

### **Analysis (1.1.3.)**

This performance is the first to introduce the artist/researcher and it is the first to introduce the sense-event. It is structured in 3 scenes, each scene consisting of an aesthetic part performed by the 3 performers and an analytical part read aloud by the artist/researcher. This very obvious contrast between the aesthetic and the analytical is intended to emphasize the problem of artistic research – the gap between an aesthetic experience and an analytical reflection. The text of artist/researcher is written in a slightly ironic tone and gives the proceedings a humouristic twist. The artist/researcher is continuously excusing the annoying aspects of her own presence – the interruptions in the performance, the far too long comments and the level of abstraction. Still, she proceeds. This ambiguity is important. It is as if she says: It is a difficult quest, maybe hopeless, but lets try anyway.

The other part, the aesthetic part, is sequenced, as 3 ascending destructions of a text. The text is a collage of quotes from a police manual for crowd control in connection with large scale demonstrations and riots. As the performance evolves the declamation of the text is distorted and made progressively incomprehensible by various sound effects added by 'sound guerrilla'. In parallel the dancer, 'street-fighter' is increasing the tension of his performance. In correlation with the strobe of light directed from the mirror shield of the 'police-officer' these elements merge into a loud, chaotic spectacle of noise and aggression. The sequence blurs the relatively separate positions of 'police-officer', 'street-fighter' and 'sound-guerrilla' and creates a unified emotional expression.

This sequence is then split up by the artist/researcher, commenting and explaining. Like this analysis, the artist/researcher is dissecting the aesthetic experience, explaining and interpreting it. The split creates a distance, a pause, where the audience have an opportunity to reflect on the quite overwhelming experience of the loud spectacle of the aesthetic part. Their reflection doesn't necessarily follow the pedagogical explanations of the artist/researcher, but the break from the massive emotional attack of the performance, opens up a space for reflection anyway.

The performance of the part 'the artist/researcher' is somewhat influenced by the fact that the person supposed to perform this part cancelled two days before the performance. As a fast substitute Elsiné Hoss does her best, but her reading of the text is of course influenced by the fact that she never had time to rehearse her reading. I think of this as another layer of *Verfremdung*, but it can be discussed in the manner in which she reads the text is too amateurish. It makes it hard to understand the text, but then again it adds to the *Verfremdung* – to the oddness of having another person standing in for the artist/researcher, for me.

This device, the artist/researcher as a odd, estranged intruder into an aesthetical spectacle, is highlighted by the appearance of Elsiné Hoss. Her long, curly blonde hair is glowing in the bleak singular spotlight, creating an almost angelic contrast to the aggressive up-front presence of the other performers. Her appearance combined with the clumsy reading creates a distance: This is not her text, she is only a stand-in for the author, her figure is a construction. This distance is even explained in her text. Spelled out. All these measures to establish the figure of 'the artist/researcher'. The content of the text is not that important – it is establishing the figure that is important. This is why the clumsy reading isn't a problem, it might even be an advantage. In the next performances various experiments with the figure of the artist/researcher are

undertaken - i.e. a professional voice-over in the first version of 'Silent Stand' – and it is not obvious that this works better. The necessary distances inherent in the conception of this figure can be created in various ways, and amateur recitation is certainly one of these possibilities.

As the figure of the artist/researcher is spelled out, maybe even to the limit of what is funny, the same goes for the 'performance-part'. Here the transformation from text to noise, and the parallel increase in tension and aggressive attack, are undertaken in a similar obvious manner. The point is not only to create an overwhelming experience for the senses; the point is to establish a situation, or moment, when the experience is solely of the senses. An experience where analytical reflection is blocked out. This moment is not only an overwhelming experience of the senses, it is also a representation of the cliché of aesthetic experience. This moment – when the senses are overwhelmed and rational reflection is blocked – is the sense-event.

The aim of the performance is to establish these two figures: The artistic/researcher and the sense-event.

It is obvious that the intrusion of the artist/researcher does disturb the formal unity of the performance – without this disturbance the performance might have been a stronger art-work; a more direct 'punch-in-the-face' of the audience. Short, aggressive and direct. Then again, such a performance wouldn't have made sense in the framework of my artistic research-project. Even though the artist/researcher claims that the aesthetic part of the performance can be seen alone, it is the whole – the aesthetic part and the analytical part done by the artist/researcher – that comprises the art-piece here. The artist/researcher is an inherent gap in the structure of the performance.

The aesthetic tool to destroy the operation-text is resonance. The reason for using resonance is to be found in one of the quoted texts, 'The Coming Insurrection' by The Invisible Committee. In that text resonance is used as a metaphor for the destruction of capitalist society, and as a metaphor for how various insurrections spread. It is the disastrous aspect of resonance that is used. A given system can be destroyed if induced by vibrations in exactly the resonance frequency of the system. If too much energy is induced at the right frequency the system will disintegrate.<sup>1</sup> Here, in the performance this metaphor is translated into aesthetic use, by treating the voice of 'police-officer' to repeated and accelerated amounts of echo and reverb. The voice is mutilated and resonant waves of sound fragments takes over. This translation of the recited text into disintegrated sound fragments, rolling over the audience in loud waves, is conceptual. Conceptual, in the sense that it doesn't really matter how the translation sounds – if it sounds chaotic or not. It is the transition from understandable text to aesthetic texture that is important. It is the constitution of an event of the senses, a sense-event, that is important, not so much how this sense-event sounds or looks like. The resonance expressed in sound is metaphorical too: It doesn't create a resonance disaster for real, it sounds like it. Whereas the Invisible Committee use resonance as a textual metaphor, here in the performance it is used as an aesthetic metaphor.

Did it work? This analysis is of course a selfanalysis and the distinction between what is attempted in the performance and what is the outcome is blurry. Furthermore this performance was done before the structure with discussions following each performance was invented. This means that the reactions of the audience wasn't

gathered in the same manner as in the later performances where the discussions was an integral part of each event. On these premises my evaluation is limited to an inspection of the video-documentation, the scattered comments I recieved afterwards and what I have termed the 'psychosocial behavior' of the audience during and after the performance.

Certain elements in the performance might have been sharper – the reading by the artist/researcher and by the 'police-officer' in the very first part before sound- destructon sets in – but the overall impression is that it did work. The sense-event was established and the artist/researcher did induce the necessary gap in the experience. The audience was forced into the double reflection of what was happening – an aesthetic experience and an analytical reflection. This gap in the perception was displayed in a very schematic manner, but as stated above this was exactly the intention with this performance.

How the two levels of information - the aesthetic meaning evolving in the sense-event and the analytical discourse presented by the artist/researcher – relates across the gap seperating them isn't clear. If the performance illustrates the argument or if it is the argument that interpreates the performance. On the contrary, it is up to the audience to navigate these opposed layers of meaning, to correlate them or to contrast them. The performance presents the problem of the gap, but it doesn't solve it.

In the following performances the gap between the aesthetic rendering of the content and the discourse of the artist/researcher are structured in more intricate manners but the gap between aesthetic contemplation and rational argument is a condition they are all constituted by.

---

<sup>i</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mechanical\\_resonance#Resonance\\_disaster](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mechanical_resonance#Resonance_disaster)