

steirischer herbst 2012
Theater/performance/dance

Truth is concrete

A 24/7 marathon camp on artistic strategies in politics and political strategies in art

21/09 (2 pm) - 28/09 (4 pm), Camp / festival centre (Operrnring 5-7, 8010 Graz)

00.00 - 24.00

Admission free / in English language

//truthisconcrete.org

With Udi Aloni (IL), Ulf Aminde (D), Center for Artistic Activism (USA), Center for Political Beauty (D), Minerva Cuevas (MEX), Annie Dorsen (USA), Etcétera... / Internacional Errorista (ARG), Everyday Rebellion (AT), Eleonora Fabião (BR), femem (UA), Davis Freeman (B), The HairCut Before The Party (GB), Pia Hierzegger (A), Kaddu Yaraax (SN), Jeudi Noir (F), John Jordan (GB/F), Kavecs (GR), Guido Kleene (NL), The Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination (GB), André Lepecki (USA/BR), Lexus Légal (CD), Sri Louise (USA), Mapa Teatro (CO), Renzo Martens (NL/B), Tomislav Medak & Goran Sergej Pristas / BAD.co (HR), Antanas Mockus (CO), Rabih Mroué (LB), Srđa Popović / CANVAS (SRB), Precarious Workers Brigade (GB), Public Movement (IL), Reverend Billy & The Church of Stop Shopping (USA), Dont Rhine / Ultra Red (USA), Lina Saneh (LB), Marco Scotini / Disobedience Archive (I), Laila Soliman (EG), Teatr.doc (RUS), Theater im Bahnhof (A), the vacuum cleaner (GB), Michael Wrentschur (A), Fiston Nasser Mwanza (CD) and many more.

Rapid changes around the world – the revolutions in many Arab countries, the Occupy movements, the upheavals and financial disasters in Europe – are also profoundly questioning the role of art. But what role does art play in this whirlwind of events, that we can hardly even follow, let alone understand? "Truth is concrete" is a marathon camp that will fill up the whole first week of the 2012 steirischer herbst festival: 7 days, 24 hours, more than 150 artists, activists and scientists will lecture, perform, play, produce, debate and collect artistic strategies in politics and political strategies in art. Day and night. It is a platform and a toolbox as much as a performative statement; an extreme effort at a time that seems to call for extreme efforts.

Public Movement (IL)

Rebranding European Muslims

Campaign and gala

Fri 28/09, 7.30 pm, Helmut-List-Halle

Moderator: David Witzthum (IL)

Branding Agencies: Demner, Merlicek & Bergmann (A), Icerikstratejileri (TR), Metahaven (NL)

Honorary guest speaker: Omar Al-Rawi (A/IRQ)

German and English language

Revenue from ticket sales benefits the "Rebranding European Muslims" campaign.

Formal attire is preferred

Commissioned by steirischer herbst

//rebrandingeuropeanmuslims.com

One hundred years ago, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was the first European country to recognise Islam as an official religion. Muslims have long since become a visible part of today's population – yet they still predominantly represent "the others", while Europe itself is on the verge of forfeiting its utopian ideals once and for all. "Rebranding European Muslims" is an international PR project by the Israeli performance and research group Public Movement, who play artistically with the instruments of a political branding campaign and the strategies of mass communication. Instead of giving answers, the project, being ambivalent, provokes different standpoints. Backed up by branding experts and with the aid of strategies deployed in official political campaigns, the project experiments with artistic possibilities of changing public opinion.

The campaign that begins in Graz, to be relayed to other countries, kicks off with a big benefit gala: a political charity event as much as a theatrical enactment of commitment and conflict. Hosted by the celebrated Israeli television presenter and internationally acclaimed journalist David Witzthum, the gala stages a performance of conflict and advocacy and celebrates at the same time Austria's historic role as Western gateway to the Muslim world. Special

guests are a belly dance company from Graz, the local Bosnian choir, scholars and diplomats, politicians, strategists, all joining in the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the recognition of Islam as an official European religion. At the heart of the gala, three prestigious branding agencies from Istanbul, Amsterdam and Vienna present their creative proposals for the future direction of the Rebranding European Muslims campaign – and the audience itself will decide which one is the most convincing approach. The winning idea will be presented in the centre of Graz – before the campaign moves on to other cities and countries. The gala will be accompanied by traditional Middle Eastern cuisine and closes with a live concert by the internationally acclaimed Islamic punk band The Kominas from Lexington/Massachusetts, performing for the first time in Austria.

Rabih Mroué / Lina Saneh (RL)

33 rounds and few seconds

Première in the German-speaking region

Fri 28/09, 9.30 pm, Sat 29/09 & Sun 30/09, 7.30 pm, Dom im Berg

A young Lebanese man takes his own life and, in a farewell letter, declares that his reasons are personal and have nothing to do with politics. But his suicide mobilises a society desperately in search of meaning: institutions (official and unofficial, religious and secular, left-wing and right-wing) and individuals (young and old) find their own reasons. Does the young man's death belong to the public or only to him and his relatives? Was he driven by the hope of an uprising? In their semi-documentary work, Rabih Mroué and Lina Saneh astutely reconstruct the final moments of a person's life, at the same time passionately unmasking the problems of a country in which last year's Arab revolutions have failed to strike a spark. Can an act of desperation, be it politically motivated or not, revive the hope for change in such a divided nation?

Teatr.doc (RUS)

1 hour 18 minutes

Documentary production

Première in the German-speaking region

Sat 29/09, 9.30 pm, Sun 30/09 & Mon 01/10, 7.30 pm, Camp: Black Cube

Sergey Magnitskiy died in police custody after a year of torture and abuse in November 2009. His death took one hour and eighteen minutes; he died with his hands and feet tied and lying on the floor, without receiving any medical help. He was not a hero, his death is not an example, not a metaphor and yet he represents hundreds of others. It is the story of confrontation with a system that seems impossible to resist. The Moscow documentary theatre *Teatr.doc* – a joint project of numerous authors, theatre-makers and volunteers – brings on to the stage what Russian politics and society try to conceal. Their plays are based on authentic texts, interviews and the lives of actual people, between art and concrete social analysis. "1 hour 18 minutes" is a trial that never took place.

Doris Uhlich (A)

Come Back

Première

Fri 05/10, Sat 06/10 & Sun 07/10, 7.30 pm, MUMUTH

Five former ballet dancers return to the stage years after retiring from their active careers. While their contemporaries were changing society and the world at the end of the sixties, they were training at the barre. Did they follow this time of new beginnings happening around them? Were they aware of the changes taking place outside? Now, as pensioners, they are establishing their own revolutionary movement with radical self-irony. Together with the young Viennese choreographer Doris Uhlich, they have spent a year engaged in futurist

archaeology. Without nostalgia and without personal justification, they search for the marks left inside their bodies by the ballet hierarchy and its rigorous body techniques. They do not look back, but forward: What mobilising power is here and now inside these disciplined bodies which have been changed by time?

Young Jean Lee's Theater Company (USA)

Untitled Feminist Show

Première in the German-speaking region

Thu 11/10, Fri 12/10 & Sat 13/10, 7.30 pm, Camp: Black Cube

Six charismatic stars from New York's theatre, dance, neo-burlesque underground, a far cry from Broadway, perform this show that is somewhere between militant happening, liberating choreography and cabaret. In her most recent work, the Korean-American director Young Jean Lee once again questions cultural identities and confronts us acutely and humorously with our own prejudices.

"Untitled Feminist Show" takes us into a world in which female bodies are not constrained by certain roles, but are instead free, to embody any identity, to try them out, to change again. The uninterrupted nudity of the protagonists – far from being shocking or titillating – comically and irreversibly undermines social constructions of gender and makes it hard to project overhasty categorisations on the cast members, not all of whom identify as female. The body does not have to determine one's identity.

La Pocha Nostra (USA/MEX)

The Insurrected Body

From the series "Psycho Magic Actions for a World Gone Wrong"

Première

Thu 11/10, Fri 12/10 & Sat 13/10, 9.30 pm, Dom im Berg

How can we remain open, original, porous, funny and critical all at once without lapsing into post-ironic jadedness or becoming one more "packaged product" for international festivals? The legendary troupe La Pocha Nostra answers this question with an inimitable, mind-blowing, eclectic blend of ritual, performance and crass entertainment. Robo-baroque, cyborg-kitsch and acid humour combine to create an exuberant hybrid of a living archive and radical pedagogy that addresses far-right isolationism, xenophobia and the violence of organised crime. For what is extreme if everything is extreme? The audience is invited to take part in this bizarre experiment, to live through the dreams and nightmares of our current times together and to assist the performers of this strange reality show.

Heiner Goebbels (D) / Carmina Slovenica (SLO)

When the mountain changed its clothing

Austrian première

Fri 12/10 & Sat 13/10, 7.30 pm, Helmut-List-Halle

The old is no more, the new not yet tangible: the forty young singers of the world-touring Slovene choir Carmina Slovenica – all between ten and twenty years old – confront us energetically with stories and questions concerning the farewell to childhood. The new piece by Heiner Goebbels examines the upheaval in the lives of the young women in exciting pictures, that are also perspectives of the massive social and political upheaval in the region from which they and the musical culture of their choir hail. Following the changing seasons, Heiner Goebbels weaves the choral music of this renowned choir from Graz's neighbouring city Maribor, that is this year's European Capital of Culture, with partisan songs from Tito's era, classical and pop music and his own compositions, to create a grand evening of music theatre.

Information and tickets:

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