

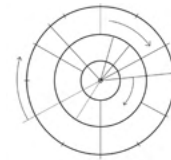
APPROACHES, PRACTICES, EXERCISES

APPROACHES, PRACTICES, EXERCISES

This part focuses on how I work. There are concrete practical examples and also glimpses of how the research on liveness and the time-space of on- and offline feedbacks into my ongoing artistic work and research.

Working Conditions: when I work many windows are open on my computer. Often I get curious and side-tracked. I sometimes get up in the middle to move. On other days I'm the whole day in a studio dancing/rehearsing and on a good day I'm outside perceiving reality, location scouting for a treasure hunt. Little by little a chaotic storage* has accumulated in my brain. But everything is somehow here, I just walk back in my mind and my external harddrive, looking for how my ideas transform in the contingency of the moment. Niklas Luhmann's Zettelkasten system fascinates me. He used it for his own thought process. For me this analogue approach to networked thinking has been an inspiration for how to externalise the interconnectedness of everything I do. Just like the internet, my artistic thinking has no borders unless I define them through a specific search. Drawing the borders of what belongs and not has been the hardest part of this practice part of the reflexive documentation.

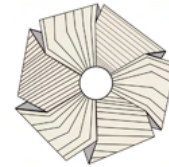
As this is a PhD in practice, there is not really a "best before" date on things that I keep on doing. Some of the things I began doing ten years ago. I have forced myself to make a temporary order in this chaotic storage but this doesn't have to be a linear journey. Please pick the cherries that you like.



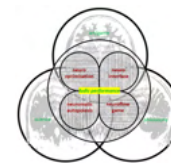
= **Living Documents**
(2017-2020)
with
Dominik Grünbühel
& team



= **Questionology**
(2019-ongoing)
with Cordula Daus
& team



= **Treasure Hunting**
(2015-2016)
with 9 headed team



= **Brain Machine
Dérive**
(2020-2022)
with Margarete Jahr-
mann & Neuromatic
Game Art



= **Public Eremite**
(2013)
in close collabora-
tion with Johannes
Burström & Clélia
Colonna

T

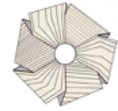
= recurring
in **teaching**

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TO-DO LIST



T

Welcome to OS Todo¹ Treasure Hunting Vienna! Please, take a couple of minutes to finish listing your todos, you can begin immediately:

.....
.....
.....

Please also list what you needed to do yesterday:

.....
.....
.....

Today is yesterday's tomorrow, are you approaching the now, now? We will slide back and forth around this point to grasp the full picture.

What did you need to do when you were ten?

.....

Is there anything you still need to do that you needed to do back then?

.....

Please also list what you want to do but don't have to do:

.....

What did you want to do yesterday ?

.....

What do your knees want to do ?

.....

What do you want to do in September ?

.....

What do you want to do before your demise?

.....

¹ These to-do list questions were spoken live in computer voice-German by Johanna Wolff 2016 and in computer voice-English in 2015 by Peter Mills inside Treasure Hunting. Absurd to-do lists have since then been part of my practice. Originally I was inspired by Johnny Cash's famous to-do list which also includes "kiss June". I'm fascinated by the difference of machines and humans carrying out tasks and to me there is something extremely poetic and glitchy about that almost everyone has things that they want to do but that we might never do.

Inspired by my choreographic and participatory work, I have more and more integrated the logic of algorithms into my own writing - creating writing rules and systems that support the text development, where the form speaks as part of the content. Constrained writing. I make myself a participant and hence become the word-doer or worker of a system rather than the author.⁴

“Delegating decisions to systems can create a sense of freedom and even a pause from the constant need to know. When decisions are outsourced to a “ machine” (for instance the system of Questionology or the rules of an exercise), the participant can’t be held responsible for the exact content that has been generated inside this automated or semi automated writing-creation process. We are freed from the backend of response-ability - which is usually felt as a certain pressure to produce a perfect answer or solution.” Ruth & Daus 22⁵

Inspired by hyper link games I have also worked with multiple choice systems in the open source software Twine. This poster publication from 2018 is inspired by the structure behind such a twine-network. This structure can also be seen as an early draft of the part **“WHAT IS LIVENESS AND WHAT CAN IT BE?”** inside this reflexive documentation.

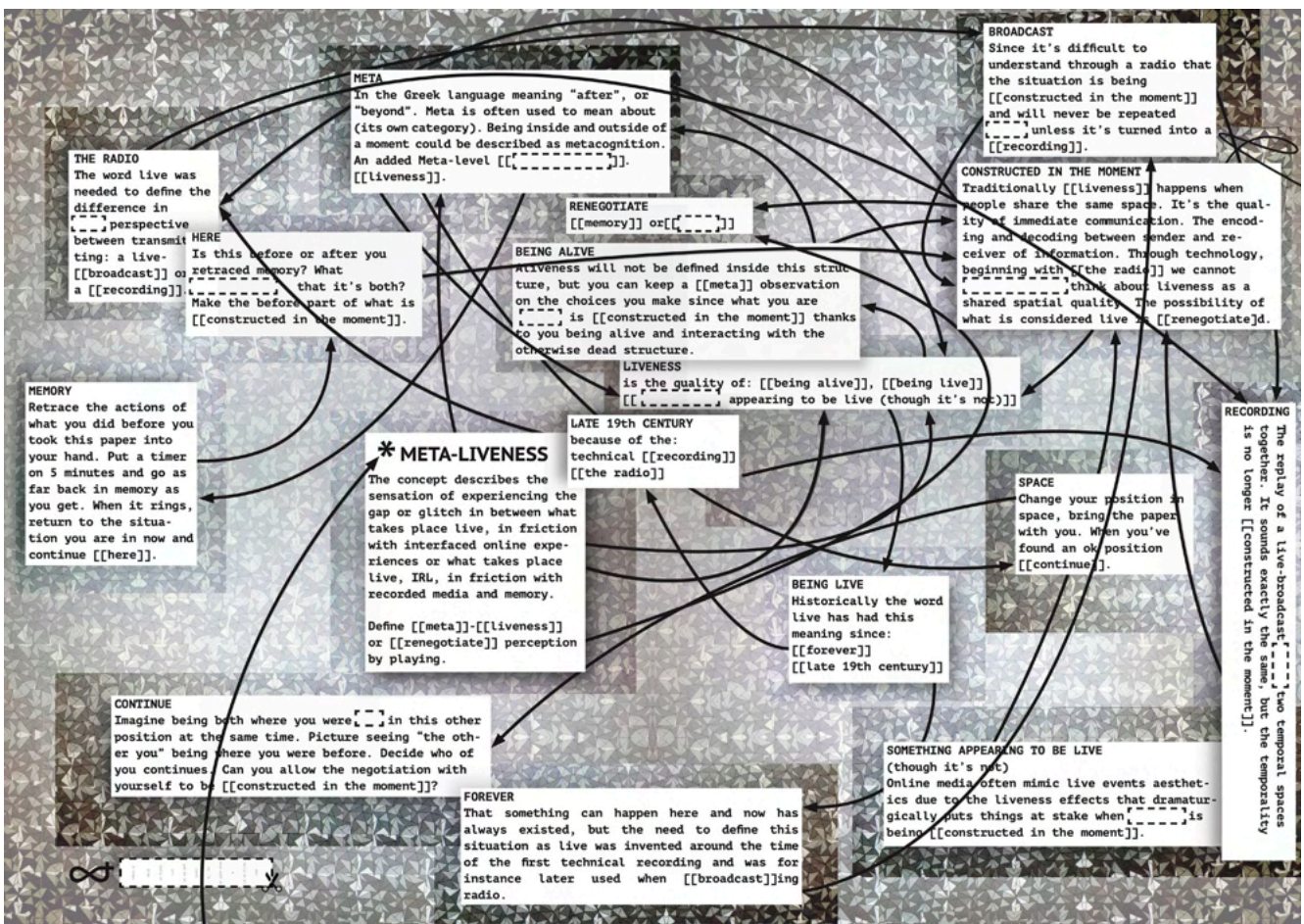


Image: C Ruth

4 Prior to the PhD I attended a course in artistic writing at DOCH/Uniarts Stockholm with Hanna Hallgren and Camilla Damkjaer. This course was the starting point for me to translate my artistic practice and thinking and way of working also to text. The two main sources for inspiration in how my practice with words have developed further relates to a course in e-poetry that I attended at Valand in Gothenburg in 2018 with Imri Sandström and my ongoing exchange with language artist Cordula Daus with whom I often co-write.

5 Ruth, Charlotta & Daus, Cordula; *Notizen zu Questionology*, In: *ide. Informationen zur Deutschdidaktik* 46. Jg., H. 2, 2022: Neues aus Österreich, forthcoming.



"My trick is to compose a sentence through finding words that content wise demonstrate the core of a text"⁶

In the reflexive part of **my** artistic research practice, I **trick** myself to write from *within* rather than *linearly*. For instance, creating a short text that **is** hidden in a longer text so that the short text to some extent decides what vocabulary the longer text needs **to** have. To do this I first begin like I do right now - I **compose** spontaneously what I want to approximately say and then I go back treasure hunting for **a** possible "core meaning" - a **sentence** that can function on its own, detected inside this spontaneously written text. I began writing this way **through** a method invented inside the work Living Documents. This looped performance work depends on 11 words that I record spread out over 2.5 minutes. The timing of the spread out words afterwards fit with different sentences that I speak out loud over the recording. I was initially **finding** those words by writing a short lecture about my practice. Afterwards, I searched for an inherent core meaning, stripping the lecture down to a few single **words** and adapting it to include the 11 words **that** I had found as grammatically and **content wise** coherent as possible. It's not necessary but if you want to take a look I **demonstrate** the process of writing in **the** screen recording version of this text (see footnote). It begins by looking for words that appear to be at the **core** of the text as well as prepositions like **of**, in etc. to easier build **a** sentence from the existing **text**.

If you want to understand how this plays out with spoken text and also experience the friction between recorded time and real time which I have used a lot in my work I suggest you engage in the task of recording and reading the concentrate-text "*Time questions and renegotiates space*" (excerpt from Living Documents).

Time questions and renegotiates space

Instructions:

1. Press record on a recording device and at respective time indication read/

record word:

...00.05 time

...00.15 questions

...00.21 and

...00.28 renegotiates

...00.38 space

2. Stop recording

3. Play recording and read the following text waiting and catching up with the recording, matching each word:

I'm intrigued by gaps in **time**, this fascination of mine is not necessarily mathematical; it's rather physical, a physicality that **questions** how memories crossbreed with the now **and** how the body **renegotiates** basic spatial parameters in a place it's been before. Regardless if planned or not, the act of repeating something composites our mind. It makes my head-**space**, root and sprout at the same...

4. Now play the recording again and continue reading (this part I wrote specially for here and now).

...**time**. My research explores how we, as ourselves or audience-beings, are in more than one place simultaneously and it **questions** how the here..... **and** the now can be extended. Dramaturgically my work often **renegotiates** and blurs what was and what is with what comes. With this reflexive documentation, I hope to give you a taste of this deliberately confusing but for me also liberatingly confusing **space**.

⁶ Originally published in the frame of SAR Language Based Artistic Research special interest group 2020.

<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/835089/1019935> Search for Charlotta Ruth

This documentation also inspired the video work Dear Presence, commissioned by Työhuone (Simo Kellokumpu & Vincent Roumagnac), Finland / Pandemia Mundi, November 20 <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/1018230/1018247>

LAGGING



Another language practice that I every now and then return to is inspired by digital time phenomena rather than digital systems. In this practice, I usually begin by creating movement and text material that more or less belong together. Basically, I pair exaggerated gestures with spoken words. If performed at the same time it becomes painfully illustrative but if instead performed in non-sync like a video call that lags,⁷ the performer is somehow at many places at the same time which makes the here and now more layered. In my Living Document (one of five looped performance installations), I speak the words as if documenting the moment that just took place in the body rather than being with the body in the now. In the performance Brain Machine Dérive,⁸ four parallel performances run as part of a parkour and in one room I performed a Pro-technology speech using a similar text-movement approach.⁹ In this speech, I explored how the mismatch of movement and text, sometimes delayed, sometimes a bit before, could enhance the positivistic pro-technology stance I took that we would be better, safer, faster, stronger, smarter... if adopting new technologies.

"The exploration can also be described as how choreographic composition and thinking in relation to technology as a process (as a relationship in time and place), can convey the feeling of what in a philosophical text remains rather abstract."¹⁰

WORD-DONATION



Inside my participatory work, I have often worked with flexible narratives and poetics of repetition. The core of this practice lies in the seemingly random collection of words (word-donation) from audience-participants that engage inside a participatory structure.

The word-donation is initiated through simple writing tasks that are embedded in a larger performance framework. The upside down pyramid and to-do list are examples of such writing tasks. The donated words are then re-contextualized and embedded into partly pre-written texts or text systems that are "performed back" in different ways to the original word-donators (the audience). At the end, sometimes several hours later, an individual result or summary is generated.

The words are embedded inside the system and the systems (e.g. Questionology, Treasure Hunting) frame, pace and embed the words provided by the visitors. Algorithmically computed elements are often part of the processes, both in the shape of human live computation (myself or collaborators) and actual coded organisation methods. Through the play with displacement and repetition as well as through the individual relationship to a contributed word, poetics is inoculated between words, between words and actions, and between the moment a word was donated and the moment a word is re-performed.

This approach to text hence lives through the sympoietic creation composed by contingent live components such as who does what and *how*. The meaning making and compositional outcome is very dependent on the overall experience and context in which it plays out.

7 Where the video image for instance catches up with the spoken word or when in a live streamed situation you have both the real situation and the streamed double with a technical delay between the real and the streamed situation.

8 Developed together with Margarete Jahrmann & Neuromatic Game Art research group FWF/PEEK AR 581, 2021.

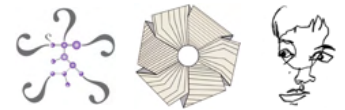
9 For more insight see Neuromatic Game Art <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/1407741/1559509>

10 Ruth, Jahrmann, Luif, *Brain Machine Dérive*, CARPA7 proceedings (Nivel series 2022)

<https://nivel.teak.f/carpa7/brain-machine-derive;>



Examples of how words were collected and displaced inside the Questionology Programme for applied Questioning (2021 Cordula Daus & Charlotta Ruth in collaboration with Simon Repp).
Flow-chart: Charlotta Ruth, images: Gerd Schneider, Fabian Weiss, Cordula Daus



The systems that are part of these word-donation processes include elements of misusing, expanding, or translating the use of digital tools. Special attention is given to the place (the interfaced situation) where the analogue, for example, typed or spoken words, transfers to the digital realm. When constructing the spatial situations for these material border-places I've noticed that my collaborators and I,¹¹ tend to exaggerate the idea of going somewhere else. A recurring element is sticking the head into something.

Communication zone // Treasure Hunting
Vienna 2016

photo: D Grünbühel & C Ruth



Recording helmet // Living Documents
Dansehallerne/Warehouse9, Copenhagen 2019

photo: D Grünbühel & C Ruth



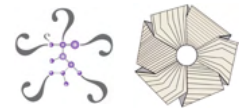
Hole in the wall voice recognition // Questionology
Zentrum Fokus Forschung/brut-wien, Vienna 2021

photo: Gerd Schneider



¹¹ Here I want to specially draw the attention to the carpentry, interface / object-design and spatial features that have been created by my collaborators Luke Baio (Living Documents, Treasure Hunting), Sofia Romberg (Living Documents, Questionology, Treasure Hunting), Susanne Songi Griem (Questionology), Hinnerk Utermann (Questionology), Laura Weiss (Treasure Hunting, Public Eremit).

Hacking into existing environments



When working site-specifically as in the example of WUK (Treasure Hunting) and Zentrum Fokus Forschung (Questionology), an emphasis is made on hacking into the existing environments. Through lending the appearance of existing objects, the performances can also lend the history of the everyday surroundings and blur what is real or not.



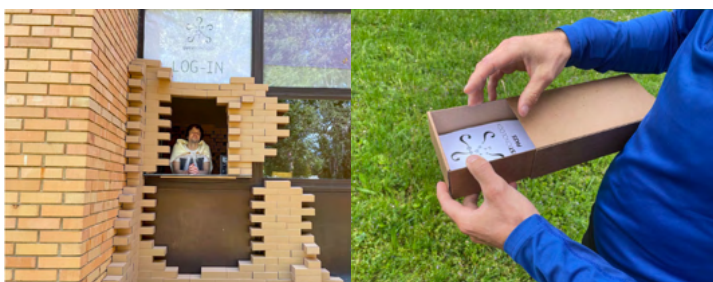
A view that you later had through a window, was at the beginning of Treasure Hunting seen through the slit of a letterbox (Screen attached behind a letterbox and filmed as part of a video walk)

photo: C Ruth



A phone boot at the time already existing in large and small as an installation at WUK (the small copy is created by Werner Oberer) was placed in different sizes in reality and inside the video walk - creating a magic scale effect.

photo: C Ruth, C Baumann



The central play-object inside Questionology: the brick, the data-carrier (in German Datenträger) has the exact measures of the bricks of Zentrum Fokus Forschung. The brick and the login-table fitted to the window of Zentrum Fokus Forschung was developed by Hinnerk Utermann. Note that brick, as Simon Repp (programming and sound Questionology) pointed out to me and Cordula Daus, also plays with the connotation it has in the digital realm. "The word "brick", when used in reference to consumer electronics, describes an electronic device such as a mobile device, game console, or router that, due to corrupted firmware, a hardware problem, or other damage, can no longer function, and thus is "bricked". Anecdote: Simon Repp is also visible at the log-in desk and the brick-construction at the front of the login became more and more advanced as the technical tasks of Simon were more and more under control.

photo: C Ruth & C Daus

The logo and play object in **Treasure Hunting** was inspired by Göthes farbkreis which on sunny days was to be seen as a flag at WUK. Play Object made by Sofia Romberg making use of the Questionology logo-design (Laura Weiss)

photo: D Grünbüchel, C Ruth





"We try to speak in the we-language, it's not our mother tongue so we're not so good at it, we do it mainly to better notice what we say." (Quote from Questionology)

Person	English	WE-language
1. Person Singular	I / me / my / mine	we / us / our
2. Person Singular	you / your / yours	we / us / our
3. Person Singular	she/he, him/her, it	we / us / our
4. Person Plural	we / us / our	we / us / our

Note: The following text is an excerpt from the co-written text *Notizen zu Questionology*¹².

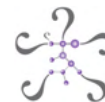
"We-ing and its ability to crack open identities and hack language has been used inside a number of participatory art-works that successfully explore collective self-empowerment (For instance Nada Productions live video-performance "We" from 2008 and She She Pop's "Oratorio" from 2017 where a projected text written from a we-perspective invited the audience to speak in chaire). In Questionology we spoke we-language and everyone was invited to join this language-game that only has three pronouns. The idea to speak in we-language came with an interest in blurring who's experiences, qualities and thoughts belong to whom and also a curiosity in building and borrowing questions from each other. Yet, as the 'we' also often is bluntly used for totalitarian propaganda the decision to use it inside Questionology was not easy to make. A false 'we' may easily co-opt people into a group or lobby. Adriana Cavarero hat dies "die intrinsische Moral der Pronomen" genannt.¹³ But as there was no second and third person plural, "we", no "you" or "them", certain traditional power structures of communication could be by-passed in Questionology.

Everytime the "we" covers up for the normative engrained pronoun, for instance "I", it's as if this pronoun-glitch in the system makes us become the performer of the words rather than resting in the illusion of language as a natural system for communication. Speaking the we-language allows for observing how language performs and how it assigns places to each of us. The feeling is similar to re-training ourselves using new gender pronouns as for instance using the english "they" instead of "he" or "she". It makes us touch the system of language.

Ultimately, it is in-and-through language that we experience and can experiment with different positionalities, (Haltungen). [...] The simple mechanism of breaking conventional rules puts the representational function of language itself at stake or in question. It allows us to revisit "English". In Questionology we had the feedback that this fragility - to we-speak and at times fail at it - created a warm and error-accepting surrounding."

¹² Ruth, Charlotta. & Daus, Cordula; *Notizen zu Questionology*, In: *ide. Informationen zur Deutschdidaktik* 46. Jg., H. 2, 2022: Neues aus Österreich, forthcoming.

¹³ Cavarero, Adriana (2000): *Relating Narratives. Storytelling and Selfhood* (London: Routledge) S. 90 (quoted after Rinck, Monika (2015): *Wir. Phänomene im Plural* (Berlin: Verlagshaus) p. 27.



We haven't tried the we-language in participatory writing before but we think it brings a similar experience as when talking. The suggestion we have is to write our biography in the we-language. We already added some of our experiences but left some holes where we who read can add. If our initial words are in the way please feel free to change our biography. The invitation is to blur what experiences we together have had and what we are working on.

WE PLAY WITH TIME, PERCEPTION AND INSIDE CHOREOGRAPHY, , GAME DESIGN,
. AND ARTS BASED RESEARCH.
. CURRENTLY,
OUR MAIN TOPIC OF INVESTIGATION HAS BEEN PERFORMATIVE ASPECTS OF
. COMMUNICATION, PERFORMANCE DOCUMENTATION, PARTICIPATORY SENSE MAKING, SOCIETAL PARTICIPATION,
. AND WHAT HAPPENS TO LIVENESS IN ONLINE
TO OFFLINE SITUATIONS. WE HAVE ALSO RESEARCHED
. WE ARE
APPROACHING OUR WORK WITH A MEDIA INDEPENDENT AND APPROACH,
RANGING BETWEEN STAGE, GALLERY, PUBLIC SPACE, INSTITUTIONAL IN BETWEEN SPACES AND ONLINE AS WELL AS
. RIGHT NOW WE ARE IN THE END PHASE OF OUR PHD IN PRACTICE AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED ARTS IN VIENNA

LOOKING FOR TREASURE HUNTERS !!!!

I am looking for Treasure Hunters for a study on getting lost.

To participate in the study you can be fully healthy, non-smoker and non user of drugs, but it's not necessary. It's good if you have basic English language skills and are able to read and interpret instructions in your own way.

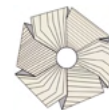
The study is carried out in this way:

As a Treasure Hunter, chance will pair you up with another excellent candidate. You will wander around in a brick building looking for important and unimportant details. At regular intervals you will be asked to ask yourself questions, sometimes with others, sometimes alone.

Additional:

The study operates upon time-donation. You can choose to donate as much of your time as you want. Please note that you have the right to interrupt the study at any point without explanation.

Anecdote: This advertisement-text was drafted on a stereotypical medical study that hung on the pin-board where I used to study. Peter Mills and I also advertised robot-voice lessons drafted on an announcement for a singing-class.



Treasure Hunting was developed for the public accessible areas at WUK, Werkstätten & Kulturhaus Vienna in 2016. The performance was conceptualised around my dramaturgical concept of *meta-liveness*. Inspired by this participatory performance, I wrote my research proposal for the PhD in artistic research. As part of the PhD I have returned and reflected onto the work.

MORE ABOUT META LIVENESS -> WHAT IS LIVENESS AND WHAT CAN IT BE? P.

Or stay here to read about how *meta-liveness* was applied in practice.

In **Treasure Hunting**, the dramaturgy or non goal oriented *game-design* invited the participants to literally experience the *now* in friction with a before and after. I made a plan for how the treasure hunters would get multiple interconnected perspectives onto their experience and how resonance between the previous, present and coming situation would develop at different stages of the journey. The circular timeline of the experience made the situation and site produce its own resonance. Through the looped or spiraled temporality, the dramaturgy or game mechanics integrated a player-flexible, subjective narrative acting inside a, what Anna Anthropy calls, queer temporality.

*In information technology and computer science, a system is described as stateful if it is designed to remember preceding events or user interactions; the remembered information is called the state of the system.*¹⁴

In a lecture about stateless game-design Anna Anthropy¹⁵ draws parallels between colonialism and progress-based game narratives. The progress idea (bigger, stronger, smarter) is based on white western linear thinking. But if the progress inside a game instead loops and therefore repeats, what has taken place and what will come will eventually merge. The *meta-liveness* glitch of being in friction with one's own memory can hence be planned and integrated dramaturgically.

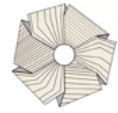
An inner and personal logic can be built through letting participants access and reactivate their recent experiences from different perspectives. The human mind of each player then becomes the contingent state of the *game-system*. An unstable and flexible state which cannot be controlled but which can be integrated and played with through a flexible design. If one can count on that almost all players already have a memory related to a site (for instance a famous site like the Eiffeltower) - I can build this into the design. When creating an experience from scratch, I can plant memories and through repetition create an inner logic of the experience.

IF TO READ ABOUT LOOPS p. 15

¹⁴ State (computer science) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_\(computer_science\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_(computer_science))

¹⁵ Anthropy Anna, Smash the State! Models for Stateless Narrative Design Videoconference GameZ & RuleZ, Zürich November 2019 <http://gamezandrulz.ch/>

EXPERIENCE LEVELS



T

The idea of building memory into the experience can be composed through articulating how the level of engagement increases. In Treasure Hunting, these levels were made explicit to the visitors. In later work, and also inside teaching, I think about it but have not announced it as clearly. Here I describe how it worked in **Treasure Hunting**.

Erlebnis - Sensory Experience

Erfahrung - Long Lasting Experience

Erschaffung - Creation

ERLEBNIS Two steps were included in the Erlebnis-level: An audio-walk and a video-walk. This level can be compared to the training or prologue film that often comes at the beginning of a computer game. The instructions of both video and audio guided the treasure hunter couple on separate paths -so as an individual you had only a parted overview of the physical area but together with your companion a fuller picture of the site was "collected". The instructions further introduced actions and engagement; looking at details, recollecting situations; collecting physical objects; transferring messages from one place to another; visiting the communication zone; as well as playful instructions that created choreographic confusion with the companion through guiding the players on two opposing tasks.

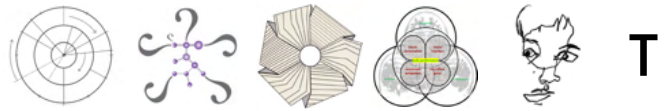
The Erlebnis-level had a compact linear time-frame and invited creative output from the treasure hunters on the level of choosing to follow or not follow the instruction.

ERFAHRUNG In the next level the memory of the first level was transformed through building in depth experience at the site. Clues guided the Treasure Hunters to areas already introduced through the video and audio, but this time they were invited to revisit the site with their combined memory as a starting point and instead of having instructions and linear time from audio and video they now operated within a flexible time frame on four very different treasure hunts. This time they were the creators of a written note that had been moved in the Erlebnis-level and they would now find the picnic area where the coffee thermos that they had found came in handy. In-between each "loop", they also returned to the communication zone where the treasure hunters were building a "wortschatz" *vocabulary* (literal translation word-treasure) inside an interactive document through donating memory traces (words) of their recent experience. At the communication zone, the backend facilitators supported the delivery of these memories through associative questions. This level lasted up to ca 4 h depending on individual play flow.

ERSCHAFFUNG The meta-liveness perspective became more present in the experience the longer one stayed. On level 3, 'Erschaffung', Treasure Hunters revealed the backend of Treasure Hunting and were getting into operative tasks of the facilitators for instance communicating at the backend of the communication zones, playing with level 1 & 2 participants 'from the inside'. They were also given a still uncovered area of the building to expand the original system.

CHECK-OUT At any moment, the Treasure Hunters had the possibility to check out. The check-out included a closing video walk where the Treasure Hunter received an individually edited and re-combined wortschatz - *word treasure* from the memory traces (word donations) they had left. This *wortschatz* was possible to keep as a print but the treasure hunters were guided to a recording helmet where the recited poem was transformed into a *treasure tune* and stored on a USB stick.





When does live performance start resembling mechanical reproduction? Do the words I choose still mean the same after repeating them many times?

In the looped lecture performance **Living Documents**, I anticipate and reflect upon the *meta-liveness* appearing inside my own practice when I repeatedly communicate my research to others. The fascination for the loop is something I share with Dominik Grünbühel. During the the PhD it has been interesting to go deeper on the one hand from being in the practice based investigation on loops, on the other hand paying attention to how the loop is increasingly present in social media and reflect on how this plays back in real life. In parallel, I have also become more and more aware of how the before, the now, and the after and my idea of *meta-liveness* when stretched out over time has its resonance in non-western philosophies like Kaballah and Buddhism.

Shortly before I began the PhD in 2017. Dominik Grünbühel and I initiated the project **Living Documents**. In this project, we explore how the loop could be approached as a living documentation medium. We documented five artistic practices in the format of 10-15 minute long looped choreographic installations (repeated during three hours). Live-loops borrow the quality of recordings in that they can be viewed or played over and over again, but since we who perform and those who pass by as visitors are unavoidably different every time, the loop also enhances the live situation by making differences visible in conjunction with memory. As has for instance been described in relation to the looped performance work of Ragnar Kjartansson, the endurance of the repeated act also reveals the liveness of the surrounding, the ongoing activity of others, the non-act.

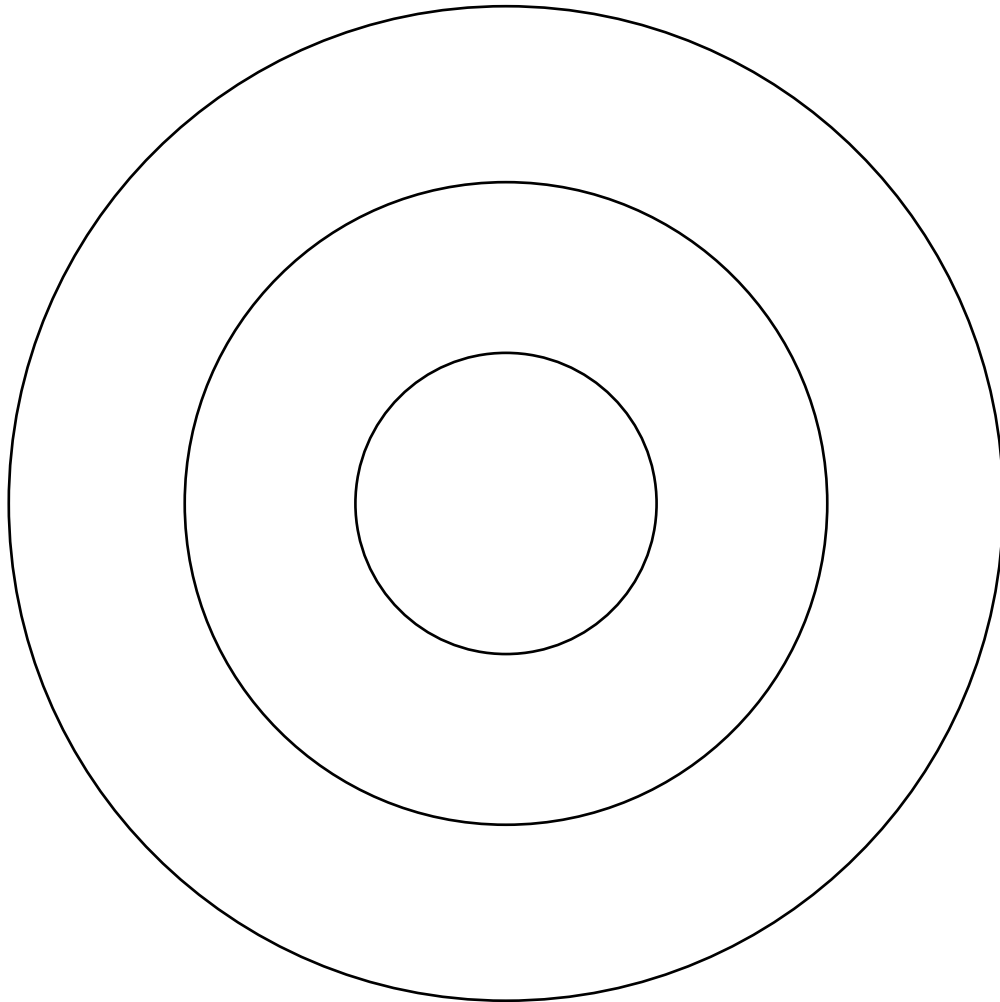
The idea to think of the loop as a medium or technology, came in the collaboration with Peter Mills. This was only in the second phase of the project when we had already developed three installations. We were already using the loop as a medium but after articulating it, the methodology became more graspable also to us. This, to me, is a good example of how inner logics reveal themselves in the articulation process with others. This also sheds light on how exchange and discourse inside artistic research can become really relevant for articulating artistic methodologies.

Inside the loop we used intrinsic practices from performing arts; text, set-design, sound and choreography to “capture” the thinking of the artists. The process was initiated by an experimental interview that Dominik Grünbühel and I developed and tested together with Johannes Burström. When engaging with the other artists we invited close colleagues of theirs to also answer the questions. The interviews were recorded and used as input for both sound, choreography, set and text approach. Anna Öberg, one of the collaborating artists, and I also developed a workshop presented at the artistic research conference *Alliances & Commonalities* at Stockholm University of the Arts in 2018. The exercises on the next page are stemming from this workshop.



Divide the tripple circle diagram into parameters, concepts or components you repeatedly return to in your work. Think how you distribute the space inside the circles and how things overlap and exist as layers in several directions. Where do the things you repeatedly do come from?

In which contexts and which formats do you use them? What follows you and what do you follow?



A

B

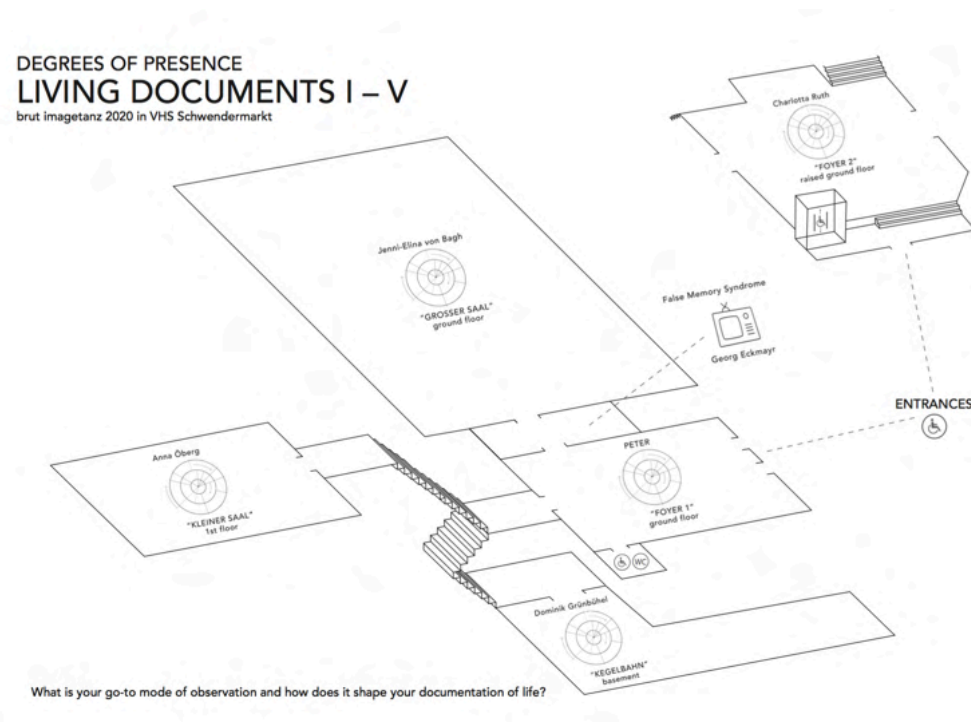
If the closest route from A to B is a line, draw the paths your mind takes from A to B.
WALK THE PATHS IN SPACE, USING THE DRAWING AS A MAP

DEGREES OF PRESENCE

At the beginning of the PhD I wasn't sure about if Living Documents belonged to the PhD research. The project deals with the difficulty to of document live performance, but originally it was planned to only appear live.

A few days before the Vienna premiere in March 2020 the pandemic was creeping closer and Johannes Burström (sound and programming) who was the first one of our team to travel, was told by brut-wien, our venue and co-partner, to not travel just one hour before he needed to leave his home.

As we had to find solutions for our planned performances in pandemic times, Living Documents from then on also got an increased relevance for my PhD research.



Jenni-Elina von Bagh: sound recording of the Copenhagen version being played back in a live installation setting.

PETER: surveillance and live sound (see below)

Anna Öberg: live video conference call and a looped video.

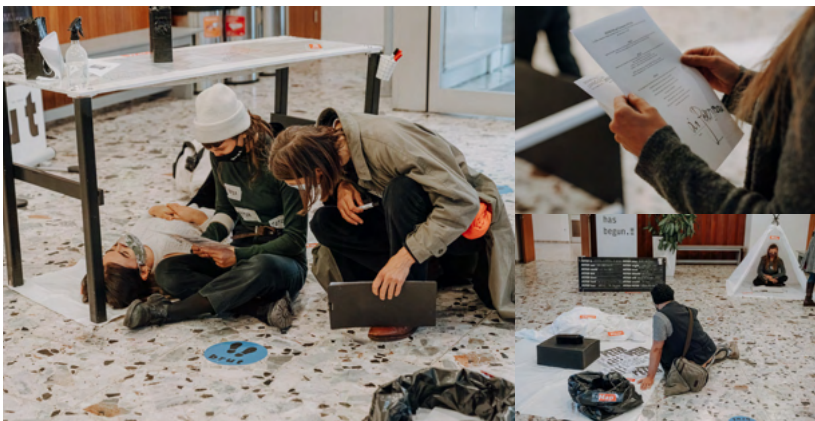
Charlotta Ruth: live performance and live sound recording being played back in friction with live-setting.

Dominik Grünbühel: live performance and multiple live video.

Map and Living Documents logo: Maiko Sakurai Karner

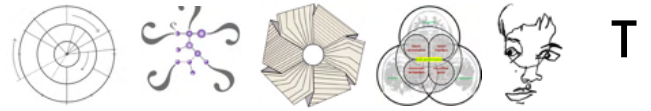
The in March originally planned performances got postponed to the Autumn. Shortly before the postponed performances at brut Schwendermarkt in October 2020 the pandemic situation again got instable. Dominik Grünbühel and I decided to not risk cancelling again. Instead we began together with our collaborators to transform the five live installations to different *degrees of presence*.

To read about *Degrees of presence* -> CONTEXTUALISATION AND POSITIONING OF THE RESEARCH p.6



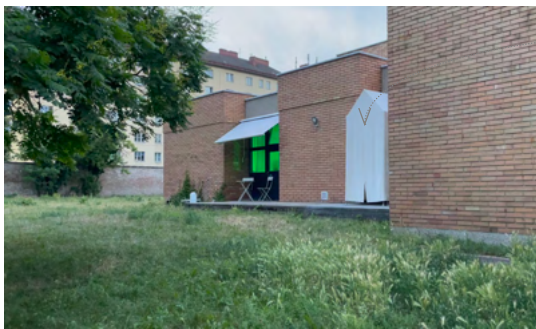
In PETER's Living Document, visitors were invited to a market-place of activities. They were being instructed by a score written in the style of a "will" as well as the instructions that were part of the installation. At regular intervals an omnipresent voice announced a reset that addresses how we engage with our experience and its absence. It was interesting to experience how different this installation turned without Peter's body presence. On the one hand the audience gained more autonomy, on the other hand the non-present body coming through a loud-speaker carried more authoritarian connotations.

Video installation and Video conference



DEVICE AS A SPACE

Regardless if working with video or live video, I think very carefully about the space that is being created through or with a device to make this part of the experience. In a live environment, I cannot simply put a TV screen up and pretend that the hardware is invisible. My logic is: if I don't transform the screen to fit into my environments, I have to make the device part of the narrative. In the images of the video-walks on p.14, you see the meticulously crafted ipod-holders that Luke Baio created. We were discussing what physical connotation we could include beyond filming and photographing. The idea to conceive them more as handheld mirrors felt correct to enhance the magic realism.



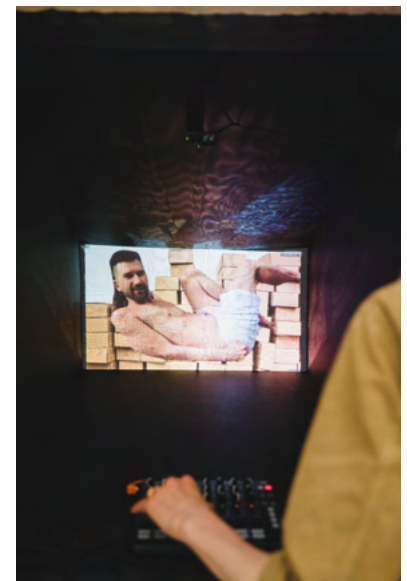
Which doctor in **Questionology** was found when entering a tent. The tent led to a black tunnel where at the end *Which doctor* was projected.

Which doctor: [M] Dudeck

Tent: Hinnerk Utermann & Maiko Sakurai Karner

photos left: C Ruth

photo right: Fabian Weiss



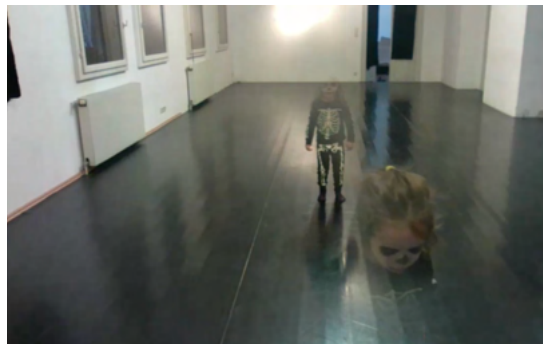
The construction of the *Which doctor* installation was conceived by Hinnerk Utermann after careful considerations also with Cordula Daus (in blue). In the tryout, we tested having a TV-screen but the screen appeared too much like watching TV. In the final version we instead projected the video call onto a semi-transparent fabric. On the picture one sees Hinnerk in the right window and the video call appearance on the left. In the real installation [M] Dudeck performed which doctor connected via zoom from his home in Italy - a solution originally inspired by the unstable travel situation during the pandemic. In the back [M] Dudeck had a zoom-background with our bricks.

GHOSTS AND BODY-DOUBLES

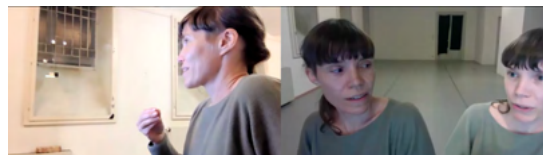
When I began teaching on Zoom in March 2020, I quite immediately began playing with the video-background function creating body doubles. Choreographing with video doubles is something I have also played with in earlier video works together with Dominik Grünbühel. On zoom I filmed the room I was in, creating a second layer of my real background, where I could go in and out of as well as be visited by myself. One day when I was testing this function, my 4 year old daughter dressed as a skeleton, entered the studio. This was later the inspiration to the commissioned video work *Ghost Audience*.

Professionally, I have used this fun feature inside online lecturing about *liveness* (Performance Documentation Academy of Music & Drama, Gothenburg (recurring), University of Plymouth 21), I also used it in a short video essay published in *JER Journal* for embodied Research.* When performing the online version of my *Living Documents* at the conference *Transmitting, Documenting, Narrating**, at Valand Academy/ Academy of Music and Drama Gothenburg 2020, I also began exploring being connected with several devices.

Ghost-session on Zoom with my daughter Ritva
April 2020



Screenshot from online lecture on zoom using two computers and one video background 2021.

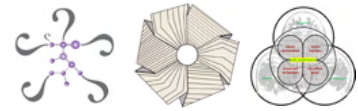


Screenshot from the online performance *Living Documents* using two computers 2020.



* Kress, E., Mouritzen, L., Samson, K., Pearsall, J., Rao, S., & Ruth, C. *Embodiment and Social Distancing: Performances*. *Journal of Embodied Research*, 3(2), 2 (24:24), 2020 DOI: <http://doi.org/10.16995/jer.65> retrieved 20.06.22

Human-Machine Conversations



T

Every now and then I communicate with semi-automated services a bit differently than intended. The below excerpt was originally conducted in German with DPD post delivery. These types of everyday practices influence how I relate to human machine systems in my work.

Charlotta, 07.01.2021 16:26:21
IP:80.110.112.39, ID: 313559

07.01.2021 16:26:21

Charlotta:

Dear ones (ihr Lieben), I was at home all day -thus us missing each is not true. The truth is that yo did not come by. Charlotta

07.01.2021 16:26:26

Charlotta:

you

07.01.2021 16:27:35

Live Support:

Welcome to our live chat! We'll be in touch in just a few moments! Kind Regards from the DPD team

07.01.2021 16:32:46

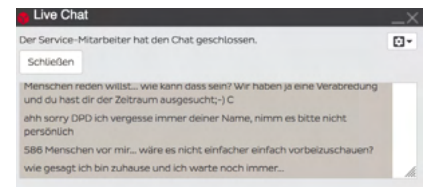
DPD, I have been at home waiting for you for a very long time today and now (*darf ich per du sein?*) you tell me that you want to talk to 723 other people before me... how can that be? We have a date and you actually chose the time ;-) C

07.01.2021 16:55:28

ahh sorry DPD I always forget your name, please do not take it personally
586 people ahead of me... wouldn't it be easier to just drop by?
As I said I am at home and I am still waiting...

07.01.2021 17:03:11

The service employee has closed the chat



Another day I suddenly received a call from a so-called police-bot. The border between reality and this research project decreases in such situations. Basically, I don't have to do much more than living and the *non live liveness* that I'm studying arrives at my doorstep.

*"This is a message from the Austrian Federal police. We have noticed some suspicious activities on your Austrian Identity-card. For further information please press 1."*¹⁶

So these scammers can learn something from me. In order to instruct someone in asynchronous communication, you have to diminish the contextual things that can make me feel that this is not real. 1. I don't have an Austrian Identity Card 2. Why would the Austrian police call me in English?

When translating machine behaviour to real life situations and performers, I include such non-sync and abrupt conversation behaviour. I mentioned in the contextualising part that the artworks that I draw examples from are research environments rather than research results. My human machine practices are, first of all, conceived as experiments. These experiments have helped me formulate thoughts about *liveness* and changed space-time conditions. In a few cases, these experiments are later framed as art-works. In other cases, the actual situations are only steps on the way to a text or an idea conceived with more analogue means.

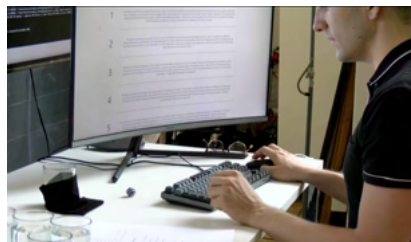


In the research project **Neuromatic Game Art: Critical Play with Neurointerfaces** led by Margarete Jahrmann¹⁷ I had the chance to collaborate with technical researcher and game-developer Georg Luif as well as technology philosophers Mark Coeckelbergh and Anna Dobrosovestnova. With the help of Georg we could train and explore how to make use of a General Pretrained Transformer GPT-2 for philosophy and artistic research.¹⁸ After initial try-outs where the AI had been trained on techno philosophical texts the results turned rather boring, and as we wanted to perform a philosophy reading with it we decided to also train it on text material from our ongoing work. This, apart from research texts, included other types of content like blog posts, game announcements etc. Thanks to this, the style of language that the AI generated became more accessible. The training determines the borders of what the AI is able to express and when attending to its material, to know what the premises for this text generation is makes it more inclusive. This is something I have observed with other generative text making.¹⁹ It is often necessary to know, or have a chance to find out, the rules of the game for appreciating this often unusual way to relate to content and meaning making.

4

Based on how it was trained, the GPT2 will be highly active, will follow me around like a real live cell, will listen for any signal generated by my body, and will amplify it. If it hears one, it won't care how far, whether by its own volition or through measurement interference, it will shoot it down. If it is a human voice, it will learn to trust its instinct instead of its reason. The system will be totally reliant on accurate measurements and signals, and will be totally unresponsive to outside

For the **Brain Machine Dérive**²⁰ parkour we developed a rule based conversation that made use of the GPT-2. Mark Coeckelbergh had the task to insist on questioning the content, Anna Dobrosovestnova had the role of a philosophy-bot; reading, repeating and playing with the material that was fed to her on her laptop and Georg Luif acted as a human "server" typing the questions that Mark asked into the webinterface of the GPT-2 and choosing one of the answers that the GPT-2 generated with the help of a dice.



Backend Georg Luif rolling the dice.

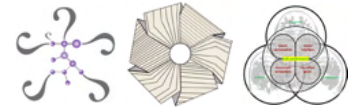
Photo: Felipe Duque

¹⁷ FWF/PEEK AR 581

¹⁸ For the Brain Machine Dérive installation we used the "Generative Pre-Trained Transformers 2" language model, "GPT-2", released in 2019 (now the new generation GPT-3 is available). The code architecture is similar to existing language models, but the GPT-2 was trained with the gigantic dataset "WebText" - 40GB of pure text. Our own fine-tuning of the GPT-2 model, on a collection of texts from the Neuromatic Game Art research group as well as techno philosophical texts took several hours of pure computation time.

¹⁹ I thought about it when attending SAR special interest group Affinities + Urgencies in Language-based Artistic Research in the session on Conceptual and Generative Practices Dec 2021.

²⁰ Brain Machine Dérive was conceived by the Neuromatic Game Art research group as a looped 1 h performance installation in different spaces and garden at Zentrum Fokus Forschung, Vienna in June 2021. The format combined Margarete Jahrmann's expanded dérive practice with a philosophy reading and I was in charge of the conceptual direction for this work. For more documentation please visit: <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/1407741/1407742>



To reveal the backend or system operator is a recurring practice of mine. In **Brain Machine Dérive**, the backend was easily accessed by simply walking behind the installation and as Georg Luif, in his role as the human server, would come out every now and then to serve water, visitors were also given a clue that something was happening there.

In **Treasure Hunting** and **Questionology**, durational works, the inner systems have been resolved as part of the ending (see also Questionology flow-chart on p.8 and Erlebnis Level and check-out on p.14. To me, this moment of revealing a secret - being granted expanded knowledge onto a situation to resolve how something operates - brings a release, But this moment also a condensation of time where everything falls into place - a sensation similar to solving a riddle. Your previous experiences meet with the now and you can anticipate how it has an effect onto what will come next but also for the participants to come. Planning for this sensation to happen is an example of *meta-liveness* dramaturgy.

The GPT-2 operated on the code script python and Georg and I also developed a score inspired by python for the human visitors.

```
protocol visitor (fellow humans):

brainDerive = ["entry room", "big room", "office space", "garden", "Terrace"]
visitorActions = {"moveFreely" : ["around", "behind", "inside", "outside",
"inSpaceAndTime"]} }
    if inEntryRoom:
        makeSenseOfTheGPT2Experiment
    if inBigRoom:
        shapeYourOpinionOnTechnology
    if inOfficeSpace:
        allowVisualsToStimulateAssociations
        writeAssociationsOnCards
    if onTerrace:
        readTechTarotCards

if time = have:
Join the data flow / mind cloud meditation on gong
```

score: Charlotta Ruth/Georg Luif/Neuromatic Game Art Research Group 2021

LIVE-BOT ORACLE

The GPT-2 conversation set-up was inspired by a previous more DIY set up that I have played with for many years. In this conversation set-up, a small group of three-five people engage in a human-machine conversation where an interactive document is at the centre. On the next page you also find descriptions of how to turn this practice into a self-interview.



Image: C Ruth

Questioner types questions on a key-board without a screen (of course the screen can also be covered if a blue tooth keyboard is not accessed). Through a keyboard command the question is spoken by a text to voice function coming from a speaker.

Live-bot-oracle sits in front of a computer where an interactive document is visible. Person does not touch the computer but is instructed to read and improvise answers from the content generated by the search-engines. If possible, the Live-bot-oracle speaks with robot voice and wears a headset.

Search-engines make internet searches inspired by the content of the questioner's questions and feed the interactive document with content that the Live-bot-oracle picks up. The search-engines can be in the same space but as they are connected to the interactive document they can also be somewhere else.

Extra: When I have had enough participants, I have instead made one of the search-engines in charge of documenting and writing a summary. To read the summary at the end of the conversation has a satisfying wrap-up effect.

ADVERTISEMENT

Robot voice lessons

There is nothing as engaging as sounding as a robot. Would you like to develop this side of yourself?

I am currently scheduling and are happy to welcome old and new students!

The training, which takes place in a beautiful, stimulating semi-virtual environment, covers many genres, popular and classic. We work backed up by a wide range of computer voices, which makes the training very inspiring. You work with vocal training, interpretation, performance, body language and presence. It is immediately science fiction!

SO WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?

[typing]

[pwing!]

22.01.06

GOOD, NO FEVER AND HIS TASTE HAS RETURNED.

[typing]

[silence]

[typing frenetically]

22.03.01

*I'm afraid that I will not feel or recognize real emotions anymore and now I've said "I" here because it feels really rude to say that I'm afraid that you or others or the world won't be able to feel real emotions anymore and since I am "you" in this communication it's obsolete to think about who won't feel you or me, are you for instance having a **deeper experience** than me cause the score allows the moderator to take a bit of distance?*

[silence]

[sighing]

[photo click]

great experience vs deep experience

A complete search of the internet has found these results: great experience is the most popular phrase on the web.

22.05.30

SO... IN THE MEAN TIME WE FOUND OUT THAT IT'S MORE POPULAR TO HAVE A GREAT EXPERIENCE THAN A DEEP EXPERIENCE. HOW DOES THAT FEEL?

[typing]

22.06.45

...AND YOU LIKE DEEP EXPERIENCES? YES?

[typing]

22.06.50

*Well, how do I feel? I guess it's my everyday disappointment with - sorry for lumping a vague category together - people. I'm not surprised though. If it's more popular to have a great experience than a deep one it speaks a lot about **our time**, doesn't it?*

This self-conversation practice is inspired by the live-bot-oracle practice.

Technical needs: Computer with internet connection + for fun activate text to voice. If you want to later turn it into a written text. Record sound on e.g. a smart phone - this also gives you an interesting time documentation.

Self split task:

The Moderator: asks questions (through voice) for instance about difficult things in the ongoing research. When formulating questions, the moderator has to include facts that the Search Engine generates.

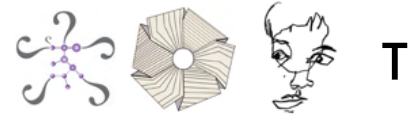
The Writer: answers (through typing on a keyboard) as honestly as possible.

The Search Engine: picks up key-words of interest and searches online for content to feed the conversation with.

When conversing in this mediated and complex way I don't only manage to conceive a surprising conversation, the playful situation also stirs a sense of *liveness*. I actually think it demonstrates that it's the sending and receiving that constructs *liveness* and that you can conceive this by yourself if you are open to go to some place in your mind with others or on your own.

Excerpt from a conversation between different Me/s (Revisiting Live-Bot-Oracle principles as Self-Interview practice for ZFF publication envelope # 2021) <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/1193650/1264773>

QUESTIONNAIRE



I have designed many questionnaires. Apart from a survey that I helped designing for mapping the needs of artist parents, none of my questionnaires have had the focus on collecting data. But similar to algorithmic advertisement I do use the data for personalising the content inside a live-experience. Words are being played back at the person that filled them in, what I called word-donation on page 7.

When working on Questionology Cordula Daus and I developed an online questionnaire together with our collaborator Simon Repp²¹. In its small universe this questionnaire did what also the live-performance did. It collected material input and reshuffled it into a new shape and even though it worked as an experience-object on its own, it also functioned as a teaser for people to become curious about the live-performance and was for instance spread on social media prior to our performances. The Questionnaire was constructed through different types of questions as well as constrained writing practices, i.e. the upside down pyramid but taken apart in different steps. Approximately half way through the ca 5-10 minute experience, the answers began to play back at you and at the end an abstract was generated based on the input you had given.

Hello,

we are a questionological bot conceived by Cordula Daus, Charlotta Ruth and Simon Repp. We kindly ask for your time and permission to retrieve and stir questions in you.

Donate 5 or more minutes

When others ask, what do you say that you are interested in ?
Please list three things:

Submit

ABSTRACT

This re-search proposes a growth of experience. By coupling play and repeat, we allow preparation to see the light of the day. An increasing volume of studies is demonstrating that it is both safe and beneficial to be patient during this perception process. Why do you travel? We understand this question as an on-the-ground contribution to the underrated art of waiting for things to come.

Exit

²¹ Technically Simon Repp constructed the backend in a programming language called rust. Together with Cordula we were drafting which functions were needed and Simon created a tutorial for me on how to implement the functions in XML markup language. Thanks to this I could then trial and error myself and in communication with Cordula Daus look at language details, without having to involve Simon in each little change.

CHAMBER PLAY

Together with Cordula Daus I've been exploring how to capture the experience of engaging with our questionnaire. We invited our artist colleague Erik Berg to first do the questionnaire and then discuss it with us. Below is an excerpt from a work in progress chamber play about time, contingency and intensity.

Excerpts from Act 1, Scene 1

Berg is sitting alone in the middle of the space on a chair, feet off-the ground. He is filling out a questionnaire on a computer. The two researchers enter the space. One of them, the smaller one, carries a text printed on A4 pages in her hands. The title reads Matthew Reason: Affect and Experience. Berg puts his feet on the ground.

RESEACHER ONE. How did it go?

LABELLE BERG. I need coffee.

RESEARCHER TWO. We might need to establish other forms of commenting on things. This is what I really liked about Matthew's text. We live in such a text based world... Why do we write on dance if we could dance about dance? That's what I appreciate in his text, that it thinks in a new way about: what can we do with language?

[...]

BERG. taps on the keyboard. Anyhow, I was doing your questionnaire and the first thing I noticed was that it immediately takes the control and has a dense grip on time and space - but time first. I noticed being not actually asked but prompted to "donate 5 minutes".

RESEACHER ONE. Or more...

BERG. That gave me a sense of comfort somehow, it's like I'm being taken care of fictively. Someone has made a standard estimate of what this is. So that's... like I noticed... that I put my body into kind of rest. A bit of a resting focus. I would say this happens because I get agency in let's say the economy of attention. Because I know how to spend five minutes doing something.

[...]

RESEACHER ONE. Did it take 5 minutes?

BERG. I didn't measure the time.

RESEACHER TWO. 5 minutes is almost a metaphor for a "very short time".

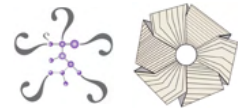
ADVERTISEMENT

Chamber Play

**If you want to visit us in the chamber of making, you can join us
in the political incorrect online workspace :**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1sBjwzYmCxbepMgVI4CvVvdpK58-kZ8wb2SmDIHCxDZE/edit?usp=sharing>

Choreographic Clues



T

Inspired by score based choreography, treasure hunting, game-design and instruction based art; I have developed practices and theory under the umbrella *Choreographic Clues*²². In the following sub chapters I describe some of my very different work with clues. What all these investigations have in common is that clues, as well as their sometimes less enigmatic sibling *instructions*, make the reader (the receiver) do something or go somewhere. They are a perfect example of performative utterances (J. Austin). Even when we cannot really perform a conceptual instruction (think for instance about the conceptual instructions written by Yoko Ono), we are being activated beyond the realm of reading and grasping - we are to some extent performing the action in our mind²³. To me this enhanced engagement is not necessarily proof of *liveness* all the time - *liveness* is a process. But one moment that for sure feels more intense is when the clue is being resolved. Resolving the clue can maybe be described as the short moment of when the mind of the clue-writer reaches into the mind of clue-reader. Peter Liversidge, famous for his "proposals", has also described how the live component in his exhibitions often is that which is not visible in his exhibitions. That there is a tension between attending to a proposal that has not been realised when another proposal, like a cannonball that has been fired into the gallery wall, is next to it.²⁴ Liversidge's proposals play with what is realisable and also what is not (yet) realised. When some proposals are realised they become examples of a possible future for all other proposals. Somehow this reminds me of Niklas Luhmann's quote on contingency.

To re-read the quote -> see title page

As human beings, if the instruction is related to a material or site-specific situation we are conditioned to expect that the instruction supports us assembling, finding, or achieving something. If the materiality creates this expectation it is necessary that it's possible to resolve or complete the task - otherwise there is no participatory sense making. But important to note is that if the goal is not a shelf or an address of a pick up point - the fastest route to finding this location is not always the most engaging. If we are inside a treasure hunt, the work of resolving the riddle so that it begins *instructing* (dechiffre the reality through the metaphors of the riddle) is at the centre of the experience.

Depending on context, my clues are sometimes also deliberately puzzling or impossible - an invitation to an ongoing process of looking for another relation to the given. If the clue is to be resolved through dancing it's not at all a problem to stay inside of a space of contradicting information. As Lilia Mestre says about scores "*The eternal quest to understand and the eternal impossibility of achieving, leaves us with the wonderful possibility of experimenting.*"²⁵ In the following choreographic warm up score one observation I've made is integrated. If the instruction simply reads "shake", "bounce", "fold", ... it becomes possible to complete the task but if instead using the formulation "find a shake..."²⁶ the clue instructs to *look for what it is* rather than just *performing it*. As a dancer the difference between *performing* an instruction or *looking for what the instruction can do* is enormous. It can, for instance, change which part of me engages, how long I engage and how I work with nuances.

Some scores connect less obviously to the topic of on-line offline space-time. Other clues have a more clear connection as with scores written in the style of Python-script. Often the practices are connected to earlier translations - I first taught the shake-score in an online-training and was experimenting with how to instruct in other ways as it is nearly impossible to talk and play music online at the same time.

22 Choreographic Clues stems from my fascination and life-long practice of treasure hunting. Choreographic Clues is best coming alive inside teaching where all these different aspects can be brought together. Inside *Withdrawing the Performer*, research project in collaboration with Jasmin Schaitl (funded through INTRA 21-22) I am further developing this practice in relation to participatory sense making.

23 Thanks Jasmin Schaitl for making me think even more about the mind as a space of where performance unfolds.

24 The Art Assignment, min 1.08 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUkJbyWp3wQ>

25 Mestre, Lilia; *Scores*, in *Choreo-graphic Figures. Deviations from the line*. Eds. Nikolaus Gansterer, Emma Cocker, Mariella Greil (Edition Angewandte: DeGruyter 2017) p.306

26 This way of formulating the instruction is originally inspired by the, in dance-improvisation context famous expression "find an end", which a facilitator can say to a group in order to bring a gentle end to an improvised task.

SHAKE-SCORE

T

(Detach this page and fold it / roll it up so that only one clue comes at a time
- if you want, you can put a timer on 15 minutes).

Find a standing on two feet

Find a gentle shake or bounce in that standing

Find a pattern (in that shake)

Find a pattern that your breath likes

Find a way to play that shake-bounce-breath-pattern

Find a space between joints (in that shake)

Find a listening to the music of yourself, the paper and the room

Find a way to repeat, shuffle and expand everything on this page until time is up.

Imagine that the following text is spoken with a Swedish accent. Not only is the English slightly off, sometimes it also has the wrong timing with your actions and some geographic mistakes (like an Audio-guide made for a generic non-existing kitchen generated by an AI).

1. Go to a chaos drawer in your kitchen or wherever you can localise something resembling chaos in your kitchen.

2. When you are in front of the chaos: close your eyes before accessing the content of the possible drawer/container. Now open.

3. With both hands carefully localise up to three objects that you are not entirely sure what they are.

4. Bring the objects with you and return to the table. You can look at the objects if you want.

5. Let's write a bit, you can write on an electronic device if you don't have a paper at hand. Maybe that's better, cause maybe you want to send it to me later.

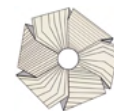
6. Describe the surface, shape and material of the objects as if you have never seen such objects before.

7. Blur which quality belongs to which object - write in whichever order the qualities appear to you.

8. Ok, good now pause. Let's look at what you wrote or didn't write. No matter what, we can ask ourselves: what is not there?

9. The second question would be - can we understand what we are missing or what we need through localising what's not there? I mean in the overall chaos - not the drawer.

You don't have to answer out loud. Just think about it for a bit.



(if you are not at home consider the risk of crime)

Go to a jacket

Stick your hand into the pocket

Is there something in there?

Place the thing or the nothing on a surface

Look at it

Is it a treasure?

Without naming it, describe the thing or the no-thing with three words.

Look for these words somewhere else in your surrounding

Hyperlink your treasure or non-treasure to your immediate surrounding; make it important.

CITY GAMES VIENNA

In 2019, I was invited by **City Games Vienna** to develop the game-design for an urban game. Good Turk is the third in a series of scratch cards treasure hunts using actual locations in the city which are extended by an online narrative.

The following example is based on a series of game-tests conducted shortly before the game-release in September 2019. The text has been condensed from a text I originally wrote in preparation for a PhD seminar at the IT University of Copenhagen on "Ritual, Play & Performance" 2019 where I exchanged with PhD students from interaction and game design. Even if this game is not an art work it was interesting to me to see how my research on clues applied in a more commercial setting also made it possible for me to share my thoughts with interaction and game designers.

The urban game *Good Turk* mixes historical locations with a contemporary cityscape. The *game-space* is created by a map, a letter, and 6 scratch cards as well as the possibility to follow a story that can be found online by accessing a code on each card. Clues guide the players to 6 sites that carry an historical and semi-fictional narrative. During the time of the two *Türkenbelagerungen* (the Ottoman Sieges of Vienna), *Turk* turned into a swear word for the things that were threatening or evil. The title, therefore, has connotations to an expression like *evil good*.



photo: Citygames

From my perspective as a game-designer, the interesting thing with clues is not that people understand them straight away, it is that clues open a contingent poetic game space. The content of the clue resonates with each player's imagination and interpretation of the area. The flow of a game therefore isn't only established through the player being successful, but also through the game's capacity of becoming meaningful in relation to its surroundings.



photo: C Ruth

The game begins at Brunnenmarkt. A former *Bauernmarkt*, a farmers market, that little by little was taken over by the *new Viennese* who imported a more customer friendly merchant culture. Brunnenmarkt is nowadays the street market with the best revenue in Vienna. A melting pot of food, smells, battery driven toys, cheap house utensils, languages and nationalities whereof many of Vienna's Turkish population.



photo: C Ruth

So what do you expect to find when reading the first clue?*

*"I was as Viennese as one can be.
A black liquid palace famous for my culture and my mix with
white."*

"It's funny when I read the clue it becomes a metaphor and the things I see around start resembling what I read" [...] "Black liquid palace, you know like a church, I think I know where this is [...]"²⁷

In the example above, the player was not stressed to find the right location but rather surfed on her own imagination until she realised that the church she intuitively first had in mind was outside the area marked on the map. While searching, she had time to develop her own logic, searching for very Viennese things, like the catholic church close by. *"It feels natural because things start to become meaningful"*. The game-tester compared how the game creates a similar state of mind as when she's intuitively taking pictures in her work as a photographer. *"It all makes sense because it has to make sense"*.

Teun Dubbelman speaks about how a narrative is constructed in the moment of playing as a cognitive interplay between past and present actions²⁸ something which is actually similar to building the logic inside a music improvisation.

A problem that is always present when location scouting is the unpredictable changes of the urban landscape and its landmarks. In City Games Vienna's first game 1918, designed by Simon Schwaighofer and Philipp Ehmann, monuments were acting as location-targets. In their 2nd game Paradise Lost, Philipp Ehmann expanded the design to also include locations of less static nature. A metro, a former shop-front and a little garden were included. It's comparably easy to check if there are plans to remove a monument in the 1st district of Vienna but outside the city centre of Vienna the city is changing faster. It is not sure what will still be there in a year. Not to speak about in five years or in 10 years. This drew my attention to the urban landscape as a very live and non-static context and my game-design needed to integrate the possibility of change.

In a third game-test it became clear how the knowledge a person has of a place affects how a riddle is being interpreted. Café Putz served coffee at Brunnenmarkt for 50 years until 2017 and for anyone that had been there it seemed as if the Viennese Style Café house would stay forever. The players who were on the site for the first time and therefore not playing in friction with their memory were more open towards what to find. The player who knew of the former café but didn't know it had ceased to exist couldn't recognise the location because his memory overruled the clues. The glitch that this game-tester experienced reminded me of the experiences I was consciously building into the participatory work Treasure Hunting (WUK Performing Arts 2016).

ANSWER CLUE:

Café culture and coffee - nowadays as Viennese as something can be, also immigrated. The myth goes that bags with coffee beans were left behind when the defeated Ottomans returned home after 1683.

²⁷ Interview, game-test with Katarina Šoškić my dear PhD colleague.

²⁸ Dubbelman Teun, *Narrative Game Mechanics* (2016) p 40 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/309365249_Narrative_Game_Mechanics/link/5a0eb72f0f7e9b7d4dba7543/download last retrieved 20.11.2021

Analogue Augmented Reality (AAR)

The first version of AAR derived from a workshop situation where I didn't have the technical capacity to provide headphones for all the participants and I found myself stripping down an audio walk I had developed to a "concentrate"²⁹ of what that audiowalk was about and only provided a few written instructions and a time frame.

START ALL OVER

Summary: This walk can be done on your own but its choreographic potential better unfolds as a group exercise. It includes leaving the building you are in and then returning using the memory of what you did when last arriving. Approximate total time 10-15 min

Preparation: Dress according to weather and in case you need them - don't forget your keys. Bring a timer-device of preferred kind.

Begin: When leaving through the door set a timer for two minutes and walk at a rather quick tempo in the direction you last came from.

When two minutes are up. Stop and turn around.

Now walk following your memory of last arriving but at a slower tempo.

Try to notice also what you didn't notice last time. Spend at least 10 minutes.

Return all the way to where you were before. If you did many things last time when arriving, notice what you skip this time.

When you re-arrived:*

*Ask yourself if you are here now or in the *before* - or both.

SPACE COLLAPSE

This memory-group exercise pays attention to how the bodies have attended a space consciously or unconsciously on an earlier occasion. I have for instance used it at the beginning of giving my lecture at the Public Colloquium in 2018 where I knew that many people in the audience had been in the same space the evening before. I also used it when presenting my work at SAR, Society for Artistic Research conference in 2019. There, I allowed the practice to also influence my whole experience of the conference. I decided to visit all the sessions that took place in the room where I was scheduled to present. This meant that I had a memory of everything and everyone that had been in that room during the conference by the time of my presentation.

Summary: Based on their individual memory, people are asked to move to the position they had last time they attended something in this room. Length: 5-10 minutes.



Instructions were originally coming one by one, as part of a powerpoint presentation at SAR, Zürich 2019.

²⁹ Concentrate is a concept originally applied in the context of performance documentation that I have developed together with Olivia Jaques and Marlies Surtmann

Thanks for attending to my practices and exercises if you have questions please get in touch!

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