Jan Rozman: MEMEMEME
Kdo je ‘me’ v ‘meme’ v ‘MEMEMEME’?

MEMEMEME je bivanjski prostor asociativnega toka internetne skupnosti, trk brezkrajnega števila memov* in njihovih odmevov. Preko teles štirih performerjev, njihovih telefonov ter digitalnih asociativnih referenc videa in zvoka predstava plasti pomene gest, gibov, podob in izrazov. V partituri performativnega okolja preigrava mehaniko in se poigrava z estetiko internetnih memov. Odrske akcije se kot živ mimetičen organizem razmnožujejo in ponavljajo, variirajo ter mutirajo, v plasteh med njimi pa se razpirajo možne pomenske vrzeli, ki zrcalijo fragmentiranost sodobne komunikacije in alienacijo internetne družbe.

**Meme je vsaka ideja, ki se skozi variacijo in selekcijo, kljub svoji morebitni naključnosti ali nesmiselnosti ponavlja in (raz)množi. Besedo meme (iz mimeme, gr., ki pomeni ‘tisto, kar je posnemano’) je za oznako jezika, zgodb, znanj, navad, vzorcev in vedenj, ki se prenašajo z imitacijo – nekakšen kulturni ekvivalent genu –, prvi uporabil biolog Richard Dawkins. V digitalni dobi so zaradi vsesplošne uporabe spleta najbolj razširjeni in poznani internetni memi.*

Jan Rozman: MEMEMEME
Who is 'me' in 'meme' in 'MEMEMEME'?

MEMEMEME is the space of a community's flow of association, a clash of an infinite number of memes* and their reverberations. Through the performers' bodies, their mobile phones and digital video and sound references and associations, the performance layers gestures, movements, images and expressions. Its performative score plays with and around the mechanics and aesthetics of internet memes. As a living mimetic organism, the stage actions are multiplied and repeated, diversified and mutated to open up the potential semantic splits and gaps that reflect the fragmented and alienated nature of modern communication and the internet society.

**A meme is any idea that is, despite its potential randomness or nonsense, repeated and multiplied through variation and selection. The term meme (from Ancient Greek mimeme, 'imitated thing') was coined by biologist Richard Dawkins as a cultural equivalent of a gene to designate language, stories, knowledges, habits, styles and behaviour that is transmitted through imitation. As a consequence of the near universal use of the internet in the digital age, the most widespread, flexible, resilient and circulated are precisely (viral) internet memes.*

Jan Rozman: MEMEMEME

Stara mestna Elektrarna - Elektro Ljubljana / Old Power Station, Ljubljana:
21. 11. 2019 ob 20.00 / 21 Nov 2019 at 8 pm
22. 11. 2019 ob 19.00 / 22 Nov 2019 at 7 pm

Koncept, režija in koreografija / Concept, direction & choreography:
Jan Rozman
Izvajalci in soustvarjalci / Performers and co-creators:
Peter Frankl, Kaja Janjić, Julija Pečnikar, Daniel Petković
Dramaturgija / Dramaturgy:
Varja Hrvatin
Zvok in video / Sound and video:
Vid Merlak
Kostumografija / Costume design:
Tanja Pađan (Kiss The Future)
Oblikovanje svetlobe / Light design:
Urška Vohar
Scenografsko svetovanje / Set design adviser:
Dan Pikalo
Grafično oblikovanje / Graphic design:
Matija Medved
Video dokumentacija / Video documentation:
Hana Vodeb
Foto dokumentacija / Photo documentation:
Nada Žgank
Izvršna produkcija / Executive production:
Sabina Potočki

Produkcija / Producer:
Emanat
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Jan Rozman: MEMEMEME

Jan Rozman (1991) deluje kot performer, koreograf, plesalec in improvizator v Ljubljani in Berlinu. V svoji umetniški praksi se ukvarja z razširjenim pojmom telesnosti, materialno semiotiko, teksturami, vrzelmi, napakami in zmedo, ekologijo, domišljijo, (znanstveno) fantastiko in humorjem. Svoje delo usmerja v raziskavo in artikulacijo relevantnih uprizoritvenih izrazov za post-internetno/antropoceno obdobje. Šolal se je na oddelku za sodobni ples umetniške gimnazije v Ljubljani, študiral koreografijo na amsterdamski School for New Dance Development (AhK) in opravil magisterij na programu solo/ples/avtorstvo v okviru Inter-University Centre for Dance (UdK) v Berlinu. Končal je tudi dodiplomski študij fizioterapije na Zdravstveni fakulteti v Ljubljani (UL). Leta 2019 je prejel Nagrado Ksenije Hribar v kategoriji »perspektivni koreograf«, ki jo podeljuje Društvo za sodobni ples Slovenije. Istega leta je prejel tudi štipendijo danceWEB na festivalu ImpulsTanz na Dunaju.
www.janrozman.net

Peter Frankl (1991) je performer in glasbenik iz Ljubljane, ki je najbolj aktiven na področju improvizacije, tako teatralne kot gibalne. Trenutno opravlja študij anglistike in se preživlja kot igralec in pedagog. Je eden izmed ustanoviteljev Improvizacijskega gledališča Ljubljana - IGLU, del mednarodne mreže improvizatorjev Ohana, participativno gledališkega dueta Human Calculator, intermedijskega impro projekta Laser Beasts, ulično-performativne skupine Trio Šardone, kolektiva Smrt Boga in Otrok, ter deluje kot umetniški vodja Improvizije. Svoj gledališki prvenec je režiral v Španskih borcih s predstavo Stoli in sodeloval kot plesalec pri projektih v okviru Gledališča Glej, AGRFT-ja in Anton Bruckner univerze v Linzu.

Kaja Janjić (1984) je zaključila študij na salzburški eksperimentalni akademiji za ples - SEAD, kjer je je leta 2006 diplomirala iz sodobnega plesa, baleta in koreografije. Njeno delo se razteza od plesa do gledališča, kabareta ter otroških predstav, v zadnjih petih letih pa je aktivna tudi kot plesna pedagoginja. Kot plesalka je sodelovala je s koreografi Rosano Hribar in Gregorjem Luštkom, Matjažem Faričem in kot gostja z mednarodno skupino EnKnap. Bila je članica skupine Rdeči kabaret in igrala v kabaretski predstavi Maruše Oblak v produkciji SMG, sodelovala pa je tudi v večletnem projektu mednarodne mreže DCL - Dance Communication Lab (Dance Explorations Beyond Front@) pod koreografskim vodstvom Roberta Clarka. Leta 2013 je z Maticem Bobnarjem ustvarila svoj prvi avtorski projekt Pas De Tea, leta 2016 pa solistično predstavo Cianoza v sklopu festivalov Svetlobna gverila in Ukrep.

Julija Pečnikar (1995) je plesalka, ki je letos diplomirala na Akademiji za sodobni ples v Budimpešti. Svoje prve gibalne izkušnje je pridobila preko učenja judo tehnik in se kasneje srečala s sodobnim plesom na SVŠGL, umetniški gimnaziji v Ljubljani. V času šolanja je sodelovala z domačimi in tujimi koreografi, kot so Vita Osojnik, Csaba Molnár, Marco Torrice, Adrienn Hód, Tamás Bakó, Viktor Szeri, Tijen Lawton. Zanima jo ustvarjalni gib v širšem pomenu, prisotnosti in odzivnosti telesa ter prepoznavanje in prevajanje gibalnih izrazov. Trenutno deluje v Ljubljani in Budimpešti.

Daniel Petković (1991) je plesalec, igralec in performer. V preteklih letih je sodeloval z različnimi kolektivi, koreografi in režiserji ter nastopil na mnogih domačih in tujih festivalih. Poleg sodobnega plesa se posveča performansu, neoburleski, gledališki igri, hibridnim oblikam uprizoritvenih umetnosti in moderiranju. Kot avtor se je leta 2015 predstavil s plesnim prvencem Terra umbilicus (Emanat). Od 2016 je član kolektiva tehnoburleske Tatovi podob (Emanat). V letu 2017 je v tandemu z Urbanom Belino premierno uprizoril performans Lažna dojka. Med drugim nastopa tudi v burleski Urške Vohar Matilda in njene žemljice iz cikla Tatovi podob predstavljajo, v performansu Sine Nataše Živković v produkciji Mesta žensk in otroški predstavi Škrat Kuzma dobi nagrado v Slovenskem mladinskem gledališču. Od leta 2015 je samozaposlen v kulturi.

Življenjepisi vseh sodelavcev predstave so dosegljivi na:
https://emanat.si/si/produkcija/jan-rozman--mememememe/

Jan Rozman (1991) is a freelance dancer, choreographer, improviser, performer, and performance maker, based in Ljubljana and Berlin. His artistic practice engages with extended embodiment, material semiotics, textures, gaps, errors and confusions, ecology, imagination, (science) fiction, and humour as he searches for relevant performative articulations of the post-internet/anthropocene era. He studied contemporary dance at Arts Secondary School in Ljubljana and choreography at School for New Dance Development (AhK) in Amsterdam. He received his Master’s degree in solo/dance/authorship from Inter-University Centre for Dance (UdK), Berlin. He also graduated in physiotherapy from the Faculty of Health Sciences (UL), Ljubljana. In 2019, he received the Ksenija Hribar Award, presented by the Contemporary Dance Association Slovenia, as the most ‘promising choreographer’ and was also the recipient of the DanceWeb scholarship at the ImpulseTanz Festival in Vienna.
www.janrozman.net

Peter Frankl (1991) is a performer and musician, based in Ljubljana. His primary artistic interest is theatre and movement improvisation. He is currently studying English and works as an actor and teacher. He is one of the founders of the Improvisation Theatre Ljubljana - IGLU and member of the international improvisers' network Ohana, participatory theatre duo Human Calculator, intermedia improv project Laser Beasts, street-performative group Trio Šardone, collective Smrt Boga in Otrok, and the artistic leader of Improvision. He made his directorial debut with the performance Chairs in Španski borci Culture Centre in Ljubljana. He performed in the projects by Glej Theatre and the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television in Ljubljana and Anton Bruckner University in Linz.

Kaja Janjić (1984) graduated in contemporary dance, ballet, and choreography from the Salzburg Experimental Academy of Dance in 2006. She has performed in dance, theatre, cabaret, and children's performances, and recently also started teaching. She collaborated with choreographers Rosana Hribar and Gregor Luštek, Matjaž Farič and was guest performer in the international dance group EnKnap. She was member of contemporary cabaret group Red Cabaret and performed in Maruša Oblak's performance produced by Slovenian Youth Theatre. From 2012 to 2014, she participated in the Dance Explorations Beyond Front@ project in the frame of the international network Dance Communications Lab. In 2013, she co-created together with Matic Bobnar her debut project Pas De Tea and in 2016, the solo piece Cyanosis in the frame of the Ljubljana-based Lighting Guerrilla Festival and Ukrep - Taking Measures Festival.

Dancer Julija Pečnikar (1995) graduated in 2019 from the Contemporary Dance Academy in Budapest. Her first experience with movement practices was through judo techniques. Later, she studied dance at the Arts Secondary School in Ljubljana and collaborated with choreographers such as Vita Osojnik, Csaba Molnár, Marco Torrice, Adrienn Hód, Tamás Bakó, Viktor Szeri, Tijen Lawton. She is interested in creative movement in the broadest sense, presences and reactions of the body, and recognising and translating movement expressions. She currently works in Ljubljana and Budapest.

Daniel Petković (1991) is a dancer, actor, and performer. He has performed at various festivals and collaborated with different collectives, directors, and choreographers. Primarily a contemporary dancer, he is interested in live art, neoburlesque, drama, hybrid forms of performance art, and moderating at events. In 2015, he created his dance début Terra Umbilicus (Emanat). He is a member of the technoburlesque Image Snatchers (Emanat) since 2016. In 2017, he co-created with Urban Belina the performance The Fake Bosom, a post-human show. He is performing in various performances, like the burlesque show Image Snatchers present: Matilda and Her Buns by Urška Vohar, performance Sonny (City of Women) by Nataša Živković and the children's performance Kuzma The Gremlin Gets An Award in Mladinsko Theatre. He has been working freelance since 2015.

CVs of all collaborators are available at:
https://emanat.si/en/production/jan-rozman--mememememe/

Varja Hrvatin
Internet je oder in ljudje zgolj memi

zajamem sapo
*jan: *začne kričat**
varja: ej ej ej, kaj pa je fora?
jan: sori, sam lihkar sm se zavedu, da je treba iz vsega tega materiala narest predstavo

Ko me je Jan povabil k sodelovanju pri predstavi, sem ob prebiranju koncepta za prijavo na razpis zajela sapo ob takratnem naslovu *gasps*. Ker je koncept tematsko in metodološko nekako orisoval aktualno temo in nek sodobni performativ, ki me je zanimal, sem se takoj zagrela za idejo. Potem sem si pa mislila, “kako d fak” lahko narediš predstavo o memih. Z živimi telesi. Z gibom. Onkraj neke bazične ilustracije formata in nizanja referenc ter asociacij. Kako lahko skozi problematizacijo memov sploh spregovoriš o neki relevantni temi, da ne izpade popolnoma banalno in “random”? Ta radikalno drzna ideja, za katero v tistem trenutku nisem razumela, v kaj se bo razvila, me je neizmerno vznemirjala in me pravzaprav navdihuje še ta trenutek, dva tedna pred premiero, ko tipkam pričujoči esej.

ko gledaš en Netflix dokumentarec in začneš preizpraševati vse

Nič. Nič ni. Niča ni. Ničesar ni bilo. In potem je bila beseda. In gesta. In meme. Vse se je začelo z izvorno idejo o obravnavanju fenomena internetnega meme na vsebinski ravni ter raziskovanja mimezisa, memetike, repeticije in kopiranja na ravni giba in forme. Po prvi fazi vaj, ki je potekala na rezidenci, se je ekipa vrnila z goro materiala, ki je na gibalni ravni zajemala vse od ritualizacije vsakdana, grajenja ritualov s pametnimi telefoni, nabora gibalnih memov ter kombinacij in zaporedij le-teh, vse do petnajstih strani kontekstualnih referenc, ki so zajemale viralne pesmi *and I will always love you, don’t go breaking my heart, can’t touch this, ai ai ai ai ai ai, Puerto Rico, do you believe in life after love, living in Americaaaaa,* videe, podobe, pojave, dogodke, osebnosti, citate, *Houston, we have a problem, May the Force be with you, They may take our lives, but they’ll never take our freedom, This is Sparta!.* Ta gora materiala, ki je v začetni fazi procesa vključevala tudi vseprisotno uporabo “face filtrov” prepoznavnih pop ikon, politikov, emoji-jev in karakterjev, se je izlila v konglomeratno gmoto vsega, kar nas je in kar nas vsak dan oblega. Kako zdaj iz vsega tega vznemirljivega, žmohtnega nabora izluščiti tisto, kar je najbolj prepoznavno, najbolj povedno ali če se izrazimo po memovsko – viralno? *In potem se je zgodil MEMEMEME.*

ko probaš zaspat, ampak začneš premlevati

Meme je ideja, je množitelj in razmnoževalec idej, je ponavljanje ideje, z variacijo in selekcijo. Po *Richardu Dawkinsu*, ki prvi definira meme, je meme razumljen skozi različna vedenja, ki se kljub svoji naključnosti ali nesmiselnosti neprestano pojavljajo v družbi. Vse, kar nas obkroža, kar sestavlja človeško življenje – jeziki, zgodbe, navade, znanja, vedenjski vzorci – tvori človeško kulturo in komunikacijo, ki jo meme kot replikator idej razmnožuje, mutira in nadgrajuje. *KEEP* S pojavom interneta se ti vzorci digitalizirajo v obliki »internetnega meme«. Ti generirajo in reproducirajo fragmente podob in vsebin, ki preko globalne viralnosti vzpostavljajo subverzivni trk med konteksti in pomeni. Ker obstoj mema sloni na hipnosti (torej minljivosti), je ta močno vezan na hranjenje s pozornostjo *CALM.* Odkar poznamo oglaševanje, vemo, da je ekonomija konzumacije vezana na trženje s človeško pozornostjo. Ker oglaševanje in meme v svojem bistvu oba ciljata na tem hitrejši in tem večji domet, *AND* pravzaprav delujeta po principu ustvarjanja distrakcij, ki lomijo in zamotijo rutino našega vsakdana. Teoretik *Yves Citton* se skozi raziskovanje ekologije pozornosti ter “ehologije” ukvarja z dekodiranjem mehanizmov širjenja fragmentov idej in podob. Ekologijo memov *MEME* je moč razumeti skozi princip širjenja in razmnoževanja, saj ti v srži delujejo kot virusi ali geni. Memi se tako kot geni z vsako kopijo spreminjajo, mutirajo in mestoma združujejo z drugimi memi. Najmočnejši memi se reproducirajo največkrat in lahko postanejo viralni. V času ekonomizacije pozornosti *ON,* torej pozornosti kot kapitala, *Citton* preizprašuje mehanizme distrakcij in človeške pozornosti ter s tem postavlja vprašanje njene kritične vrednosti. *Keep calm and meme on.*

ko so stvari dobre, ampak so predobre, zato se začneš spraševati, kdaj se ti bo zgodila naslednja tragedija

Proces predstave je predstavljal strnjeno, nasičeno pot nabiranja in sprobavanja materiala, iskanja uprizoritvenega jezika gest in predvsem oženja referenčnega polja znotraj teme, ki ji referenčni bazen predstavlja prostrano vesolje interneta.

Kako torej začeti? Metodološki pristop raziskovanja memetike, kopiranja in ponavljanja se je iz gibalno-plesne logike preselil v simultano konstrukcijo asociativnega univerzuma, ki ga poseljujejo performerji – akterji in nosilci digitalizirane komunikacije. Ko opazujem potek konstrukcije te predstave, govorim o konstrukciji, saj režija in koreografija v tem primeru zame ne zajameta kompleksnosti spletanja te fragmentarne strukture, ki hkrati prevaja internetno logiko v uprizoritveni kod ter simultano izumlja jezik, ki bi onkraj ilustracije vzpostavljal konstrukt ekvivalentnega odrskega sveta, se zavem, da pravzaprav gradimo odrski leksikon za razumevanje, kaj meme je, kako deluje in kaj pravzaprav njegovi viralnost, hipnost, informativnost in minljivost producirajo. Če torej govorimo o konstrukciji, potem glavno orodje postane partitura – dobesedno komponiranje predstave z vsemi elementi in nivoji izraznih medijev. V tem kontekstu dramaturgija prevzame mehanizem in logiko memov. Iz enostavnega giba, ki nekaj sporoča, nanj lepi plasti in medije, kjer sporočilnost z vsakim dodatnim nivojem pridobi na mutaciji, sprevračanju pomena, ustvarjanju pomenske vrzeli ali pa kontekstualne subverzivnosti. Kako govoriti jezik mema, ki biva znotraj interneta, se reproducira na socialnih omrežjih in se “uteleša” zgolj digitalno? Kako zgraditi most, ki bi skozi analogno logiko ter živostjo (odra in performerjev) – kot glavne komponente uprizoritvene umetnosti – uspel dekodirati mehanizem in namembnost mema kot digitalnega komunikacijskega formata ter nosilca idej?

ko vse kar gre lahko narobe, gre narobe, ampak si še vedno okej

Na neki točki si je bilo treba zastaviti vprašanje, zakaj sploh ta predstava in kaj z njo hočemo odpirati? Zdi se mi, kot da je sama predpostavka meme sveta, pop kulturnega ter instant aktualnopolitičnega ali raje družbenega, zahtevala »statement«, ki stoji za vsem skupaj. Kaj ta štiri telesa, ki tvorijo repetitivne, kopirane in mutirane gibe, sporočajo in v kakšnem svetu sploh lahko obstajajo? V našem. V svetu, ki čustva pretvarja v »emoji-je«, ki znanje in globalno stanje servira v obliki preobilice informacij, za katere ne vemo, od kod sploh prihajajo, kdo jih kontrolira in ali so sploh resnične. Živimo v družbi, ki je individualizirana, odtujena, pasivna in čedalje bolj narcisoidna. Zapletamo se v vrtinec identificiranja skozi socialna omrežja, skozi filtriranje življenj v lično uniformirano konvencionalnost in konformizem. Kaj nam preostane? Kdo sploh smo? Reprodukcija privlačnih in povednih podob v nas vzbuja varnost ter inkluzivnost. In kljub temu, da je kritična distanca nekaj, kar poskušamo ohranjati in skozi forumsko anonimnost komentarjev in objav prikazati, pa smo simultano pogoltnjeni v brezno fiktivne realnosti, ki je skrojena za nas, za konzumacijo, za pripadnost. Vse to nas preobraža v nosilce naučenih vzorcev, ki se v nas zaredijo, ne da bi mi to sploh opazili in bili sposobni kontrolirati. Kot kloni obče ideologije sveta se potapljamo v globalno eksistencialno krizo, kar prvi zadetek iskanja pod besedo meme na spletnem *urban dictionary* opiše kot »the cure for depression«.

ko se poskušaš izkazati v svoji karieri, vzdrževati socialno življenje, piti dovolj vode, telovaditi, vsem odgovoriti na sporočila, ostati pri zdravi pameti in biti srečen

Ko na vaji opazujem performerje, ugotavljam, da tukaj skorajda ne govorimo več o plesu in koreografiranem telesu, temveč reprogramiranju telesa, da razmišlja in deluje drugače – fragmentarno, digitalno, anorgansko, v podrejenosti gesti in svojemu pametnemu telefonu. Performerji niso ne liki ne bitja, skorajda tudi ne telesa; so nosilci idej, izvajalci kontekstov in izpolnjevalci pomenskih vrzeli. Hkrati se ob konstruiranju njihovega gibalnega jezika simultano plastijo tekstovna narativna plast, fragmentarna in referenčna glasbena podlaga ter vizualna spremljava, ki je operirana in vpeljana s strani performerjev. *In…* Ta celotna konstelacija *Ter…* pod vprašaj postavlja koncept *In* identitete. Kdo so zdaj ti *ter* performerji, *I* ki živijo v *Den* asociativnem *idem* brezizhodnem »loop-u«? *In, ter* In kdo smo mi, *I den* ljudje, ki *dem der* v prepričanju *In, ter, I, den,* svoje avtonomnosti *ti ti, net* od vzorcev *In, ti, ti, net, net* kopiranja *In, ti, ter, net,* reproduciranja *I, den, ti, tet* in ponavljanja *A!* izgubljamo vpogled v to *Aaa?* kar je naša identiteta *AAAAA* izluščena vseh kopiranih *AAAAAAAAAaaaAAAAAAaaaaaAAAaAAaaaaaaaaa* in naučenih vzorcev *AaAaAaAaAa AaAaaaaaaAaAAAAAaaaAaAaAaAAAAAAAAAaaaaaa*

aplavz

Varja Hrvatin
The Internet Is a Stage and the People Merely Memes

gasps
*jan: *starts screaming**
varja: whoa, what’s that all about?
jan: sorry, I just realised we need to make a performance out of all this material

When Jan invited me to work with him on this performance, I literally gasped for air when I saw its working title *gasps* in the application. The concept seemed topical both in terms of subject matter as well as methodology, while delineating a certain contemporary mode of performing I found quite interesting, so I quickly warmed up to the idea of collaboration. But soon I had to ask myself “how the hell” do you make a performance about memes. With living bodies. Using movement. Aiming beyond some basic illustration of the format or listing a string of references and associations. How to address a relevant theme through the problematisation of memes in a way that it doesn’t end up totally banal and random? This radically bold idea, which at the time had me wondering how it would develop, was a real thrill and, as it happens, still is a source of excitement, two weeks prior to the premiere as I am typing these words.

when you watch a Netflix documentary and start questioning everything

Nothing. Nothing is. Nothing is not. There was nothing. And then there was the word. And the gesture. And the meme. It all originally started with the idea to explore the phenomenon of the internet meme at the level of content and research mimesis, memetics, repetition and duplication at the level of movement and form. The team returned from the residency, where they had the first part of the creative process, with stacks of movement material that encompassed everything from everyday rituals, constructing rituals with smart phones, sets of movement memes and their combinations and sequences, to fifteen pages of contextualised references that included viral songs *and I will always love you, don’t go breaking my heart, can’t touch this, ai ai ai ai ai ai, Puerto Rico, do you believe in life after love, living in Americaaaaa,* videos, images, phenomena, events, personalities, citations, *Houston, we have a problem, May the Force be with you, They may take our lives, but they’ll never take our freedom, This is Sparta!.* These stacks of material, which in the beginning stages included also the ubiquitous use of “face filters” of recognisable pop icons, politicians, emojis and characters, poured out into a conglomerate of everything that surrounds us on a daily basis. How, then, to extract out of all this exciting, bursting scope of ideas that which is the most recognisable, the most meaningful and, if we put it in meme terms – the most viral? *And then the MEMEMEME happened.*

when you are trying to sleep but start overthinking

The meme is an idea, a multiplier and reproducer of ideas; it is repeating an idea through variation and selection. *Richard Dawkins*, the first to define the meme, understands memes as a sort of behaviour that continues to proliferate in a society despite its randomness or nonsense. All that surrounds us, all that makes up human life – languages, stories, habits, knowledges, behaviours, patterns – constitutes human culture and communication, which memes as ideas’ replicators multiply, mutate and upgrade. *KEEP* With the emergence of the internet, these patterns have been digitalised in the form of “internet memes”. They generate and reproduce fragments of images and contents, which by way of global virality constitute subversive clashes between contexts and meanings. Since the meme relies on instantaneity (that is ephemerality), it is strongly tied up to feeding on attention *CALM*. Ever since advertising has existed, we have known that the economy of consumption is inextricably linked to marketing with human attention. As the goal of both advertising and the meme is essentially to spread as quickly and as widely as possible, *AND* they actually function according to the principle of creating distractions that break with and distract us from our daily routines. By investigating the ecology of attention and the so called echology, theorist *Yves Citton* has been attempting to decode the mechanisms of how ideas and images spread. The ecology of memes *MEME* can be understood with the principles of dissemination and reproduction, given that they at their core function as viruses and genes. Like genes, memes evolve, mutate and associate with other memes. The strongest are reproduced the most and thus become viral. In the age of the economisation of attention *ON,* i.e. attention as capital, *Citton* examines the mechanisms of distraction and human attention, thus addressing the question of its critical value. *Keep calm and meme on.*

when things are good, but they are too good so you are wondering when you are going to have your next tragedy

The creation process was a condensed, saturated case of gathering and testing out the material, searching for a performative language of gestures and, especially, narrowing the field of reference within the topic that relied on the vast universe of the internet as its pool of reference. So, where to begin? The methodological approach of researching memetics, duplication and repetition shifted from the movement-dance logic to a simultaneous construction of an associative universe inhabited by the performers – agents and carriers of digitalised communication. Looking back at how the performance was created, it seems right to talk about its construction as, for me, direction and choreography in this case do not capture the complexity of the process of interlacing this fragmented structure, which at once translates the internet logic into a performative code as well as invents a language that could constitute a construct of an analogous stage world beyond illustration, I realise that what we are constructing is actually a stage lexicon for understanding what memes are, how they function and what exactly their virality, instantaneity, informative power and ephemerality produce. So, if we are dealing with construction, then the principal tool becomes the score – composing the performance literally, with all the elements and levels of expressive media. In this context, dramaturgy takes on the mechanism and logic of memes. It takes a simple movement that communicates something and pastes layers and media onto it; with each additional layer, its communicativeness accumulates another mutation, another subverted meaning, another semantic gap or contextual subversiveness. How to speak the language of memes which resides within the internet, is reproduced on social media and “embodied” only digitally? How to build a bridge which would, through analogous logic and liveness (of the stage and performers) – as the main component of performance art –, decode the mechanism and the purpose of the meme as a digital communication format and carrier of ideas?

when everything that could go wrong goes wrong, but you are still okay

At a certain point, we had to ask ourselves “why this performance” and what are we trying to open up with it. It seemed as if the very assumption of the world of meme, of pop culture and of the instant topical-political or, better, the social, demanded a “statement” that was behind all of this. What do these four bodies, producing repetitive, copied and mutated movement, communicate and in what kind of a world can they exist at all? In our world. In a world that translates emotion to “emojis”, serves knowledge and the global state of affairs in the form of a plethora of information we have no idea where they are coming from, who is controlling them and if they are real at all. We live in a society that is individualised, alienated, passive and increasingly narcissistic. We are getting entangled into a vortex of identifying with social networks, into filtering our lives to neatly uniform conventionality and conformism. What can we do? Who are we? Reproducibility of attractive and meaningful images gives us a sense of security and inclusion. And although critical distance is something we all try to have and maintain in the anonymity of commenting on the forums and posting endlessly, we are engulfed in an abyss of a fictitious reality tailored specifically for us, for consumption, for affiliation. All this is transforming us into carriers of learned patterns that infest us without us even noticing or being able to control it. Like clones of a universal ideology, we are plunging deeper and deeper into a global existential crisis, which is described by the first search result for the word meme on *urban dictionary* as “the cure for depression”.

trying to excel in my career, maintain a social life, drink enough water, exercise, text everyone back, stay sane, survive and be happy

As I watch the performers in rehearsal, I start to realise that we can no longer speak about dance and the choreographed body but about re-programming the body to think and act differently – in a fragmented, digital, inorganic way, subjected to gesture and one’s smart phone. The performers are neither characters nor beings, they are hardly even bodies; they are carriers of ideas, executors of contexts, fillers of semantic gaps. Simultaneous with the construction of their movement language, the performance layers the textual narrative layer, the fragmented and referential music soundtrack and the visual backdrop, introduced and worked visibly by the performers. *In …* This entire constellation *Ter …* calls into question the concept *In …* of identity. Who are these *ter* performers, *I* stranded in *Den* the associative *idem* “loop”? *In, ter* And who are we, *I den* people who *dem der* convinced about *In, ter, I, den,* our own autonomy *ti ti, net* of patterns *In, ti, ti, net, net* duplication *In, ti, ter, net,* reproduction *I, den, ti, tet* and repetition, *A!* are losing track of *Aaa?* what our identity *AAAAA* emptied of all copied *AAAAAAAAAaaaAAAAAAaaaaaAAAaAAaaaaaaaaa* and learned patterns *AaAaAaAaAa* is *AaAaaaaaaAaAAAAAaaaAaAaAaAAAAAAAAAAaaaaaa*

applause