

REHEARSAL OF THE REAL

Nevin Aladag, Adam Linder, Pilvi Takala, Diego Tonus

21.09. – 24.11.2013

kunstverein
nürnberg albrecht
dürer
gesellschaft

Opening: Friday, September 20, 2013 , 7 pm

With the performance *Ma Ma Ma Materials* by Adam Linder on opening night at 8 pm.

Rehearsal of the Real is engaged in the practice of testing what we call reality.

"Reality" here means life in society, social behaviours, and the identities available to us. The exhibition looks at the way codes and rules within communities are implicitly assumed by their members. How can the technique of repeated "rehearsal" and strategies of "testing" challenge the often invisible social boundaries to be experienced in a new light?

The working methods of **Nevin Aladag** (*1972, Turkey), **Adam Linder** (*1983, Australia), **Pilvi Takala** (*1981, Finland) and **Diego Tonus** (*1984, Italy) share a special affinity for performative strategies of repeating, imitating and satirizing. In their works they take individual observations of reality as a starting point and put social conventions to the test, critically analysing patterns of human behaviour through subversive acts and intentional misinterpretation. In the course of these trials, whether enacted via film, photography, performance or dance, the artists engage in an interplay between reality and fictionality, often themselves assuming a fictional role to examine the flexibility of societal norms. They create parallel narratives that, by use of fiction, reveal the truths of social interactions, so that in the testing of existing conditions, the distinction between reality and fiction becomes secondary.

Nevin Aladag, **Pilvi Takala** and **Diego Tonus** are represented by works that engage with this subject through sculptural gestures, filmed documented interactions and trial arrangements. On the opening night, **Adam Linder** will present the solo performance *Ma Ma Ma Materials* (2012) in the large hall of the former administration building of the Milchhof complex that houses the Kunstverein Nürnberg. As a performer and choreographer he emphasizes in his dance pieces the improvisation and fragmented repetition of cultural materials that flow through the body and are inscribed onto it. The performance – as a medium limited by time – will be seen only once at the opening, making *Rehearsal of the Real* attainable as a whole only at that particular moment. During the run of the exhibition, documentary material of Linder's performance will be displayed.

As a further discursive analysis to the exhibition's theme, a text by philosopher **Marcus Steinweg** (*1971, Germany) addresses the concept of "reality" and the possibilities of testing it. The text is available as a handout and published on the website of the Kunstverein Nürnberg.

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Nevin Aladag (b. 1972, Turkey; lives in Berlin)

In her work, Nevin Aladag examines different processes of formation of individual and collective identity and how these can bridge geographic and cultural boundaries via language, dance and music. In her four-channel split-screen installation *City Language I* (2009), exhibited for the first time at the 11th Istanbul Biennial and part of a video trilogy of the same name, musical instruments are being played only by the elements of the city: the wind, the sea, the architecture and animals. This experimental musical rehearsal in urban Istanbul highlights the limitations as well as the capacity for change in the social space of the city. In the work *Theke* (2013), traces of Aladag's interest in the cultural gestures of music and dance are literally imprinted on the surface of a 12m-long counter: footprints of stilettos form a random pattern on the cool, self-referential sculpture, suggesting a previous dance performance and a feminist impulse towards the Minimalist art object. *Spiegelfamilie [Family Portrait]* (2007/2011) – five mirrors sized to reference the members of a traditional family constellation – and the series *Best Friends* (2012) focus on different negotiations of social roles. *Best Friends* is comprised of photographic portraits of young people who feel connected to each other as close friends. The similarity in their clothing, accessories and postures makes clear that the identification process always takes place via the "other", as well as showing how much the appropriation of dress codes and fashion styles serves a constant affirmation of the self.

Adam Linder (b. 1983, Australia; lives in Berlin)

Based on various body languages and ritualized movements – quoting from ancient Egyptian figures through to institutionalized panel discussions – Adam Linder's performance *Ma Ma Ma Materials* (2012) develops as a sequence of performative transformations. In his works, his body becomes a surface for the projection of conventional patterns and strategies of mimicry through testing repetitions and fragmentations. As a performer, the figure he represents transmit historical references, forgotten attitudes and pop motifs. Aesthetics and rehearsed behaviours vary interchangeably to address the cultural inscriptions on the human body. The combination of classical forms of dance like ballet with pop music and contemporary urban dance styles related to rap and hip hop have been at the centre of his performances for some time, such as in *Cult to the Built on What* (2013). Within his subjective logic, Linder links the stylistic device of rap and the connected language of public speech with different forms of expression. He not only transfers the combination of subcultural expressivity and ballet to the theatre space, he has also presented his performances like *Ma Ma Ma Materials* in art institutions such as the Halle für Kunst, Lüneburg or in outdoor spaces such as at Silberkuppe, Berlin (both times in 2012).

Pilvi Takala (b. 1981, Finland; lives in Istanbul and Amsterdam)

Takala's subtle interventions examine inclusionary and exclusionary mechanisms within social groups and institutions, simple provocations that make visible "insider" structures as well as systemic processes. Her examinations towards reality are documented in videos, at times using techniques of investigative journalism like the hidden camera. In *The Trainee* (2008), the artist worked under her middle name as an intern for the duration of one month in a marketing department. While there she captured with different media the demands and the irritations that were caused by her atypical behaviour of passive inaction among the office's other employees. In the installation, *One in a Million* (2012), which the artist presents at the Kunstverein Nürnberg, she explores how the logic of numbers and gambling has entered into our social consciousness, specifically examining Postcode Lotteries, a bureaucratic phenomena established in the Netherlands in 1989 and later in the United Kingdom. Takala's work evolves along the story of a woman who discovers that she temporarily has no postal code, therefore denying her a chance at winning the Postcode Lottery.

The work consists in part of the documented conversations and written communication with the municipal office and the Postcode Lottery administrators. The installation subversively reveals the absurdities of the bureaucratic chains of command prompted by the lack of a postal code.

Diego Tonus (b. 1984, Italy; lives in Amsterdam)

The work of Diego Tonus is often structured as an arrangement of tests and trials. He analyzes everyday activities, and in repeating and reorganizing their elements, creates alternative perspectives on society. The works oscillate between performance and film, while also including staged and repeated fragments of reality, and central to the work is the motif of storytelling, particularly unclear or uncertain forms of historical record and oral tradition. Without unveiling the entire story, Tonus plays with different "truth-values" associated with the individual's expectations towards reality. His works reflect collective experience through various role-shifts, as is also mirrored in his own position as an artist who incorporates the roles of performer, screenwriter and director in his work. The video *Speculative Speeches (Workers of the World – Relax)* (2012) is a work where he uses fragments of dialogue and text in voice-training exercises. The recited text is taken from real telephone conversations based on a private experience, and he samples and re-performs them in a range of tone, pitch, emotion and emphasis. Over the course of the video's text fragments, repetitions, and speech errors, a story between reality and fiction evolves, a tale of an unpaid job and the employer's excuses for non-payment.

Opening hours: Tuesday to Friday, 2 – 6 pm;
Saturday and Sunday, 1 – 6 pm; and by appointment.
Entrance fee: 2,50 €; reduced: 1,50 €, free for members.

Minutes (4): October 8, 2013, 7 pm

Exhibition talk with Claudia Emmert (Director Kunstpalais Erlangen) and Simone Neuenschwander (Director Kunstverein Nürnberg)

Guided tours: Sept 26, Oct 24, Nov 7, Nov 21, 2013, respectively at 7 pm.

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