



Tr'espace

presents:

ArbeiT

or:
In Praise of the Ephemeral

A crossover performance with
objects, manipulation, and a grand piano

by Roman Müller

on stage
Roman Müller
Eve-Anouk Jebejian
Philippe Deutsch

directed by
Jani Nuutinen

Tr'espace presents

**Arbeit
or : In praise of the Ephemeral**

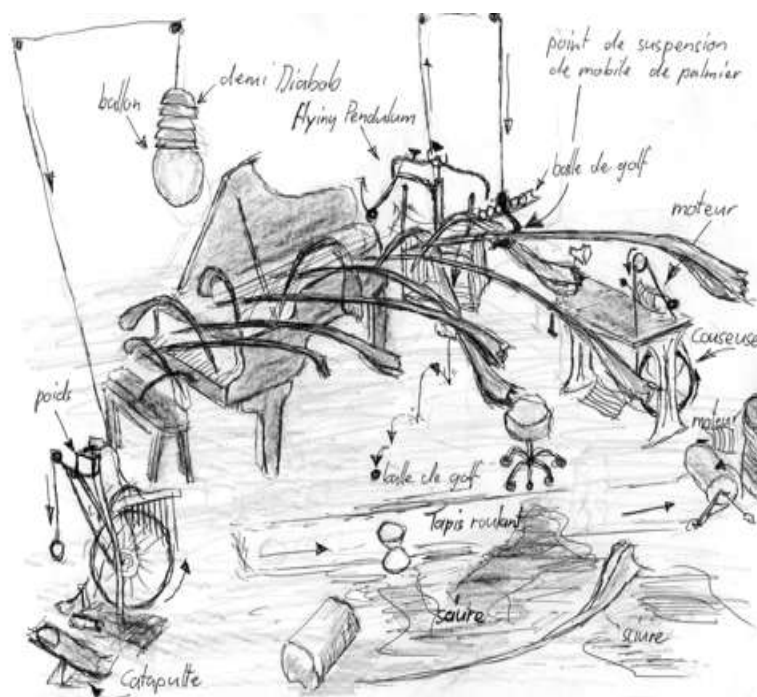
**A crossover performance with
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Information for organizers and media
Edited by: Roman Müller
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Outsourcing, human resources, efficiency improvement ... these terms are not normally associated with the theatre, but they serve as the building blocks for the new piece by the company Tr'espace. Transporting us into a bizarre, vividly caricatured world, this production examines the relationship of the human body to work and to the development of human endeavor. Actions are outsourced, broken down into their smallest units, divided up among the players, automated. The goal is beyond reproach: to make life more pleasurable.

In a universe where the invisible becomes visible, physical effort and beauty intersect in simple gestures, the practical becomes unnecessary, and profit is called into question. Absurd and fleeting.



Arbeit = work

work [from Old High German: *Werk*, "toil", "torment"],

The Industrial Revolution changed the character of work profoundly. Increased division of labor and the acceleration of the pace of work through technology and mechanization caused workers to lose some of their ability to see the tasks and purpose of their work as a whole.

The extent to which work is valued has changed significantly over the course of western history. In classical antiquity, physical work, particularly manual labor, was viewed as undignified in comparison with scientific and political activity pursued by a free man... ..But this view has evolved to such an extent that in modern philosophical anthropology, work is predominantly viewed as the defining characteristic of what it means to be a human being.

Quoted from the Brockhaus encyclopedia, 1997

On Stage

In the beginning is the diabolo, a spinning object, that requires a steady acceleration. Usually, this is done with arduous physical labor – but can this be done also by a machine? This concept was the starting point, in a moment, when the juggler gets tired, and a fertile imagination starts...

In this piece, the diabolo is not used as a circus object. Instead, the idea is to amplify the constraints inherent in the object, to use them theatrically to explore the theme, to develop this thread further and expand it to include the relationship between man and machine and to explore the resulting hierarchical structures and interdependencies.

A handful of machines, an old treadle sewing machine, a flying pendulum, curious mechanical objects... a hodgepodge of items, old and new. And in the middle of it all, an elegant black concert grand.

At the beginning, everything is neatly arranged. Everything is in its place, both the objects and the performers. The pianist sits at her piano, the juggler stands center stage, the technician (or *quiet* worker) sits at his lighting console, which is in a corner of the stage.

The work begins: Each performer moves in his specific sphere in an interaction between person and object, without hierarchical relationships between the performers. Gradually, the boundaries dissolve. Machines come into play, reducing work, taking on multiple functions, gaining independence. An illusory world builds, in the shadow of which an inconspicuous worker keeps the machinery running. And everything turns...

Until the final image: the protagonist lying in a sea of sawdust. He has come closer to the goal of having minimized his work [from *Old High German: Werk, "toil", "torment"*]. Now all the hurly-burly continues without his help. A lonely machine, making rasping sounds, moves three Diabolo continuously in a circular course, and a tiny mechanical piano plays a little music...

My Inner Drive

Laziness is an important driving force. Not simple idleness, but the desire to devise clever or even bizarre solutions that require the least possible expenditure of personal effort to perform actions. I do this by using the force of the other performer, for example, or by constructing machines to assist me, automating actions and accelerating them.

The comical aspect in the relationship between man and machine should be explored and hierarchies should be translated into movements or actions that may appear strange, but are really logical outgrowths of laziness.

Performing artists communicate using a specific vocabulary; like any profession, the theatre has its own jargon. What if I were to replace the critical vocabulary of my work with that of another field? How do terms used to express a feel or an understanding of one context change when applied to another? What if I suddenly use terms from economics to describe my work as a performer? What if I juggle and manipulate words like division of labor, outsourcing, effectiveness, optimization, efficiency, increased output?

What new images form in the spectators' minds and how are existing ones changed and shaped? Can the economic data that is so omnipresent these days be used to define human relationships?

Craftsmanship and manual labor have been relegated to the sidelines. Physical labor is something to be avoided. Does using fewer human resources make something more efficient? Better?

We prefer to hand over our physical and intellectual activities to technical achievements whose inner lives we cannot see. Complex production sequences, machines, systems, and financial flows are beyond our comprehension, let alone our control.

In my work as an artist, I operate at the other end of the spectrum: juggling and manipulating objects requires precise physical work and total control at all times.

What happens, then, if I allow the same historical developments that have affected human labor to flow into my artistic creations? What if I break my actions down into separate, single steps, automate them, outsource them, or hand them off to machines?

Music **for a grand piano and machines**

Two atmospheres of music encounter in *Arbeits* : A baroccan world (Johann Sebastian Bach) with its rather mathematical arrangements and clear structures meets contemporary pieces of the 20th century (Luciano Bérió, Arvo Pärt), which work with acoustic textures and resonances. In between “Der Vogel als Prophet” (taken from : *Waldszenen* by Robert Schumann) flies as a romantic leitmotif which stretches, accelerates, separates, changes and thus structures the whole play.

Slowly, but inexorably, another acoustic level joins in: monotonous metallic sounds of machines creep into the soundscape, overlapping with the baroccan harmonies, driving onward until loops are produced without electronic equipment, solely by mechanical processes.

The music and the tonal universe that is created make a key contribution to the dramatic development of the story and follow the same logic as my visual work. Nothing is brought in from the outside, everything is visibly produced onstage.

with musical works by:

Der Vogel als Prophet (Waldszenen) Robert Schumann
Toccatà e-moll Johann Sebastian Bach
Variationen zur Gesundung von Arinuschka Arvo Pärt
Children’s song No 6 Chick Corea
Le Dodo ou l’*Amour* au berceau Francois Couperin
Wasser Klavier..... Luciano Berio
Präludium + Fuge D Dur..... Johann Sebastian Bach

Really brilliant Christian Strüder, Flottmann-Hallen Herne DE

Fantastic Heike Pohl, Int Kleinkunstwochen Schwerte DE

Entering the room as a member of the audience it's as if you've landed in Gyro Gearloose's lab, a space crammed with a range of strange, exciting machines, where people work hard. [...] We dream, think, sweat and shiver along with the performers, sharing their delight. [...] And what began as a game, playful and wholly without coercion, ends in a drive to produce, determined by others, with no time left to play. The machines which were once intended to make our lives easier, eventually make it more complicated. They develop lives of their own and take control. Humans stand by and watch, stressed, overwhelmed and superfluous, amazed at what they have conjured up. The only thing to do is pull the plug, turn the gadgets off. Suddenly there is time for play again, for levity, music. And time to watch these three people on the stage, to admire what they have created: poetic, childlike, dreamy images and sounds – which a lot of work has gone into.

David Heiligers www.die-junge-buehne.de DE

In the work-hard-play-hard era, is leisure simply an object of ridicule, symbol of inertia and irritating boredom? At the end of this enchanting, poetic and effusively ingenious show by the Swiss company Tr'espace at the Schwerter Kleinkunstwochen, the world of work degenerates into a seething tangle of cables, wires and appliances composed of abstruse mechanical apparatus and machines on standby. Only the soft purring of a machine can be heard, continually turning three diabolos in a circle while a tiny red mechanical piano emits metallic tones. Roman Müller, virtuoso, ingenious master of this universe, looks towards the audience, visibly content and almost triumphant. Work has been beaten. [...] A highly intense and unusual visual experience, otherwise seen only in Cirque Nouveau or Varieté... as a children's toy the diablo has sunk into oblivion, as a tool of the juggling trade it is just one of many turns, never experienced as a medium of expression in the theatre or circus. Tr'espace have set a new benchmark! Spellbound, astounded, delighted. A gem [...]

Herbert Hermes, Schwerter Rundschau DE

Roman Müller, known to many of us as a virtuoso diablo artist and member of Duo Tr'espace, has created a theatrical performance centred on the diablo as an object. It is a fascinating, surprising, inspiring and thought-provoking piece of theatre. One motive for working seems to be curiosity: Roman explores the infinite possibilities represented by the object diablo and its physical properties. With great patience, he experiments, creating beautiful images almost incidentally.

But for me the ending immediately raised the question: "Can such creative artist ever find a peaceful life?" It's not work that drives them on, but rather their ideas and their own obsession with their art. How else would such a great performance be possible? And luckily for the audience, machines can never take their place. Sorry, Roman, you're going to have to carry on.

Gabi Keast, Kaskade 109 DE

A magnificent work, precise and fine.

The show is there, ready, sensible, delicate, amusing. Arbeit ! The play deserves its name.

It is a good play, an original play which asks silence and proximity from the audience

Roger Leroux, director of the Cirque Théâtre d'Elbeuf FR

Yesterday, Roman treated us to a lovely evening, completely transporting us into his own universe: playful and humorous, but also deeply fascinating and touching. It was just what I wanted, one of those special moments in which you gain insight into working processes and the artistic work is simply and unpretentiously present. It's turning into quite a beautiful story.

Ueli Hirzel after a workshop presentation on May 4, 2011 at the end of the first artistic residence at the Château de Monthélon:

Concept, idea, performer	Roman Müller
Pianist	Eve-Anouk Jebejian
Shadow technician on stage.....	Philippe Deutsch
Outside eye.....	Jani Nuutinen
Consultant on dramaturgy	Anne Hirth
Light design	Philippe Deutsch, Laurent Béal
Conception of the Mobilé	Mädir Rigolo
Conception of mechanics and machines.....	Roman Müller
Set design.....	Jani Nuutinen, Roman Müller
Visual design	Philippe Deutsch
Sound technician	Pierre Guillerme, Nik Fridli
Production.....	Ute Classen

Roman Müller CH

juggler, object designer, performer

graduates of the Scuola Teatro Dimitri CH in 1999. Before he worked as mechanic and afterwards he has been working subsequently for several international theatre companies and productions. As a co-founder of Tr'espace and the Kollektiv inStallation he pursues his own vision of circus and object manipulation. Has been performing in 25 countries spread over 5 continents and is awardee of numerous internationally renowned prizes.

He teaches *Scenic foundation of object manipulation* at different circus schools as ESAC *École supérieure des Arts du Cirque* in Brussels BE and, ACaPA *Fontys Academy for Circus and Performing Art* in Tilburg NL and others.

Roman Müller is the driving engine with Arbeit. To gain a rest under palms trees afterwards.

Eve Anouk Jebejian CH

pianist

plays the piano for as long as she can remember.

Educated at the conservatories of Genève, La-Chaux-de-Fonds, Vienna and Montréal, she earns her degree as a soloist at the conservatory of Lausanne.

She has been taught and inspired by Gilles Manny, Catherine Courvoisier and Brigitte Meyer, but also by Marc Durand, Avo Kuyumdjian or François-René Duchâble.

She holds several diplomas with distinction and is winner of numerous musical contests. As a soloist as well as with orchestra and chamber orchestra she performs on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

In Arbeit, Eve-Anouk Jebejian adds harmony and contrasts the rhythmic breathing of the machines. With the power of her magic play, she softens waves and make storms arrive.

Philippe Deutsch FR

technician on stage, graphical design, photos

There are various excursions as performer or technician with circus companies like Archaos, Cie Malabar or Cirque Baroque. In the 80ties, Philippe was one of Paris' first Graffiti artists. Since then, he has been following this vocation as visual artist, photographer and visual performer.

For companies, Philippe creates the complete communication design of print and web media, including video + dvd production and photography. With his sense and knowledge about lights and atmosphere he sometimes creates the light design on stage for dance productions. Exhibitions on festivals and galleries present Philippe's art work.

On the stage of Arbeit Philippe performs the silent technician oiling the gears in the back. Or better said : he controls the operating system. Philippe also creates the communication design for Arbeit.

Jani Nuutinen FI

director, œil extérieur

lives in France ever since he graduated of the Ecole National des Art du Cirque *CNAC* in Chalons-en-Champagne in 2001. He works with Philippe Découflé and creates set designs for several Finnish and international productions. Currently he is on tour with his two solo shows *Un cirque tout juste* and *Un cirque plus juste*. In 2005 he is awarded the State Art Prize of Finland. Together with Maksim Kamaro he is the artistic director of the Circo Aereo.

In Arbeit Jani has a wake eye on objects and takes care such as for details as also for the whole. Thinking and melding in dialogue with Roman Müller.

Anne Hirth DE

consultant on dramaturgy

Theatre studies at Scuola Teatro Dimitri, Verscio CH and afterwards (2000 – 2004) at Ernst-Busch University in Berlin. In 2005, Anne founded *büro für zeit and raum* and realizes choreographical work and directions (such as for Sacha Waltz and Luc Dunberry).

Roman and Anne respect the other's work since their common time at Scuola Teatro Dimitri. In Arbeit Anne takes care that images and ideas don't get lost in time and space.

Mädir Rigolo CH

Mobilé

Educated in Paris at the Ecole Nationale du Cirque, the Ecole de Mîme Etienne Decroux and Ecole Jaques Lecoq between 1977 - 81. As co-founder of Rigolo he works alternately as performer, director and set designer in more than 20 productions. In the *Balance trilogy* he brings his vision of a sophisticated dance theatre on stage which also emphasizes his interest in the plastic and fine arts. The Sanddornbalance is successfully performed all over the world.

Mädir is the godfather of the mobilé structure and Roman's mentor in creation process.

2014

January 31 – February 1 E-WERK, Freiburg DE
January 14 ABC, Scène nationale Bar-le-duc FR

2013

November 14 Kulturzentrum Reithalle, Offenburg DE
October 31 + November 1 UNIDRAM festival, Potsdam DE
October 18 5-3-1 Festival, Helsinki FI
September 18 + 21 + 22 festival SPIELtRÄUME, Alte Reithalle, Aarau CH
May 23 TPR, La Chaux de Fonds CH
May 21 Teatro Dimitri, Verscio CH
April 12 Les Passerelles, Pontault Combault FR
April 9 Festival Facto, Luneville FR
April 4 - 6 Théâtre du Vieux St Etienne, Rennes FR
March 14 Kurtheater, Baden CH
March 7 - 8 Festival Cirq'ouleur, Flottmann-Hallen, Herne DE
March 9 Schwerter Kleinkunstwochen, Schwerte DE
January 17 – 19 Cirque Théâtre d'Elbeuf FR

2012

October 27 + 28 Festival CIRCA, Auch FR
October 20 Théâtre Paul Eluard, Choisy le Roi FR
October 13 Maison de Jongle, La Courneuve FR
October 6 + 7 Théâtre le Moulin9, Aigle CH
October 1 - 4 **Premiere** Théâtre HautePierre / les Migrateurs + le Maillon, Théâtre de Strasbourg, Scène Européennes Strasbourg FR
September 6 + 7 **Pre-premiere** Kulturzentrum Tollhaus, Karlsruhe DE

Partners

Co-production + artistic residence

les Migrateurs / associés pour les Arts du Cirque + le-Maillon, Théâtre de Strasbourg, Scène Européenne FR
Cirque-Théâtre d'Elbeuf-Centre Arts du cirque de Haute-Normandie FR

Co-production:

CIRCA Auch-Gers – Midi-Pyrénées FR

Théâtre Paul Eluard – Choisy-le-Roi FR

Arc en Scène – Centre neuchâtelois des arts vivants – La Chaux de Fonds CH

Residence:

Theater op de Markt – PCT Dommelhof BE

Château de Monthelon FR

Maison de Jongle, La Courneuve FR

Kulturzentrum Tollhaus Karlsruhe DE

Circus Monti Wohlen CH

Supported by:

Ernst Göhner Stiftung CH

Groupe des 20 Théâtres en Ile de France FR

Food for thought

The conceptual framework of this play is based on various essays and literature – e.g. by:

Friedrich Müller Reissmann: Wir brauchen ein anderes Steuersystem
Die Mythologie der Neuzeit, ideologisches Hindernis für ein anderes
Steuersystem
Zwei Märchen zur Lösung des Arbeitslosenproblems

Hartmut Rosa : Acceleration: Changing Structures of Time in the Modern Age

H.G: Wells : The time machine

trespass (en.) – unbefugtes Betreten (dt) – entrée non-autorisée (fr)

Petronella von Zerboni and Roman Müller met in 1998 at the Scuola Teatro Dimitri. In their ensuing years of artistic collaboration, they have succeeded in reinventing the diablo in aesthetic, dramatic, and technical terms. They defy conventions and transcend apparent limits, creating an inimitable style that elegantly and sensitively combines the playful and the wacky with stunning artistic feats.

A trilogy was created around the diablo, starting with the act *Duo Tr'espace*, which expanded to include the short piece *RencontreD* [meetingD] and then the theatrical performance *Le Cercle* [The Circle].

This genre-transcending concept has opened numerous doors. Tr'espace has achieved an artistic range that erases the strict boundaries between classical circus, variety shows, and *cirque nouveau* and has been celebrated and honored by spectators and professional circles alike. In a certain sense, the leap from the circus ring to stages usually reserved for dance and theatre was a perfectly natural artistic progression and has allowed Tr'espace to pioneer a new, more open theatre culture, one that now embraces a tremendous array of performing arts.

Tr'espace has performed in over 25 countries and on every continent – in more than 1,000 shows.

Le Cercle – The Circle – describes continuous movement, with no beginning and no end, a perpetual motion machine that is a metaphor for the continuing research of Tr'espace.

- 2012 10-year anniversary of Tr'espace + world premiere of *ArbeiT*
- 2010 *ArbeiT* Carte Blanche
- 2008 *inStallation*
World premiere of a large production in Wohlen CH at the winter home of the Circus Monti
2009 – 2011 on tour in Switzerland, France, England, Belgium, and Germany
- 2005 *Le Cercle*
World premiere at the festival *La Route de Cirque* in Nexon FR
since then, performed on tour all over the world
- 2004 *RencontreD*
World premiere in Brussels BE at the festival *Piste de Lancement*
2007 awarded the *Circo Emilo Zapatero Prize* at the 9th *Festival International de Teatro y Artes de Calle TAC* in Valladolid ES
2004 awarded the *Jeunes Talents Cirque* in Paris. Also received a sponsorship for continuing research from the Regional Council of Île de France, the region surrounding Paris.
- 2003 *Duo Tr'espace*
2009: Awarded the Press and Media Prize at the 33rd *Festival International du Cirque de Monte Carlo*.
2005: Silver Lion at the 10th *Wuqiao International Circus Festival*, China
2004: Won 4 medals at the 25th *Festival Mondial du Cirque de Demain* in Paris: the Silver Medal, the ARTE Prize, the Cirque du Soleil Prize, and the Alexandre Grimailo Studio Prize
- 2002 Founding of the company Tr'espace by Petronella von Zerboni and Roman Müller

Tr'espace performed at... (among others)

Ansan Arts Center, Ansan KR
Zomer van Antwerpen, Antwerpen BE
Festival Circa, Auch FR
Theater am Brennpunkt, Baden CH
Festival Polo Circo, Buenos Aires AR
Esciena Abierta, Teatro Principal de Burgos ES
Equinoxe, Châteauroux FR
TPR, La Chaux-de-Fonds CH
Cirque Théâtre, Elbeuf FR
Forum Meyrin, Genève CH
5-3-1 Festival, Helsinki FI
14th IJC, Tel Aviv IL
Le Carré Magique, Lannion FR
Théâtre Vidy, Lausanne CH
33rd Festival Internationale du Cirque de Monte Carlo MC
La Tohu, Cité des arts du cirque, Montréal CA
25th Festival Mondial du Cirque de Demain, Paris FR
Ruhrfestspiele Recklinghausen, Recklinghausen DE
Le Manège de Reims, Reims FR
Scène nationale de Senart, Senart FR
Janvier dans les étoiles, La Seyne-sur-Mer FR
Sizuoka Festival, Sizuoka JP
Stadsschouwburg Utrecht NL
Teatro Dimitri, Verscio CH
International Circus Festival of Wuqiao, Wuqiao CN

Voices of the Media / Stimmen aus der Presse / Voix de la press

Der Geheim-Tipp der Ruhrfestspiele: Ein Traum von einem Circus-Theater: Ovationen für *inStallation*. Bilder wie aus einem surrealen Traum. Berauschend und berührend. Mal poetisch, mal wild. ... Gestern Abend feierten die „Wunderkinder der Schweizer Circus-Szene“ mit *inStallation*, einem wortwörtlich traumhaften Mix aus Theater- und Circus-Kunst, ihre umjubelte Deutschland Premiere bei den Ruhrfestspielen.

Recklinghäuser Zeitung

Disons-le net, la compagnie Tr'espace nous régal. Au croisement du cirque et la danse, Le Cercle signe un très beau moment de théâtre visuel. Ce spectacle brillant, même s'il est dans la pénombre, nous enveloppe dans un état d'écoute et de bien-être très agréables. Les yeux et l'ouïe du spectateur sont constamment mobilisés, subjugués, par ces artistes talentueux. Ils ont une façon tellement simple et poétique de s'amuser avec l'espace, les corps et les objets, que le néophyte en reste pantois...

Pariscope

...that they live in memory more as magic than stagecraft. This was juggling at its very best: high art, a transforming experience. They received a lengthy and heartfelt standing ovation.

Juggle

And it's really true: I fell in love – with the most beautiful and most innovating act I've seen for a long time. Roman Müller and Petronella von Zerboni presented a new art form, a new dimension of diabolo playing. Dance and movement, body and prop merged into a single flow ... It's breathtaking – and beautiful. Quite simply beautiful...

Kaskade

Selbst kleine Patzer in der außergewöhnlichen Choreographie, die an modernes Tanztheater à la Pina Bausch erinnert, bringen die drei Artisten Petronella von Zerboni, Roman Müller und Mischa Blau nicht aus dem Rhythmus, wirken vielmehr wie eingebaut, wenn das Spiel mit dem Kreis von Neuem beginnt.

Der Westen

Mit *Le Cercle* von Tr'espace begannen die 49. Schwerter Kleinkunstwochen in der Rohrmeisterei. Ein begeistertes Publikum ließ keinen Zweifel daran, dass die 3 Artisten nicht um sonst bei verschiedenen internationalen Festivals mit zahlreichen Preisen für ihr Stück ausgezeichnet wurden.

Ruhrnachrichten

La grâce et l'acrobatie pour ouvrir la saison de Vidy ... il y a un charme, une fraîcheur, une sincérité, qui séduisent visiblement le public.

24 Heures

The show, presented by Petronella v Zerboni from Germany and her Swiss partner, Roman Muller, has been seen as probably the most unique among the variety of programmes in the history of the Wuqiao International Circus Festival.

China Daily

But as so often in a magic show it was a speciality act which scored heavily. This was the swiss duo Tr'espace who did things with diabolos that one would not have thought possible as they danced and gyrated around the stage. It was a brilliant performance.

The Budget, Official Magazine of the International Brotherhood of Magicians

Contact

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