



Workshops European Summer Academy

European Identity in Times of Crisis (EITC)

European Summer Academy 2017: Myths of Europe – April 29th to May 8th

Title: Living Myths

Workshop Trainer: Sina Schneller, Jascha Sommer, Laura Strack

Workshop description

What does “Europe” mean to you? Which stories about Europe have you been told by others? If someone asked you to tell “the story of Europe”, what would this story sound like? To your mind, is the story of Europe’s future a utopia or a dystopia? Starting out from our personal experiences, ideas, fears and dreams, we collect contemporary narratives of European identity. Are these myths threatening or worth striving for?

In a second step, we try to make up our own visions of a common European future that we consider worth living. Everybody is invited to bring his or her own skills, knowledge and ideas to bear in our various future scenarios. In the workshop we seek for a political room that emerges between us, our skills, bodies and narratives through interaction. What could the present-day disasters (austerity, precariousness, xenophobia, new nationalism, climate change) be opposed with?

Our workshop is inspired by the artistic and activist strategies of the Living Theatre, an international theatre company who, throughout their powerful and provocative performances, have been fighting global capitalism, social injustice and violence for more than 50 years now. Experimenting with some of their textual, physical, scenic and interventional strategies, we practically reflect on how theatre can contribute to a constructive and creative critique of Europe’s present and future.

Our final performance makes use of the particular environment the summer academy takes place in. Referring to the spatial, historical and mythological characteristics of



the place, we invite the audience to take part in our interactive performative laboratory for living myths and European future scenarios.

We understand the workshop, but also the resulting performance / intervention as a forum for communication and exchange. In the performance we seek to create awareness about what is common to us, but also what separates us, to question and reassure identities.

The following schedule gives a first impression of how we want to structure our workshop, conferring it a certain regularity and daily rhythm while at the same time leaving it open for unexpected and unplanned events, contributions and ideas of the participants.

Sample Day

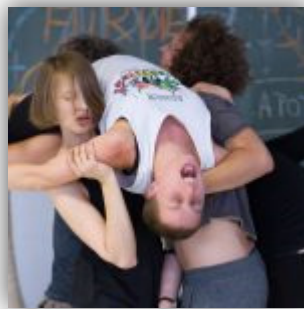
Time	Module	Description
10-12	Body practice	different kind of physical activities linked to our approach to theatre (playful warm-ups, breathing and voice exercises, body exploration and improvisation techniques, presence and focus training, group-building games, yoga, community dances)
12-13:30	EUROPE?!	reflecting, thinking and discussing about Europe as an identity construct in the past and in the present. We will provide a collection of material ranging from ancient myths to images of the contemporary crisis, inviting our participants to contribute their own experiences and ideas as well as to discuss, develop and transform the shared material
14-15	LUNCH	
15-16:30	POLITICAL THEATRE	introducing and discussing several positions of political theatre movements ranging from the early 20 th century to the present (i.e. Living Theatre). We will give brief introductions of several artistic standpoints, movements and strategies and invite our participants to both experience these strategies by trying them out and discuss or critically reflect upon them



16:30-19	Performative practice	How can we transform what we did, read and discussed together into a theatrical action? How can we enter a scenic space and fill it with what for us is interesting, shocking, beautiful, memorable, questionable ...? How can we transpose our "thinking about Europe" onto a stage or a scenic space?
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This is a very loose and provisory grid that ought to help us during the preparation of the workshop. According to the internal development of the workshop and to the needs or interests of the participants, we are free to vary or change the daily structure.

Pictures



Biography

Jascha Sommer (*1986) studied literature and dramatics as well as scenic research at Ruhr University Bochum and at Université Paris X Université Nanterre La Défense. He works as performance – and video artist in the ruhr area region and furthermore he is artistic leader of the artist network ‚Cheers for Fears‘. Within this frame he produces in 2016 the performance/intervention „Another Living Theatre: Paradise Now“ – a collaboration with the artistic activism of the 60ties.



Sina-Marie Schneller (*1990) studied dramatics and literature at Ruhr University Bochum. She works as performance artist, program manager and networker within the young artist community of North-Rhine-Westfalia. Since 2015 she coordinates in collaboration with Jascha Sommer the artist network ‚Cheers for Fears‘.

Laura Strack (*1989) works as theater scientist and translator for literature in Italy and Germany. She likes to write, to dance – with body and with words, between the lines, languages, spaces and cultures.