

Giswil 13. Sept 2025

Written by Gabriel Magos

So I come here with my Witchcycle, with which I have been unannounced in public space for quite a while now, I come here to the Turbine Giswil -Translocal Performance Art to watch some performances as part of the performance festival "**Im Handumdrehn**" and to write something about them.

The turbine hall, power corner at the back of the valley, agriculture all around.

Unfortunately, I miss Antonia Röllin's performance with her sons and brother. Chris Regn and Andrea Saemann welcome me. And a woman I know from the magic lantern.

About 140 people in the huge hall, absolute silence, and off we go, the performance is on.

The Vietnamese **Vu Duc Toan** reenacts "**Lieber nichts sagen**" by Monika Günther and Ruedi Schill, a performance of a workshop in Vietnam in 2004.

He draws a chalk circle on the floor. Nothingness is celebrated. Now he flutters in with bird feathers. The dove of peace approaches. The sound of feathers in the silence.

Ah – they are not feathers at all – they are little papers, he lays them out in the chalk circle. With a clap, he lets more papers fly. Where do they end up ?

He throws up papers. Where do they end up ?

A reclining candle, candle flame, piano music.

He cuts the candle in two.

I am touched – the music, the candlelight, his tranquility.

The candle is now extinguished, this half is standing. The other half rolls on the ground. He drives it with his foot in front of him, through the huge hall. The approximately 140 people follow him. I see Tabea, Karin, Lena, Boris.

Vu Duc Toan has made a parable – about the desire for understanding, for clarity – and the paradox behind it.

When I'm on the road with the Witchcycle, wonderful encounters happen. And conversations about the forces we are exposed to, that we want to understand. And which can also overwhelm us.

The next performance **Trân Tan «COW HOW?/CÂU HOI»?**

Tran Tran reads from a booklet.

"People ask me – in Lausanne – where are you from? Why aren't you white – why are you here?"

Tran Tran tells the story of the family as war refugees from Vietnam in the nineties.

"If I had blue eyes, people would be nicer to me. My parents met in France."

Tran Tran tells of racism as it manifests itself towards people from Asia.

Studying, work, family.

« Do I feel Swiss? Do I have to be white? I'm not white. Knowing a national language, having a passport, making a Swiss watch, cheese or chocolate, yodelling – I would like to learn.

To be neutral – I don't think I'm neutral – I'm not because I'm the child of war refugees."

That's exactly how I felt when I was flying the white flag and the Russian army invaded Ukraine on Feb. 25, 2022. That's when I realized that I couldn't be on the road with the white flag, because as a Hungarian refugee I'm a party.

"I'm tired and angry, sad to have lost my origins."

Now Tran Tran speaks Vietnamese, tries, but can't do it properly.

"Sometimes I lose these sounds, sometimes they come back. My Vietnamese is cloudy, second generation of immigrants."

Tran Tran tries to translate Vietnamese.

« How does this language sound here ? I come from where rice is eaten, where Vietnamese food is eaten.

But actually I come from humanity, diversity, international laws, I come from where fascism is fought, where the real criminals are fought from, I come from where it is not said that it is too complicated."

Tran Tran's voice gets louder.

"I come from where genocides are not accepted."

"So when asked how are you, be honest – I'm not losing faith in humanity."

Tran Tran unfurls a banner.

In situations of injustice to stay neutral is to choose the oppressors side

18.20 Boris Nieslony und Karin Meiner – «We are still in discussion»

Both - in black - sit at a table with a white tablecloth.

Boris makes noises. Both hold up the tablecloth. Boris scolds and grunts. Karin looks under the table. Boris slides backwards with the chair.

They lift the tablecloth and guide it under the table surface. Pull it back and forth. Boris makes noises. They pause.

Karin pulls the tablecloth towards her, holds it up. Boris takes the table on his head. Karin pulls the tablecloth over her head. Boris stands up.

Karin holds up the tablecloth. Boris goes to Karin with the table. He puts the table over Karin, she humps the table with the sheet.

Karin puts the table down and puts the sheet on it. Boris pulls the chair away from Karin. Karin walks around with the table. Boris makes noises.

He discovers the tablecloth on his chair and takes it over his arm. Karin walks around with the table on her back. She puts the table down.

Boris puts the tablecloth on the table. Karin shifts around on her knees. Boris shakes the table. Karin comes to the table, she shakes her chair.

Are Boris and Karin Vladimir and Estragon, an older couple or children playing?

Karin stands on the chair, then on the laid table. Boris fetches scarves black, white, red and lay them on the floor.

Are the two of them making a satire on the political establishment?

Karin on the table with a black cloth over her head. Boris shuts the cloth from behind with a black cloth, holds the cloth between her legs.

Karin dances on the table with a black cloth. Boris on the wall. Karin is lying on the table. Boris bobs against the wall

What's the story ?

Boris hits the wall. Karin turns on her stomach on the table. Boris pushes the chair around, argues. He topples Karin off the table.

Karin kneels, swings her arms. Boris slams the table down again, makes contortions.

Karin goes behind the curtain, fetches tape and pump. Boris comes to her. They both pump. Karin sits down on the chair, pulls off a sock, unrolls the tape.

Boris holds the pump to Karin's foot, Karin glues the pump on. Boris exhales, Karin pumps with her foot. She runs around pumping.

Boris squeaks with the chair. He puts the chair on the table, smells Karin's sock.

A crystal ball rolls into the game. Karin's foot pumps. Scarves - Crystal ball - Boris lies on the floor, forehead on the floor. He dives into the ground.

The crystal ball rolls to Boris' mouth. Karin blows the crystal ball. Boris rolls around, knocks on the floor, the crystal ball rolls in.

Boris shakes the metal. Karin on the chair with a sheet over her head. Boris with the crystal ball and Karin with the pump.

Karin holds the sheet hanging behind Boris. Boris throws the crystal ball far away. Karin fetches a blue hose. Boris with the crystal ball through the hall.

They are two small children.

Karin comes with a yellow construction ribbon, she rolls it to the other side, comes back with it.

What's going on here ? – Is it an idle, a game, a ritual, an incantation... ?

Karin speaks to Boris. Nothing happens. "We're starting from scratch"

Boris: "It's already over"

18.41 – 15 min break

19h Rita Ambrosis – «2'943'360'000»

A red spot of light, red spotlight. A trestle ladder. The space.

A sound - from the left, in the shell, fabric, plastic, a figure. From a light door. Climbing on the floor – Chihiro. A beetle rolls in, in plastic. Red light.

Pauses. Says "2 billion 943 million 360 thousand" in English with an Italian accent.

Something is. She stands up. A red light flashes on her chest. Something is.

Are the aliens coming back there in the valley? She wears a red robe. « I am looking for something.» Now she's at the red spot of light.

The red light flashes at her heart. «Who is the heart, looking for something?'

She runs. "Jogging is good for the heart." She climbs the ladder. "Climbing is good for the heart."

"Do you hear my heart ?" It comes from the ladder. «My heart was looking for something.»

A man comes to her. «I offer my heart.» She with a red cloth. The man leaves again. She goes to the floor, grabs her dress.

"Can you hear my heart ?" – "1 billion 480 million 200 thousand"

She tramples on the cloth. She runs, goes to the ground, runs, goes to the ground, tosses, sits down with someone, with me, "can you hear my heart, it's beating".

"My heart is looking for something" - "1 million 800 thousand 500 thousand" - she sits down next to me, "I hear my heart".

She goes to the hanging chain and uses it like a swing - she says numbers, the big number, goes through the audience - "what I want to say is my heart likes your heart - it adores - unlimited".

She opens the curtain, the door and goes out.

19.19 'nSchuppel

In the dark, a dark figure in a dress lets its voice resound. A voice comes back from the other side of the large room.

Again the voice of the figure in the dress sounds and again a voice comes back, like a personified echo, from a figure on the other side.

Both figures have a light, they call to each other. Echo with a deeper voice. Is it the goddess Echo ?

There is now light in the large room, but it is getting dark outside. I'm in the Turbine in another room in another time.

The figures approach each other at a distance, a third figure comes, with light, he runs around, also with his voice. A bell rings. Yodel.

At the latest now I want to yodel myself. I remember my time on the alp, the cheers on the alp, our visit to the Pagan New Year's Eve.

The figures begin to yodel, metal rings, screams, they have lights on their heads, masks, they are surreal carnival figures, demons, witches' sabbath, there are now five of them.

Now they stand in a circle and start yodelling together.

Slowly, in a procession, they go outside. I am flooded with a wave of memories. Ils Comediants in Barcelona, le Mystère des Voix Bulgares, my own visions of processions, my «flags process(ion) sculpture».

It is an opening of the local heritage into a universal heritage. Overcoming shame. Global vision.

Life is a process, a river that is constantly changing. At the same time, we have an identity, status and position in society. There is a tension, and we call this tension shame.

20 h Short break outside, inside set-up.

20.22 Thuy Anh Dong - **"Ten things about sweetness"**

The bell rings in. Thuy Anh pushes the first curtain aside on the far left of the large room, takes a glass of water and drinks it.

At the second curtain there is a pile of white powder.

She pushes the next curtain aside. Mankind in space. Human and architecture. Power.

It was built and now it is being revived. She enlivens it. She puts the audience in procession, because she goes to the next curtain and we go with her. The room is used for the procession. The space is a process, the space becomes a process by walking through it, and it leads us into this process, into the confrontation with our shame.

There is an interaction between the audience and the space, the space becomes an actor.

The next curtain moves. She moves the curtain. A revelation.

She swallowed white powder. She coughs. A white table is there. She pulls the table into the room. She brings red liquid in a glass. She drinks from the red liquid. She smells the red liquid.

She spits the white into the red liquid.

She goes on. The audience moves on.

There is the mental, the psychic, the architectural, the physical, the emotional. The emotional is closest to me. And I feel that something is coming.

And then she disappears into the toilet and for a long time there is nothing. Nothing. What is she doing in there, is she hurting herself, but no -

She comes out again in a pink dress and leads us into a room where there is a large pile of milk powder in the middle. She blows and blows into the powder until a small cow comes out.

Then again in the large room. She distributes chocolate chips and asks us to let them melt in our mouths.

And then she drills two holes in a condensed milk can with a large knife and tells us that in her childhood condensed milk was so precious that she only received it drop by drop, but now she wants to empty a whole can. And she says that at one hole in the can the condensed milk comes out, and at the other hole you have to blow.

She lies down, holds the can in the air above her open mouth and asks us to blow into the other hole. First someone does it, then me. For us as refugee children in

Switzerland, it was exactly the same with condensed milk. Her mouth fills more and more with condensed milk until it overflows.

In the end, she just lies there, the last condensed milk dripping into her mouth – it's such an incredible presence in the room.

Then in one aisle, she takes off the top of her dress and comes out again with a skin-colored bra.

Another curtain, flickering light, she dedicates this performance to her mother, a nurse. There were always sweet things at home, most of them from Nestle.

Soon I get back on my witch's bike and drive away. I assisted a real witch.

On the train I get to know Quynh Dong, who came from Vietnam as a boat refugee. It was through her that Benjamin's contact with Vietnamese artists came about. She makes huge ceramic petals and stages slow-motion choreographies.

I immersed myself in a magical world. Hanoi. I talked to Thuy Anh. What does fate want of me, the Hungarian refugee, thrown back, on the witch's bicycle, examining shame?

I want to open up.