

Thomas Zollinger

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Thomas Zollinger



Thomas Zollinger lives and works in Biel and Zurich, Switzerland. His conceptual work involves minimal art performances of standing and slow walking. Beginning in 1991 with Ritual Theatre, he has progressively elaborated his idea of participative performances in durational projects such as the „12th months performance“ in which he ritualized elementary human actions (1998/1999) or the prolonged 3-years-performance CH LOVES ART (1998-2001), concerning the requirements of artist's existence in Switzerland. His focus lies on the absence of objects, materials, requisits and the use of nothing beyond human presence.

During his „expedition.02“ from Strasbourg F to Sion CH (2002) he was physically walking along the language borders of these areas and in the following years he has created and varied many walking and standing projects. His work has been shown in cities such as Linz (European Capital of Culture), Murcia (Manifesta8), Biennial of Lanzarote and public spaces throughout Europe (Istanbul, Bodrum, Tromsö, Dresden, Feldkirch).

Since 2008 he realizes naked performances (solo / group) in urban space, for example „Naked Ufo“ with 18 participants as an off-project to the Swiss sculpture exhibition (2009), the „Naked Art Walk“ Zurich (2012), an „Artwalk with Nude Accents“ with the „Procession of the Naked“ in Biel Switzerland (2014). Recently in September 2014, the „Naked Slow Walk“ was invited in the „Zagreb I love you Festival“. It was shown on the Croatia TV with following short reports in online-medias all over Europe.

Thomas Zollinger, born 1952 in Zurich, was an experimental writer. In the eighties he began to study theatre, performance art and movement, and took inspiration from Norbert Klassen (Berne), Black Market International, Grotowski and Butoh Dance. In 1991 he started his own projects in Ritual Theatre, in which he was examining the border between performer and audience, and also the body in an empty space with its naked architecture.

Thomas Zollinger

Most important performances and projects:

- 2014
Sept Zagreb, Naked Slow Walk, Zagreb I love you Festival (Tomislav Gotovac/Emil Matešić)
Aug Biel City Space, 168hr Water Carrying, with 27 participants
May Biel City Space, Artwalk with Nude Accents / Procession of the Naked, with 18 people
May Berlin, MPAB, Naked Words, Symposium Transnationality/Translinguality (Dovrat Meron)
- 2013
Oct Basel, Art of Encountering, Performers from Philippines / Switzerland (Boris Nieslony)
Oct Winterthur, Festival Perform Now! Winterthur, FOLIE Performance with Glynis Ackermann
Aug Zurich Rathausbrücke, Naked Performance Studies in Urban Space, 20 participants
June Zurich Rathausbrücke, Naked Cluster, 14 participants
- 2012 Zurich Turbinenplatz, Naked Art Walk, 23 participants
- 2011 Biel older town, Little Naked Performance Festival Biel, 16 participants
Basel, Zurich, Biel, Berne, Six without material, 6 x 6h Performances
6 performers, with Gisela Hochuli, Monica Klingler, Glynis Ackermann etc
- 2010 Murcia E Manifesta8 Plaza Beluga, 40 minutes standing, 35 participants
- 2009 Bienal de Lanzarote, Video Naked Performance The Non Age
Biel Central Square, Naked Ufo, 40 min standing of 18 naked people
Winterthur Kunsthalle, Naked Non-Age with 55-85 years old people (Paco Barragán)
Linz09, European Culture Capital, Slow Motion Walks in the Public Space
- 2008 Biel/Zurich h/Appenzell and other places, 24x45min naked walking 45min max 1m/min
with about 80 people involved in the whole project until Aug 2011
Zurich Kunsthof, Performance with a Class of 20 schoolers 8 years old
Body & Urban Space, Stockholm, Bodrum TR, Tromsø N
- 2007 Body & Urban Space, Linz, Graz, Istanbul, Dresden, Greifswald, Madrid
Montagne de Diesse, 8 x 3 hours Slow Motion Walks, on ARTE TV 22.11.07
- 2006 Feldkirch A, 8 hours water kettle walk
Solothurn Theatre Days of Litterature, Word Body, Performance 12 students
- 2005 Bienne Théâtre de Ville, Word Body, Performance with 14 High Schoolers
Biel/Bienne Magic of Slow Walking, Place Guisan, 24 performers
Biel Journées photo de Bienne, Gone further (Photo, Video, Installation)
Pfäffikon Seedamm Kulturzentrum, Mapping Switzerland, Performance/Foto
- 2004 Olten Fachhochschule, Gr.un.drecht, Performance
2002 expedition.02 strasbourg-sion 16.07.-20.08.2002
2001 Centre PasquArt Biel, 40 Minuten STANDING, Performance with 51 people
2000 Going further, Gewölbe Galerie Biel, Concept, Video, Performances
1999 24-hours RITUAL THEATRE, 7. Int. Performance Conference Glarus Switzerland
1998 24-hours-Performance Christmas Exposition Biel
1998-2001, CH LOVES ART (12.09.1998-11.09.2001)
3-years-performance, concerning the basics of artist's existence in Switzerland
1998/99, 12-month PERFORMANCE (12.09.1998-11.09.1999)
- 1998 7-day RITUAL THEATER, Public Space & Empty Store Biel, with 27 people
1997 12-hour SLOW MOTION WALKING, Public Space Empty Stores, Biel, 30 people
1995 6 x 6 hours RITUAL THEATRE forumclaque Baden (Co-Produktion)
1994 5-day- RITUAL THEATRE forumclaque Baden

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Thomas Zollinger Naked Projects since 2008





Naked Slow Walk Zagreb

Zagreb Trg Petra Preradivova (Flower Square)
13/09/2014, 12.03h-12.25h

Zagreb I love you Festival

Naked Slow Walking of the three performers in the pedestrian zone of Varsavska Street. After about 12 minutes, Elias Kirsche and Glynis Ackermann lay in a sculptural bodyformation on the pavement of Flower Square. Three minutes later the police appeared the square. They were talking with the lying performers while Thomas Zollinger, also naked, entered the scene from the outside with a slow approach. After 20 minutes the performance was definitely ended by the police. After 25 minutes the naked performers put on their clothes. They were driven to the police station where they had to wait for 2 hours until the fine was paid by the organizers of the Festival.

The festival was inspired by artist Tomislav Gotovac's 1981 performance by the same name, in which he ran naked through the streets of Zagreb. The Festival theme discusses the status of the body in public space with "the challenge and confrontation involving the naked body and urban landscape in the historical core of the city, expressing in this way the duality between nature and culture." (Emil Matešić).

The "Naked Slow Walk" was shown on the Croatia TV. There were short reports in online-medias all over Europe.

Performance Thomas Zollinger, Elias Kirsche, Glynis Ackermann

Photos Tomislav Čuveljak

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Thomas Zollinger Minimal Performances



168 Hours Watercarrying

Biel City Space
Monday 25/08/2014, 00.00h until Sunday 31/08, 24.00h

The lead role in this 168 hours duration, non-stop-project, was given to an old metallic water kettle which was carried through the city by ever alternating persons performing in hourly relays. Passing through apartment buildings and various shops the kettle then reached a significant place where it was emptied out, again refilled at a lakeside spot and then returned to its original starting point.

This point of departure was in a centrally located spot in Biel where the kettle was watched over by a "guardian" who unobtrusively "occupies" the place for one hour in an hourly rhythm of alternating persons. Intended was a wordless, bodypresence oriented state of "just being here" ; A fluctuation between everyday and performative standing, walking, minimal movement or statuary pose.

The „guardian" was the person who had returned with the kettle after 50 minutes to the starting point. At first she stood beside the kettle and waited until, on the hour, the next person took over and went his way through the city.

The route lead through the performance "occupied" urban space locations of the 12th „Schweizerische Plastikausstellung", LE MOUVEMENT. The person with the waterkettle intervened everywhere where performances were being held, discerning and following her own interpretation of where the intuitive line of division between the public and performers may lead.

"168 Hours Watercarrying" envisages itself as a complementary action to the „Plastikausstellung" and welcomes the direction of thought that sculptural art is not merely a materialised idea, an object or a piece of sculpture to be seen; Rather it is something substantially corporeal imbued with human physical energies.

In the simple act of watercarrying nothing is shown to give a reason for the requirement of an audience. Addressed here is the general publicity mirrored in the anonymity of the passersby.

24 hours presence investment in the project by Glynis Ackermann, Rolf Brügger, Suzanne Castelberg, Gisela Hochuli, Angela Hausheer, Jacob Jansen, Hansjorg Köfler, Agnieszka Obuchowicz, Elizabeth Schär, Chen Tan, Thomas Zollinger. Further watercarriers involved interested persons from Biel, other parts of Switzerland and overseas. Concept and Management: Thomas Zollinger. Photo Horst Jerina. This project was supported by the city of Biel, Department of Berne, Ernst-Göhner Foundation.

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Thomas Zollinger Naked Projects since 2008





Artwalk with Nude Accents / Procession of the Naked

Biel Switzerland Urban Space
Saturday 17 May 2014, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

18 naked people

Fixed route through Biel, from Guisan Square, Station Street to Central Square and the pedestrian zone of Nidaugasse. In this part of the city no permission of the authorities. The 18 participants were black clothed, only one person was naked all the time. Others were naked especially for one of 8 nude accent: Standing in Line, Walking down the Street, Mixed Cluster, Meeting at the Edge, Walking in a Circle, Lying and Breathing / Wave 11', Standing in Curved Line, Walking by. Nakedness is employed as a sculptural element in dialogue with the architectural environment, ground structures and pedestrian traffic.

The second part in the older town was police authorized, with a short Naked Cluster and the Procession of the Naked while bells were ringing.

Context: jolimai festival Biel Switzerland. After 6 p.m. performances in the Gallery "Alte Krone" with Alina Kopytsa, Glynis Ackermann, Gerard de Roodt, Selina Lauener, Elias Kirsche.

Concept / Head of Project Thomas Zollinger, Photo Walter Winkler

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FOIL

Winterthur Festival Perform Now!
04/10/2013

Performance Glynis Ackermann / Thomas Zollinger.

Powerfull and sensuous, describes the Performance of Glynis Ackermann and Thomas Zollinger. Both the naked artists raised a sellophane foil between their bodies and pressed towards each other. The foil was caused to move solely by means of varying muscle tension, eventually freeing itself and falling to the ground. Impressive above all was how Ackermann and Zollinger stood still for over 15 minutes long... "I personally found the performance very fascinating, due to the involvement of real people and not actors. A visitor summed up "The atmosphere moved me" Der Landbote 7.October, Sarah Stutte, Photo Regina Jäger

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Naked Art Walk

Zürich Turbinenplatz
Saturday 08/09/2012, 15.20h-16.00h

Performance of a 40 minute Naked Walking (slow motion, max 1m/min) in this large and generous public square in Zürich. With 9 women, 13 men.

An independent project in the context of artandthecity, an allusion to the "Limmat Art Walk"(Hamish Fulton) with its 170 clothed slow walkers along the river Limmat. The performance was police authorised. Concept / Head of Project Thomas Zollinger

Photo Walter Winkler

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Thomas Zollinger Minimal Performances



(0) Basel Kasko 17/04/2011



(1) Zurich Turbinenplatz 10/06/2011



(2) Basel NT-Areal 03/07/2011



(3) Biel/Bienne Zentralplatz 27/08/2011



(3) Biel/Bienne Zentralplatz 27/08/2011



(4) Bellelay Abbatale 01/10/2011



Six without Material

- (0) Basel Kasko 17/04/2011
- (1) Zurich Turbinenplatz 10/06/2011
- (2) Basel NT-Areal 03/07/2011
- (3) Biel/Bienne Zentralplatz 27/08/2011
- (4) Bellelay Abbatale 01/10/2011
- (5) Jegenstorf Schlosspark 10/12/2011 as "non-event"
- (6) Bern Progr 23/12/2011

A serie of 6 x 6 hr Performances in 6 different places, inside or outside, in Basel, Berne or Zurich. Performers worked "without material" only with the possibilities of their bodies, in interaction with passers-by or in dialogue with the square or the architecture of an empty space. Who is "performing"? What means "performing"? What is everyday behavior?

The project started on 17th April 2011 in Basel in the empty Kasko, a space for contemporary art and performance projects

Glynis Ackermann, Markus Goessi, Gisela Hochuli, Monica Klingler, Boedi S. Otong, Thomas Zollinger, Guest Bruno Steingruber

Videostills Elisabeth Schär

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Thomas Zollinger Minimal Performances



23/12/2010, 17.20h-18.00h, Murcia Plaza Cardenal Belluga
MANIFESTA 8, Eventos paralelos

Dozens of people on a central square of Murcia, reduced to the simple act of standing, breathing. The plastic of living human bodies could be seen as a silent manifestation of the pure existence of human beings. Everybody had the opportunity to join the artist and the other participants to become a concrete part of the performance. Open for participation. With about 35 participants.

La performance, 40 minutes standing, de Thomas Zollinger, se instaló el pasado 23 de diciembre en la plaza Belluga de la mano de Eventos Paralelos Manifesta 8. Más de 35 personas se detuvieron frente a la catedral de Murcia a observar aquello que nos rodea sin que le prestemos atención, una parada en el camino que pintó una estampa que nos recuerda lo poco que nos detenemos a pensar, a mirar, a reflexionar.

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Thomas Zollinger Naked Projects since 2008



Friday 28/08/2009, 17.20h-18.00h, Biel/Bienne Central Square

Grouping of 18 naked people. Passers-by are part of the performance. Nakedness serves the minimal sculptural naked mobile bodies and the clothed passers-by, between sculpture and choreography.

An independent article on the theme: „Plastik“ (Sculpture) and the title „Utopics“, concerning the opening 29th August, Plastik Exhibition in Biel. Authorised public performance. Endorsed by the city of Biel.

Concept / Head of Project Thomas Zollinger. Videostills Werner Graf

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Thomas Zollinger Naked Projects since 2008



Saturday 06/06/2009, 17 Uhr, Kunsthalle Winterthur

The exhibition *The Non Age* (07.06.-26.07. Curator: Paco Barragán) focused on the taboo subject „Age“. Themes in question here were the naked ageing body, its authenticity, wrinkled, furrowed skin, scarring, signs of life's wear and tear-or top fit. Truth is beauty.

In the gallery rooms were 10 naked, 55-85 year old person. At the official opening the clothed guests then entered. Those who were naked behaved as far as possible in a normal manner, mingling naturally among the clothed guest. About one hour later they left the room independently of each other. They then returned clothed. Camera Elisabeth Schär. Cut Thomas Zollinger.

Video projection in the Bienal de Lanzarote 2009/2010, Lanzarote, various exhibitions including *The Non-Age*, *The Rebel of Age*

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Thomas Zollinger Naked Projects since 2008



March 2008 until August 2011, various locations
The 5th series of 24 x 45 minutes walking

The walking tempo (max. 1m./min.) was in slow motion and the participants were naked. The preferred location was an empty room or in the nature. This meditative project was always assigned to Sundays.

Walking is in an upright posture and as far as possible in a continuous forward motion without pausing. Wide angle, „panorama“ vision. The choreography which evolves out of this.

All 45 minute naked walking with a starting-time shift of 1hr per event: 01.15am., 02.15am, 03.15am., and so on until 22.15pm., 23.15pm, 00.15am.

Thomas Zollinger (concept), friends, guests and persons who apply. About 80 persons were involved in the whole series with the 24 naked walking. The overall concept covers 7 series, dedicated to the weekdays (since 2000).

Some group performances with 3 until 20 persons:

- 16/03/08 Biel/Bienne empty apartment (01.15h-02.00h)
- 15/06/08 Biel/Bienne Alte Krone empty gallery space (07.15h-08.00h)
- 03/08/08 Aarberg between forest-glade (9.15h-10.00h)
- 01/02/09 Winterthur empty Kunsthalle (14.15h-15.00h)
- 05/07/09 Biel empty greenhouse in a former gardening (17.15h-18.00h)
- 28/03/10 Zürich Mühle Tiefenbrunnen Dance Studio (18.15h-19.00h)
- 06/06/10 Biel-Nidau Expo Square (19.15h-20.00h)
- 27/06/10 Männedorf empty gallery space (21.15h-22.00h)
- 19/06/11 Zürich Opfikon Lake Glattpark ramp (21.30h-22.15h)
- 15/08/11 Appenzell AR Wissegg on the top of a hill (23.45h-00.30h)

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Thomas Zollinger Body & Urban Space Projects



Body & Urban Space IX Tromsø

Tromsø Norway City Space, Empty Stores
July 2008

Walking, Sitting, Standing, Lying

The city walks of Thomas Zollinger, follow a concept which is individually and specifically developed for each city. They involve an interaction with the unexpected and with the special conditions of a European urban environment. Elements include the reduction of walking speed to the point of standstill, dance which evolves from walking, interactive dance, erotic dates and word performance. The venue takes us, depending on the size of the project, through private apartments and vacant shop locations, which are sought after on the spot, and even through local city events, offices, shopping centres, galleries, art museums and factories.

The city walks are a non-stop performance usually lasting from 6 to 7 days including the planning, preparation and realization. Due to the length of time involved, elementary human acts such as eating, drinking, pissing, sleeping, speaking, sitting, moving, and touching, are worked into a theme and developed into an artistic expression. This means allocating elementary activities to previously designated routes in public spaces, in empty shop locations, in empty apartments, galleries and art museums, consequently resulting in creating performance art in interaction with invited project guests, passersby, the public and the media.

07: Linz, Graz, Istanbul, Dresden, Greifswald, Madrid

08: Stockholm, Bodrum, Tromsø

09: Colmar, Arrecife

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Thomas Zollinger Body & Urban Space Projects



Body & Urban Space IV Dresden

Dresden City Space, Empty Gallery & Store, Offices, Theatre, Appartments, Shopping Centers
November 19/21/22

A 3-days-city walk including overnighting in the empty gallery H5 from Priesnitz to Coschütz.

Thomas Zollinger Body & Urban Space Projects



Body & Urban Space III Istanbul

October 2007, Sirkeci Event Hall / Levent-CitySpace-Proje 4L / Istanbul Bienal



Body & Urban Space I Linz

September 2007, 5hr City Walk from St. Josefs Warte to the Danube River Modellflugplatz

Thomas Zollinger Walking Projects



8 x 3 hours slow walking 2nd serie

Diesse Mountains, Switzerland
2007 March - November

Starting April 8th and then on the 8th of every following month till November

The walking speed was reduced to 20m. per minute. Each walk began at the same predesignated time and had a duration of 3hrs., following the same predesignated tracks through the mountain plains of Diesse.

Solo project Thomas Zollinger. It was filmed by ARTE TV and broadcast on 22nd November 2007.

Video on youtube keyword „Arte Tracks Slow Art“

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Thomas Zollinger Word Body



Wordbody

01/11/2005 Biel/Bienne Théâtre de Ville

26/05/2006, Solothurne Theatre (Switzerland's festival days for literature)

For this word experiment there is no need to learn a text or to study a role. The performers are speaking words associatively, producing a word with every breathing out, as long as there occurs no break. The naked words are moving about the room, confronting the audience. A simple word can tell a whole story or film. Performances with students of Biel/Bienne.

Some spectators contributed words, too. The score created by Thomas Zollinger anticipates this option. However, other people did not agree with these interventions. At the end of the performance, the audience entered into a controversial discussion.

Videostills Damian Shepard, Peter Zacek

Concept Thomas Zollinger

A conventional theatre or an artspace with nothing inside

12 to 50 people or actors speaking words

The performers are speaking only words. The naked words are moving around, confronting an audience or visitors of an artspace. A simple word can tell a whole story or film. The sound of a word, the speech rhythm, the voice energy of the performer create an improvised piece, basically hold by a composition of elements concerning the way of how to speak words.

The elements are clearly organized in a score. There is no need to learn a text or to study a role. The performers have to learn the score, When is the right moment for which element?

The basic element of the performance is speaking words associatively, producing a word with every breathing out, as long as there occurs no break. Sometimes all performers are speaking words all together, sometimes there is a solo, sometimes there are groups of performers speaking words.

Another element let the performers repeating the same word for some moments in an improvised rhythm. A third element is a strong shouting out of one common word by all performer together in a perfect synchronisation.

Forth element is silence, a space without any word without any movement, only breath is moving the performers body.

A structure with full darkness and full light gives orientation to the performers and also the audience.

The basic element of Word & Body was performed every month as a core structure during the 12 month performance 1998/99 by myself, Thomas Zollinger, in different rooms and public places. Associatively spoken words as long as there was no break. The break produced an immediate and clear stop in the speaking of words, then silence. The duration of the performances ranged between 20 and 60 minutes.



Thomas Zollinger Walking Projects



Magic of Slow Walking

Biel/Bienne Guisan Square
17/09/2006, 00.15 a.m. to 01.00 a.m.,

A fourth series of 24 x 45 minutes walking started with the performance „Magie des Gehens" (Magic of slow motion walking) on the Guisan Square in Biel/Bienne on 17/09/2006. The performance was consciously placed in the night from Friday to Saturday. At the same day and next to the Guisan Square, the symposium "Art, Power, Freedom" of the Swiss artist organisations (FAB) took place. „Magic of slow walking" was an independent and, for some participants, a surprising artistic contribution to the theme of the symposium. Performance with 24 slow motion walking artists, dancers and others.

Concept and Head of Project Thomas Zollinger, Photo Jutta Bürger

Echo from Symposium, Roman Brotbeck:

„Much more convincing was an unannounced performance by Thomas Zollinger - it was only after the FAB that I have found out who the author was - which took place in the Guisan square at midnight: Two dozen people occupied this square for the duration of one hour. The traffic was discreetly diverted by the police. The people moved about the square in slow motion. A striking calmness was evoked, which obviously disquieted the coincidental passers-by; some youths tried to distract the concentrated performers, they started disturbing, put plastic chairs into the way, even threatened to strike the actors. However, these did not loose their stride but consequently proceeded. To me, it was the most impressing contribution to the issue of freedom, power and art." Roman Brotbeck, musicologist, was president of the Swiss sound artist asso-ciation, today heading the music department of the Art Academy in Berne

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Thomas Zollinger Walking Projects



expedition.02

16/07 to 20/08/2002, strasbourg to sion
hiking, standing, slow walking, dancing

thomas zollinger moved from strasbourg/strassburg (france) to sion/sitten (switzerland), during 36 consecutive days (16th of july until 20th of august). he was hiking, slow walking, standing, dancing his way 6 hours a day along the border between the german and french language boundary. his "art body" (6 hours) took turns with his "everyday body" (18 hours). he arrived in biel/bienne on 1st of august and passed through an empty gallery as well as an empty office, an empty apartment and an empty bank safe on 2nd of august. on his way he honoured the expo.02 of switzerland and its "3000 events in 159 days" with the ultimate non-event, exposing himself at the exposition entrance in the waiting crowd who was doing the same: standing briefly or at length. on 4th of august, he visited the opening of an exposition in siselen, standing there for 36 minutes. afterwards, thomas zollinger disappeared in the seeland, actually not in the murtensee (lac de morat, lake of murten), reappearing on 6th of august in fribourg/freiburg. he took a picture message every hour between basel/bâle and sion/sitten (mms gallery). he sent sounds of the steps and the surroundings by mobile phone directly into an empty gallery outside of the expo.02 (espace libre) and into the sound tower (klangturm) inside the expo.02.

videostill: thomas zollinger on the way between biel/bienne and murten while taking the every hour picture message in the galerie 25 regina larsson in siselen on the occasion of an opening

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Thomas Zollinger Minimal Performances



40 minutes standing

Centre PasquArt Biel/Bienne
03/09/2001, 20.20h to 21.00h

No objects, no words, no action. „40 minutes standing“ is one of the favourite performances of the minimal artist Thomas Zollinger (Switzerland). It was the last act of "CH loves Art" with 51 people, dependant on social welfare or not, dancers, actors, artists. Camera Stephan Fawer

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1998-2001: CH loves Art

12/09/1998 until 11/09/2001, Switzerland

The overall project "CH loves Art" was provoked by the typical position of the artist without income as well as by the necessity to discuss elementary human acts in a long-term performance. For the period of 12 months, the artist was the spider in a continually built network of inwardly and outwardly knotted concepts, performances, events, people - which were documented in a catalogue of 144 published or public events.

On the background of the existential questions, which were connected to the 12-month Performance, it became necessary to invest the own existence into a research that exemplarily analysed the conditions of an artist's existence in Switzerland ("CH loves Art").

The final performance of "CH loves Art" took place in the Salle Poma of the Centre PasquArt Biel and showed the pure existence of 51 welfare recipients or non-welfare recipients (40 minutes standing 03/09/2001).

Concept and Expanded Performance Thomas Zollinger, with 144 voluntary and involuntary actors of CH loves Art.

1999: 24-hr Ritual Theatre "The Citygoer"

07/03 to 08/03/1999, Glarus (Switzerland)

One of the monthly performed 24-hour structures, on the occasion of the 7th International Performance Conference at the Art museum in Glarus and in the context of the 12month performance.

"Last but not least, the 24-hour Ritual Theatre of Thomas Zollinger demonstrated in a radical way the existential character of Performance Art. He connected an empty shop in the Rathausgasase 11 with the Art Museum by a mere walking to and from." (Glerner Nachrichten 10/03/1999)

The 12month performance started on 12th September 1998 and ended on 11th September 1999. Parallel to the 12-month Performance, it was essential to study whether the means of sustenance for artists in Switzerland are guaranteed. It was necessary to invest one's own existence in this research. The entire performance resulted in an expanded enterprise leading ultimately to a test of one's own possibilities of existence in Switzerland. The project „CH loves Art“ was finished on 11th September 2001.

1998: 7-day Ritual Theatre or 168-hr water carrying

05/07 to 11/07/1998 Biel/Bienne empty warehouse, urban space

The fourth and broadest concept of Ritual Theatre presented a deserted warehouse with its naked architecture as the empty space. It remained open for 168 hours non-stop. An uninterrupted, hourly repeated ritual of water carrying brought the particular situation into the public subconsciousness. The waking in the empty warehouse required of the participating people a detailed reference between "art" acts and "life" acts. The minimization to pure body presence or slow body flow created a temple atmosphere.

Performance with Boedi S. Otong, Verena Gassmann, Thomas Zollinger, Mala Sikka and 24 other artists, actors, dancers, musicians and water kettle carriers. Photo Jutta Bürger. Concept Thomas Zollinger.

1997: 12-hour Slow Motion Walking

18/19.07.1997, 08.00 p.m. to 08.00 a.m., Biel/Bienne and Seeland

A defined landscape with 38 communities (Biel/Bienne and in Seeland), 5 empty shops, 2 empty art galleries, a slow motion performer on the roof of the Central Square's bus-stop (Christian Mattis), another slow motion performer in an empty apartment, visible from the outside (Verena Gassmann). The presence in the print-media, on placards and cards was part of the project. The artistic objective was to gain the best possible approach to a pure slow motion walking on the basis of everyone's own possibilities. Every participant was author of a personal structure for the 12-hour performance.

Performance with Christian Mattis, Verena Gassmann, Susanne Daeppen (dance), Hans Kloeti (Visual Arts), Margrit Rieben (Music), Jürgen Müller-Othzen (Theatre), Thomas Zollinger and 23

other professionals. Photo Suzanne Castelberg, Martin Linsi. Concept and Head of Project Thomas Zollinger

1994: 5-day Ritual Theatre

26/04 to 30/04/1994, forumclaque Baden (Switzerland)

water kettle carrying through public space and the art space of forumclaque

The 5-day-Ritual Theatre develops three sequences, each takes 45 minutes. These are repeated four times a day over a period of five days. Ritual Theatre is a response to the need for the audience to define and actively participate in a contemporary ritual, leaving the traditional, constructed theatrical representation of a reality and entering a structure where the contents are the sensibility of the beholder as an individual.

The framework is as follows; there are two main spaces: the selected art-space, divided into an outer-, in-between- and inner-space, and the surrounding, free public/private space.

In the art-space two sequences of ca. 45 minutes take place.

1) is an interaction with body and voice where the participants in different numbers occupy the inner-space for ca. 3 minutes and leave the room empty for one minute 12 times.

In 2) the participants stay in the room, for a period of time until the first person leaves.

In 3), taking place in the public/private-space, the participants are left to do as they please. One action is offered in connection with the performance; the carrying of a water container between the art-space and a public area, emptying it in the public area and returning it full.