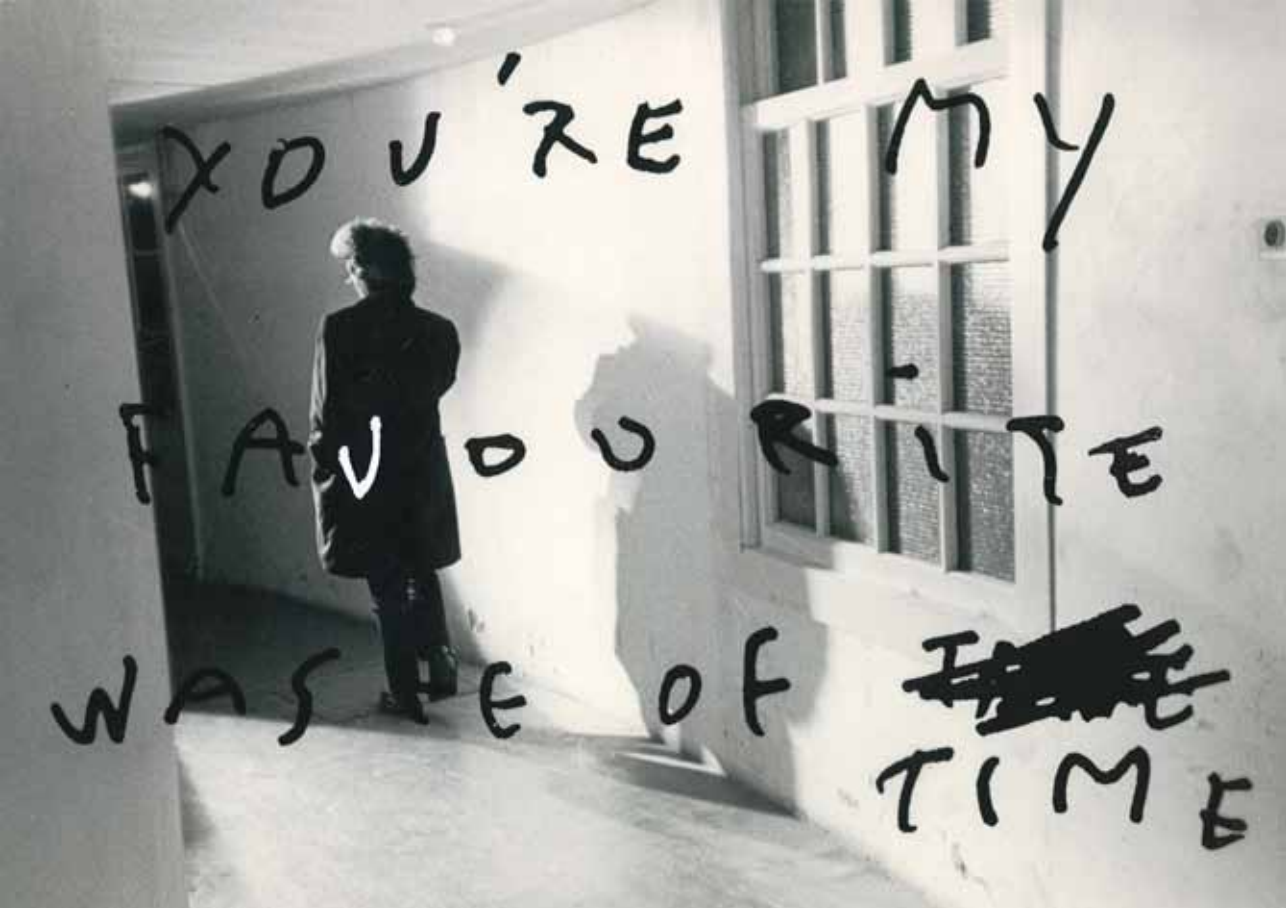
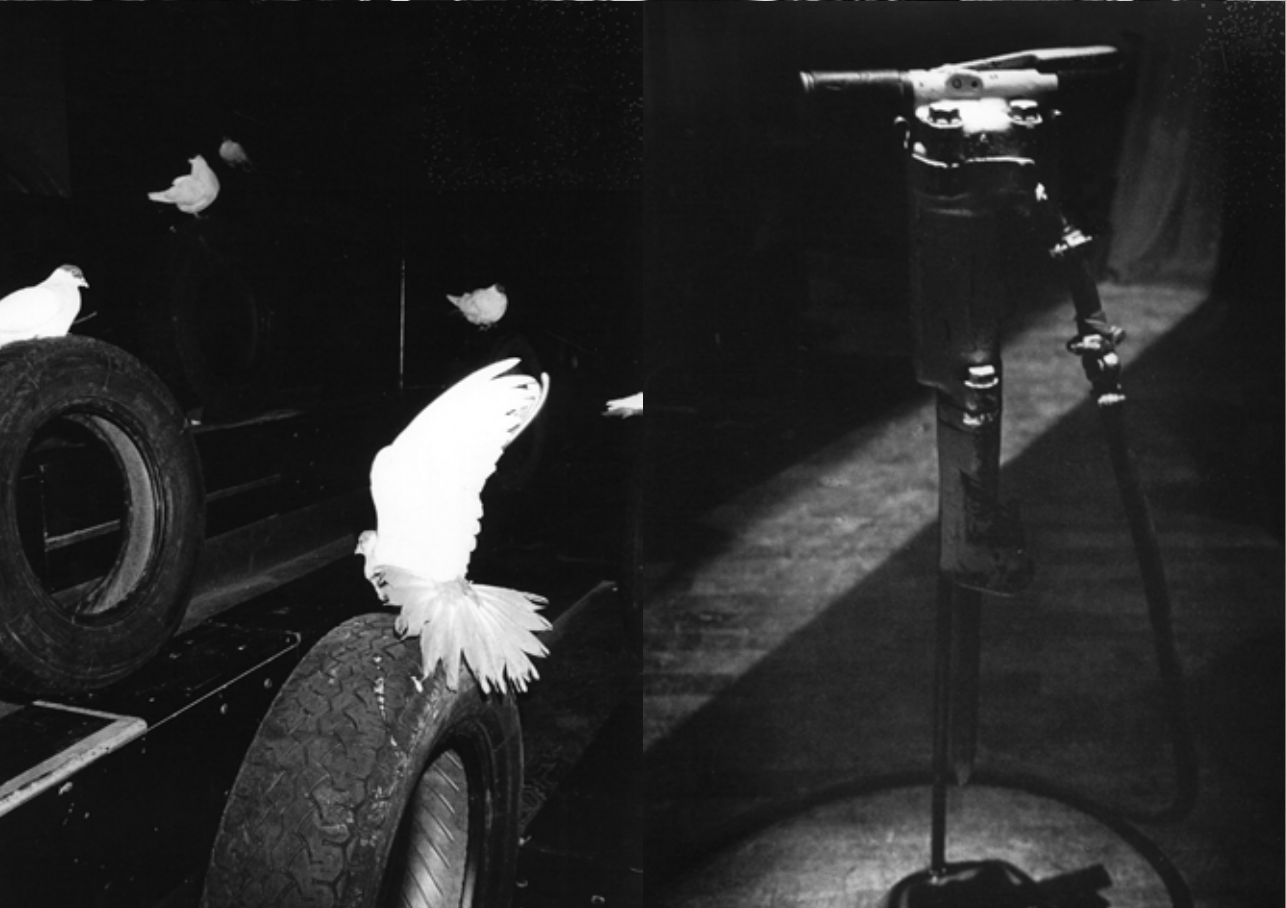
In the entrance hall photos are displayed showing the reaction of the public as they are witnessing the fifteen-minute performance.

The soundtrack (composed by Audio Sketch) may be heard through the door leading to the concert hall. At a certain point, the door is opened and the public is led through the curved corridor which is made up of black drapes mounted on the lighting rig.

Arriving in the middle of the triangular space, one is confronted with platforms on which car tires have been fixed, and which serve as stands for the doves attached to them. Right in the centre a hissing drill hanging in an iron construction is attracting further attention. Black curtains surrounding the set are blocking the actual space. While the public are settling in, there is a blackout.

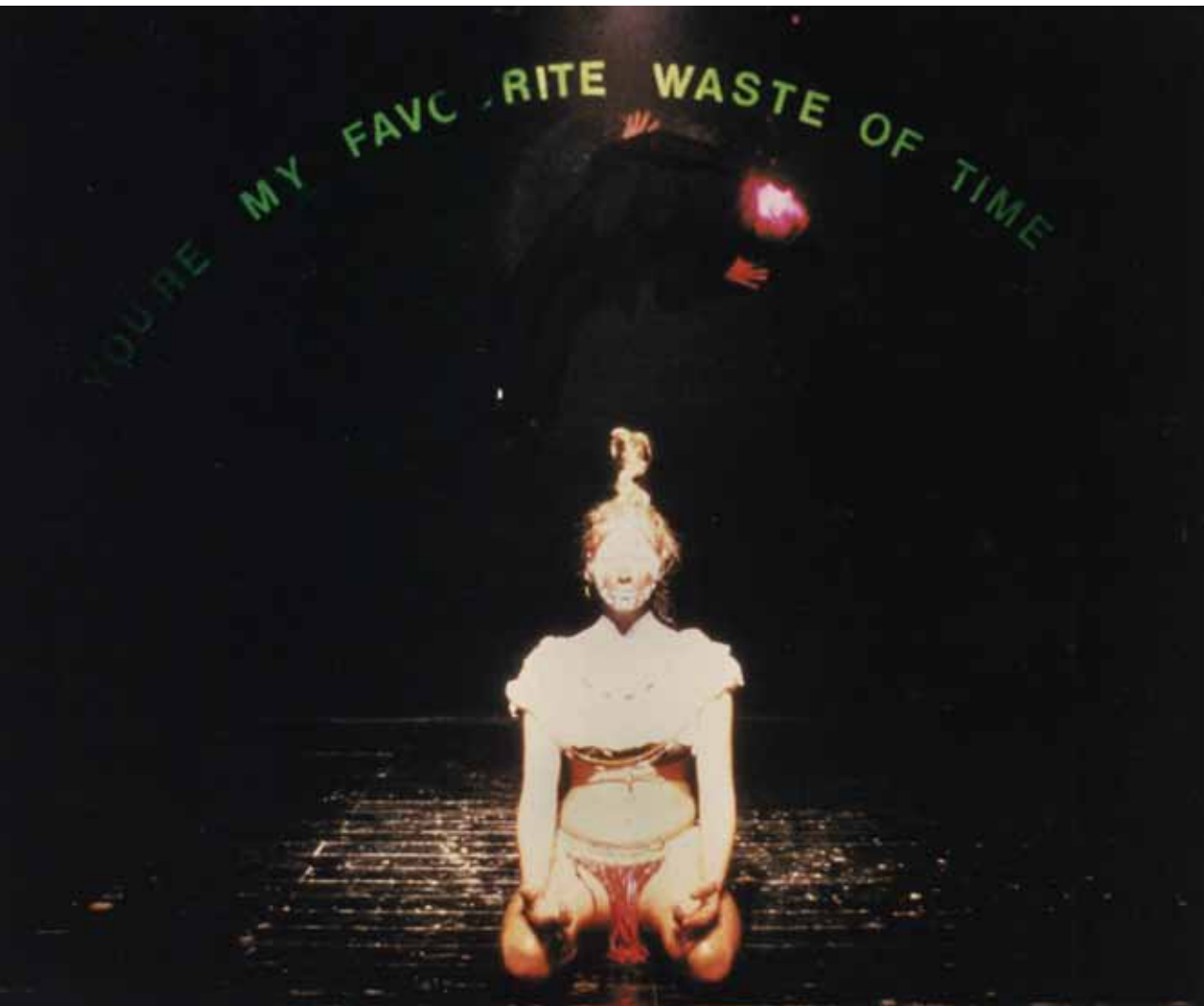
After an interval of a couple of seconds, two light flashes illuminate the set, immediately followed by a resounding bang (the photographs in the entrance hall were taken right at this moment). With the audience still being left with the echo resounding in their ears, a scratch version of 'You Are My Favourite Waste Of Time' can already be heard from the side passage. To emphasise the fact that the public have been the performers here, additional spots have been rigged further along the passage, on the way out. A new set of photographs is then added to the wall. [PB]





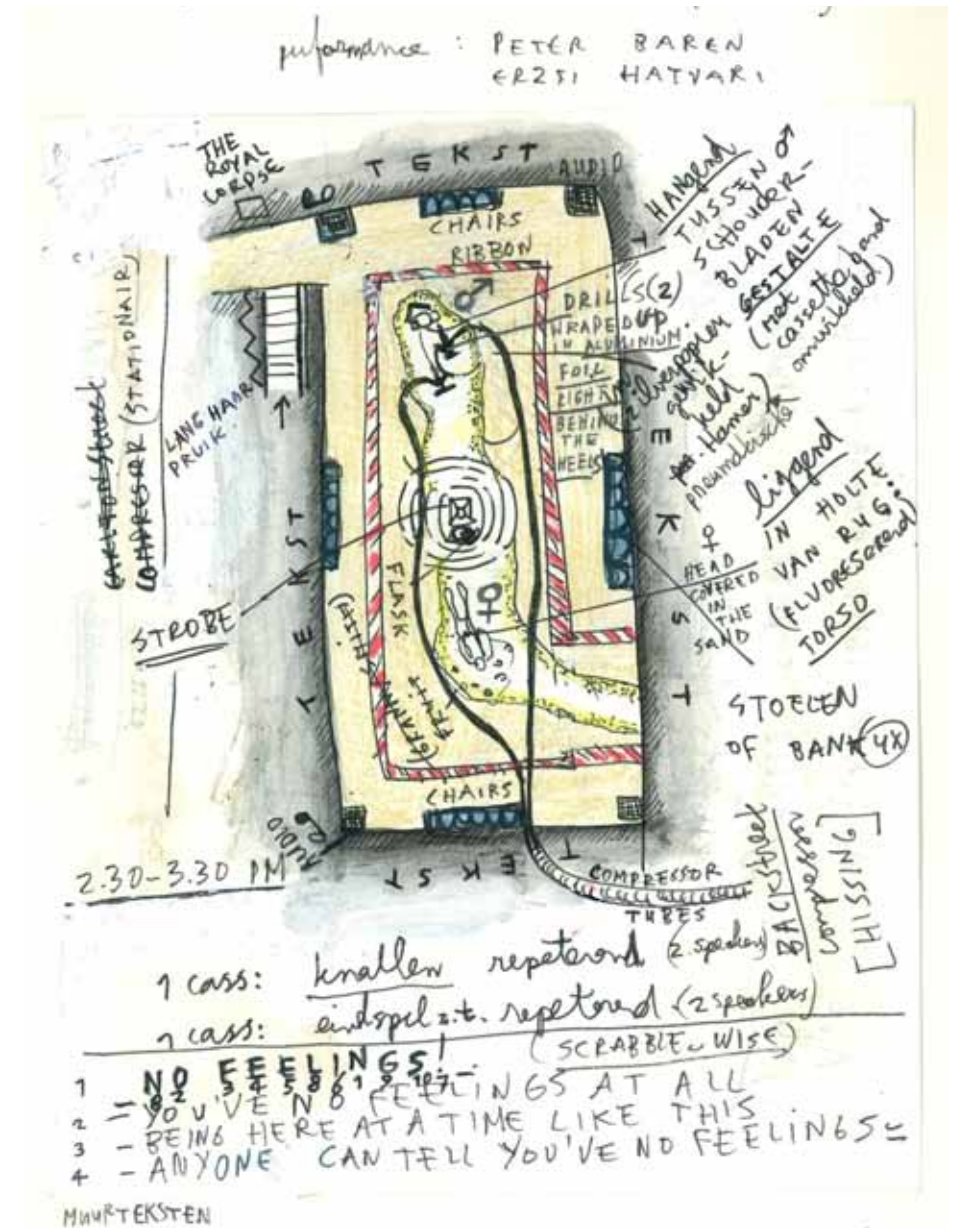
Nottingham UK, 1986

The obstacle in 'Incident' took the form of co-performer Erszi Hatvari, who was sitting cross-legged at front centre, making smooth and inviting arm movements to the audience, wearing exotic face make-up and some body decoration. Baren gradually became visible directly behind her, six feet off the floor, on the back wall: he appeared to be clinging on uncomfortably. It became apparent he was tied to the wall. In strobe lighting, Hatvari's gestures became larger and agitated, successfully distracting people's attention from Baren's struggling as if trying to break free. A red spot picked out the grotesque and offending gestures he was making with his mouth and face. The desired image of his struggle remained visible after the flats (in lieu of curtains). He was aiming at a cinematic quality, in the style of Andrej Tarkovsky: two images superimposed and one shimmering over the other. She upright and grounded. He arc shaped, suspended horizontally. [Peter McRae, *Performance Magazine* 44/45, November/February 1986/1987]



Nottingham UK, 1986

'The Royal Corpse' was presented on the following afternoon. Subtitled 'Say Hello To The Quark'. In 'The Royal Corpse' all the objects were placed on a generous sweep of sand. The scrambled words on the Gallery walls and the work-site tape bound 'The Royal Corpse' composition. The audience was invited to come inside into, as well as around. By coming inside they were completing the link to the outside reality. The composition breathed. Hoses, part of the outside link, via a compressor running at operating speed in the backstreet, quivered under dynamic pressure. Hatvari lay face down, naked, on the sand. Her strongly centred abdominal breathing (via mask and tube through the floor) made Baren's stiff standing with ritual arm movement relatively pathetic. Working pneumatic drills, wrapped in silver-foil to make the tools more conspicuous, were aligned with his heels, the weak point of man. The well-made soundtrack complemented the different levels of the composition, with low and high pitched sound and reversed recording effects. [Peter McRae, *Performance Magazine* 44/45, November/February 1986/1987]



HEARTH HERE GATHERS NAMELESS ENERGY

Amsterdam NL, 1987

Baren creates this world by not accepting the Munt Plein (Mint Square, Amsterdam), the city's heart in a forest of traffic lights (red-green); and there is the tower, seen on every postcard. You see it on the postcard, not in reality: there's too much traffic for that, just as there is too much traffic to hear the light chime that resounds each quarter hour.

Mint Square during a temporary exploration by Peter Baren: you forget the traffic lights, overwhelmed by the brilliant green and red streaming from the tower. When the peal of bells is muted, you ask yourself what the melody was that brought forth the troating sound of a rutting buck. During the day there are no visual changes in the tower. At night the sound of a hissing flame is heard. [Els Hoek, co-curator, *catalogue Century 87*]



STATIONS OF NAMELESS ENERGY

SILHOUETTES LIKE SHIVERING

ANCIENT FEELINGS

Eindhoven NL, 1987

On show are eight 'Stations Of Nameless Energy' that defy gravity by floating between the scaffolding and the curved ceiling. Three hundred car tyres, cut in half, are placed on the floor in the shape of a snail-shell. During the day the ever-changing exploitation has additional lighting. In the evening visitors must find their way by means of dyno torches.

The performance is in progress as the visitors are entering the large hall via a small room. Above each platform there is a ceiling construction. A figure wearing a harness around its midriff area, is fastened to a hook, thus enabling the figure to hang from the ceiling, bending over backwards. The figures alternate five-minute hanging periods with five-minute rest periods. The assistants applaud each time a figure is attached to or released from the ceiling. The figures also applaud their release. The hanging time intervals are staggered, so there are continuously changing focal points. After two hours the remaining visitors are requested to leave the hall. [*De Fabriek yearbook 1987*]



London UK / Amsterdam NL / Zürich CH / Katowice PL, 1988-1991

'The Human Condition' shows paintings that are moved by means of a windmachine in irregular light flashes. These include a woman lifted by four men, an aboriginal with spears, a workman in underground construction and two figures suffering from mental illness.

The floor is littered with rotting fruit and cabbage. Johann Strauss' *Frühlingsstimmen* is being played very loudly and continuously, for 60 minutes. [PB]



66 **STATIONS OF NAMELESS ENERGY WE WANNA LOSE OUR HEADS FOR ANYTHING INTIME**

London UK / Amsterdam NL / Zürich CH / Katowice PL, 1988-1991

During 'We Wanna Lose Our Heads For Anything In Time' nine performers are standing upright in a bedding of shredded paper. Their long hair is tied to strings ending in dark balloons, filled with helium gas. Everyone is holding up a particular prop, such as an eagle made of stone, a scale-model machine (flickering), a plastic stone, branches with a blindfold. Two hand-operated photo flashlights produce one flash at the time, every five minutes. That means the set is never experienced in full. At intervals a beep is heard, which means the facial expression should change from SAY CHEESE (showing teeth) to BLOW, BLOW, constantly repeated. The soundpiece by The Residents (The Walrus hunt) features sequences of generated polewinds and troubled voices under water. [PB]





Halifax UK, 1988



In the majority of cases, public art in the UK has already been institutionalised and bound up with considerations usually associated with the Gallery or the City Planners' office.

An airdrop is usually associated with the supply of provisions + material essential to the wellbeing, survival and regeneration of an area or of a country in need.

[Paul Bradley, co-ordinator The Drop]

Graz AT, 1988

The landmark of the city has survived both the French Wars and World War I and II undamaged. Like a logo, it represents Graz. An artist's interference with such an object is tantamount to sacrilege; on the other hand, such a landmark is one of the most effective locations for art in the public space. Starting from these considerations –and relating his work to the topic of the Bezugspunkte (points of reference)– Peter Baren stops the time (at least on one side of the tower) for 25 days. The hands stop in vertical position, pointing down at 'half past five'. A bigger than life-size doll is clinging to the two crescent-shaped ends of the hands with all the strength it has left. It is exposed to great danger and extreme stress. It makes a superhuman effort to save itself. Baren stages fear as a symbol of the kind of extreme situations that individuals find themselves in again and again. The choice for this location, however, means that the figure represents the community. The danger is less timeless – in fact, it is linked to time. By stopping the rhythm, Baren produces an additional irritating symbol whose effect is derived from this disruption of the perceived structures. Stopped clocks have always been connected with omens and prophecies. [Werner Fenz, curator Bezugspunkte 38/88]



74 ISLAND OF LOST SOULS

Graz AT, 1988

Proposal for painting on glass.

Baren's starting point was a proclamation (published in 1938, and found during research in the library of the University) that discussed the question whether or not Arian people and Jews should be permitted to marry.

The location chosen was most suitable for the Island Of Lost Souls installation, especially to juxtapose the apparent similarity between both the statistics of the proclamation and the structures (present in the station) to guide departing and arriving passengers.

The upper part of the painting on glass was to be carried out before the actual opening; during the exhibition, the work would have been continued on the lower part. [PB]

Peter Baren intended to blow up the scheme of the acceptable and forbidden marriages according to Nazi planners of 'the pure race', and transfer it onto a glass surface in the main hall of the train station, which had witnessed many deportations. Monstruous incisions in the body of society and history start with apparently minor interventions in the sphere of individual freedom. The Austrian railway company (*Bundesbahn*) refused to let Peter Baren paint the huge glass in the main hall. [Nena Dimitrijevic, *City As Theatre Of Ideology, Catalogue Bezugspunkte 38|88*]



76 **LUST GARDEN FOR LOST SOULS / OR THE MIND ITSELF ATTACKS**

Utrecht NL / Neuss DE / Bratislava SK, 1989-1992

The photos in the current (Neuss) installation were on show before, on the top floor of the 'Neude' building in the centre of Utrecht. Its title referred to scenes of earlier performances or parts of previous installations. As with the current installation, the photos were put on writing desks and were accompanied by provocative texts, such as: 'No Feelings!', 'You Have No Feelings At All!', 'Being Here At A Time Like This!', 'Anyone Can Tell You Have No Feelings!'. The writing desks with the photos were spread out over the various emptied office spaces and were given different lighting in each room. Texts had also been put up in the different rooms – mainly on the walls, but here and there in mirror image on the window panes. The noises which accompanied the installation – a short succession of heavy roaring sounds followed by longer, pattering sequences of sound like Brian Eno's – mingled with the usual sound of traffic. In the installation at Utrecht an additional image was used, that of an escaping figure. However, it is unknown to whom these words are addressed. Or is it just a moment of self-reflection of the artist, referring to the characters on the photos, the majority of which represent Baren's alter ego? Yes, the mind itself attacks, but there is still the question of how to define lust garden. And who are the Lost Souls anyway? It is clear that, in Baren's opinion, lost souls don't blossom in daylight: their realm is the artificial (black) light or darkness. [Geurt Imanse, *catalogue Inszenierte Fotografie*, Neuss, 1989]



Niet Zlutovania Pre Nás. Jasnosť Je Tvoj Priestor.

Kein Mitleid Für Uns Alle. Heiterkeit Ist Dein Raum.



MACBETH (or only fools die)

THE
PACK
BEUYS



CLAUS:
-PROJECTED
PAINTING
+ FALLING
MACHETES

SCHREI:

8''
→ MENS
DIER ←

ACT MB

TARIM MACHINE

LMB

I FAIR IS FOUL

GERRIT VAN BAKEL

AND FOUL IS FAIR

K. SMITH UNTITLED (SPERMS)



SUN(S)
PROJECTED MOONS →
+ → WARTZ
ZON

(BETWEEN)
HEADS

20 NACHT MUSIK
MAHLER
(compressed)
ANDROSIO #7



M.
ABAKANOWICZ:
= LMB: SOLO
SLEEPWALKING

II THIS IS A SORRY SIGHT

MB ↔ LMB

VOICE OVER: JUAN MAYNARD SMITH =
STEM THE NIGHT IS BARREN... BANQUO

A dramaturgical concept on the basis of Shakespeare's 'Macbeth'. You are then to choose a scene, and develop and design it in accordance with your own ideas. Help may be recruited (for lighting, costumes, etc.) The four scenes will be performed in the presence of the jury on August 25, 26, 27 on the stage of the Stadsschouwburg, Amsterdam (CityTheatre). Minimal duration: 15 minutes. [Prix de Rome assignment]

III GOOD THINGS OF DAY BEGIN TO DROOP AND DROWSE

(theatre of WAR)

ABAKANOWICZ: MB ↔ LMB



CROWD/
THE FOREST

MOVING
PAR-
lighting

ACT (OO LAIBACH)

IV PLUCK FROM THE MEMORY

THE ROOTED SORROW

[ENDGAME]
+ 3 (HANGING MURDERERS)



PROJECTION

MB ↔ LMB,
WITCHES
AND GHOSTS

TANGO &
JOHN
GAVANTI

DUST DUST S. VENTILATOREN
Barren 1989 → BLOW/BLOW



SPIRIT.

New York US [1] / Bratislava SK [2-4] / Fribourg CH [2-8], 1990-1992

[1]

1 – A man is hanging on the wall, overstretched. Black suit, blindfolded.

The text below the figure reads: *Ecquid Sunt Aliud Quam Brevi Gaudium?*

Two women facing each other, scarfed heads, holding up a flickering scale model machine.

The floor text reads: *The Fabric Of Life Is A Horny Goldmine.*

First night: two men are walking on opposing treadmills, blindfolded (*Seymour Likely Cares For The Homeless*). Second night: two men are walking on the opposite treadmills (*Seymour Likely Cares For A Day Without Art*). Sound: local radiostation.

Duration: 60 minutes. [PB]

[2-4]

2 – A man steps on the shoulders of a (blindfolded) woman and stretches her arms.

Soundpiece: *The Spirit* (Lou Reed). Duration: 1 minute.

3 – *Or Is There Really Nothing More Than Just A Short Moment Of Joy?*

A man is rotating, holding an open (gold painted) book between his teeth; an arrow is stuck in his back. Soundpiece: *Suite for violoncello* (J.S. Bach). Duration: 3 minutes.

4 – *Or Is There Really Nothing More Than Just A Short Moment Of Joy?*

A man is hanging, overstretched, on the wall, illuminated by members of the audience wielding dyno torches (a shimmering effect). Soundpiece: *In:amongst* (Shriekback). Duration: 1 minute.

[2-8]

Two sets of guided tours around the fortress offering examples that blend reality with moments of recollection.

2 – *Ecce Homo* (religious version)

Two figures in monk habits are clutching the same big candle, facing downwards. Along the forced sounds they are trying to pull the candle towards themselves. When thunderbolts are heard, the figures raise their heads and look at each other until one of them blows out the candle. No additional light. Soundpiece: *Acropolis* (Laibach). Duration: 1 minute.

5 – *Another Tampon Up The Arse Of Humanity.*

In one of the many niches a man, dressed in black, is on his knees, surrounded by clothing. He is showing a (stuffed) bird how to fly.

Wide-beam spot: on/off. Soundpiece: *Rip Rig & Panic*.

Duration: 1 minute and 50 seconds.

8 – *The Scream* (for Jean Tinguely).


The last performance is again carried out on the main stage.

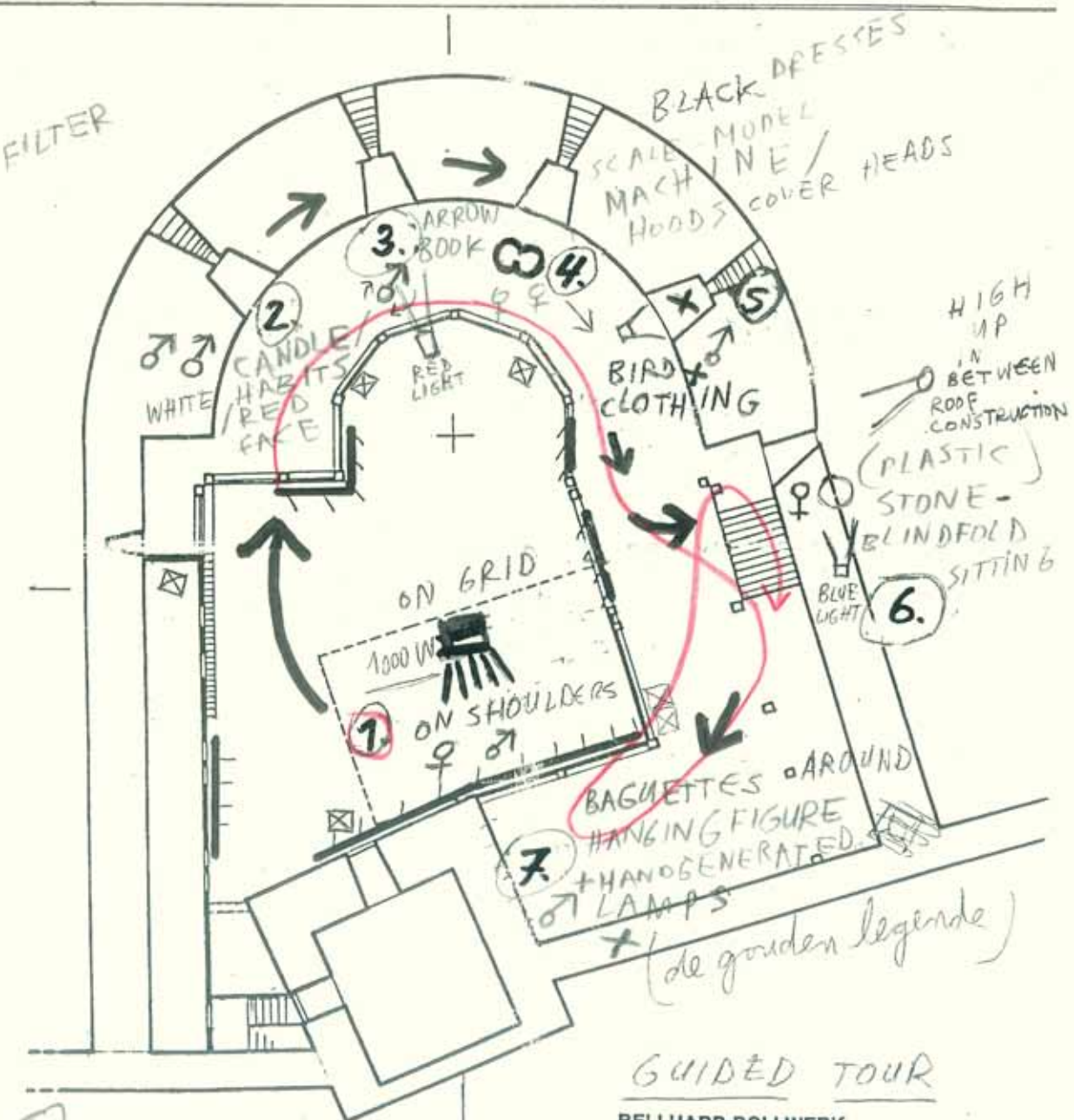
A naked figure is hunched in between the (moving) light-rig, which floats just above the stage floor. A spotlight hits the figure – at the same time, the sound of a suffocating human being is heard. The figure is straining every muscle and continues to do so until the performance ends. Because of this straining, his whole body starts trembling more and more.

Spotlight. Soundpiece: *Exil und Tod* (Laibach): high volume. Duration: 48 seconds.





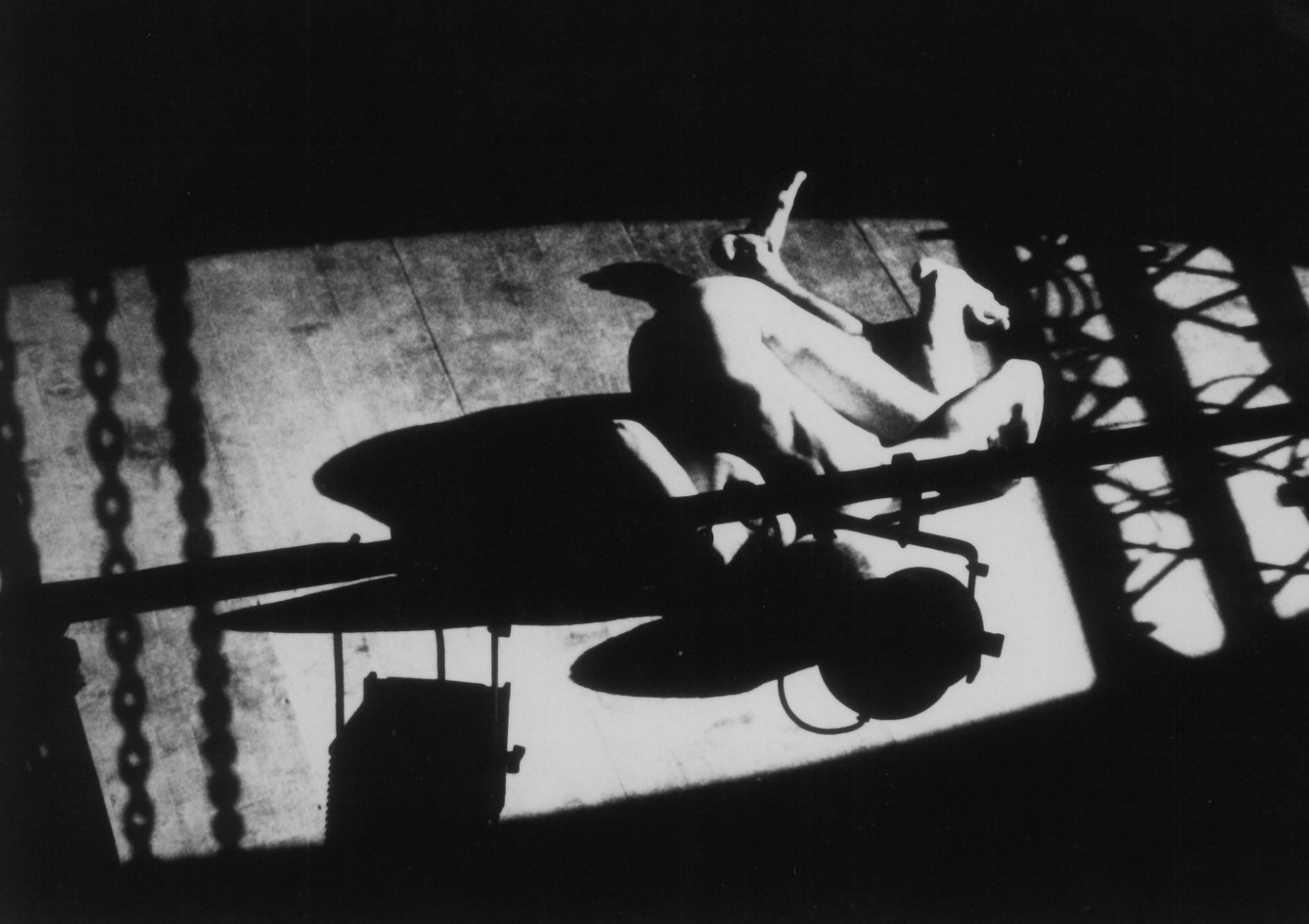
 **SPEAKER** - POSITION : ground floor
 GROUND FLOOR
 POSITION **TECHNICIAN** : 2. floor.



GUIDED TOUR
BELLUARD-BOLLWERK
 Plan 1er étage / Grundriss 1. Obergeschoss
 fribourg (CH)
 Echelle/Masstab 1:200

7 PERFORMANCES THROUGHOUT FORTRESS
 Peter Baren, 1992





92 **WHAT IS GOOD FOR THE GOOSE IS GOOD FOR THE GANDER**

Amsterdam NL, 1991

Performances during Art Fair Amsterdam.

Dressed in black hoods, with red faces and on bare feet, Peter Baren, Koos Dalstra and Reinout Toonstra (Bank Of Reality) performed Circular Walks (Circumitus). During these walks, pamphlets were handed out to the visitors of the Art Fair. On these pamphlets one could read the title of the performance, the actual date and the phrase: 'You Know How Much Such A Year Costs'. The presence of the bank account number of the De Achterstraat Foundation showed the real purpose of the daily performance: to ask for financial support in order to perpetuate the exhibition/performance programme. The circular walks were done three times a day; each time people could join the performers. [Catherine van Houts, *Het Parool*, 28 May 1991]



THE LIVING ROOM A TERMINAL BODY**ECCE HOMO** NO PERFORMANCE

Amsterdam NL, 1993 / Warsaw PL, 1994

Performance stills, shot the morning after the final exhibition and closing down of the gallery.
Several short outdoor actions in Warsaw (a.o. at Ujazdowski Castle). [PB]



Alex de Vries

Performance As Visual Grammar



Alex de Vries (1957) was co-founder of the journal *Metropolis M.*, in 1979. In its second year, this journal paid attention to Peter Baren's work for the first time. From 1984 to 1989 De Vries was employed at the Shaffy Theater in Amsterdam, and during this time he worked with Baren on a regular basis. In that same period he published articles on performance artists like Ulay and Abramovic and Gerrit Dekker. After that, De Vries had a post in the Hogeschool voor de Kunsten Arnhem (Art Academy Arnhem) and from 1997 to 2011 he was managing director of the art academy in 's-Hertogenbosch. Since 2011 he has been working as an independent author, advisor and curator in the firm of Stern/Den Hartog & De Vries in The Hague. Together with his partner, graphic designer Jan Willem den Hartog, he runs the publishing company De Zwaluw and the exhibition space Zwaluwkamer. The publishing company works in close cooperation with artists in the production of high-quality books. The latter include books on the work of Jacobien de Rooij, Mirjam Kuitenbrouwer, Piet Slegers, Harmen Brethouwer, Isabel Ferrand, Roland Sohier, A. van Campenhout and Leon Adriaans. De Vries also regularly works as an author and editor for clients like Museum de Pont, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Museum Van Bommel Van Dam and the Centraal Museum. He is chairman of the advisory body of the journal Boekman, chairman of the advisory committee for art, of the province of Noord-Brabant, member of the board for BAK – basis voor actuele kunst (basis for actual art), member of the board for Foundation Room with a View of Dries Verhoeven, and he is also a member of the committee New Festivals of the Fund for the Performing Arts.

Peter Baren's personal visual language

It is impossible to understand Peter Baren's work within the exclusive framework of visual art. However, his performances do fit in with happenings, environments, installations, appropriation art and other forms of visual art in which the nature of the work is determined by the artist's presence (whether it be physical or not) in a stage setting in time and space. But at a very early stage in his career, Peter Baren particularly concerned himself with the developments in the performing arts.

Idiom

As early as the late seventies, when he was studying painting at the Rijksakademie (1972-1977) and gaining his first experiences as a visual artist, Peter Baren was already busily working on the creation and development of a personal idiom. At a later stage, in the eighties, he developed an autonomous and individual visual language in the performance, against the background of certain developments in the visual arts in which the earliest performance artists of the sixties and seventies were leaving their positions. The manifesto-like form cherished by performance art till the late seventies, was no longer tenable. Actually, until 1986 the conditions determining the creation of performances in visual art were of an extremely dominant nature, comparable to the principles ruling the first films made by the Dogma-company, like 'Festen', produced by Thomas Vinterberg. In this basic performance practice a leading role was played by the work of Ulay and Abramovic. They intensively worked together for ten years (1976-1986), and put a definitive end to their collaboration two years later, in 1988, when they hiked the Great Wall for three months ('The Lovers' Walk On The Great Wall Of China') walking towards each other from opposite ends, one from the west, the other from the east. After having met halfway, they each went their own way. The principles underlying the performance were: there are to be no rehearsals, there is to be one performance only, there are to be no other performers than us two, and we are to go on till we drop. This resulted in a distinct visual language, with 'body art' –as it was labelled– proving to be mainly a matter of 'mental art'. In spite of their transitory nature, these performances have remained manifest as an iconic memory, captured in documentary images in books, magazines, exhibitions and archives, like the

one in the Time Based Arts institute, which later merged with Montevideo (specialising in electronical and video art) to become Nederlands Instituut voor Mediakunst, NIMk (Dutch Institute for Media Art), which had to close its doors in 2012.

Interaction

The quality of both this powerful visual language of the performance and the extreme, revelatory intensity of performing had already worked their way into the performing arts at the end of the seventies. There was, in fact, an interaction between the theatrical form language of drama, dance and mime and the purely visual quality of the outward appearance of the performance. As far as content was concerned, the intentions of both disciplines differed more widely, yet these also started converging in the early eighties. This was particularly evident in the art of dance: examples are Pina Bausch, Krisztina de Châtel, Meredith Monk, Trisha Brown, Lucinda Childs, Beppie Blankert, Bianca van Dillen, Pauline Daniëls, Truus Bronkhorst, Koert Stuyf and Ellen Edinoff, Ton Lutgerink, Amy Gale, Bob Foltz, Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker, Hans van Manen and many others. In Amsterdam this development had started early and it was boosted by the foundation of the School voor Nieuwe Dansontwikkeling (SNDO – School for New Developments in Dance) in 1975.

Both the practice of music and theatre saw the rise of interconnections with visual art, leading back to the cooperation between choreographers, visual artists and composers from the fifties. Peter Baren was particularly influenced by the work of Robert Morris (1931), who worked together with artists like choreographer Lucinda Childs (1940), for instance; but other remarkable interdisciplinary performances were of great importance to Baren, as well. An example in point is the cooperation between Merce Cunningham (1919-2009), Robert Rauschenberg (1925-2008) and John Cage (1912-1992), who created their first 'happening' in 1952. In their turn, they were preceded by the trendsetting events in the Parisian avant-garde in the twenties, like the performances of the 'Ballet Mécanique' (1923/24) for instance, by the American composer George Antheil (1900-1959), the music of which was originally written as accompaniment to a movie by co-producer Fernand Léger (1881-1955), which was directed by Dudley Murphy (1897-1968) with the help of Man Ray (1890-1976). Antheil is known for straining his hands

to such an extent while playing his piano pieces that between times he cooled them down in two fish bowls filled with water, standing on the grand piano, an act which, in a symbolical sense, might just as well be one of Peter Baren's gestures. And perhaps we should –in 2013– refer back to 1913, the year which saw the first performance of the ballet 'Le Sacre du Printemps', put to music by Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971), choreographed by Vaslav Nijinsky (1889-1950) in a stage setting by artist and archeologist Nikolaj Rjorich (1874-1947).

Fringe theatre

In any case, in Amsterdam, where Baren was living and working, performance art was no longer a mere visual art discipline in the early eighties. It is true, Peter Baren's work originated in the activities of the so-called artists' initiatives emerging around that time, a setting in which many of his artistic friends and colleagues gave their first performances. However, the developments in the so-called 'fringe theatre' had at least as great an effect on the nature and shape that Peter Baren's performances were to take on in the course of time. After the 'Actie Toots' in 1969, an event in which the established Dutch traditional theatre was drastically put in its place, a 'rustling revolution' had wound its way through the acting schools of Amsterdam, with the Mime school, founded in 1968 by Frits Vogels, as the prime initiator. At the school, students worked according to the style of movement as defined by Etienne Decroux (1898-1991): 'corporeal mime', i.e. not a silent 'pantomime', but a dramatic style of movement which he had laid down in a visual manual. The views of Jacques Lecoq (1921-1999) on the performer's 'physical intelligence', based on the body's movement through space, were at least as influential. At the time, anyone asking a mime player what his performance was about, would get the same answer nine times out of ten: 'movement in space'. For that matter, anyone asking dancers and choreographers the same question, usually got the answer: 'a process of attraction and rejection', which quite often was ironically dubbed 'addiction and reaction'.

The second circuit

Young theatre students founded unions and collectives and actively sought cooperation with composers, musicians, dancers, choreographers, visual artists, filmmakers, graphic designers and others, all seeking to work

together on an equal footing, outside the established circuits. Besides the existing stages of theatres and concert halls the so-called 'second circuit' of 'black box theatres' came into being, to be followed a little later by a 'third circuit' of location theatre, the latter soon taking the form of festivals. The most obvious example of this may be said to be the 'Festival of Fools' (1975-1984), followed by 'Boulevard of Broken Dreams' (1984-1987). Examples of 'second circuit' stages are the Shaffy Theater (1969-1989) in the Felix Meritis building on Keizersgracht, Amsterdam, which was founded by Steve Austen (1944), and the Mickery Theater (1965-1991), first located in the farm owned by Ritsaert ten Cate (1938-2008) in Loenersloot, and later in what is now called the Rozentheater on Rozengracht, Amsterdam. Another important fact to be mentioned here is that in 1968 Ten Cate was co-founder of Galerie Seriaal, together with Wies Smals (1939-1983), who in 1975 was to start up De Appel, the presentation institute which was to become of such great importance to performance art.

From 1979 onwards, an important stage for contemporary music was the Ysbreeker on Weesperzijde, founded by Jan Wolff (1941-2012), as a stage for the presentation of the more 'performative' music artists.

The art collectives of the time that were playing these stages and were part of international billings, had a great impact on the development of the art practice that embraced each and every discipline: literature, architecture, acting, dance, mime, music and visual art all played an equal part in a multitude of performances that were characterised by self-activation and self-organisation, improvisation and spontaneity, the creation of theories, research, accessibility and crowd participation, fun and a growing political and social awareness. Art companies like Het Werkteater, Onafhankelijk Toneel, Maatschappij Discordia, Neerlands Hoop in Bange Dagen, Will Spoor, Bewth, Griftheater, Hauser Orkater, Nieuw West, Stichting Dansproductie, Vals Bloed, Funhouse, Waste of Time, Proloog, Studio, the Schönberg Ensemble, the Instant Composers Pool, Moniek Toebosch/Michel Waisvisz, Jan Fabre, the Dogtroep and many others all contributed to the drastic modernisation of the performing arts. It was a period in which no experiment was shunned, in which each performance and every presentation was a result of research and in which the laws of the art disciplines were invented anew.

Temporary explorations

Against that background and basing himself on the actual visual art practice of those days, Peter Baren was working on the idiom of the performances that he himself dubbed 'temporary explorations' and later 'temporary exploitations'. He used this terminology to give his own personal interpretation of the English terminology of 'performance'. To that end he developed a personal visual language. Right from the start his working method is characterised by his deploying visual elements that never stand alone; always, they are rotating around each other, interlocking and spiralling, and they are visible from all sides. It is as if you are looking at a clock-mechanism, with numerous cogwheels interlocking and propelling each other forward with the energy of a tightly wound mainspring.

The demolition of 'the fourth wall' – the impenetrable window within the frame of the stage had already been smashed to pieces in the so-called fringe theatre – resulted in there being absolutely no barrier between artist and audience in Baren's performances, right from his very first show.

The hanging figure in his 1981 performance 'The Living Room Or Is The Approach Hardly More Important Than One Of The Objects', on the occasion of the opening of The Living Room, was not meant to be an untouchable object, but a living presence in the middle of a social event, rather. In that sense, Peter Baren was at most a *Fremdkörper* with whom, as a participant in the opening of the exhibition, one had to try and enter into a relationship; on this occasion, ignoring the hanging figure's presence also counted as entering into a legitimate relationship, by the way.

The blueprint for that first performance was still relatively simple in its design. The visual elements and the action were neatly arranged and the duration was dependent on Baren's physical powers and hence quite limited. It was immediately clear to everyone that Baren was rising from –or crashing down in– the crowd like Icarus, displaying a total disregard for death bordering on a zest for living, fixated in the moment of appearing, a floating figure evoking wonder as well as a certain level of indifference, like a fly on the ceiling having taken on the Kafkaesque guise of Gregor Samsa.

Multiple personage

At the time, Baren was still a loner, but he did have the desire to do performances together with other people. In 1980 he had performed together with the Dogtroep, at several festivals, including the Festival of Fools. He also

104 did physical training with Truus Bronkhorst and Margie Smit of Stichting Dansproductie. In 1981 he took part in Stuart Sherman's play 'Hamlet (A Portrait)', with members of the British theatre company Theatre of Mistakes, in the Mickery Theater and the American Center in Paris.

In his own work he started searching for a way of presenting a multiple personage. To that end, he worked with Koos Dalstra from 1982-1984, in a series of performances entitled 'Wirra', one of the names used by the Aborigines to denote their traditional weapon and tool, the boomerang. 'Wirra' is the basis for the visual language Peter Baren uses, the boomerang's orbit once it has been thrown, a movement of going out and coming back, like the first trajectory of a spiral, this is the movement he tries to capture and trace out. After the Wirra-series Baren and Dalstra were to work together again occasionally, in a number of projects.

After the Wirra-series Baren goes about entering into brief partnerships with artists and local performers on a completely different basis, inviting them to take part in his performances, much more like a director supervising the players than like a 'performance duo'. His working method is more like that of the *'Orgien-Mysterien Theater'* of Hermann Nitsch (1938), featuring numerous participants actively taking part in performing coherent sacrificial rituals, although Baren engineers condensed spiritual seances rather than the long-drawn-out re-enactment of the 'totem meals' sought after by Nitsch.

An important factor in bringing in numerous participants to take part in his performances, is the experience he gains in the 1989 competition for the Prix de Rome Visual Art & Theatre. The brief for the final competition of this event, organised by the Rijksakademie every year, was: "Make a draft on the basis of Shakespeare's Macbeth. Then choose a scene and give it shape and work out the details according to your own judgment." Although the whole business proved frustrating for all artists –besides Baren these included Sanne Danz, Hans Klasema and Erik Kouwenhoven– because of the jury imposing upon the artists the exact straightjacket they were trying to free themselves from, it caused Peter Baren's work to gain momentum. He managed to master the role of director, which was forced upon him in this project, and learned to use it to his own ends in his subsequent work. Never again did he force upon others his artistic plans, decisions and performances, like a distant outsider. His personal engagement, dedication and participation in a collective process took on the guise of a skipper taking on

▶ 22

▶ 130

▶ 80

105 board his crew to sail towards a collective destination. Representative of this working method was the practice of the Polish theatre director Tadeusz Kantor (1915-1990), especially his play 'Dead Class', dating from 1975, featuring Kantor himself as a teacher in front of a class of seemingly dead pupils.

Shivering memories

Baren's performance series 'Ark', started up in New York in 2004 –with several performances later on show in various places all over the world– is the most complete manifestation of this personal engagement, for the time being. The shape of the work, fanning out in all directions, always emerges from a practically impenetrable fog, with the participants being 'possessed' by Peter Baren, as it were, with Baren himself as the writer of spells that direct his people through the performance space towards a parallel world. Ark is the evocation of a multiple personality syndrome, not belonging to a god or a spirit, but to a shivering memory of a collective past in which we have lost our way. In his Ark Peter Baren is a guide who has become lost inside himself and who is freed by the people around him, so that together they may honour the intention of keeping watch together over what should never be lost: our memory as our expectation of the future.

▶ 18

The foundation for the power of this visual language was laid by Peter Baren in the eighties. The performance entitled 'New China Reconstructs Domestic Kit' in the Shaffy Theater in 1982, together with dancer/choreographer Truus Bronkhorst and, again, Koos Dalstra, was the pivotal point leading to the meaning of the theatricality of his work. The strong stage performance of Truus Bronkhorst, who was to become the most powerful solo dance personality in the Netherlands, combined with Dalstra's intimidating intractability, proved to be pregnant human instruments adding even more poignancy to Peter Baren's imagination. It was precisely the austere, ascetic character of the actions and objects that brought the whole performance into historical relief.

Shaffy Theater

For a few years, the Shaffy Theater was to be a recurring stage for Peter Baren, especially from 1984 onwards, the year in which Dick Hauser (1952) became general manager. Together with his brother, saxophone player Rob

106 Hauser, he gave the legendary theatre company Hauser Orkater (1972-1980) its name. An important role in the company was played by visual artist and future film director Alex van Warmerdam (1952), together with his brothers Marc and Vincent. Another important factor was the contribution of 'loner' Jim van der Woude (1948).

In his programmes for the Shaffy Theater Dick Hauser was keen to emphasise the interaction between theatre, music and visual art of a performative nature. He put on new work by Truus Bronkhorst, mime players like Trudie Lute and Marion van Wijk, composer/performer Harry de Wit, visual artist Peter Zegveld, theatrical producers Barbara Duifjes and Lisa Marcus, choreographer Bart Stuijff, Jim van der Woude, and others. Dick Hauser organised big multimedial manifestations in the Shaffy Theater, like 'De Blauwbaardclub' (The Bluebeard Club)' by Dagan Cohen and the spectacular Christmas balls that were on every year, drawing each and every art lover in Amsterdam. He had radio producer Julie Smit organise a monthly, incredibly touching performance programme and for the television company VPRO he also produced the experimental television programme entitled Het Lab. Every month he had artists create a monumental mural in the foyer, measuring four by four metres. Together with Johan van der Keuken, Eric de Kuijper and Peter Delpout he started up film workshops and organised the sound art festival 'So und so und so' twice.

Peter Baren's work completely fitted in with these varied programmes, until the Shaffy Theater had to close down in 1989 because the city withdrew its funding for the theatre. In the meantime, Peter Baren had already given his work international scope in 1987, which was confirmed nationwide by his participating in Century '87, an impressive, international art manifestation on location in the historic centre of Amsterdam, organised by Sjarel Ex, Els Hoek and Nicolette Gast. Baren's contribution consisted of having the troating sound of a rutting buck issue from the Mint Tower, smack in the middle of town, which was glowing red for the occasion; according to Martijn van Nieuwenhuyzen in his essay for *Flash Art*, this rutting, primitive call brought about 'the most convincing disorientation in everyday life'.

Handwritten

Peter Baren's work is acclaimed all over the world until this very day. He is invited to contribute to performance festivals in all continents. His oeuvre has exceptional imaginative powers, due to the intercultural intention he

► 8, 16

has brought to bear on his work right from the start. His early works already bore titles like 'Eastern Mantra' and 'Western Mantra'; ethnical and anthropological artefacts were part of his stock of visual instruments, especially the boomerang, mentioned earlier.

Every performance by Peter Baren is based on a handwritten and hand-drawn score, in which he visualises all aspects of the presentation. They are complex graphic records of all visual elements, actions, patterns of movement, participants, the time schedule, the use of light et cetera. He reads these 'scores' like an orchestral score, which he can execute like a conductor, but which, to an outsider, is more difficult to read. They present themselves as picture stories that immediately bring out the enigmatic aspect of his performances. It is not until the actual performance that they are explained to the person watching and getting wrapped up in the spectacle. You never just watch a performance by Peter Baren, you never just look at it, but you are surrounded by it and become a part of it. You are free to remain detached, as was the case with Baren's performance in The Living Room. In this way, you will be thrown back upon your own resources and your own responsibility regarding the things you choose to be part of. Baren, however, never judges the viewer, however harshly the latter may judge him. After each performance Baren immediately draws up a second score in which he records the working method used and the actions chosen. He does not do so in order to stimulate possible re-enactments of his work, but to report on his working method, in which intent and execution are two different things.

Anyone striking up a conversation with Peter Baren, is bound to get lost immediately in the living score of his way of speaking: with him, question and answer never run along straight lines. For Baren, each question sparks the need to circle the assumption lying hidden in it, to stray from the subject, to run ahead of things, to start reminiscing, to ask a question in turn, to come up with a quote, to get out a book, to show some photographs, to make a sketch, to draw a little map or to hum a tune, while talking to or handing something to his children, while checking his text messages on his mobile phone or opening the door to an unexpected visitor – and doing all this simultaneously. According to Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) Peter Baren has a rizomatic way of life. In everything he says and does, lurks the

107

► 60

irrepressible desire to pass by every form of hierarchy. The philosophy of 'nomadic subjectivity', as coined by Deleuze, may certainly be applied to Peter Baren's working methods.

In his performance scores he uses a visual language that represents this solitary drifting about –set off against the surrounding world– in full detail. This working method is related to what was called 'the graphic gesture' in the late seventies, with the action of creating something being at least as important as the result of that creative act. The way in which Baren writes and draws up these scores –you really should see him do it– is like the way in which wild brambles grow, endlessly branching off underground, sprouting enormously, bending towards the ground again, taking root there again, forming a network covered in little barbs that entangle you and scrape your skin. However, they bear fruit. You can pick them endlessly, make jams and jellies with them, hand these out to anyone who likes them – and they may keep the jars in the cellar and in cupboards for a long time. These jars all have written labels specifying the contents – in Peter Baren's handwriting.

THE LIVING ROOM OR IS THERE REALLY NOTHING MORE THAN JUST A SHORT MOMENT OF JOY?

Neuenhaus DE, 1995

On the occasion of the first retrospective of The Living Room after its closing down in 1993, a new version of the opening performance, back in 1981, was put on. Overstretched on the wall, dressed in black, for the duration of 5 minutes. Soundpiece: Feedback (The Grateful Dead) and The Sound Of Escaping Gas (This Heat). In memory of my father. [PB]



CARESSING THE DIKE

Lelystad NL, 1996

Baren's inspiration for this performance was the history of the building of the Dutch dikes, the bodies surrounding and protecting the new polder land since 1956. On June 26 1996, the opening ceremony was performed by Beatrix, Queen of The Netherlands at the time. Baren's work featured a tractor that, till August 18, pulled along the dike a fine selection of rotating (plaster) casts of hands, caressing the dike. These hands were modelled on the hands of the workmen who actually built the IJsselmeer dike.

This collection was to be extended with the hands of inhabitants of Flevoland, as well as those of the visitors. During the weekends they could have a cast made in a shed, set up at the foot of the dike. The tractor was on its round daily from 13.00 to 16.00 hours. [PB]



112 **MISA LUBA** LUST, DESIRE AND OTHER TERMINAL BODIES

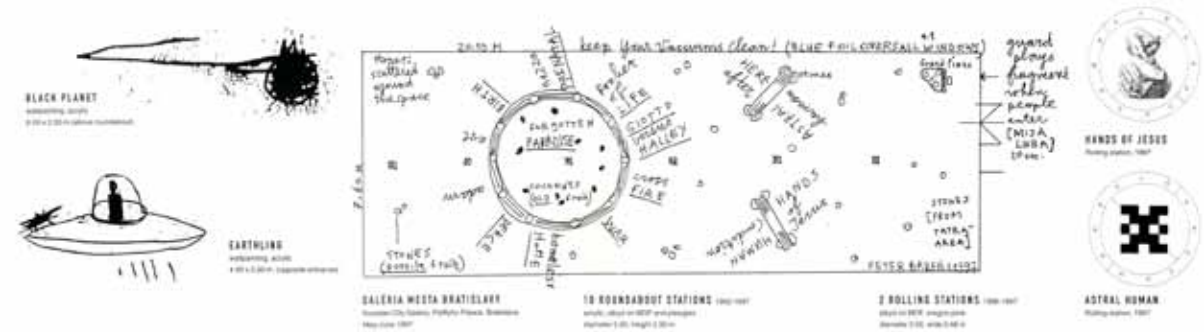
Bratislava SK, 1997

Performance during opening of installation. Whistling Misa Luba (a number by Rip Rig & Panic) for five minutes. Hands and feet are weighed down by stones brought along from the High Tatra mountains. [PB]

113 **LUST, DESIRE AND OTHER TERMINAL BODIES**

Bratislava SK, 1997

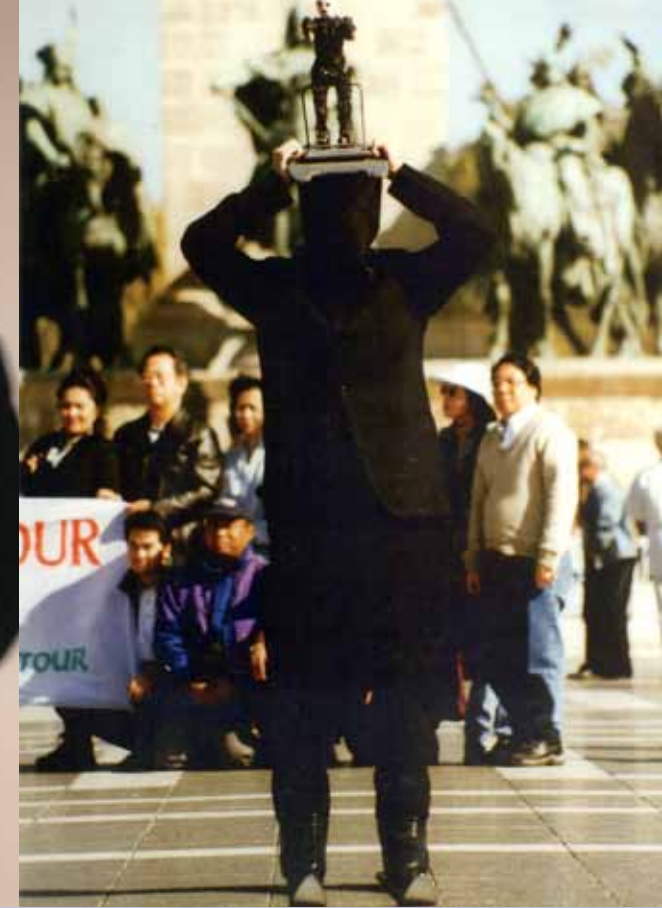
Roundabout Stations consisting of fibreboard and plexiglass panels show the words HOMELESS HOME, CROSS FIRE, ROCKET OF LIFE, WAR, PEACE. Inside, FORGOTTEN PARADISE. The Rolling Stations function as gates, having titles such as HANDS OF JESUS, ASTRAL HUMAN, HERE AFTER, HUMAN CONDITION. Stones lie scattered on the floor. Two murals: BLACK PLANET AND EARTHLING. The whole installation is flooded in blue (day)light. The guard on duty was supposed to play a simple tune (Misa Luba) on the grand piano while people are entering. [PB]



114 **PROGRESS PROGRESS**

Budapest HU, 1997

Progress Progress was performed as the missing allegory on Heroes' Square. Dressed in a black suit, on skis and holding up a tray wrapped in cloth which covered up its face. Several actions were performed on one day: high up at the Tympanum of Mucsarnok Palace of Exhibitions, on Heroes' Square itself, between the lined-up statues, such as Welfare, Justice, Prudence, Faith, Work, close to the tomb of the unknown soldier and alongside the museums situated around the square. At certain moments in the performances the shuffling figure lifted up the tray and a skull painted face became visible. [PB]



Lewedorp-Middelburg NL, 2000

A full day's walk from Lewedorp to Middelburg, The Netherlands. Two monks, barefoot and accompanied by their two dogs, take along pumpkins, which they found at that exact spot. After crossing motorways, villages, a traintrack, and going down a canal in a rubber boat, they finally end up on the Abdijplein (Abbey Square) in Middelburg, the capital city of the province of Zeeland. Here, at the end of the day, they offer the pumpkins to so-called Zeeuwse Meisjes (young maids dressed in regional costumes). Should they eat these pumpkins, they will become pregnant (as legend has it). First part of the series '2001 Pitfalls And Smiles. World Religions Recorded And Compiled By Amateurs' (SHOT69). [PB]





120 **PALESTINIAN PITFALLS**

Vlissingen NL, 2000

Short performances on the coastline of Flushing. Confrontation of Palestinian figures against Dutch landscape: hanging in sail of wing, saluting the other, on a surfboard approaching the coast, praying together, throwing corcks into the water and bottles against the embankment, wounded, set fire to belongings, praying, endgame, high tide. Second part of the series '2001 Pitfalls And Smiles. World Religions Recorded And Compiled By Amateurs' (SHOT69).





124 **BEGGARS BANQUET** DISCOVER HEAVEN

Nové Zámky SK / Bratislava SK / Venice IT / Cleveland US, 2002-2003

A well-dressed man yet in beggar position, asking passers-by to DISCOVER HEAVEN, by showing examples of how to achieve that. (Sisyphus version). Ongoing series. [PB]



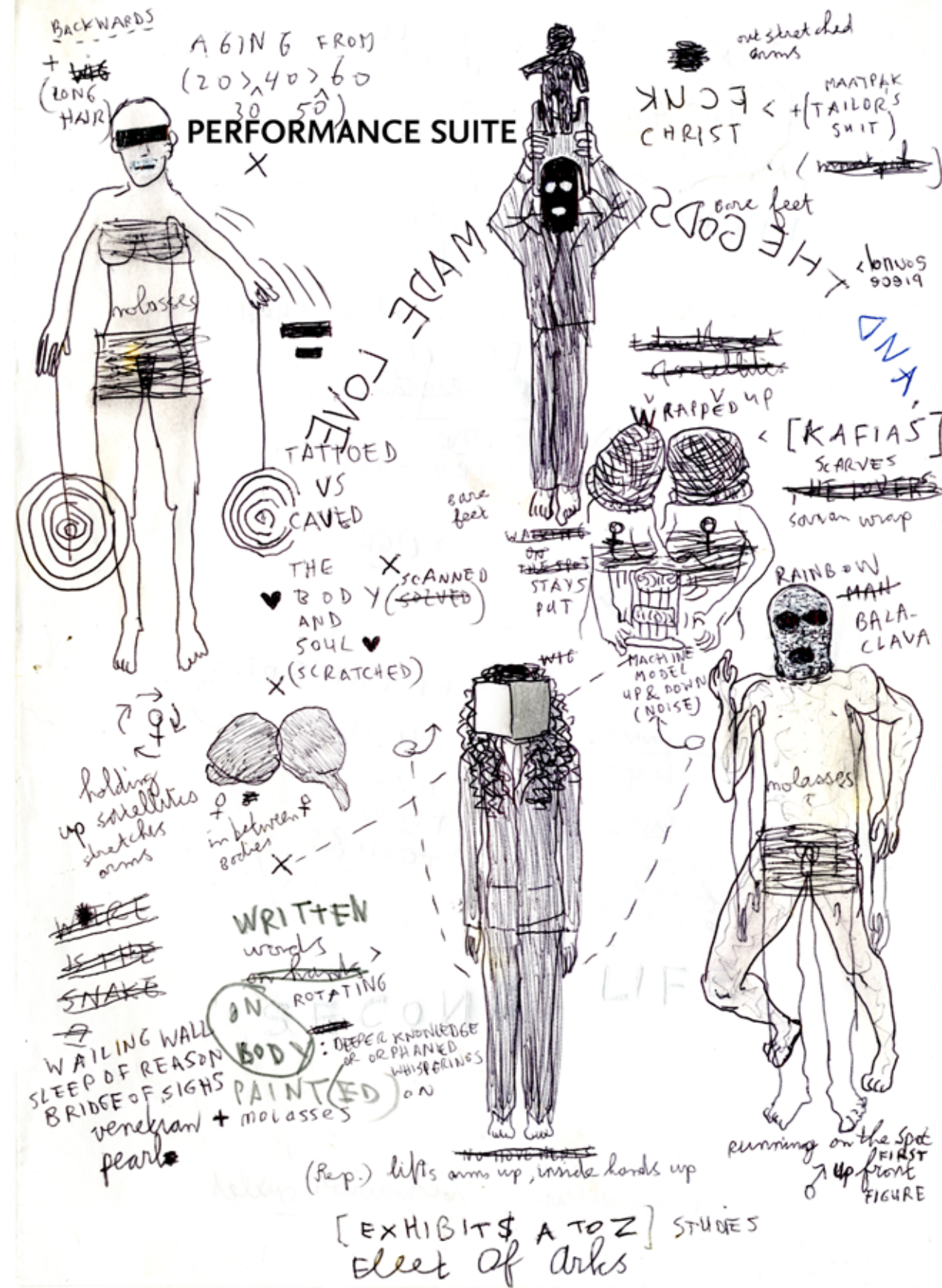


The Ark-series offers a meeting ground between sensual bewilderment and political commentary, and points out the constructed nature of our ideas of cultural memory and our sometimes superficial notions of identity. [PB]

A multi-sensory work, Ark performances include fog, procession, saran-wrapped performers, circling satellites, orphaned whisperings, molasses, written and spoken texts, boomerangs and much more. Baren's practice uses the public's assumptions regarding performance—the promise of drama, duration and theatricality—to evoke a disquieting sense of primordial mystery, public yearning, fear and cultural reformation. Props common to the show business (fog machines, aural moodscapes and nearly nude performers) are blended in with cross-cultural signifiers (Aboriginal boomerangs, Palestinian scarves, Chinese toys).

[Lance Blomgren, Helen Pitt Gallery, Vancouver for LIVE 2005]

The involvement of the audience is triggered by mobilising all the senses. It cannot and should not be that the spectators leave the location unmoved. A performance by Peter Baren is not a visual spectacle, but an emotional experience. [Rob Perree, A Committed Search For Limits. Peter Baren's Ark-series, 2008]



ARK BLIND DATES, VENETIAN BLINDS, BITCHES BREW AND THE EXHAUSTION OF HISTORY

New York US, 2004

Ark refers to the boat-like shape I will clean the floor in. The length of the performance is bound to a soundpiece (Bitches Brew by Miles Davis, 29 mins) which is played loudly.

From the beginning a slideshowed CD-ROM is feeding the actual performance (featuring two figures who are dressed up in scarves, black suit and overall, and who are huddling on an embankment near the sea, doing everything they can to get away from there).

Two figures in (dark) suits enter the cleared out storefront space from behind the back screen. One figure leads the other and positions him right behind the screening device. The second figure has no visual contact with the surrounding area; his sight is blocked by an open book.

The floor is swept clean; right after that, jigsaw puzzles of the train bombing in Madrid are carefully presented to the people seated there. One of these jigsaw puzzles shows myself as a beggar asking passers-by to DISCOVER HEAVEN, in different situations. After the puzzles have been shown around, they are taken apart and the pieces are scattered inside the Ark shape.

In the meantime, the other figure is walking very very slowly towards the front of this shape. When passing in between the drills they are turned right behind his Achilles heels and I start to write texts, words, phrases concerning the Ark item on the floor, around and around, faster and faster, until the very moment the second figure is about to approach the front of the Ark.

I cover my face with gold powder from a cannister: I lie down and put the two ends of the tubes in my mouth and blow as hard as I can in those tubes, which are connected to the drills.

The first figure leads the second one out of the space. [PB]



Biel CH, 2004

ARK STREETTEXTING

Biel CH, 2004

With coloured chalk I start to write down words, which were collected from local newspapers and which deal with economic values and cultural phenomena nowadays, thus combining them with my thoughts on I Need You. The words are repeated aloud when written onto the ground. While I am writing I ask the people present to come up with their personal comments and thoughts on I Need You. Those words are combined with my scribbles to shape an oval form (Ark). [PB]

On the occasion of the I Need You opening, the previous night, texts were written (mirror wise) all over the city centre, starting from Kunsthau Biel.

Some excerpts: BELOVED SOMEWHERE FUCKING FAR AWAY NO-NO-NO MISBEHAVE TOWARDS FAITH DESTINY RESOLVES NOTHING CHANGE THE NECESSITY OF IT ALL NEVER REST FIGHT CRY YOU NEED TO CHOOSE YOU NEED TO CHANGE OPEN END [PB]





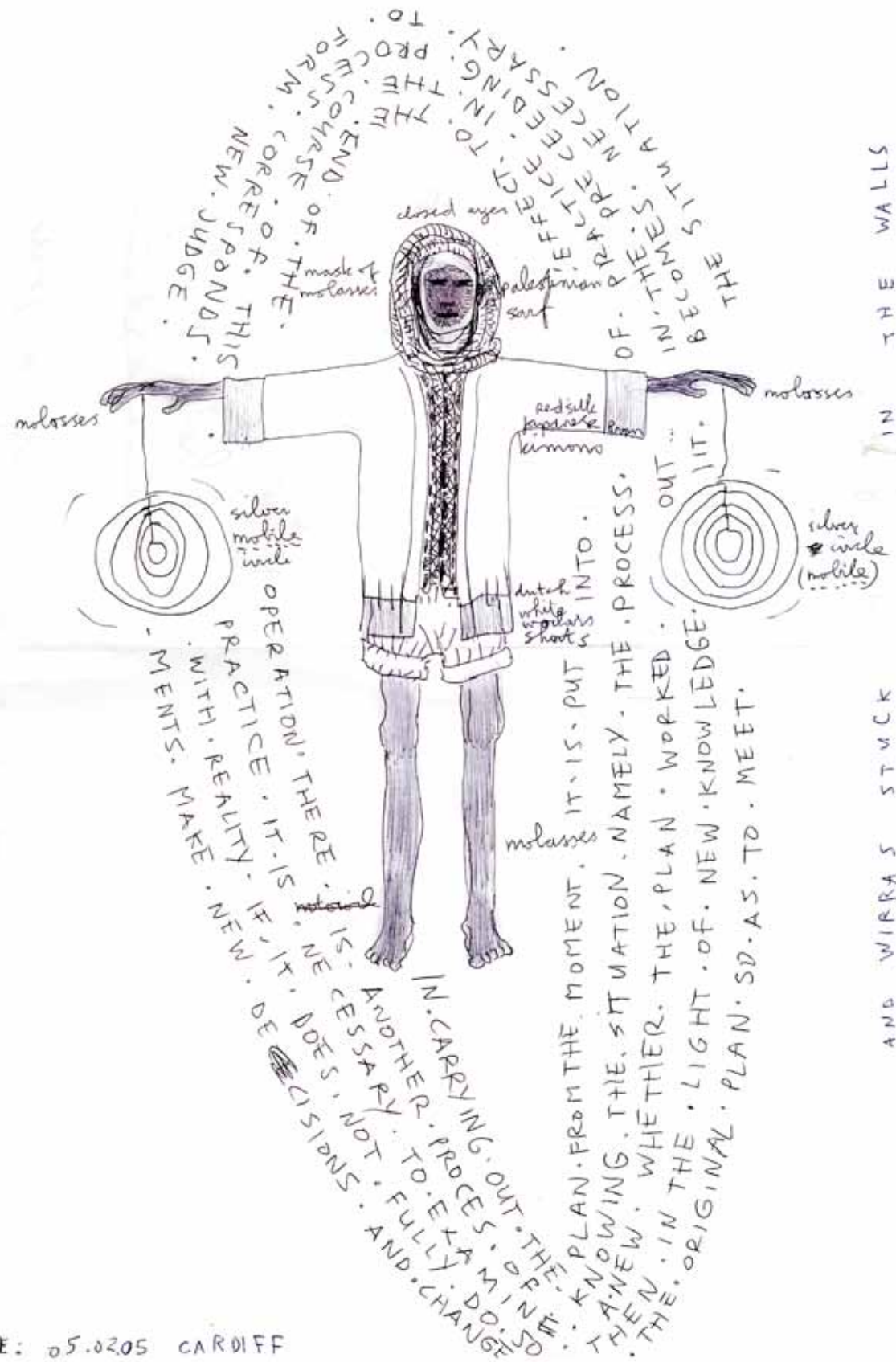
Cardiff UK, 2005

During the whole of the performance the space is filled by a hissing technofog machine (with intervals), therefore the people who enter have to mind their steps. Sounds that are heard are bangs (sometimes louder) against steel plates. Written on the wall near the entrance, from the bottom upwards, we read: EARTHLING, MEATJOY, CROSSFIRE, SHOOT, SPIRIT

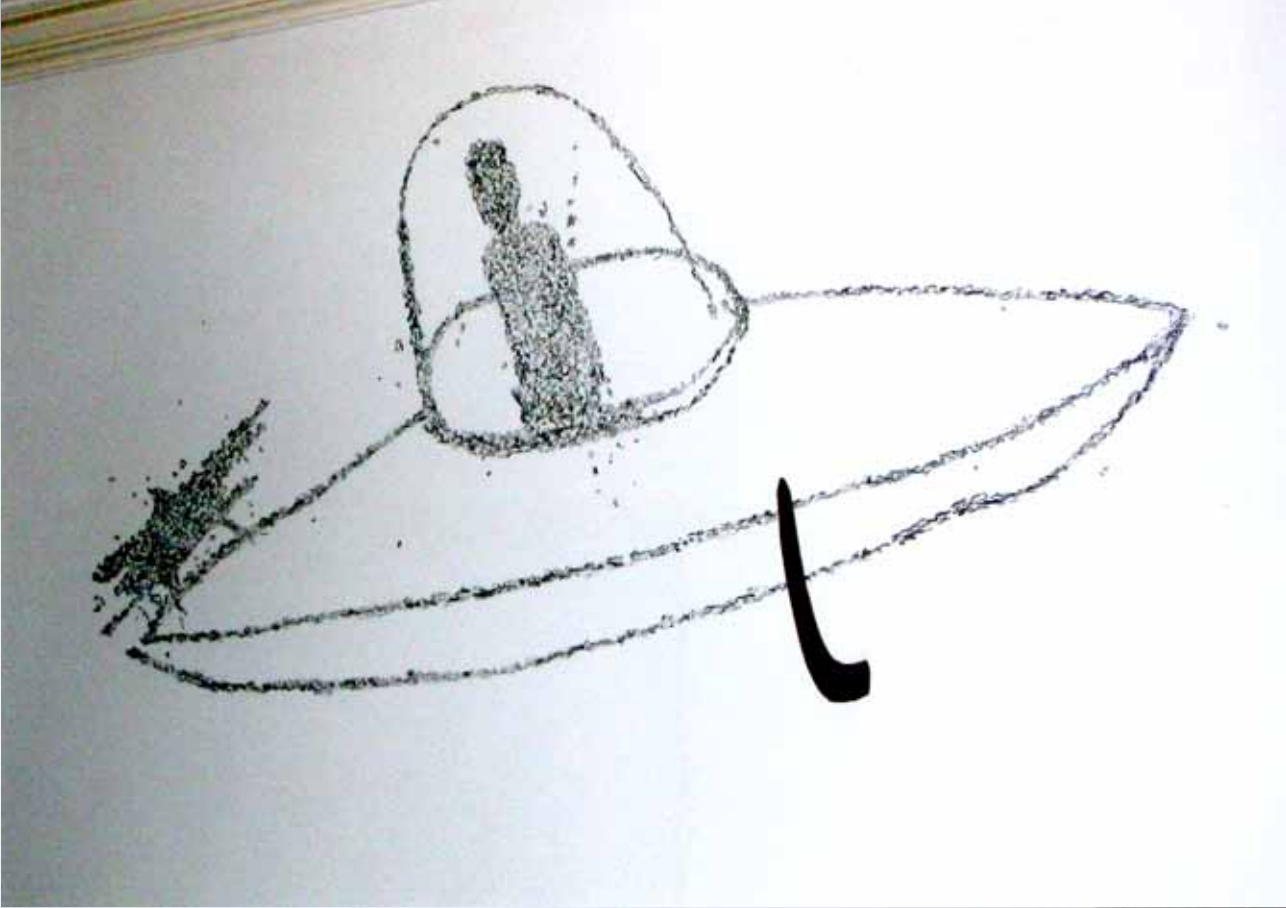
Three wirras (boomerangs) are stuck in different walls, interacting with the drawings on separate walls which close off the whole of the space. A long text is chalked on the floor, forming a boatlike shape (the Ark). This is a text by Mao Tse-tung, dating from 1936, proclaiming a strategic action, a campaign or a battle.

In the middle of this Ark (of words) a figure may be described (through the fog), arms spread out. From its hands silver mobiles are hanging down, gently moving because of people coming close and walking on again. The figure is dressed up in very different sorts of clothing: a headscarf (Palestinian style), a kimono (Japanese style) underneath a cardigan (Hippie-like) and knickerbockers (made of workman's trousers). Face, hands and legs are rubbed in with molasses. The eyes are closed. After one hour the figure leaves the room. [PB]

ARK (FROZEN FOOTAGE) = EARTHLING. MEATJOY. CROSSFIRE. ~~SHOOT~~ SHOOT. SPIRIT



TRACE: 05.0205 CARDIFF



MAKE NEW DESIGN
REDEFINING PROCESS
S.O.F.P.R.A.C.T.I.C.E
O.T.I.C.E
O.F.T.H.E.O.P.E.R.A.T
I.O.N
COURSE.OF.T
THE ORIGINAL PLAN.
THE ORIGINAL PLAN.

La Bisbal d'Emporda ES, 2005

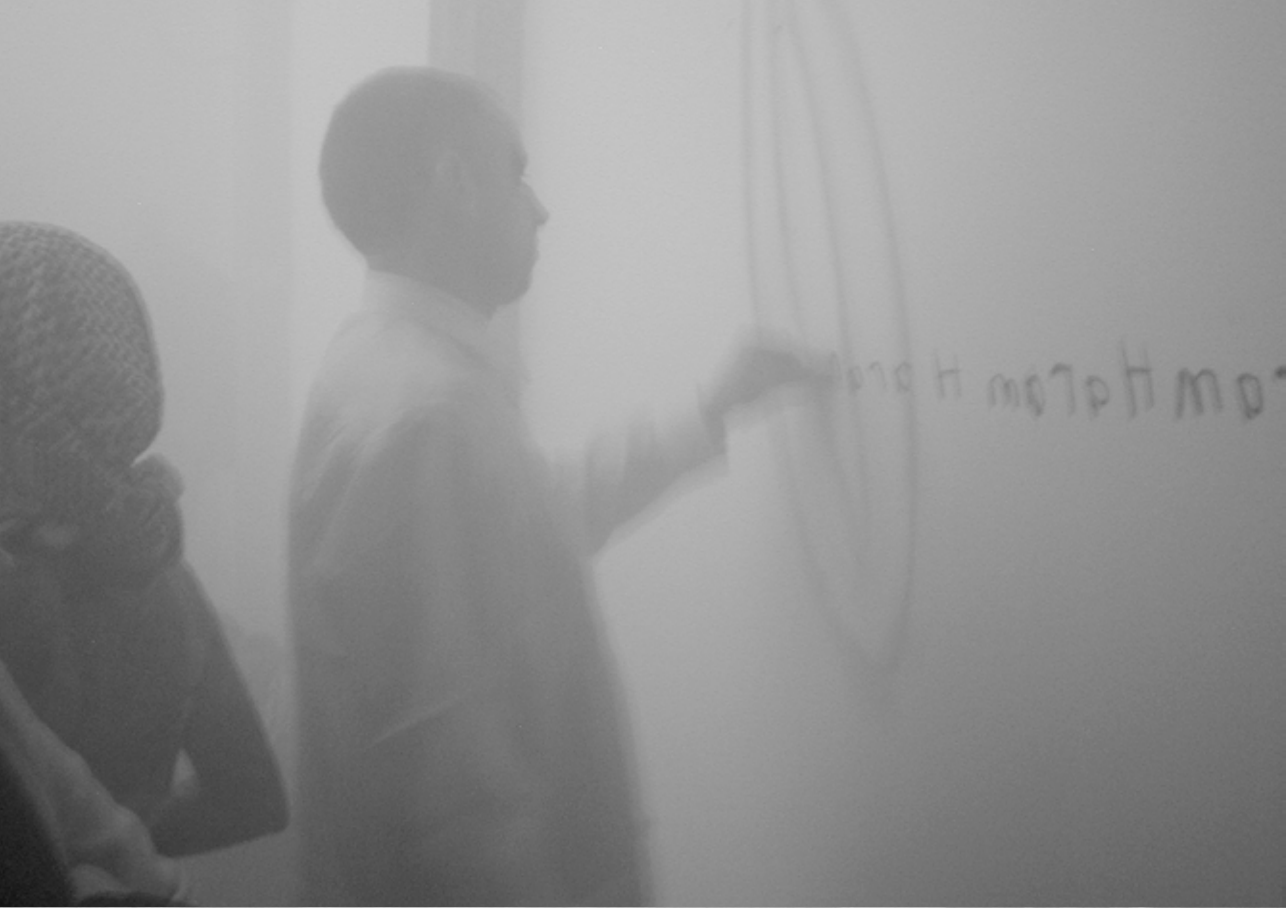
Late at night, leaving a private house opposite the castle, two figures are walking towards one of the old Jewish streets behind the main square. The first figure (black-and-white clothing and black bar covering his eyes) is leading the other, followed by a growing number of passers-by. In a back alley, the second figure is put in position and slowly rotates continuously. This figure can be described with its arms spread out. From its hands shiny mobiles are hanging down, gently moving. He keeps rotating during the whole of the performance. Very different sorts of clothing: headscarf (Palestinian style) that covers the head completely, a tight cardigan (Hippie-like) and short knickerbockers (made of workman's trousers). Hands and legs are covered in molasses.

The first figure shows the back of the text board above his head which reads ARCA (Ark). The other side is slowly presented to everybody present. It appears to be a jigsaw of two Israeli soldiers carrying a young colonist out of his house in one of the settlements.

The jigsaw puzzle is taken apart and the pieces are scattered around the performance area. Right after this he starts to write all kinds of different words around the rotating figure shaping the space into an Ark, until the last line, reading ESPERANZA, ESPERANZA, ESPERANZA completes it. For a moment the first figure stands still in front of the Ark and gathers up energy to tear his shirt, the way colonists act out their sorrow. The other figure is led into a private house again. The writing reads: AMAL (*Hope* in Arab), TIKWA (*Hope* in Hebrew) and ESPERANZA (*Hope* in Spanish). [PB]



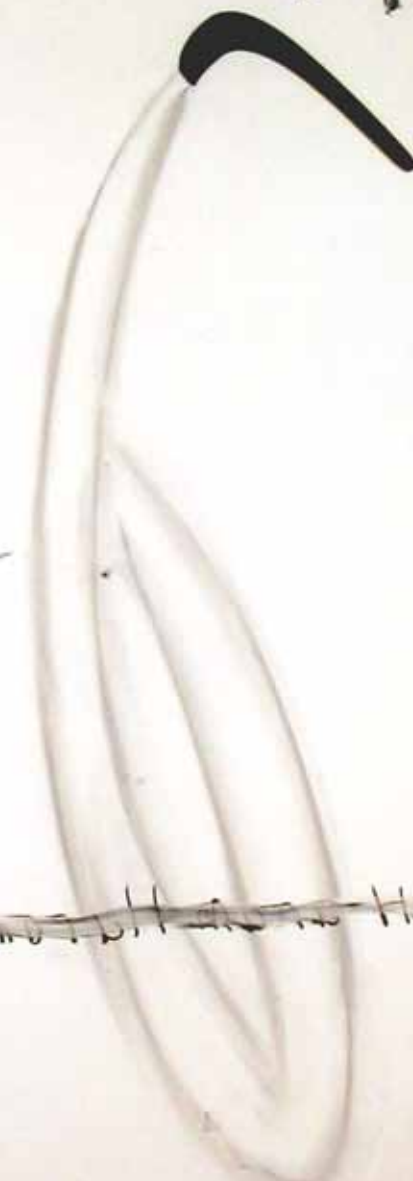




MEAT JOY



SPIRIT



EARTH LING

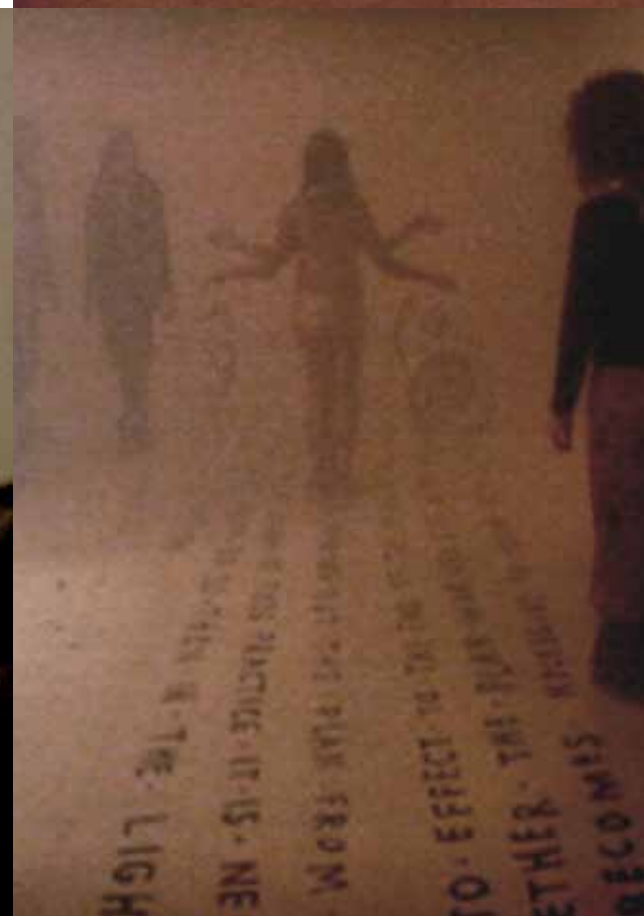


**ARK ON HOPE AND OTHER TERMINAL BODIES SUCH AS
BRIDGE OF SIGHS, SLEEP OF REASON AND WAILING WALL**

Tel Aviv IL, 2005

Each day the performance starts in the CCA/Upper gallery and consequently the space is left to proceed in a procession to several sites in the city of Tel Aviv (except for Day 1). The gallery is foggy and bangs are heard at irregular intervals. People who enter are faced with a figure, its eyes blacked out (censor bar) holding up a jigsaw puzzle (showing two soldiers carrying a youngster away from a colonist settlement).

In the middle of the space (standing on a long floor text by Mao Tse-tung, from 1938) two figures may be described: heads covered with scarves, their bodies covered with molasses and wrapped together with cling film, their arms outstretched, with mobiles hanging down from their fingers. People gather around the floor text. The first figure takes the jigsaw puzzle apart and puts the pieces down on the floor around the text. [PB]



Next, all around the surrounding walls the word HARAM (in reverse – meaning unclean, impure) is written, to declare everything that finds itself outside this space unclean, impure. Later on, one can read the word HOPE in some places, in many different languages. The first figure stops in front of every word (of HOPE) and voices it in that particular language. This action is followed by a figure picking up the boomerangs one by one, then subsequently SPIRIT, MEATJOY, SHOOT, EARTHLING, CROSSFIRE is written on each of them and then they are lined up from right to left behind the figures. After this has been done, the last action consists of the first figure tearing apart his shirt, while facing the two clinched figures. Doors are opened to lead people out. On the following days people who enter the CCA are then faced with a blow-up of the image used previously, which is then torn up and scattered around the floor text (again and again). The line of words is (repeatedly) being licked before the single figure is taken out of the space into the city of Tel Aviv, to spots where assassinations took place and bombs went off in the past. Every walk ends with the figure tearing his shirt after facing the other figure, close to one of these spots and leading it back to the CCA. During the last trip (to the seaside) a boomerang is thrown towards the sea (with the word SPIRIT written on it) [PB]







Bart Rutten (1972) is curator of the visual art collection at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam. Rutten is a specialist in the field of video art. Formerly, he was also employed at the Stedelijk Museum 's-Hertogenbosch and at the Nederlands Instituut voor Mediakunst Montevideo/Time Based Arts (Dutch Institute for Media Art Montevideo/Time Based Arts), Amsterdam. As a curator, Rutten is jointly responsible for the management of both the painting and sculpture collections and the audiovisual collection (film and video art) of the Stedelijk Museum. Besides, he conducts research on these collections, does presentations and also contributes to the rearrangement of the collection in the new museum on the Museumplein (Museum Square). In the Stedelijk Museum 's-Hertogenbosch Rutten also organised exhibitions, besides being the curator of the collection. Exhibitions organised by Rutten include the exhibition entitled *Nederclips*, the exhibition featuring Maria Roosen and Margriet Smulders and solo presentations by Anne Wenzel, Jeroen Kooijmans and artists from 's-Hertogenbosch. Bart Rutten is also visiting lecturer at various institutes, including the Sandberg Institute, Amsterdam, the Design Academy, Eindhoven and the University of Utrecht. He was also a member of several committees belonging to certain foundations, like the Mondriaan Foundation as well as the Fund for the Stimulation of Cultural Broadcasting Productions.

An interview with Peter Baren

My first introduction to Peter Baren and his work was in the late nineties, when I was working for the Nederlandse Instituut voor Mediakunst (Dutch Institute for Media Art). I was fascinated by his work, because it was so completely individual, compared to all the interminable black-and-white recordings of videotaped performances that I had been all too familiar with till then. It was a real eye-opener for me to see an artist who was not afraid to use theatrical gestures, and who included enormous light effects in his performances. Yet, in spite of Baren manipulating the surrounding space in all kinds of ways –manipulations that characterised, or even facilitated his performances– in essence, his work remained remarkably simple. In this interview we shall discuss his position in relation to the canonical definition of performance art, which became generally accepted in twentieth-century history of art: the idea that performance is about bare spaces and minimal intervention. Moreover, we shall discuss the three stages in his art works: his intentions beforehand and the way in which his ideas develop, how these manifest themselves in a live situation and what is left of them afterwards. Thus we are given an insight into the formative process underlying the performances by the artist himself.

In total, we talked together five times, looking again at the answers given earlier, questioning them again, with Baren reformulating them. I have tried to assemble all the different answers to form a complete interview in just the way in which Baren talks –giving answers that vary from short, pithy sentences to long stories in which he happily loses himself in anecdotes– thus the reader is offered the opportunity to roam with us through the various fields we visited in our discussions about his work. These discussions did not only feature details about his own work, but also important sources of inspiration, as well as co-artists crossing his path and the various venues where his performances took place.

You belong to the generation of artists for whom the performance had become an accepted medium. How did you end up in performance art?

PB: From 1972 to 1977 I was a student at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten (State Academy of Visual Arts). I did not hail from a very cultural background, hence even this training came as a considerable culture shock

to me. Unlike the Academy nowadays, it offered a really classical training. You could choose between two- and three-dimensional work: painting and drawing or sculpture, a subdivision we would find it hard to imagine at present. At the time, someone suggested –as a joke– that one should opt for four dimensions, as formulated by Kazimir Malevich. I had absolutely no idea at the time that I was to apply myself to performance art later on.

But did you ever go and see performances while attending this as yet traditional academy?

From 1975 onwards, I occasionally visited De Appel. At the time, I saw Ben d'Armagnac, for instance, and Moniek Toebosch. But I also saw videos by Vito Acconci there. In those days, I came into ever closer contact with people doing modern dance, like the dancers of Gebouw de Liefde and people belonging to Dogtroep. It was a very fertile period, with impressions coming in from all directions.

In the early eighties I started doing what I called 'public working periods'. I came into contact with Peer Veneman in the ACA/HAL 1 (Amsterdams Centrum voor Actuele kunst – Amsterdam Centre for Contemporary Art) where we were both working at the time. Through him I became involved in a new artists' initiative called The Living Room, an alternative location where we took things into our own hands, in order to provide a niche for contemporary art. The following years, 1981 and 1982, were very important to me, because that was the time when everything fell into place for me.

Let's go back to the beginning. How was it possible for you to reconcile this 'different art' which you encountered in these alternative locations with the traditional training at the respectable Rijksakademie (State Academy)? Were you not very confused, with this traditional State Academy already constituting such a culture shock?

The link was mainly forged by other artists attending the State Academy, people I felt a connection with, who took me along to these special places like De Appel; at the time, the latter was a tremendous incrowd spot, by the way. Yet, it offered me an alternative perspective on art, one which I found very appealing. It made me feel certain that I did not want to create work any longer which I could physically stand next to. I had not yet reached the point where I was going to use my body only, but I wanted more than what I could present on the flat plane. To be that confrontation myself. Perhaps this has

also got to do with my father, who was an architect, for I wanted to include the space for which my art was meant, in the work of art itself. At a certain point you *became* space and created space. I wanted to influence people three-dimensionally, with the use of a wide scale of materials and objects, I never wanted to use my own body merely, something I saw quite often in the performance art of that time.

I sought to cooperate with other artists and dancers using their bodies, such as members of Dansproductie (Dance production), for instance, and became involved in Stuart Sherman's performance called 'Hamlet (A Portrait)', which was put on at the Mickery Theatre in Amsterdam and which featured several Hamlets standing on the stage simultaneously. I was one of those Hamlets, working with members of the Theatre of Mistakes on this occasion. In those days I constantly alternated the visual art space – *the white cube* –with the theatre space– the black box. At the time I already knew that I did not want to choose only one of these worlds. Hence, my preference for always using props –apart from my own body– in my performances, props that afterwards still had a *raison d'être*. In my early performances these could be paintings, for instance; later on, I used existing objects that I had take on a different shape.

But to return to that Rijksakademie (State Academy), which, like a kind of monastery, demanded you to be present daily from nine till four, and even every evening from seven till nine, as well, while you were raring to go and hit the town, of course! The institute did not have any studios, we had to share. What a relief it was to leave the Academy, when we were able to create our own studios in squats, completely in tune with the spirit of the time, which was dominated by crisis and called for a *do-it-yourself* mentality. The period in the squat on Wittenburg was very special: this was where we lived and worked and this was the place where the doors to our studios were always open.

When you discovered this squatters' scene, did you consciously choose to focus on performance?

I certainly did not have an ideal picture in mind of what my art practice was to be like. Coming from a middle-class background, I was extremely eager to sample the world opening up before me, I still am, actually. In my heart of hearts I knew: there *has* to be more in life than this classical training, but I

164 never made a conscious choice to break away from the academic life. I found the developments in contemporary painting very interesting as well, for instance. But equally important for me was my introduction to the Japanese Butoh theatre, and to Gordon Matta-Clark, Bruce McLean, Tadeusz Kantor, James Lee Byars, to the later works of Bruce Nauman and, more recently, Alistair MacLennan. In my opinion, it was a long series of introductions, fuelled by my greediness. And to continue to work, to find your own space in a squat, an old potato warehouse on Wittenburg, for instance. To be active, to experiment, all of this taking place on the sidelines, without any major social agenda. We just wanted our own space for our own art.

So, this greediness and quest of yours formed the basis for those first performing elements in your work. But it was never just about an artistic development focused on yourself only, with the audience taking second place.

That's right, the people present played an important role right from the start. For instance, I have never done a solo performance in front of a camera, to be shown to an audience later. The live experience of the people present at my performances has always been extremely important to me.

Right from my first performance during the Frame Experiment, which took place in the Willem II cigar factory in the town of 's-Hertogenbosch, the audience has been very important. It was a very strong experience for me, taking place in a festival setting. In fact, I was subservient to the phantom –my body as a neutral entity– that had a role in this performance. I was just a presence, subservient to the overall picture I created.

I immediately knew I had presented something here that I wanted to continue with. I realised that, at that moment, it was not just about the experiment any longer. It was clear: I had a studio as a base, and used my body as personal material. Things could be taken further from there.

'A body like a phantom' also sounds a bit like the metaphor widely used in the theatre world: the actor's body like a hollow vessel that can be filled up. Also because the audience and the festival setting were so important to you: was it never an issue for you, the question whether you were a theatrical artist or a visual artist?

No. Although I never wanted to choose between these two worlds, I have always kept regarding myself as a visual artist. One of the reasons for this was the experiences I had had playing Hamlet at the Mickery on Rozen-

gracht. You were booked, did rehearsals and ended up doing the same thing twenty times over. Time and time again you had to find the strength to enter into a physical and mental marathon session. At the time, I did not want this to be my only method of working: also, I was desperate to find my own personal form. After that, in 1982, I started intensively cooperating with Koos Dalstra, at W 139 in Amsterdam, at first. This cooperation eventually resulted in our Wirra-series.

Everything we did remained theatrical: exaggerating your movements, but at the same time feeling that urge to react to the space where the performance was taking place, and to the people being present there.

In the eighties many performance artists initially working with their own bodies, in an empty visual art space, switched over to the theatre. As if performance art had become socially acceptable.

It had definitely not become that. As a performance artist, you were always kept on the sidelines at visual art manifestations and exhibitions, hidden away in the fringe programme, for instance. An interesting case in point is an action by Charlemagne Palestine. He was asked to do a performance at the 1977 Documenta. He ended up making a sculpture, because that would yield him ten times the money he was going to get for a performance. This is still the case: as a performance artist you have to negotiate a lot harder in order to get a good spot for your work, an object will nearly always get a good spot as a matter of course.

Could we say that there is a hierarchy between the art disciplines still?

That has changed by now. I think Tino Sehgal is an interesting artist: in staging the public's experience within visual art spaces, he is taking things ever further. He always uses that context in a very strong manner. Moreover, the enormous influx of film and video art has resulted in the public being more patient and more accepting of time based art.

What has induced you to do a performance? A movement, a space, music or a certain prop?

Actually, that varies a lot. For instance, an important factor in my first performance was the fact that I had a large, deserted factory hall at my disposal. It was a kind of tabula rasa. At the time, the idea to fill that hall with movement appealed to me. This had to do with my search, mentioned

earlier: I literally wanted to experience the space. Willem II was a hard, industrial space featuring loads of pillars and a tiled floor. I used very loud sounds from Cabaret Voltaire: 'Western Mantra' – extremely noisy eighties' music from Sheffield, calling to mind the noise of the coal and steel industries. The music lasted twenty minutes and that determined the length of the performance: I wanted to move among the pillars in a taut line. It was very acrobatic and physical, whereas my body was not well-trained at all. But it felt natural to do something with that young body, it was a way of giving vent to the great urge I felt, to use that hall. Then I added light, more and more light, and my movements became ever sharper and more angular. At the end the lights had to be doused.

So the concept was quite simple, really: you had the place you were asked to do a performance in, you used Cabaret Voltaire because you thought it suited the environment, and within this framework you developed a choreography to traverse the space. In your work you connect different worlds.

The musical input was very important: I listened to Wire, Joy Division, Indoor Life, Durutti Column, Einstürzende Neubauten. After 'Western Mantra', that I put on in the Willem II, I was asked more often and started working from one invitation to another, always using the identity of the location given as a strongly determining factor, to which I then reacted in my turn.

So right after Den Bosch you received an invitation for another location?

Yes, for *Galerie Alto (Gallery Alto)*, on the third floor of a grand old house in Rotterdam. People had to go up the stairs, and then entered a white gallery space lit by numerous spotlights. The gallery specialised in applied art, there were glass cases with all kinds of stuff everywhere. I had these objects removed and replaced them with attributes of my own. In that way I used the space at my disposal in a completely different manner. As I did with deserted factories or the Belvédère in Sonsbeek in 1983, a space having completely different characteristics again. First, I would have a good look at the place on offer. I had a certain idea in my head, as a rule, but that could change again in the preparatory process and eventual execution of the work.

Then and there, I decided to do a contrastive performance/installation in this very gallery, entitled 'Eastern Mantra' (after the 'Western Mantra', put

▶ 8

▶ 49

▶ 16

on earlier). This time, the performance featured a softly pulsating sound track of Cabaret Voltaire, the heat of the numerous spot lights, the small dimensions of the gallery and myself, lying naked, face down in the sand surrounding me. All this as opposed to the cold, the large dimensions of the factory hall in Den Bosch and myself as a black silhouette, reacting to the loud noise.

▶ 10 *After that you were offered to do performances in The Living Room. You did several things there.*

I did the opening performance, and after that, in 1982, I participated in a group exhibition. However, it soon became obvious that Bart van de Ven, the owner, was unable to represent me: 'How the hell am I supposed to sell a performance, can't you just create things?' For me that was not an issue: I do not sell myself, I am a performer. That is completely different from a man like Peer Veneman, for instance, who was running The Living Room together with Van de Ven. In 1991 I came back there with a photographic work, on the occasion of their tenth anniversary – this work was later bought by the Stedelijk Museum. I also took part in the farewell exhibition 'Kiss And Say Goodbye' in 1993, as well as in the first retrospective in Neuenhaus: 'Eine Amsterdamer Galerie und die achtziger Jahre/ An Amsterdam Gallery and the eighties' in 1995.

▶ 95

Did you continue to create work in your studio besides doing performances?

Yes, being classically trained, I was always busy creating things. The Stedelijk Museum, for instance, has a number of large works on paper, dating from the late eighties, in its collection. But I never put these on show in performances; they were studio pieces in the classical sense, waiting to be put on show one day. A number of photographic works, belonging to the same SM collection, did form part of several installations¹. I was more interested in integrating the drawing process in my performances. Sometimes it involved drawings leading to a performance, but at the time I also literally wrote down many performances. That meant writing out the complete action as soon as possible *after* the performance ended. I started making books, resembling scenarios.

168 *Did you also make drafts for performances that had not found a venue yet?*
Not at the time, not yet. I wrote 'scores' afterwards, like Merce Cunningham did at times. But these were certainly not your regular scenarios, enabling others to perform the work again after my death. Most of these were purely meant for my own use, to enable me to remember what I had done. Nowadays everybody records everything with a digital camera, but in those days footage was literally scarce. The footage I did have made, I used to edit and cut back to videos of a normal size. Sometimes these were shown at festivals for video art.

You were aware of being part of a tradition in which people look back as well. According to some, that is a big difference between dramatic art and visual art: the last is always created with the idea that it will be looked at again one day, and this does not necessarily apply to a theatre performance.

That's true. Which is why oral history is very important, even though in that case you are dependent on the people who saw the performance. I have become ever more aware of the transience of performance and I continue to search for a way to deal with that in a challenging way, time and again. From 2004 I have worked with young people rather, artists mostly, who carry out the work together with me. In those cases I do work with a scenario. But a scenario like that does not comprise more than a number of catchwords and little instructional sketches on a piece of standard size paper.

To what extent did you allow chance to form part of the live performances? What was the ratio between the plans you wrote and outlined beforehand and the things that were happening then and there, new impulses and new inspiration?

In the 1981 performance 'Groundroom, Lost And Found' chance played a decisive part. I had flooded the big cellar space of De Fabriek (The Factory) in the town of Eindhoven with a layer of water, resulting in a narcissistic reflection, with the space becoming even more gloomy. Broken umbrellas were lying spread out on the floor. My actions were all impulses. I walked in a pattern through the space, then stopped and said: 'Lost'. On an impulse, I walked on and then said: 'Found', and then I walked on towards the next point and repeated these same words. I used a certain hand gesture coined by Nijinsky, the dancer, which was very specific, but apart from that my gestures were spontaneous and my actions quite tranquil. The final image

▶ 14

was me lying in the water, supported by my hand. I had not imagined beforehand that this would be a fitting ending.

Over the years I have left things to chance more and more often. This is mostly due to the fact that I started feeling a lot freer, because I had acquired a whole repertory of gestures and postures which I used in various performances. But even when employing an existing gesture, the latter could change then and there. For instance, I would destroy something, giving the performance as a whole a totally different twist. This happened in 'Beggars Banquet, Discover Heaven', where I smashed performance stills in the shape of puzzles on the steps of a catholic monument. After that, the pieces were eagerly collected and taken away by little boys². Or in the Ark-series (2004-2012): here, I tore my clothes several times, as a sign of mourning³.

▶ 124

You have also performed in the public space, where you have less control over the situation, and where there are many more elements you have to react to. Maybe chance plays a much larger part there? When did you start performing in the public space?

▶ 58

In 1986 I took part –doing performances– in The National Review of Live Art in Nottingham. A year later, I was invited to make billboards there, as an art project. For these billboards I used portraits of people living in the area and stills from various performances, to which texts were added. In this way, it was possible for me to give these images a second life in the public space. Another example for 'Century '87': a light and sound installation in the Mint Tower in Amsterdam, as part of the manifestation Amsterdam Cultural Capital of Europe. This work in the public space was *time based* and, in my eyes, strongly related to performance: I spread out unannounced sounds over the city.

▶ 60

I did not hear until only a month beforehand that I was permitted to make an installation in the tower. Mint Square is a strange place, you always have the feeling you are about to be run over there – it is a spot everybody wants to get away from as quickly as possible. I did not see myself taking up position in the middle of the square, and the tower was too small for the public to enter. Indeed, a performance did not seem the most viable option to do something in that spot.

The shape of the building suggested an animal to me, and I decided to spotlight its head, the steeple, in red light, and to replace the existing light bulbs

with green light bulbs, temporarily. The sound of the troating of a rutting buck issuing from the tower fused everything to a whole. Due to a technical malfunction the work was only half-lit for days on end; it was the first time I realised my complete dependence on matters of technique. But even more important was the fact that it was a piece of performing in which I myself was absent.

A year later, the sound of the troating of a rutting buck resounded from a man-sized wooden crate, fitted out with a freight net and parachute; this was part of a touring exhibition that called in at a very wide range of places in Great Britain. Public art in the shape of a dropping⁴. Also in 1988, I participated in a very politically charged exhibition entitled 'Bezugspunkte 38/88/Focal Points 38/88', in Graz, Austria, during the Steirischer Herbst festival. The question was to reflect on the political situation of 1938, which saw the rise of Nazism. Hans Haacke also took part and the discussions we had are among my fondest memories. The artists were asked to react to buildings that were burdened by history, but they had to do so out in the street in front: doing something inside was out of the question, these buildings being in normal use as residences or offices. I had worked on a plan for the central station, about the decree, issued in 1938, banning Jews from marrying Germans. I was struck by its similarity to a floor plan of a network and wanted to use that confusion in this very place of arrivals and departures. Eventually, various persons were to have painted this decree on to the big glass window. But obviously this was considered to be over the top, for my plan was refused.

A second proposal did come off, though: 'Echo Of Hystiria, Or The Man On The Clock'. I strung up a more than lifesize dummy on the hands of the clock on the central clock tower on the Schlossberg. It is one of the exhibitions that had the greatest impact on me, also because of the powerful historical component.

After that, I had other art works loom up in the public space: 'Vanitas Borden/8 Staties (Vanitas Billboards/8 Stations), Amsterdam 1994, plus 'Red Haring Folly And Pinguin In Extase' (Penguin In Ecstasy), Wekerom 1996. However, I quit doing that in 2003. At the time, it was not so easy as it is nowadays to make a simulation of how a work was going to look in a certain location; that meant that you always had to go before yet another committee with a portfolio full of documentation under your arm. I quit doing that. No

▶ 70

▶ 72

▶ 74

offence, but I could not get up the courage any longer to ring the doorbell of people living in modern, upmarket areas, or to bring matters together –on order– in underprivileged problem areas.

In the performances 'Stations Of Nameless Energy', dating from 1987, and 'Echo Of Hystiria, Or The Man On The Clock', dating from 1988, you also worked with hanging bodies. But this time these were real people, weren't they?

▶ 62

I had other people perform 'Stations Of Nameless Energy'. During two weekends it was on, for people to experience. I played with the fact that you have opening hours, like in a museum, where you can go in and out. There was no development at all in the actions. You could come in right at the beginning, or after one and a half hours, it did not matter when, essentially. But I did seek a large suspense curve. Here, the experience of the physical (overstretched body) was linked to the imagination. In a sense, the same thing held good for the visitors: I gave them dyno torches for entering the dark space with. That meant they had to let go of their passive, consumer attitude and actually had to do something themselves in order to be able to view the work. They formed irregular light sources, very maniacal. This shadowy light seems to prevent one from storing the image, so that one has to look again and again. In 'Echo Of Hystiria, Or The Man On The Clock' the lifelike male figure was attached to the hands of the clock in such a way that, like a station, it incorporated both hysteria and history.

It would seem that the role of light is always important to you: you expressly use it to manipulate the viewer's perception. But in what way are these flashes of light related to the mist patches featuring in your later works from 2004 onwards, the Ark-series?

▶ 130

These flashes of light were a lot more confrontational. This also had to do with their function in the performances: to nail the people present to the floor, as it were, by harshly and irregularly lighting up frozen moments, resulting in a chain of hardened emotions and, eventually, resulting in people experiencing the whole as a huge delusion⁵.

In the case of mist, too, the audience is forced to move around actively, for if you don't move, you see next to nothing. Entering a mist patch has a certain quality, it is quite a subtle obstruction, forcing one to savour the actions while roaming around, more or less.

172 *In this case, the circumstances the audience have to face are pretty extreme (Guangzhou Live 2010). You really call the shots as to the environment in which the performance is served up to them. There is an interesting friction in this somewhere, also in regard to your past as an actor and visual artist. To what extent is your performance a theatrical performance as well?*

My performance is expressly linked to what I am experiencing as its creator. It is a direct experience, which I let take place in unusual locations, besides. I associate a performance with an action in front of the people present, with a certain distance between myself and them; at the same time it is very important to me to create a three-dimensional experience that completely surrounds the audience. With my performances I want to break through that distance, which is always there at theatrical performances. Nowadays, that takes less effort than I needed to put in back then in the eighties and nineties.

Your working method is really theatrical, too: you strongly influence the image that the audience, once present, will see and experience. You are continually influencing the reception of your performance. The boundaries between seeing and not seeing, between absence and presence, they all cause a tension in the experience of a space for you and with you. Perhaps that constitutes the crux in your work.

Right from the start this has had my undivided attention. I keep looking for ways in which I can do a performance differently every time, and I am always interested to see how people, in their turn, react to that. But also eager to find out how I can make a performance, and how it may win a place in visual art, in museums and outside, as well.

For example: Boris Charmatz is working on a Museum of Dance. To give dance a permanent place in a museum. Whom do you encounter when you go in there? The only physical entity there is the encounter: people reacting to your coming in. Charmatz's work, and Tino Seghal's as well, are really good indicators that there is still a lot to be explored in performance art. For instance, I have been quietly working on 'The Pack OfTing' for quite some time. The Pack (Das Rudel) refers to Joseph Beuys' pack of sleds in his similarly entitled installation. Ting signifies the reverberation of objects, 'things' becomes 'Ting'. For this performance I would like to use several adjacent rooms, one opening out onto another, and without a fixed 'performance' moment. I would like to compose it in such a way that the

► 196

► 214

rooms feature art works, selected by me, as the backdrop for performances that exist simultaneously and in connection with these objects, without the objects overshadowing the performance or vice versa. Beuys' 'The Pack' should play a large role in this, as should Gerrit van Bakel's 'Tarim Machine', and two sculpture groups entitled 'Crowd' and 'Heads' by Magdalena Abakanowicz; likewise, it would be an excellent place for one of Kiki Smith's nearly immaterial works like 'Untitled (Semen)', for instance. But I would also like to have other artists doing performances here besides myself. For me, one of the major components of this work is to create a complete equality between object and performance.

To put less and less on show, but with a greater power of expression, that is the challenge, over and over again. After a number of years my work has gone from objects back to performance again, I no longer do installations or commissioned work. So I have literally come back to light and mist and my own presence.

173

- 1 During the Festival a/d Werf, Utrecht, 1989, Inszenierte Fotografie, Neuss, 1989 and Hills+Mills, Bratislava, 1992.
- 2 Transart Communication 2002, Nové Zámky. See page 124.
- 3 During The Manifold (after) Lives of Performance, Leuven/Amsterdam 2009 (page 190), Guangzhou Live, Guangzhou 2010 (page 196) or Transmuted, Mexico City 2012 (page 204).
- 4 'The Drop', 1988-1989; this art event also included a.o. Stuart Brisley, Alistair MacLennan and Cornelia Parker (see page 70).
- 5 Like in the performance series 'We Want To Lose Our Heads For Anything In Time', 1989-1991.

Amsterdam NL / Marseille FR / Istanbul TR, 2006

What would you consider to be an icon of human splendour or of human suffering? And would you place it on my body? For several days, this question was whispered into the ears of people visiting an art fair, and also of people taking a day's walk in a city centre and of people attending a performance festival. These icons included POWER, CHANGE, CLOWN, SEX, MY FATHER, JIHAD, BIRTH, MY MOUNTAIN, CHILDHOOD, FREUD, SPRING BLOSSOM, BLIND FAITH, LEADERSHIP, TWIN TOWERS, EXISTENCE, MARIA, MIDDLE EAST, THERAPY, JUSTICE, MIRACLE, PEACOCK ISLAND, PATIENCE, EVERYTHING. [PB]

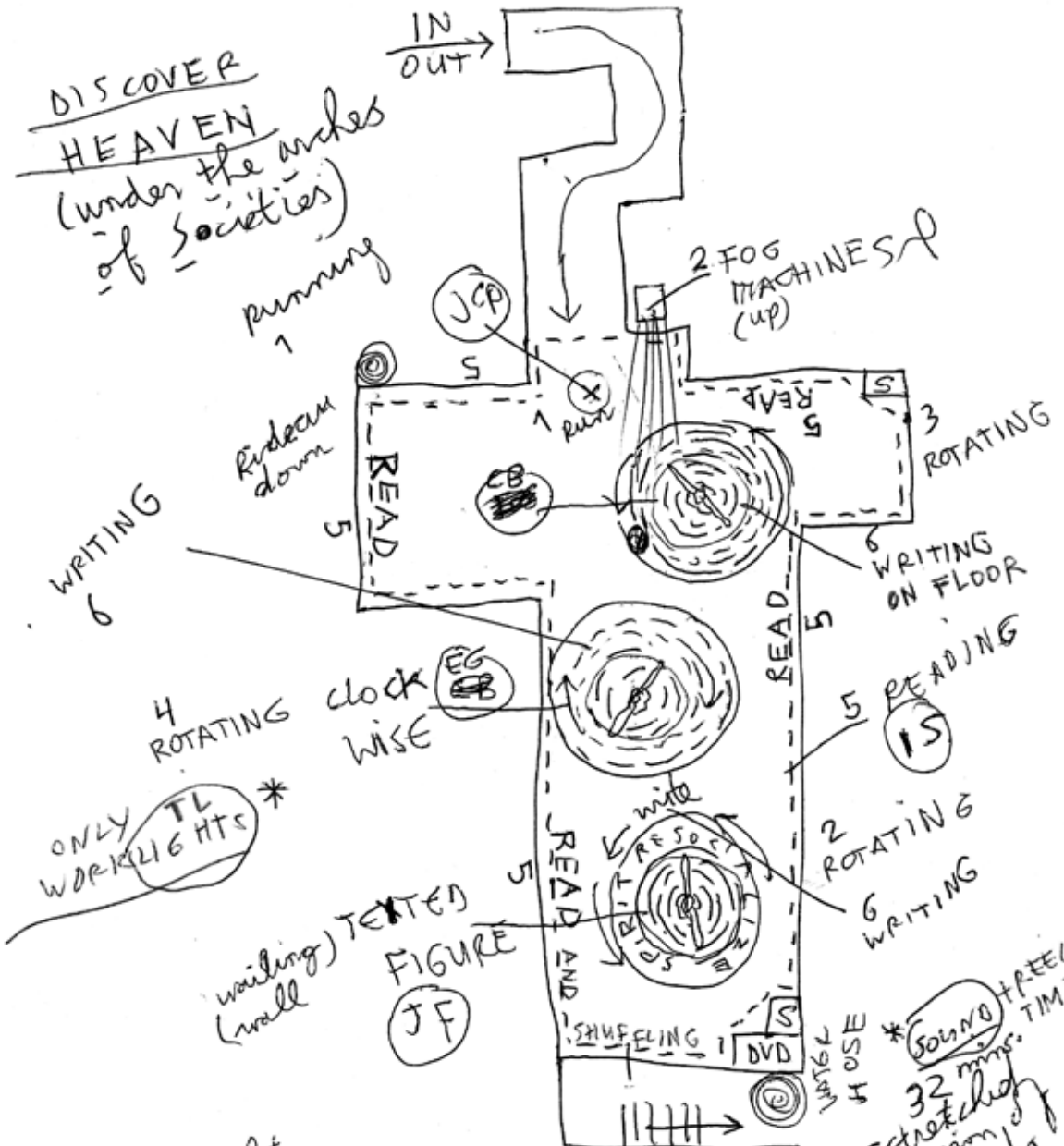


Glasgow UK, 2007 / Marseille FR, 2009 / Amsterdam NL, 2009

Peter Baren's performance taking place later that evening, in the same room, does not feature any spoken language; however, it is at least as titillating. Loudly humming noises lead one into a foggy room. A naked figure, her buttocks and breasts wrapped in cling film, keeps running in the same place. She is smeared with a dark, sticky substance: molasses. Baren leads another three figures into the room, one by one, their heads hidden by a balaclava or Palestinian shawl. A figure is spinning round and round, arms outstretched. On one arm the words 'Wailing Wall' are written. Another figure is wearing silver discs on her fingers. Like the sun, the centre of everything, she is showing the orbits of celestial bodies. With vehement strokes Baren chalks texts on the floor, in circles round the bodies. As the centre of his microcosmos, they are now propagating words like 'Hope, Hope, Hope', 'Retreat' and 'Resocialize'. 'And The Gods Made Love' is the text Baren chalks on the floor, right before our feet. The gods made love; Hera's spilled milk caused the creation of the Milky Way by Hercules. Baren is offering cosmic ecstasy: the bodies are rotating, my body is standing still. Yet, I am part of this star system and mingle with the others, in the end. The running figure is getting into trouble, slipping on the sticky mass that has dripped down her body. Then Baren comes to collect his figures one by one, leading them into the fog by their hips. He takes the running woman into his arms and carries her out of the room. The fog dissolves, the sounds fade away. Baren returns with a mop and wipes away every trace of the performance. Which will never appear again in this form. [Roos van der Lint, witness report for De Appel arts centre]







- ~~PERFORMERS:~~
 PERFORMERS:
 RUN 1 JEAN-CHRISTOPHE PETIT
 PIVOT 2 JOHANNA FLE CHAIRE
 PIVOT 3 CHARLOTTE BOURNILLY
 PIVOT 4 ELISA GILLOT
 READ 5 ISABELLA STELLMANN
 FLOOR- 6 PETER BAREN
 TEXTING

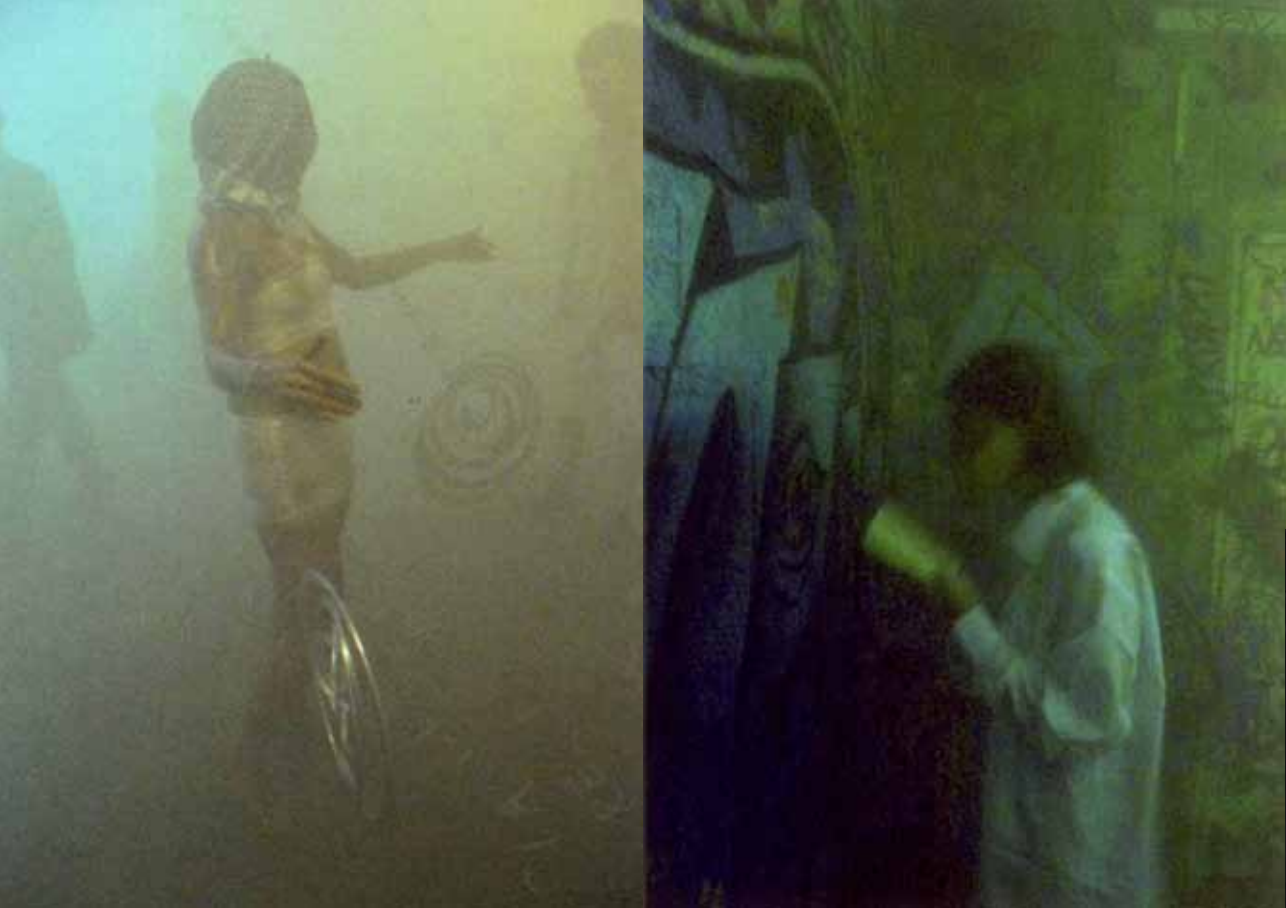
omni art studio
 showers
 water hose
 32 mmf. TIME
 * (sound) FREEEL
 Estrecher
 overm...
 and The Gods
 Made LOVE
 (JIMI HENDRIX)
 28 SEP 2009
 FRICHE
 BELLE de MAI
 MARSEILLE
 3. PRÉA VIS
 DE BÉSORDRE
 URBAIN

[ENTRANCE / LA
 TOUR] DURING

ARK UNKNOWN PLEASURES

Amsterdam NL, 2007

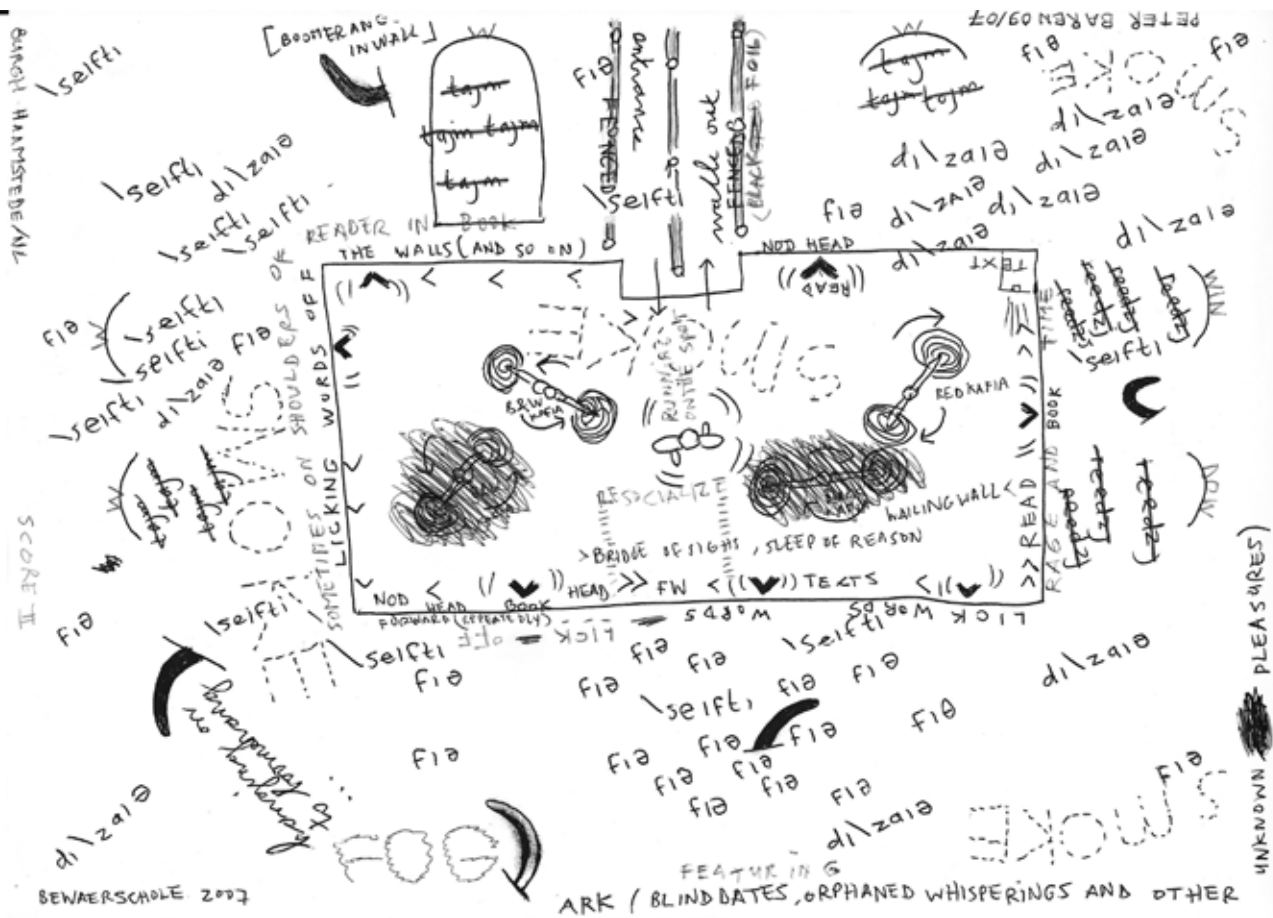
This performance DVD features *Hope And Other Terminal Bodies*, as well as extracts of the daily performances put on during BLURRR 5, at the Biennial of Performance Art, Tel Aviv 2005. These took place both in the CCA (Centre for Contemporary Art) and on different sites where suicide bombings took place in the past: in certain shopping streets, the market, crossroads, the busstation and at the seaside. [PB]



ARK FEATURING BLIND DATES, ORPHANED WHISPERINGS AND OTHER UNKNOWN PLEASURES

Burgh-Haamstede NL / Assemini IT, 2007-2008

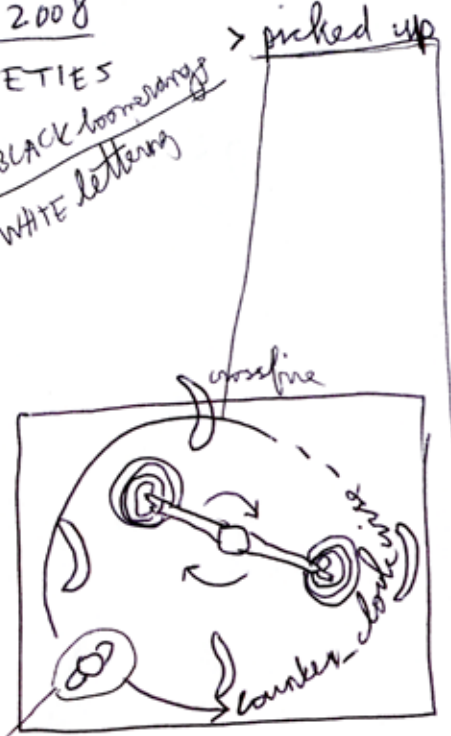
DESIRE / FEAR / SAFETY - Several clouds featuring these words, written in phonetic transcription on the surrounding walls in between boomerangs, which have been stuck into the wall. Work light. Sound: hissing fogmachine. People entering the foggy space are confronted with a running figure (who remains running on the spot for the whole duration of the performance). Next to that figure, a second one (eyes blacked out, white shirt, black trousers, bare feet) is holding up a jigsaw puzzle (showing the scattered interior of a crashed plane) that is taken apart a little later and all the pieces are laid down across the floor. Floortexting of words and words and words on the floor around the performing figures till the end of the performance. Figures three and four are positioned to the left and right of the running one, arms stretched out and mobiles dangling from their fingers. Their heads covered with scarves, their bodies covered in molasses, they are rotating slowly, till the end of the performance. A fifth figure (eyes blacked out) is reading from a book (*Rache und Zeit* by Peter Sloterdijk), one sentence at the time, nodding its head. Before continuing its reading, the figure shuffles alongside the wall, stops and riffles through the pages, starts to read one whole sentence and keeps riffling through the pages (back and forth) till the end of the performance. The performance comes to a close when, one by one, the figures are led out of the space (by the second figure). The fog slowly evaporates and the space shows itself again, with the traces of the Ark. [PB]



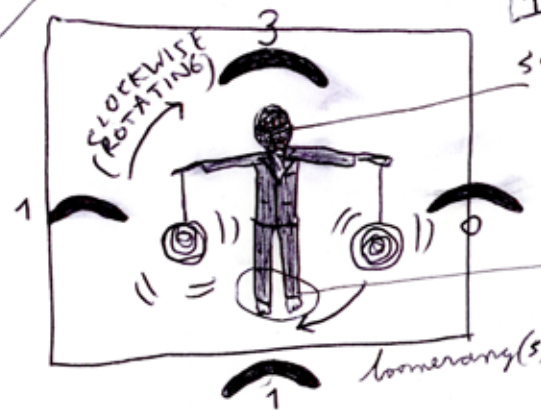


BACC/Bangkok 8. NOV 2008

ARCHES OF SOCIETIES

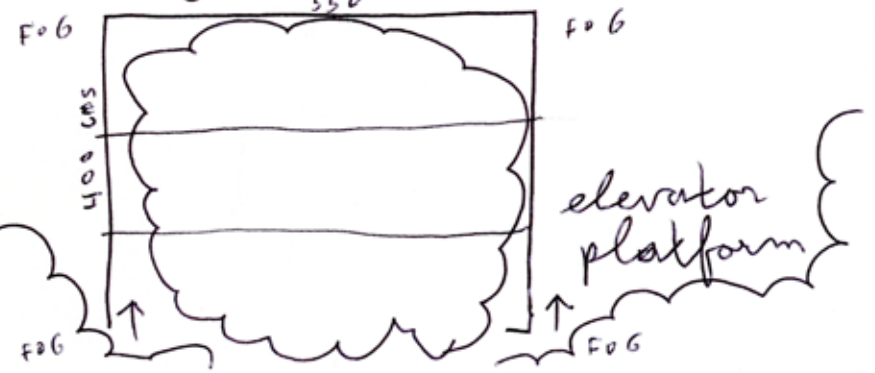


one after another and
 hold up with one hand pressed against forehead (covering censor bar) and vice versa on the floor around the rotating figure



white shirt
 wide black trousers
 bare feet

Bright working light (TL)
 550



+ Bartek
 LUKASIEWICZ

START from GROUND FLOOR UP ↑ 1 ↑ 2 ↑ 3 ↑ 4 > out (people leave the platform)

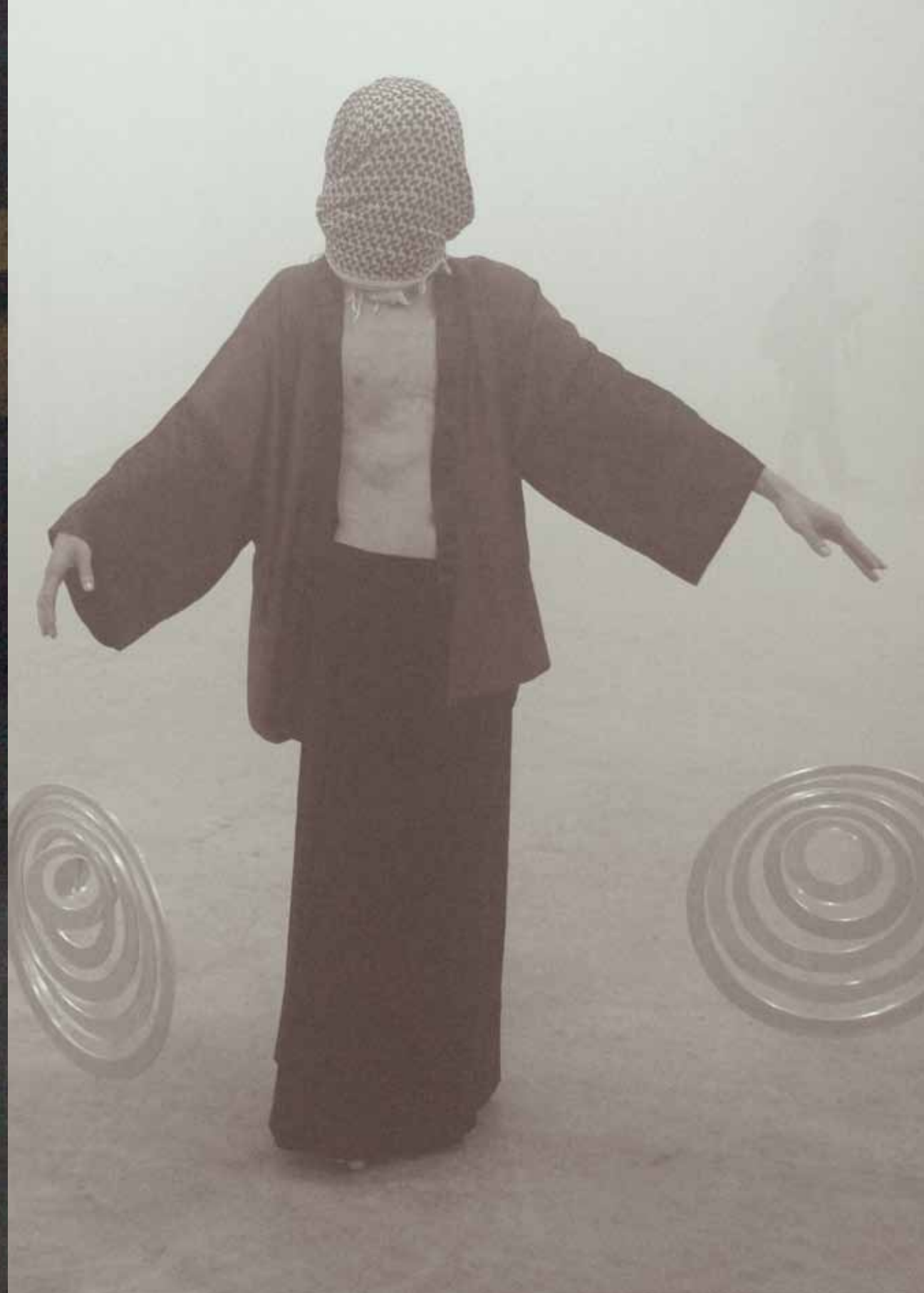
ARK UNDER THE ARCHES OF SOCIETIES

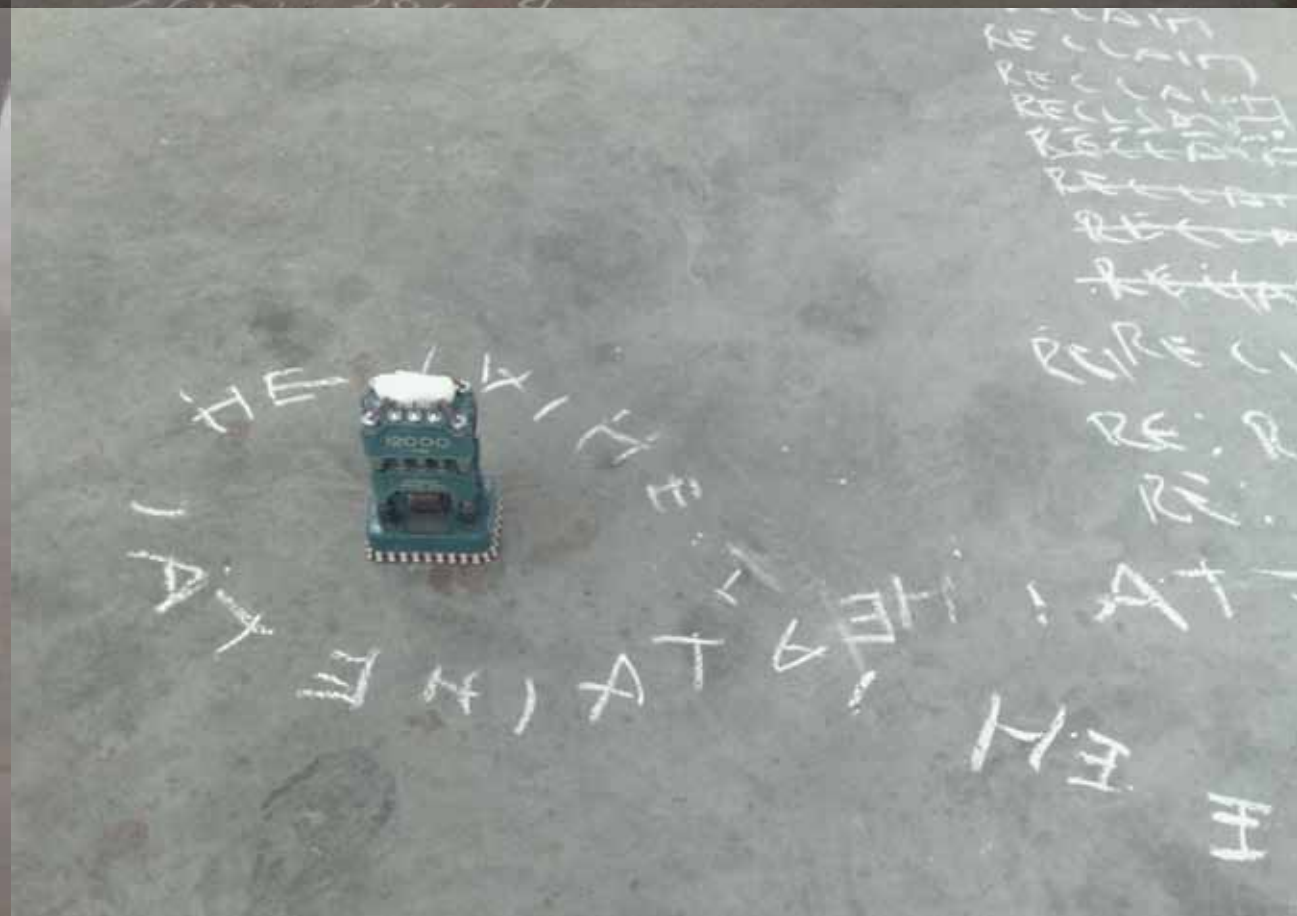
Bangkok TH, 2008

People gather outside the ground floor near the loading area, and are invited to walk onto the elevator platform, where two figures are to be described in the fog. During the performance, the elevator stops at every floor; the doors do not open. During the whole of the performance, the first figure (black suit, arms spread out, head wrapped in a scarf, bare feet) is rotating clockwise on the spot, with dangling satellites hanging down from its fingers. A second figure walks counter clockwise, picks up boomerangs (one by one), pressing them on top of each other against its forehead (SPIRIT, MEATJOY, EARTHLING, CROSSFIRE). After this action the boomerangs are carefully laid on the floor again, in reverse. The second figure stands still in front of the MEATJOY boomerang, then positions himself opposite the first figure, freezes and tears up his shirt. The door is opened and the other figure is led out of the elevator. [PB]











210 **BLIND DATES WITH THE HISTORY OF MANKIND**

Venice, IT, 2013

Four days in a row a figure walked very slowly up and down Garibaldi Street. Dressed in a grey suit, censor bar painted across his face, holding a wirra in one hand and a dirty, torn shirt in the other. While walking, he held one foot next to the other for just a second, and then continued. Every walk took about two hours. The first time, ΤΑΙ ΗΕ (*The harmonious operation of all things on earth*) was written on both sides of the wirra, then only on one side, the words STRUGGLES, LOSS and ABSENCE, respectively, were written on the other end. The walk started at the Garibaldi monument and continued in a straight line towards the bridge close to the Giardini. Arriving on the bridge, the figure came to a standstill and held the wirra across the other hand holding the shirt. The end of the daily performance was marked by having the wirra tied to the fence surrounding the monument. [PB]





PERFORMANCES 1980–2013**WESTERN MANTRA ▶ 8**

Willem II factory, Den Bosch (Frame Experiment)
Performance: Peter Baren
Date: 27 September 1980
Photography: Robert Glaubit (screen)

THE LIVING ROOM OR IS THE APPROACH HARDLY MORE IMPORTANT THAN ONE OF THE OBJECTS? ▶ 10

The Living Room, Amsterdam
Performance: Peter Baren
Date: 1 February 1981
Photography: Richard Wedding

GROUNDROOM LOST AND FOUND ▶ 14
Peperstraat 37, Groningen / De Fabriek, Eindhoven

Performance: Peter Baren
Date: 1, 9 May 1981
Photography: Peter Cox, Peer Veneman

EASTERN MANTRA ▶ 16**Galerie Alto, Rotterdam**

Performance: Peter Baren
Date: 26 June 1981
Photography: Peer Veneman

NEW CHINA RECONSTRUCTS DOMESTIC KIT ▶ 18

Shaffy Theater, Amsterdam
Performance: Peter Baren, Truus Bronkhorst, Koos Dalstra
Date: 16-20 September 1982
Photography: Bob van Dantzig

WIRRA SERIES 1982-1983

In collaboration with Koos Dalstra

WIRRA 1 PARI MUTUEL ▶ 22

W139, Amsterdam (30 Man Kunst)
Performance: Peter Baren, Koos Dalstra
Date: 16 January 1982
Photography: Peer Veneman

WIRRA 2 THE RETURNING TYPE ▶ 24

De Moriaan, Den Bosch (Artists' initiatives in The Netherlands)
Performance: Peter Baren, Koos Dalstra
Date: 14 March 1982
Photography: Peter Cox

WIRRA 3 THE GREAT KNEEFALL ▶ 26

Stichting voor kunstENNU, Tilburg
Performance: Peter Baren, Koos Dalstra
Date: 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16 May 1982
Photography: Piet den Blanken, Robert Glaubit (screen), Peter Baren

WIRRA 4 STUCCO NITEMARE

Koninklijke Akademie voor Kunst en Vormgeving, Den Bosch (Studium Generale)
Performance: Peter Baren, Koos Dalstra
Date: May 1982

WIRRA 8 PANORAMA FAULHORN CONCERT / BENEFIT FROM THE HIGHTREE ▶ 30

Stichting voor kunstENNU, Tilburg
Performance: Peter Baren, Koos Dalstra
Date: 27 November 1982
Photography: Martin Stoop, Willem Sanders, Peter Baren

WIRRA 6 PANORAMA FAULHORN / MUSEUM OF MANKIND ▶ 34

Lantaren/Venster, Rotterdam (Perfotijd. Performancefestival)
Performance: Peter Baren, Koos Dalstra
Date: 8 April 1983
Photography: Hajo Piebenga

WIRRA 7 PANORAMA FAULHORN / MUSEUM OF MANKIND ▶ 36

Aorta, Amsterdam (NAT III)
Performance: Peter Baren, Koos Dalstra
Date: 10 April 1983
Photography: Ryu Tajiri, Robert Glaubit (screen)

WIRRA 9 PANORAMA FAULHORN ▶ 49

Belvédère, Park Sonsbeek, Arnhem (Festival De Stad)
Performance: Peter Baren
Date: 21, 22 May 1983
Photography: Irene Companjen, Peter Baren

NOCTURNE DUTCH GRAVITY**Het Apollohuis, Eindhoven**

Performance: Peter Baren
Date: 25, 26, 27 May 1984
Photography: Peter Cox

DUTCH GRAVITY PORTRAIT OF WUBBO OCKELS ▶ 52**Lantaren/Venster, Rotterdam**

(Perfo 3. A Kind Of Beauty)
Performance: Wolf Mense
Date: 16 May 1985
Photography: Kees de Graaff

KINK FLORA

Botanical Gardens, Haren
In collaboration with Marion Gadiot
Performance: Wolf Mense
Date: 4 January 1986

THE GIFT ▶ 54

De Appel, Amsterdam (Opening)
Performance: Peter Baren, Wolf Mense
Date: 30 April 1986
Photography: Oscar van Alphen

UNTITLED ENDGAME ▶ 55**Shaffy Theater, Amsterdam**

(You Don't Have To Watch Dynasty)
Performance: pigeons, car tyres, racked seating, pneumatic hammer, loud bang, soundtrack
Date: 16-20 September 1986, 20.30-22.30 hrs every fifteen minutes
Photography: Kees de Graaff

INCIDENT ▶ 58**Midland Group, Nottingham**

(The National Review of Live Art)
Performance: Peter Baren, Erszi Hatvari
Date: 13, 14, 15 February 1986, 19.45-21.45 hrs every fifteen minutes
Photography: Jon Bewley

THE ROYAL CORPSE OR SAY HELLO TO THE QUARK ▶ 59**Midland Group, Nottingham**

(The National Review of Live Art)
Performance: Peter Baren, Erszi Hatvari
Date: 10 October 1986

INCIDENT**Lokaal 01, Breda**

Performance: Agneet Evenhuis, Wolf Mense
Date: 24, 25, 26 January 1986

Het Kijkhuis, Den Haag

Performance: Wolf Mense
Date: October 1986

De Gele Ridder and Het Hooghuis, Arnhem (AVé-festival 1986)

Performance: Peter Baren, Erszi Hatvari
Date: 30 November 1986
This version of 'Incident' was presented in black light.

HEARTH HERE GATHERS**NAMELESS ENERGY ▶ 60**

Mint Tower, Amsterdam (Century '87 Modern Art face to face with Amsterdam's past)
Date: June-August 1987
Photography: Rineke Dijkstra, Jannes Linders

STATIONS OF NAMELESS ENERGY

SILHOUETTES LIKE SHIVERING ANCIENT FEELINGS ▶ 62
De Fabriek, Eindhoven
Performance: Joost Duking, Luigi d'Andrea, Richard Stichter, Ilona Smeets, Daniel Rozenberg, Taco Langius, Bas van Alphen, Lucas Verweij, Stef Kolman, Evelyn Vaessen, Jacqueline Dodemont, Andre Both, Anneriek Schuurman, Matthijs Siljee, Eibert Draaisma, Ad Goossens, Dirkje Abbenes, Frank v. d. Broek, Hanne van Beek
Date: 13, 14, 15 November 1987
Photography: Peter Cox

STATIONS OF NAMELESS ENERGY

THE HUMAN CONDITION / WE WANNA LOSE OUR HEADS FOR ANYTHING IN TIME ▶ 66

Chisenhale Dance Space (THC) and **Chisenhale Gallery** (WWLOHFAIT), London

Performance: Terry Baptise, Sue Carpenter, Sarah Dekker, Marfella Fuller, Greta Hayward, Jenny Harris, Rosalind Laidly, Tina Perez de Lisboa, Nikki Smith
Date: 18, 19 March 1988

Photography: Edward Woodman, Ute Klaphake

Arti et Amicitiae, Amsterdam (Beyond Performance)

Performance: Petra van Aken, Peter Baren, Nelly van Berkel, Claudia Buser, Noline Goezinnen, Karin v. d. Hilst, Lida Kaandorp, Hans Kipp, Laura Wissing, Tetje Wubben
Date: 3 March 1989

Photography: Kees de Graaff

Shedhalle, Zürich (Performance Tage)

Performance: Kathrin Aebisher, Eugene Arts, Muriel Bader, Peter Baren, Judith Glaus, Bettina Holzhausen, Hans Kipp, Sigrun Laepple, Jane Langohr, Iris Teuber
Date: 3 November 1989

Photography: Fritz Vogel

Poltel Filmstudios, Katowice (III. Spotkania Teatru Wizji I Plastyki)

Performance: Gzimka Avdija, Peter Baren, Malgorzata Bednoiczuk, Elzbieta Buta, Jolanta Golik, Regina Jaron, Nathalia Kosiec, Magdalena Sulenta, Tomasz Szmigel, Agnieszka Szpala, Issa Wisniewska, Guzy Zosia
Date: 3, 4 May 1991
Photography: Wladislaw Morawski

THE ROYAL CORPSE OR THE MONUMENTAL IDIOCY OF OPERETTAS CONNECTED TO THE ASTRAL PATHOS OF HISTORY

Museum het Prinsenhof, Delft (Ruimte In Tijd)
Performance: Peter Baren, Hans Kipp
Date: 2 April 1989

HEARTH HERE GATHERS

NAMELESS ENERGY ▶ 70

Halifax, Gateshead, Dundee (The Drop)

Wooden crate with soundrecording of a rutting buck

Date: 1988-1989

Photography: Peter Baren, Paul Bradley

ECHO OF HISTYRIA OR THE MAN ON THE CLOCK ▶ 72**Uhrturm, Schlossberg, Graz** (Bezugspunkte 38/88, Steirischer Herbst)

Date: 15 October-8 November 1988

Photography: Christian Jauschowitz, Dietmar Tanterl

ISLAND OF LOST SOULS ▶ 74**Railwaystation, Graz** (Bezugspunkte 38/88, Steirischer Herbst)

Proposal, refused, 1988

Photography: Peter Baren

THIRSTY LANDSCAPE**Swedish Cultural Centre, Paris** (Polyphonix

14. Festival international de Poésie, Musique, Vidéo et Performance)

Performance: Peter Baren

Date: 9 June 1989

LUST GARDEN FOR LOST SOULS / OR THE MIND ITSELF ATTACKS ▶ 76**Neudeflat, Utrecht**

(Theater Festival a/d Werf)

Date: 22, 23, 24, 25 June 1989

Photography: Edo Kuipers (p.76)

Kulturforum Alte Post, Neuss (Inszenierte

Fotografie. Foto-Raum-Installation)

Date: 20 August-17 September 1989

Photography: Edo Kuipers (p.77)

Dom Kultury, Bratislava (Hills+Mills)

Date: 3 April-20 May 1992

Photography: Martin Marencin (p.78)

MACBETH ONLY FOOLS DIE ▶ 80**Stadsschouwburg, Amsterdam**

(Prix de Rome Art & Theatre 1989)

Performance: Wolfram Berger, Martine Berghuijs,

Wouter Brave, Marlies Hamelynck, Frans

Heusdens, Michael Knap, Erik Pootjes

Date: 25, 26, 27 August 1989

Photography: Kees de Graaff

Museum Fodor, Amsterdam

Exhibition of sketches, storyboards, performance stills

Date: 2 September-8 October 1989

SPIRIT. ▶ 84**Franklin Furnace Presents at 466 Washington St. New York**

Performance: Peter Baren, Regina Early, Ronald Hooft, Seymour Likely, Aldert Mantje, Loriann

Vignola, Reco and Waco

Date: 30 November, 1 December 1990

Photography: Jayne Hinds, Nina Sobell (p.84)

Cypriana Majernika Gallery, Bratislava

Performance: Ivan Galansky, Jaroslav Mottl, Danica Segesova

Date: 4 April 1992, 20.00-20.50 hrs,

every ten minutes

Photography: Martin Marencin (p.86)

Belluard Fortress, Fribourg (Belluard-Bollwerk Festival)

Performance: Peter Baren, Eric and Nathalie

Fragnière, Didier Monay, Olivier Suter, Pierre

Portenier, Marianne Martin, Yasmina Ryser,

Roland Dumont, Michelle Bover, Karl Ehrler,

Laurent Petitat

Date: 15 July 1992

Photography: Jana Sebestova (p.88)

WHAT IS GOOD FOR THE GOOSE IS**GOOD FOR THE GANDER** ▶ 92**Rai Fairground, Amsterdam** (KunstRAI)

In collaboration with Koos Dalstra and Stichting De Achterstraat, Hoorn

Performance: Peter Baren, Koos Dalstra, Reinout

Toonstra, Bento Bremer and other visitors of the artfair

Date: 29, 30, 31 May, 1 June 1991

Photography: Edo Kuipers, Serge Ligtenberg

THE LIVING ROOM

ASTERMINAL BODY ▶ 95

The Living Room, Amsterdam (Kiss And Say

Goodbye. The Living Room 1981-1993)

Performance: Peter Baren

Date: 20 September 1993

Photography: Edo Kuipers

ECCE HOMO NQ PERFORMANCE ▶ 94Several short outdoor actions in **Warsaw**

(a.o. Zamek Ujazdowski and Palac Kultury i Nauki)

Performance: Peter Baren

Date: February 1994

Photography: Kaya Wasilewska

THE LIVING ROOM OR ISTHERE REALLY NOTHING MORE THAN JUST A SHORT MOMENT OF JOY? ▶ 109**Kunstverein Grafschaft Bentheim,****Neuenhaus** (The Living Room, Eine

Amsterdamer Galerie und die achtziger Jahre)

Performance: Peter Baren

Date: 10 June 1995

Photography: Gert Jan van Rooij

THE FACTORY ASTERMINAL BODY**De Fabriek, Eindhoven** (Stir Well. De Fabriek 1980-1995)

Performance: Hans Kipp

Date: 31 March 1995

CARESSING THE DIKE ▶ 110**Lelystad** (Dijkwacht, art and poetry on the borders of Flevoland)

Performance: Jelena Okolowic

Date: daily performances between 27 June and 18 August 1996

Photography: Judith Glaus, Edo Kuipers

DUTCH GRAVITY IMAGES FROM THE

SOURCE 1980-1996

Kunstraum Düsseldorf (Dialogo Cultuur /

Niederländische Performancetage)

Performance/lecture: Peter Baren

Date: 21 June 1996

MISA LUBA LUST, DESIRE AND OTHER

TERMINAL BODIES ▶ 112

Palffyho Palace, Bratislava

Performance: Peter Baren and pianoplayer

Date: 6 May 1997

During the opening of the installation LUST,

Desire And Other Terminal Bodies

Date: 6 May-1 June 1997

Photography: Martin Marencin

SYNAPS**Spazio ARKA, Assemini** (InterAzioni X)

In collaboration with Marcelle van Bommel

Performance: Peter Baren, Marcelle van Bommel

Date: 28 June 1997

THE CATWALK COLLECTION /**PROGRESS PROGRESS** ▶ 114**Cinema MIER, Nove Zamky** (TransArt

Communication 1997)

Date: 28 September 1997

Photography: Lehel Tóth

Mucsarnok, Palace of Exhibitions, Budapest

(Budapest Autumn Festival)

Performance: Peter Baren

Date: 3 October 1997

Heroes' Square, Budapest

Performance: Peter Baren

Date: 4 October

Photography: Lehel Tóth

COVER JOSEPH BEUYS**New York**

Performance: Peter Baren

Date: January 2000

Photography: Maria Hlavajova

COVER GRUPPO A12**Ljubljana**

Date: 22 June 2000

Photography: Peter Baren

COVER MICHEL DE RUYTER**Vlissingen**

Performance: Peter Baren

Date: 3 September 2000

Photography: Koos Dalstra

ABBEY ROAD TO CHRISTIANITY ▶ 116Day's walk **Lewedorp-Middelburg, Zeeland**

in collaboration with Koos Dalstra

Performance: Peter Baren, Nezza Barendse,

Anneke Bonnema, Koos Dalstra, Marion van

Wijk, Joris, Jispe

Date: 1 September 2000

Photography: Leo van Kampen, Dirk-Jan

Gjeltema

PALESTINIAN PITFALLS ▶ 120**Vlissingen**

In collaboration with Koos Dalstra

Performance: Peter Baren, Koos Dalstra

Date: 26 November 2000

Photography: Leo van Kampen, Wim de Maat

ANGEL DUST WE WANNA LOSE OUR

HEADS FOR ANYTHING IN TIME

Sloterdijk Station, Amsterdam

Date: 1 January 2001-1 February 2003

Photography: Edo Kuipers

BEGGARS BANQUET DISCOVER HEAVEN ▶ 124

Central square and sidestreets, Nové Zámky (Transart Communication 2002)

Performance: Peter Baren

Date: 11 October 2002

Photography: Sylvie Ferre

Bratislava, 2002

Venice, 2003 (preview 50th Biennale di Venezia)

Photography: Geurt Imanse

Public Theatre Cleveland, 2003 (Cleveland's international Performance Art Festival)

Tate Modern Gardens, London, 2003

Vancouver, 2005 (LIVE)

Bangkok, 2008 (Asiatopia 10)

ARK SERIES (2004-2012)

ARK BLIND DATES, VENETIAN BLINDS, BITCHES BREW AND THE EXHAUSTION OF HISTORY ▶ 130

Chashama at 217 E 42 St., New York (Currency 2004. An international festival of contemporary performance)

Performance: Peter Baren, Paul Waddell

Date: 18 March 2004

Photography: Peter Grzybowski, Alan B. Seigel

ARK STREETTEXTING ▶ 134

Kunsthhaus, Biel (I Need You)

Date: 20 June 2004

Photography: Raoul Marek

ARK IN BIEL ▶ 132

Biel (I Need You)

Date: 14 August 2004

Performance: Peter Baren

Photography: Raoul Marek

ARK FROZEN FOOTAGE ▶ 136

Trace, Cardiff (Close Encounters)

Performance: Peter Baren

Date: 5 February 2005

Photography: Phil Babot

ARK ON HOPE AND OTHER TERMINAL BODIES

Ustka, Slupsk, Torun, Cracow

(13th International performance Art festival Castle of Imagination)

Performance: Peter Baren, Dariusz Fodczuk

Date: 28 August (Ustka), 29 August 2005 (Torun)

Photography: Jacek Chmielewski, Shannon Cochrane

ARK HOPE BY FORCE BY FAR ▶ 140

La Bisbal d'Emporda and La Interior Bodega,

Barcelona (Acts of Faith and Generosity Imperceptible, la terra sona)

Performance: Peter Baren, Porntaweesak

Rimsakul

Date: 3 September 2005 (La Bisbal d'Emporda)

Photography: Joan Casellas

ARK FEATURING BRIDGE OF SIGHES, SLEEP OF REASON AND WAILING WALL ▶ 144

Helen Pitt Gallery, Vancouver (Live. Biennial Of Performance Art)

Date: 27, 28 October 2005

Performance: Peter Baren, David Khang, Christina Knox, Sean Lang, Naufus Ramirez-Figuera, Robyn Volk

Photography: Merle Addison

ARK ON HOPE AND OTHER TERMINAL BODIES SUCH AS BRIDGE OF SIGHES, SLEEP OF REASON AND WAILING WALL ▶ 150

CCA/Center Of Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv (Blurr 5. Biennial Of Performance Art)

Performance: Yarden Bar, Peter Baren, Lenga Caspi, Tal Rosen

Date: 23, 24, 25, 26 November 2005

Photography: Ruti Sela

DEEPER KNOWLEDGE / ORPHANED WHISPERINGS ▶ 174

Zuiveringshal, Westergasfabriek, Amsterdam (Kunstvlaai Artfair 6)

Date: 6, 7, 13, 14 May 2006

Performance: Peter Baren

Photography: Marielle Videler

Marseille (Preavis de Desordre Urbain)

Date: 23, 24 September 2008

Performance: Peter Baren

Galata District, Istanbul (Visibility Project 4. Galata Perform)

Date: 18 October 2008

Performance: Peter Baren

ARK FLEET OF ARKS UNDER THE ARCHES OF SOCIETIES ▶ 175

Tramway, Glasgow (The National Review of Live Art. New Moves International)

Date: 11 February 2007

Performance: Peter Baren, Yvonne McCombie, Sarah-Jane Grimshaw, Sigurdur Jonsson, Anthony Harley, Kieran Hurley, Gary McNair, Janice Parker, Lisa Sinclair

ARK UNKNOWN PLEASURES ▶ 181

DTN, Amsterdam

DVD presentation, overnight screenings

Date: April-July 2007

Photography: Gert Jan van Rooij

ARK FEATURING BLIND DATES, ORPHANED WHISPERINGS AND OTHER UNKNOWN PLEASURES ▶ 182

Bewaerschole, Burgh-Haamstede

(Incantation in the sense of stillness)

Date: 22 September 2007

Performance: Peter Baren, Anniek van der Hoest, Ashlee Male, Henriette Rietveld, Yvonne Tanis

Photography: Marinus van Dijke

Spazio ARKA, Assemini (InterAzioni XXI)

Date: 26 April 2008

Performance: Peter Baren, Riccardo Tanca

Photography: Paul Gregoire

ARK UNDER THE ARCHES OF SOCIETIES ▶ 187

BACC/Bangkok Arts And Culture Centre, Bangkok (Asiatopia 10)

Date: 8 November 2008

Performance: Peter Baren, Bartek Lukaszewicz

Photography: Phonsawek Chaiyasit

ARK DISCOVER HEAVEN UNDER THE ARCHES OF SOCIETIES

Galeria ODA, Piotrkow Trybunalski

(International Art Festival Interakcje XI)

Performance: Peter Baren, Jakub Falkowski

Date: 14 May 2009

Photography: Marchewa Marchlewicz, Martyna Piasecka

Galeria BWA, Bielsko Biala ▶ 194

Performance: Peter Baren, Christine Bouvier

Date: 18 May 2009

Photography: Alejandro Gonzalez

ARK DISCOVER HEAVEN UNDER THE ARCHES OF SOCIETIES / HARMONIOUS OPERATION OF ALL THINGS ON EARTH ▶ 190

OPEN Realization Contemporary Art Center, 798 Art Zone, Beijing (10. Open International Performance Art Festival)

Performance: Peter Baren, Ondra Libal

Date: 23 August 2009

Photography: Frantisek Kowolowski, Agnes Nedregard

ARK DISCOVER HEAVEN UNDER THE ARCHES OF SOCIETIES ▶ 179

La Friche La Belle de Mai, Marseille

(3. Preavis de Desordre Urbain. Festival de Performance)

Performance: Peter Baren, Charlotte Bournilly, Johanna Flechaire, Elsa Guillot, Jean-Christophe Petit, Isabella Stellmann

Date: 28 September 2009

Photography: Louis Alesandrini, Bernard Sarre

UNTITLED HONEYMOON POP UPS

Réformés Canebière, Marseille (3. Preavis de Desordre Urbain. Festival de Performance)

Performance: Peter Baren, Melanie Derouetteau

Date: 23 September 2009

Photography: Louis Alesandrini

ARK DISCOVER HEAVEN ▶ 194

Frascati Theater, Amsterdam (The Manifold (after) Lives of Performance)

Performance: Peter Baren, Wolf Mense

Date: 14 November 2009

Photography: Cassander Eeftinck Schattenkerk

La Chapelle du Quartier Haut, Sète ▶ 195

(6. Infr'Action. Festival International d'Art Performance)

Performance: Peter Baren, Jonas Gille, Philip Luhnevåg

Date: 16 September 2010

Photography: Nisa Ojalvo,

ARK UNDER THE ARCHES OF SOCIETIES Frascati Theater, Amsterdam (The Manifold (after) Lives of Performance)

Performance: Peter Baren, Sarah van Beelen,

Cato Koole, Zoe Reddy, Mirjana Smolic, Adrienne Wennekes

Date: 15 November 2009

Photography: Cassander Eeftinck Schattenkerk

ARK DISCOVER HEAVEN

Central Marketplace, Sète (6. Infr'Action.

Festival International d'Art Performance)

Performance: Peter Baren, Jonas Gille

Date: 18 September 2010

BEGGARS BANQUET DISCOVER HEAVEN

Place Aristide Briant, Sète (6. Infr'Action.

Festival International d'Art Performance)

Performance: Peter Baren

Date: 18 September 2010

Photography: Nisa Ojalvo

© 2013 De Zwaluw Publishers,
Peter Baren, the authors

Authors

Marga van Mechelen
Bart Rutten
Alex de Vries

Design and production

Jan Willem den Hartog
Stern/Den Hartog & De Vries
www.sternsite.nl

Translation

Renee den Hartog

Printing

Veenman+, Rotterdam

Photography:

See page 216-222

This publication is financially supported by

Mondriaanfonds
Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds
Stichting Hartenfonds
VSBfonds



VSBfonds

Peter Baren wishes to thank

Maria Hlavajova
Samo Barendse
Luka Barendse
Nezza Barendse
Koos Dalstra
Piet van Leeuwen
Wink van Kempen
Nikki Milican
Aart van Barneveld
Toine Horvers
Bob de Wit
Stuart Sherman
Nicolette Gast
Peer Veneman
Bart van de Ven
Edo Kuipers
Geurt Imanse
Joep Neefjes
Ghislaine Boddington
Emma Dexter
Anne Bieler
Paul Panhuysen
Franck Gribling
Judith Glaus and family
Wolfram Berger
Marlies Hamelynck
Wouter Brave
Martine Berghuijs
Rob Perree
Kees de Graaff
De Fabriek
Henke Baars
Jelena Okolowic
Beate Engel
Andre Stitt
Wladislaw Kazmierczak
Hlavaj family
Sergio Edelsztein
Jonathan Turner
Dan McKereghan
Lance Blomgren
Anet van de Elzen

Marinus van Dijke
Peter Grzybowski
Christine Bouvier
Chumpon Apisuk
Albert van der Weide
Gordian Piec
Dariusz Fodczuk
Ann Demeester
Claudia Ruiz
Ramon Coelho
Chen Jin
Jonas Stampe
Jill McDermid
Martin Renteria
Jozsef Juhasz
Rebecca Cunningham
Captain Beefheart
Arie Schippers
Alfred Brand
Robert Fripp
Gert Jan van Rooij
Amsterdam Fund for
the Arts
Netherlands Media Art
Institute
The Royal Netherlands
Embassies in
Washington, Ottawa,
London, Bratislava,
Beijing, Paris, Warsaw,
Budapest, Rome and
Prague
Consulate General of
the Kingdom of The
Netherlands in New
York, Istanbul and
Guangzhou
Beam Systems
and everybody who
participated in shaping
the performances and
in all the work that went
with it.