

kein hexenwerk

JUNE 2022 - ACADEMIE VOOR THEATER EN DANS AMSTERDAM



un/ **folding**

(the) t i m e

kein hexenwerk

Kein Hexenwerk is a magazine for and from the Academie voor Theater en Dans. The editorial team grouped together in the beginning of 2021 - out of the isolation, striving towards a space of collective thinking. You are now holding the third issue in your hands!

Kein Hexenwerk is an attempt to archive, critique and make different working methods accessible. *Kein Hexenwerk* wants to offer multiple perspectives, take pleasure in contradictions, explore the broadest possible frames of the performative. Most of all, it offers a space: for questions, for research, for unfinished thoughts - a space for collective thinking and generous sharing.

Kein Hexenwerk encompasses interviews with professionals from the field, performance texts, poems, photos, and offers space for all sorts of contributions. For each issue, the editorial team chooses a different theme, followed by an open call. We are looking forward to getting in touch with you:
keinhexenwerk.atd@gmail.com.

We hope you enjoy this issue!

the editors

editorial letter

03 - un/folding (the) time

Dear readers,

What time is it when you open this magazine? How many times have you checked the time today? And how do you relate to what the clock tells you?

Allow yourself to take a moment to read, think, flip through this third issue of *kein hexenwerk*. This one is about time, following up on “Mapping the Space” as our last issue. We begin with the basics - the very conditions that enable art-making in the first place. TIME underpins SPACE - space passing through time, space being interwoven with different temporalities. We want to offer you both a space and a moment in time to think together about time passing, temporalities, timelessness and timefulness...

As you unfold the pages of this issue of *kein hexenwerk*, we invite you to think with us about time. Go ahead and dog-ear the pages, flip the magazine over its head and find ways of un/folding time with all of the wonderful contributors.

We position this magazine critically against the hegemonial idea of progress-oriented time, cleanly and blankly organized in past, present, future (in this order): instead, this issue is full of creased, wrinkled, torn, folded and bent ideas of time. As something that shifts and varies, time depends on who is keeping it and who is telling it. Whose stories are remembered and how, what futures are being speculated about or foreseen now, and how can rethinking or unlearning the understanding of time change our lives?

There is a certain irony to making a magazine with deadlines and time pressure about time. It points to the rigidity of a capitalist time measurement permeating our daily lives. In the spirit of un/folding time, this issue is appropriately late in the year. Especially in this period, with so much events happening, so much to see and to do, we felt it was important to take the time. We now warmly invite you to take the time to explore this issue of *kein hexenwerk*:

Un/folding (the) time.

Enjoy!

the editors

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IMPRESSUM

JUNI 2021

ACADEMIE VOOR THEATER EN DANS, AMSTERDAM

Note: KEIN HEXENWERK is trying its best to be a safe space and accessible to all students from the ATD. We are aware of the intricacies of creating safe(r) spaces within institutions. If you have any feedback on accessibility and safety, please feel free to reach out. We will take advice to heart.

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SPACE TIME MIND BENDS

Jeroen van Dongen is a professor of History of Science at the University of Amsterdam. He researches the life and work of Albert Einstein and his contemporaries, the history and philosophy of studies of space, time and gravity, and the relationship between history of science, philosophy of science and scientific practice. We had the pleasure of talking to him about time and the theory of relativity. The answers were mind-bending.

For the non-physicists amongst us: What is time?

In the theory of relativity, you don't speak of time and space, but of something called spacetime. Spacetime is basically a taking together of physical space and time. If we think of space, we think of three dimensions - the three directions of depth, width, height. Time then becomes the fourth dimension. There are a lot of questions of course that arise when you think philosophically of time as the fourth dimension. This book here, for example, it's a given: it is an object that exists in the world. What if I think of the universe of this fourdimensional thing, is time then also a thing? There is a width to this book, a depth, a height - there is also a time dimension. But that is then a philosophical question.

What exactly is the theory of relativity, that Einstein came up with?

When you talk of Einstein and time, there are two important distinctions to make. There are basically two versions of the theory of relativity: one version is called the special theory of relativity, one is called the general theory of relativity. And of course the special theory is a special case of the general, with the main distinction being that the special theory knows no gravitational force. It discusses the relations between objects

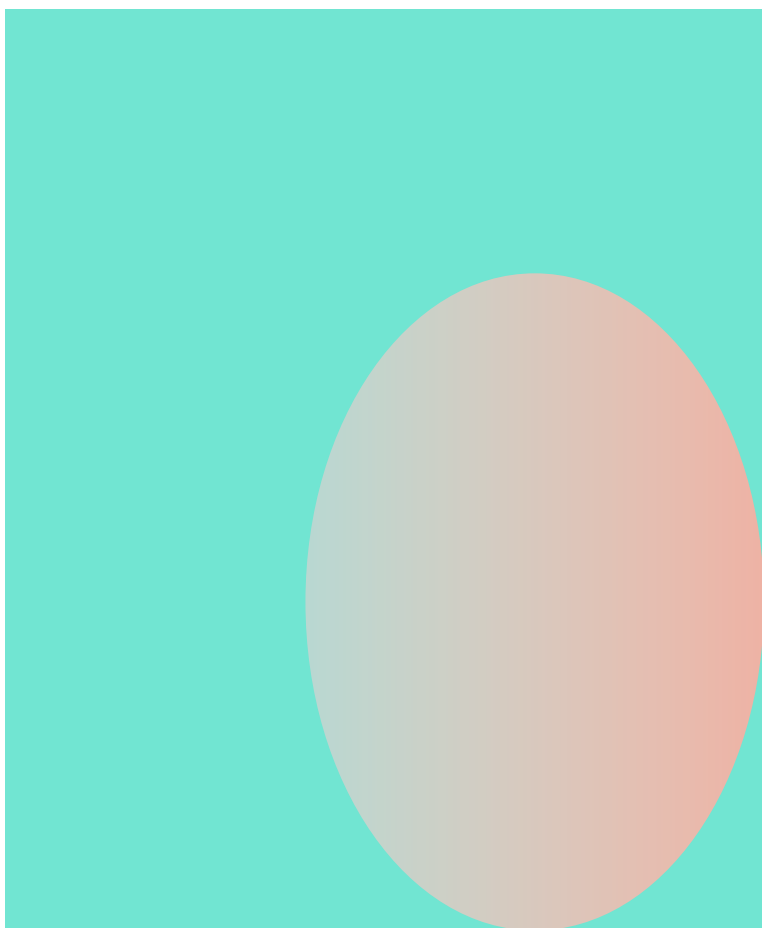
in the absence of the gravitational force. The only force that is then present is the electromagnetic force. In the case of the general theory, you include the gravitational force.

Now - the general theory of relativity is sort of the theory that describes the curved universe, black holes, that has the big bang as one of its solutions or predictions - but that is not the case in the special theory of relativity. The special theory of relativity is what Einstein came up with first. And in the special theory of relativity, you have these notions of time dilatation and twin paradoxes... these counterintuitive senses of time, and they become even weirder, if you go to the general theory.

That sounds pleasantly confusing! Let's go to human times for a moment. Could you lay out the conception of time historically and how it changed through Einsteins theories?

If you look at it historically, then the perception of time is part of Einsteins thinking. Prior to Einstein, there was this intuition that there was this universal clock, meaning that there was this universal passage of time. There was just one time parameter that moved forward anywhere in the universe. Isaac Newton, for instance, said that time is this universal thing that just keeps passing - leading to all kinds of philosophical justifications. Immanuel Kant used it in his motivation for the fact that we can have various kinds of knowledge. There was a sense of certain conceptions of the world that are given to us before observation. Kant called this our "ability to make synthetic judgements a priori". A priori meaning: prior to observation, synthetic meaning statements of the world that expand upon the terms that you use to make those statements. To use knowledge for further knowledge, basically.

But later on, there was a viennese physicist, philosopher, physiologist, who started criticizing that kind of notion: Ernst Mach. He was a proponent of a particular philosophical position that we now often refer to as Empiricism; meaning that you should, when "making" knowledge, restrict yourself to the sensory experiences. So that was one criticism of epistemology that existed in that point in time, in the 1890s. As Einstein appreciated and read Mach, this fed into his thinking.



The other development was the thinking of electrodynamics, particularly taking shape in the work of Hendrik Antoon Lorentz, a dutch physicist working in Leiden. And Lorentz had a particular version of the theory of electrodynamics, which tried to solve all kinds of apparent paradoxes/contradictions in the electrodynamics up until that point. Because there were some phenomena expected to be seen, but they were not seen. And one of these phenomena had to do with the change of the interference pattern of light. The idea at the time was that there was this fluid body that existed throughout the universe called “the ether”. We still use it in our way of talking: When we talk about the radio emmissions, we are listening to the ether - it is still part of our vocabulary. So there was the idea of the ether and of light being a wave in the ether. Therefore, if you had a machine looking at interference phenomena, the motion of the machine inside the ether would produce different interference patterns. But the problem was that this kind of deviation in the interference pattern was not seen. And that was just weird, because if light was this wave in this ether, you would expect this to happen. Lorentz thought that we should just account for this by simply changing

our formulas. But Lorentz thought those formulas just calculational tools, not actual time descriptions.

What Einstein initially did when he proposed the first version of theory of relativity was to re-interpret this whole description of electromagnetism by Lorentz by a re-interpreting the concepts of space and time that Lorentz was using.

So you would always need to refer to an observer that was describing the world that was at rest in respect to the ether. Einstein found that strange, because then we start to prefer one observer over the other. So he said - any description should be valid, if you move in respect to the ether or not. The relative motion of the (hypothetical) observer to the ether should not matter - that is why the theory is called the theory of relativity!

So that also meant that all these auxiliary time and space descriptions of Lorentz would then become real. No longer just mathematical descriptions, they were now what Einstein held as specific readings of clocks. Therefore, if one observer is moving in respect to another observer and looks at his clock, he is going to see a different time. And that lead to all kind of counterintuitive objections. A lot of people did not approve these theories in the beginning, but basically, they proved consistent. And then all pronouncements about the world from all of these relative observers were equally valid. The ether became obsolete. You could just use clocks and rulers to measure space, regardless of your state of motion.

So it also enables more observations, more perspectives?

Yes. If you will, democratizes whoever can make statements about what you observe. And the reason for this to be true is that you didn't see these certain phenomena - this idea that if you wouldn't move in respect to the ether, that your account would be valid.

And then if you move, you would see the consequences of your motion, you would observe light behaving differently. In order to account for this, Lorentz was introducing a mathematical trick by applying fake time and fake space parameters, and at the end the equations check out again - but would not not think further about these fake times and spaces coordinates.

And Einstein basically said: let's take those space-time coordinates at face value and let's treat them as physical spacetime coordinates. That meant we need to allow for different accounts of time - for a relative notion of simultaneity. Simultaneous for one observer is then not simultaneous for another observer.

What would Einstein in the general theory of relativity think of our title - un/folding time?

There is a certain jargon, that really fits your title: Spacetime Foliation. It means that you slice up the spacetime in slices of an equal amount of time - and if you then change the time parameterisation from one way of describing time to another - you change your foliation of spacetime. You fold spacetime differently. It is really mathematical jargon, but that would fit the title very well.

Another title that we discussed was “Bending time”. And as far as my knowledge of the theory of relativity goes, that is actually possible when extremely heavy objects curve the spacetime with their gravitational force. Could you explain that a bit?

The thing about the theory of relativity is that different conceptions of time are always relatively different conceptions of time. So there is this idea that you - yourself - can always choose locally the way to describe the world around you, using just regular time. However, if there is a complex, relative state of motion, the way that the other person would then describe time would become curved and complicated. So each observer can always describe their local neighbourhood in an unproblematic way. But the relative state of motion, with extreme velocities, that makes things more complicated...

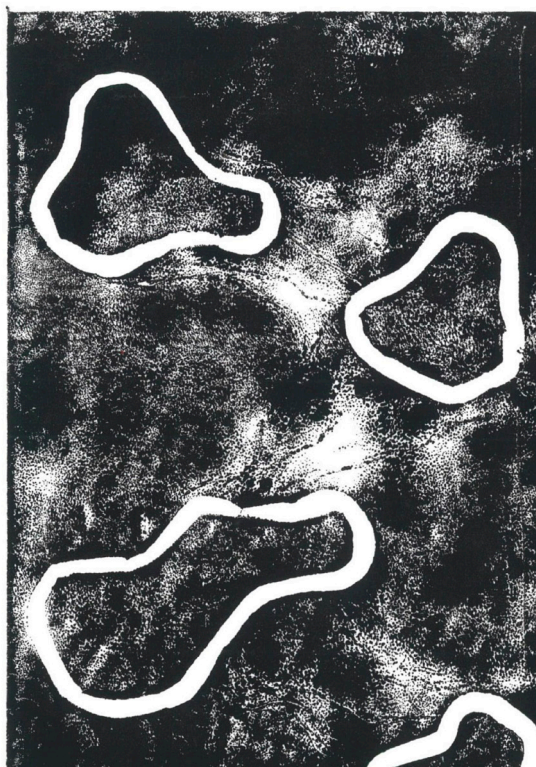
If you take, for instance, a black hole: for an observer that is far away from the black hole, it is a well in spacetime. But if you fall into a black hole, your own local universe can look just completely regular, and you can describe whatever happens just around you - using the normal space time coordinates.

early birds or: the cracks in the timeline

As we live in times of crisis(es), it is worthwhile - and necessary - to not only tackle the crisis, but the times as well. As the climate emergency steadily unfolds around us, ideas about time and temporalities are ubiquitous. There are terms sprouting like mushrooms after the rainfall to give a name to our time: Capitalocene, Anthropocene, Plantationocene and more recently Donna Haraway's Chthulucene.

The hegemonial progress-based narrative of linear time is degrading at all ends. The future we often imagine in popular culture swings back and forth between technosalvation and dystopias; the past seems dark and half-forgotten, and the present is an ongoing hand-over-hand progression from one crisis to another, often enough mere survival.

Our relation to time is severely disrupted: without a schedule, we are lost, without our watch, we will be late. Simultaneously, we destroy our planet at an incredible speed - that still seems to slow for most of us to notice. The question is: Is this all? What other temporalities exist? And how to better attune to a wild variety of times?



Imagine a felled tree: the linear trunk horizontally on the forest floor.

We can think of this tree as a resource, as something that took some decennia to be produced, is now dead, and can be fed into a chain of commodities, turned into capital.

Dead, linear things are easy to commodify - a dead, linear time is easy to slice up and sell as labour of all kinds.

But if we look at the felled tree closely, we see much more: At the end of the trunk, there are branches going into multiple directions, housing birds, maybe a dormouse. And just underneath the bark, bacteria and fungi have already begun to decompose the wood, along with beetles and other insects. To them, the felled tree is a feast, gnawing and dissolving their way through the tree, until there is no tree left. But by that time, seedlings will have settled into the rich and nutritious humus that all the creatures made of the tree. The future of another tree lives in the past of the felled trunk, and all the creatures that co-inhabit the tree, live in simultaneity with the present, the past and the future...

Looking closely to the interconnectedness of beings in nature snaps linear time in pieces like a dry twig. We need to redirect our look from the linearity of the trunk and look under the bark and in between the branches.

Thinking of nature, we often refer to huge timescales - sometimes incomprehensible to our minds, adjusted to hours, days, years. And sure: the life of a tree seems longer than we can imagine. But what about herbs? Dandelions bloom up to four times per year, and a common bindweed can grow a circle around another plant within only one hour. The heartbeat of mice is faster than techno music.

The question is rather: with this multitude of rhythms resonating in our world, how do we attune? And what happens when we don't/didn't/will not?

Time is quite literally out of joint, when birds breed unusually early, following the blossoming of their home trees, but the caterpillars - their main food source - have not been born in order to feed the hatchlings. Time is out of joint when materials, having been buried in the ground for eons, are burned in an instant. Time is out of joint when it does not get cold enough in the winter for hibernating creatures, and the dormouse wakes up months earlier, only to starve to death because no food has grown yet... There are many examples of rhythms beginning to disconnect. Temporalities slide out of alignment with each other. If we stick to only one sense of time, we have no chance to understand the crisis in emergence. Instead, we need to account for a lot of different times, rhythms, temporalities.

The ongoing mode of crisis that we call our present asks us - or demands - to radically change our ways of relating to time. And we need to do it now, or yesterday.

In collapsing linear time, more space for non-linear life is made.

To Donna Haraway's "It matters what thoughts think thoughts" (Staying with the trouble, Donna Haraway, 2016) I would like to add "It matters what times time times". Observing rhythms around us from a situated perspective, we can begin to align to the times that time other times: getting a sense of attunement to the many rhythms around us. By becoming more "timeful", we notice our entanglement in the webs of timelines and temporalities. Past, present and future coincide and collide

in a billion different ways. If we do not account for these ruptures, we risk not only our future - but our past, and the present of others as well.

Only through re-thinking time, we can address urgencies/crisis in the present, the future, and the past at the same time. As Kathryn Yussof brilliantly states, "the end of this world has already happened for some subjects, and it is the prerequisite for the possibility of imagining "living and breathing again" for others". (A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None, Kathryn Yussof, 2018). Attunement to the manifold of temporalities intersecting each other offers hope, too: in these newfound simultaneities, hope and despair, survival and crisis, suffering and healing can happen with each other. There are too many crises to tackle at the same time - but maybe different times and temporalities open up more spaces to do so. Robin Wall Kimmerer, botanist and enrolled member of the Potawatomi First Nation, points out: "If time is a line as western thinking presumes, we might think that this is a unique moment for which we have to devise a solution that enables that line to continue. If time is a circle, as the indigenous worldview presumes, the knowledge we need is already within the circle" (Ancient green: Audio essay for Emergence magazine podcast, Robin Wall Kimmerer, 2022). This is not to fall into a Hegelian trap, but rather: There is hope, despair and most of all **agency** hidden in the simultaneity of things.

Not every time can heal all wounds - but maybe, a lot of times can heal a lot of wounds.

We can begin decomposing linear time, bit by bit, bite by bite.

Toni Kritzer (they/them) is studying with an adjusted trajectory within the directing department at ATD. Their practice revolves around queer ecology and the notion of landscapes, making use of a variety of means ranging from performance to painting.

which football team won the basketball competition?

I started to think about time with this sentence, and it opened up my thoughts: what was first - the chicken or the egg? No answer. It made me think about future and past, or past and future in a non-linear way - as in first the past happened, and now I am going towards the future. But instead I started thinking about: what was there first? or, what if the past is changing in every second of the future?

HERE OR THERE = YES This questions puts me more into the present, into experiencing time itself. I am less concerned with what has happened before or what will happen after- because there is no way to know it. So I stay with the question - instead of trying to find a correct answer where there is none. Zooming into the question with another question. The question becomes a wheel, rolling on.

STOP. AND EVERYTHING IN IT.

Is it really possible to destroy time? What would that mean? I kept saying: to the world without time.
How can I create a world without time? Is it possible for time to not exist?

When we are reaching a point of no time, it brings me into a container. I was thinking of creating a container. The container might be isolated from the outside. I was thinking of ovaries and uterus and fat and warmth and fertility...

I was also collecting period blood for couple of months, to feel my container, my uterus, my blood, my fat, my bacteria - my fertile space that can sense and react to the cycles of nature. I am not measuring TIME, but my fertile container is. How can this incubator create time?

A LINE AND A BREATH AND A MOMENT A MOMENT A LINE
A LIFE AND EVERYTHING IN IT

I read a book called "In order of time", (Carlo Rovelli) and basically, the author says that time is slower to the ground than it is up high. Time passes faster in the mountains, and slower in the soil, down to the earth.

The audience did an exercise, blindfolded, where they were asked to draw a vertical straight line from top to bottom. On a paper, the size of a body. By this exercise, with the up-down motion, you put more attention more onto the ground, the feet, going downwards. You feel to start the weight and the heaviness and the small pain in your arm, I passed it on to the audience in holding the pencil. I did this exercise in the studio everytime, and then I passed it on to the audience in the performance. This exercise is putting me into the space, into the container. And I am not so concerned with what happens before, what happens after - it gives me a sense of ground, and of weight.

AN END A SEED A SEED AN END

If you have a container - like a body, with its inner space of blood, liquids, organs, bacteria, all kinds of tissues - a line becomes a tool from the outside to feel the inner container.

By dealing with the line, with my body in the space - I can sense my inner container more.

It is interesting to give such a small and easy task - on the first glance it seems very linear sharp, direct. But when you are entering into the practice, it starts to bend. There is never a straight line, it buckles,

It was also super interesting to see the different lines that different people were drawing. Other people drew a hundred lines really fast. Some people were so focused that

they didn't hear me telling them that they could stop now.

It is like a seismograph of the body. There was so much focus in that container.

INVITING TEMPORAL SENSITIVITY

I got another quote: Time is existence. To think about that while performing was such a relief: If the time is existence, basically you do not need to do anything - everything is already here, somehow. You simply need to exist to really feel the time. Your

existence gives you sensitivity.

It is a practical performing skill, too: How can I take time on stage? To really feel the heaviness of I WANT TO TAKE TIME. TO TAKE IT. I don't want to rule it, or have any agency over it, but TO FEEL IT. TO SENSE TIME.

How can I ALLOW (that is the important word) myself to not just fulfill the task and move on to the next, but to allow myself to take a moment before I start doing anything.

What is the feeling of the light on my skin?

How does my voice resonate to your ear?

GROWING BUILDING

I am angry at the world for being so ignorant to time and yet so attached to it. How to escape the watch on my wrist? I don't keep a schedule anymore - I don't write anything down. I practice the memory.

Exit the schedule, forget the structure: enter the container again. A small space of boredom

and laziness where I am not doing anything. This is where the ideas, and the mistakes can happen.

The space becomes fertile.

boredom, no new things can pop up.

Without the empty space, the laziness, the

Dora Brkarić (she/her) is a curious mover who is always seeking for binding of dance, noise, video, theatre and emotions. After dance graduation from Academy of theatre and dance in Zagreb she decided to explore Helsinki where she study for a while in TEAK. This text is based on a conversation about a performance Dora made in the last few months, titled „which football team won the basketball competition“, thinking with Bruno Listopad, Una Vrdoljak, Patrik Gregurec and Jama.

QUEER TIME(S)

An interview with Dr. Moira Pérez, whom we had the pleasure to talk to about the temporalities that arise from queer and anti-colonial perspectives, about temporal exiles - and about possible futures.

What does queer time mean to you? What histories arise from there?

The idea of “Queer time” calls attention to the time that flows in the margins and interstices of hegemonic time. Our culture has a particular form of organizing temporality, of rationalizing it, but time occurs and is experienced in many different ways, even within one same subject. Hegemonic time is attached to capitalist productivity, progress, individuality, rationality and quantification, a complete dissociation from what we call “nature”, and so on. Around and within these experiences of time, we find other forms: messy times, whose limits, speed, meanings and directions are unclear. Queer times are multiple and multidimensional, they overlap and contaminate each other.

When we begin to look beyond hegemonic time, we start to perceive a whole range of histories, histories of joy and resistance, and histories of oppression and violence. Histories of those who are constantly “left out” of mainstream progress, those who pay the price of it; tales of an exhausting, life-consuming waiting for access to a livable (and joyful) life. But we also find histories of celebration, of micro

communities built around care and understanding, of survival against all odds, of “wasting time” just being with each other. It must be said that “Queer” is of course a contemporary Western, particularly Anglo, notion, and this means that when we use this term to refer to other cultures and contexts we are imposing a nomenclature which may not make sense there (what in an Anglo context is “queer”, non-hegemonic or subversive time, for others may just be “time”).

What can an un/folding of time offer?

When you say “un/folding of time” I visualize time as a cloth, or various cloths, that are folded into themselves and each other in very specific ways. This allows for some bridges and connections at the points where various folds meet, but it hinders others and hides the richness that lies at the crevices. So un/folding time could mean opening those folds, beginning to perceive that which was hidden inside them, but also experimenting with new, alternative foldings where new connections, new bridges and temporalities can germinate...

How can we connect with others in the present, the past and the future? How can we bring in all those excluded from contemporaneity? How can we think of time and temporality beyond the human? We need to experiment with alternative figurations and experiences of time.

If you would imagine a texture, a visual to queer time - what do you see or feel? Or: if there was a clock or a calendar attuned to queer time - what would it show?

I don't think there can be a calendar or a clock attuned to queer time, precisely because queer time cannot be quantified into one single shape. Queer time would rather look like a beautiful mess!

How can temporalities/conceptualizations of time be weaponized against marginalized communities?

We tend to think of time and temporalization as something that “is just there”, independently of us and our contingency. But those apparently neutral forms of temporal figuration must be understood in the context of social relations and always-contested historical understandings. They are powerful instruments of social administration. Time is organized and represented in very specific ways: what we place in the past, the present and the future; when we make a certain time end and another begin; how we understand and distribute ruptures and continuities...These figurations are built in such a way that there is only place for certain subjects and forms of life, whereas others are exiled from contemporaneity. This exclusion can work for example by expelling certain subjects and collectives into the past (those considered “primitive”, “backwards”, examples of what Man -here purposefully gendered- was but no longer is). These subjects can at best aspire to occupy a slot in hegemonic temporality, provided they agree (and manage) to walk along the chrononormative trajectory set for us all, in which of course they will always be behind (that is for instance the price to be paid by those of us from the South, if we want to be seen in the North: we might be invited into the conversation, but will always be regarded as lagging behind, because the temporal parameters are rooted in coloniality and racism). It can also work by conceiving a future, and building it from the present, in which there is no place for such subjects. Here activism has a central role in critically revising what kinds of future it struggles for and who has a place in them.

As we are experiencing seemingly ongoing times of crisis, what perspectives can arise from a queer and postcolonial perspective?

The most important thing we can learn from these perspectives is precisely what it means to present problems in terms of “crisis”. We live in a political, economic, social order that has violence, exclusion and destruction at its very core: what we are witnessing is not an unintentional side effect, something that has just begun, or a mistaken detour which can be easily readjusted. Problems are labelled as “crisis” when they become visible and inconvenient for those at the centre of this hegemonic order, those who were not supposed to suffer its consequences. Queer and anti-colonial approaches can help us identify the connections and continuities between all those isolated moments and realms that we usually call “crises”, exposing their structural nature and the notions of the human that underlie their hierarchization. This means, among other things, adopting notions of temporality as continuous, instead of models that isolate “crisis” as exceptions unrelated to what happens in between them and/or what happens to other subjects. Which social groups are human enough for us to classify their extermination or suffering as a crisis? What structural changes are needed for such harm to finally come to an end for all, not only for hegemonic subjects?

But having a place in the future is not necessarily good, either: subjects can be relegated to the future, their time constantly postponed by a recurrent “not yet” and by patronizing invitations to calm their tone down and wait for their turn.

In the sense of queerness as the not-yet - how can this futurity form agency in the here and now?

I'd say there are two meanings to this idea of the “not yet”: a negative one and a positive one. The negative one, to which I referred just now, is what Dipesh Chakravarty has called the “waiting room of history”: the constant deferral of certain subjects and groups from the good life, which is supposed to be accessible to all but is in fact running on an extensive waiting list. On the positive side, we find the reassurance that something different (something better) is possible, and that we can build it together. In this second sense, the “not yet” is what propels us into critique and to action, what makes us historical agents of change. It reminds us to continue revising our own visions and interventions, identifying when we are complicit with exclusionary practices (including temporal figurations), and helping each other improve and flourish. It is important to recall that the “not yet” is not the “impossible” or the “never”: there is always some part of what we are looking for that already exists in the present. The “not yet” is at the same time something that is already happening (again an unexpected folding of time, in which future and present touch each other), and even something that has already happened: as Ayutla Mixe linguist Yasnaya Aguilar has said, the proof that another future is possible is in the past, because populations that weren't supposed to survive did make it, against all odds, and this means that what now seems tragically doomed to failure might just be possible. We need to learn to recognize the fragments of a different world where they appear around us, and cultivate them collectively.



Moira Pérez (she/her) is a researcher at the National Council for Scientific and Technical Research, Argentina, and currently a Fellow at the Forschungsinstitut für Philosophie in Hannover, Germany. Her work focuses on the interplay between violence and identity, and brings together contributions of queer theory, anti-colonial thought, and narrativist philosophies of history, among others.

gabriel de oliveira generates nondisciplinary sound and performance through dream-states, intuition, and living archives – spanning from guitar-oriented pop, through embodied practice, to organizing collective K_B_. Currently collaborating on audiovisual, choreographic and narrative-songwriting work with Ellington Mingus, Flávia Pinheiro, and Beatrice Sberna. Favorite practice: doing nothing.

“Don’t analyze it, just take it all in.”

Milford had won me over. Before I saw him touch the drums. Before even seeing or hearing him for longer than 3 minutes. A trailer of a documentary titled Full Mantis, 2018. The heart that beats like a metronome is arrhythmic, diseased. Why would you wanna play like that? Den-deng-a-deng. Den-deng-a-deng. Are you gonna let the big trucks run over you? Isn’t life also aliveness? Listen. The heart goes - BEBI. Everything else goes quiet, just a notch. Years pass by, seas and territories crossed - all kinds of shifts of scenario and heart. Suddenly, after all my failed institutional experiences, Milford Graves - the drummer, visual/sound/martial artist, teacher, part-time polymath grandfather, nurse, gardener - was my first mentor. Yet I only ever exchanged words with him via Zoom calls a couple times. Ironically enough, an Atlantic in between us.

Now, how could that be? How could I know and care this much for an elder, or any person, who I could only just imagine standing in front of me? From where did his voice reach and touch me? More so, who am I to voice his legacy when so many students and loved ones have done and do so with much more intimacy and time? I can’t say I have met Milford, or fully realized the person he was. Still, he is with me everywhere I go from now on.

Ever since I have moved here, I always arrive (mildly or terribly) late to whichever scheduled event the Netherlands has to offer me. I take that to be a virtue. From early on, daydream states have always been openly accessible for me to undergo, where I imagine an entire reality around me. Often enough they emerge as a narrative, and always as a space. My parents like telling and retelling the stories of how I preferred being left alone in my room when playing, no interruptions whatsoever, and maybe that was because I had not yet accommodated a space for them in my trance. You see, two or three plastic dinosaurs were already an ecosystem. Going into playing would mean revisiting, transplanting and rebuilding, ever new, a space left off the last afternoon. Paradoxically, the sweet clarity of the room where all those years moved slowly grew more and more immaterial, into a sense or sensibility itself. As I grew up, or pretended to do so, these daydreams would encompass the people around me and grow interconnected through all kinds of themes. It would happen anywhere, any time. Of course, my own little ritual to myself, but one of dialogue. Look. Even when touching into a memory, it feels like I imagine somebody - or something - conversing, responding and reflecting to and with me. Now, what does this have to do with the Netherlands?

It was in the Netherlands, and during isolation, that I first felt I lost grasp on memory over my identity, past, sense of self and of my own face. This also meant change. Brazil was far, in its own pandemonium. Brasilia even further. Our unfortunate circumstances also meant an abrupt ease and taste for international telecommunications. Seemingly out of nowhere,

the ICAPhiladelphia decided to organize a retrospective on Prof. Graves and promptly open up space for weekly online conversations with him. I signed up and brought a friend. It was also where that same close friend, by the name of Leo, once put his vivid mind and passionate Italian accent together to ask Prof a question about caos. And where he received a prompt response, starting with the beauty of cows, through an anatomically grounded sound mimesis, and finding an end in the true meaning of spirit: breath. The only way I can attempt to describe it is that our teacher underwent his own trance, a delirious joy and grace of serving a student with his beautiful, vibrant intonation: “look at these Large animals, man...”. An analogy between the garden, gardener and improvisation was shifted on its back, into a pure expression of the strength of life with contrasting multivocality. Multiple moments, places, characters, lives evoked within a few minutes’ worth of talking. “Fire with fire... chaos with chaos”, one could say. The disciple would be convinced of the same, and of his mentor’s small yet inspiring error, had he not encountered a large framed photograph of a foggy cow field while looking up unto the plastic roof of a public bathroom. I haven’t ever quite trusted coincidences, not a bit more after he ran into my house for a speechless show-and-tell.

What did Milford know?

Listen.

What I must admit I have omitted up until now is that this entire exchange took place on one of the nights where I for some reason didn’t manage to join our gathering of all kinds of heads. In fact, I hadn’t had any primary contact with that situation, aside from Leo’s plural narration. Until a night where, as a farewell to a traveling friend and remembrance of Milford’s passing in February 2021, he revealed to me an exact transcript of their conversation, minute by minute. It was when our friend playfully read Milford’s answer, almost matching in pitch, that I knew with a smile. New work ahead of me. Breathing life into an archive such as this one means blessing my memories. It means rejecting an idea of time that can only think and move forwards. A voice to the ineffable. A saddened part of me questions: how to narrate something I haven’t witnessed in person?

Another fuller one trusts the aliveness of life. An aliveness that can only be contained in imagination. But imagination is far too clever for that.

One who can’t grasp the intuition of fantasy, or the fantasy of intuition, is faded to disenchantment. Ever since I’ve moved here, I arrive late to whichever scheduled event the Netherlands has to offer me. I take that to be a responsibility.

ahh... hmmm...

notes on daydreams

Laziness and nothingness are two untranslatable ideas – across personalities, not to mention cultures. Regardless of that, if laziness is the unwillingness to work and produce... Then nothing is the product of a process. What do we do when we’re idle?

We invent nothings in little unconscious gestures.

What does time carry?

Time transports memory and imagination. Narrative, intuition, senses, sensibilities, embodiment, all kinds of content and context... Within each and every one of those, time finds a vessel again.

How fast does time pass? Does time move according to some absolute measure that we internalize as a biological clock or exteriorize as the one with pointers? Does it move according to our expectancies and schedule? I don’t have scientific answers, but I’ve learned how to count.

I know there’s something stuck in between my counting.

I’ve learned more of how long it takes for me to miss my parents or fall into a nap.

Time passes with energy, a task, tiredness, sleep, involvement, feeling.

Time passes with a sense of narrative.

What can’t be learned is how long a memory takes. Or how long an act of imagining lasts.

An amend.
What does time carry?
Time carries timelessness.

The first time I consciously decided to give a voice to a memory, it was because of a story. Text, followed by sound, then a vibration – touch. Landscapes of all volumes flash by.

To perform for me...
Well, form is a container for the subjective moment.

Radical imagination is to know a time beyond what any material circumstance can dictate and pin down.

A second, acknowledge the incredible of what our grandparents materialized.
Our grandparents did make mistakes, which we now extend in any direction.
Deep respect towards failure and all the knowledge within luck and error.
What Bispo rhymed: it's not that we're wrong – we haven't yet been colonized.

Acknowledging a subjective way of listening and interacting, softening.
Delirious joy, childlike servitude, no ownership.
May we always laugh after a mistake.

Epistemological violence comes with hegemony over property.
Epistemological violence is property over truth and reason.

A eulogy is a scale of whatever is beyond the individual self.
A eulogy truthful to itself gives continuity to ancestral joys.

No more artist other than an art.

The dream, as any good trance, is as an animating kinesis. Life drive is the essence of doing nothing – “not doing”.
Explanations of the ineffable are the most shared of our subjectivities.

Research precedes itself.
Listening, dialoguing, miming, repeating while de-mechanizing, talking “alone”.

Telling a story to a listener, only with the voice, no words. Receiving a narration back.

An objective in morphing. Transducing collective memory into shared space, in the creation of metaphors that might answer a single question multi-vocally.

A vague score for affects. Time-induced transformation through a motion of proximity: (image/immobile –) sculpture – vibrating space, text, sound – into resonant bodies – meaning

If music is sound over time and sound-installations are supposedly sound over space, in what space does music happen?

That space, transplanted when I sit in a sweet clarity again.
Nurturing a miniature ecology of affects in memory and imagination.
Through and through a shared ground.
Only in admiration for my elders and all those who precede me, and the sonic and cultural ecologies they've created to describe themselves and the ones around them.
No lifeless surroundings.

And finally, when I refer to timelessness, I don't necessarily mean longevity.
Although I grant it lasts.

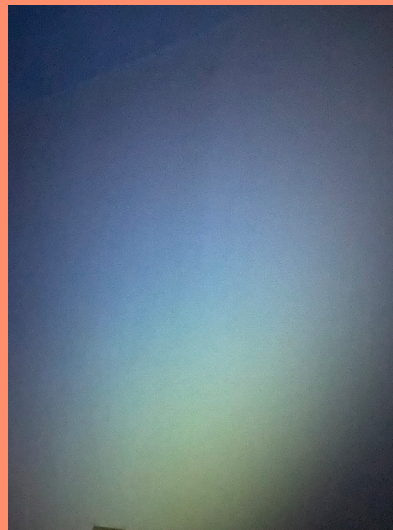
Can we encounter an idea in the obsolete?
Can we encounter an idea in the unused?
These are all performative resources. Distribute them.
Embody a transformative touch. A transformative sound.

This piece is a sibling to the performance-in-progress ‘you just go ahh... hmmm...’ and its sound documentation, available at 3tigrestrikes.bandcamp.com. Rejoice!

homebase at kb.hotglue.me

MY BLACK FUTURE

**“My time
I think that it’s my time
Feeling the glory of my
prime
Feeling the power
I’m the man of the hour
Turns a stone into a flower”**

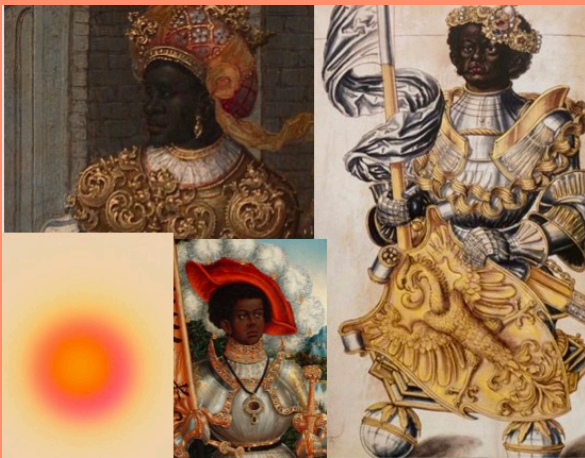
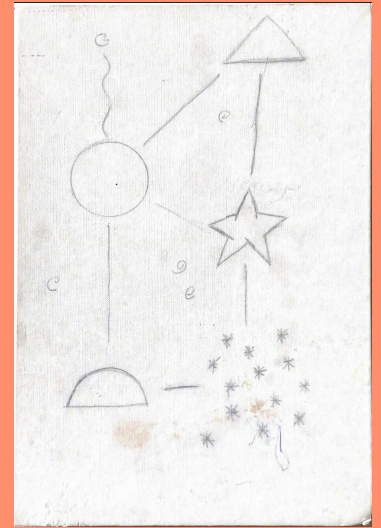
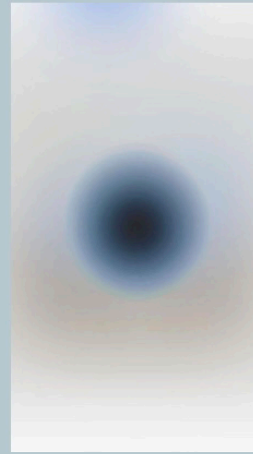


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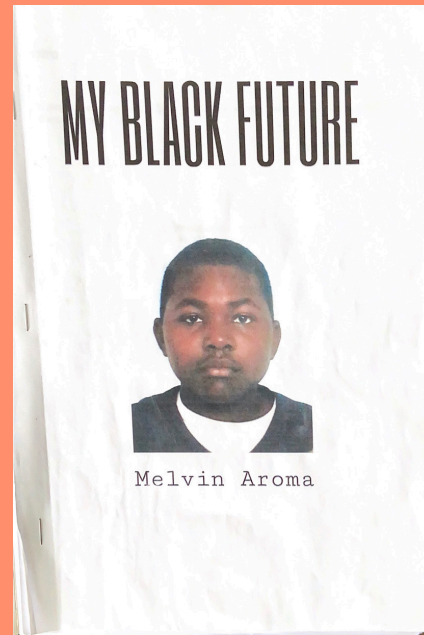
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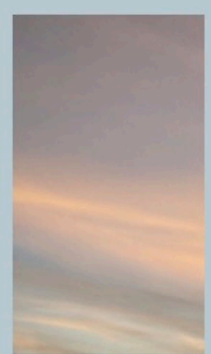
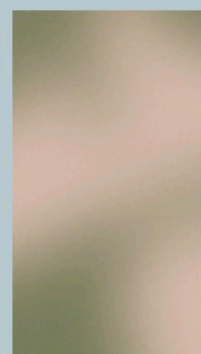
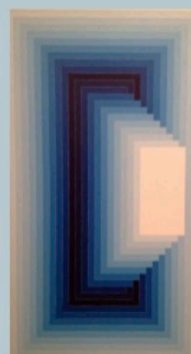
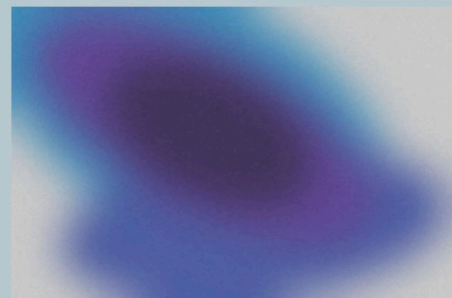




My Black Future is about hope. Turning nothing into something and being able to make it work, even in hard times. I've noticed that the public expected black pain from my solo performance, which says a lot about the expectations of Black art today. We tend to ignore the beauty behind courage and I would love to showcase that.



Melvin Aroma is a student of the Drama & Contemporary Music theater at ATD. His last project for his third year is a solo performance named "My Black Future". Here is his visual experience.



SPACE TIME WORMS

The duration of the performance is five minutes. Or depends on how fast you read. What will happen to you during that time? How will you change? What will you become? You will lose a hair or two, the rest will grow a bit longer. And maybe an idea will grow too, or a belief will be unplugged. Will you come through the same after your read? Will I have ceased to be before I finish writing this? Does change mean the death of what came before? And if so, can anything really change or does everything come to pass to let new things come to be? We are extended through space, three dimensions of ourselves taking up a volume in this universe. Are we, in the same sense, extended through time?

You have been, you are and you (hopefully) will be for another while. But this thing you call yourself has been different than it is now and will (hopefully) be different than you are now. You do not have the same properties as 10-year-old-you or (hopefully) 90-year-old-you. I am not even talking about mental properties, your thoughts, beliefs and such, in which sense we often say “we are different people throughout our lives”. We take it way too metaphorically. Yet, even physically so many properties are lost or gained. You grew up and you will (hopefully) grow old, every minute parts of yourself are manufactured others disregarded. Is it then so that “10-years-old-you” is someone else than “26-years-old-you”? Should you consider your future selves as strangers?

I sometimes imagine myself in a line, like in a supermarket with my past selves in front of me and my future selves behind. All of us existing in the present, one after the other, like people going through the check out, one at the time. These stages of myself look at each other, recognize parts of themselves in each other but cannot find one thing they all have in common. Are those temporal parts of me to be considered as different, separate, entities? I believe not.

First off, because there is no change if an object does not have different properties at different times while still remaining itself. Let us consider the life of a banana. A banana that had the property of being green at time X and the property of being yellow at time Y is still said to be the same banana. The green banana did not cease to be only to be replaced by the yellow banana. Rather, I propose that the banana has a green temporal part at X and a yellow one at Y. It is because we are objects which survive change that we are said to persist through time. But how can we understand our relationship with our past and future parts?

I would like for us to consider our extension through time as similar to our extension through space. Like your arm is you and part of you, so your 5-year-old self is you and part of you; one of the many temporal parts of yourself. Yourself, considered in this way, is a four-dimensionally extended entity contained inside the universe. Like a worm in a block of cheese.

Looking at it like that, “You” refers to an object, an entity which is larger than the current temporal part we are experiencing in the present. Second after second a different part emerges from the future, takes foot into the present and then disappears into the past with so many other temporal parts. While you were reading this piece countless parts of yourselves came and went. While I was writing this, wondering how to somehow connect this way of thinking with my current theatrical practice, many of my own temporal parts came to be and disappeared. All of them a bit disappointed because they failed. I also pictured the temporal parts of me who learned to write philosophy articles. They didn’t think we would be temporally extended this way. I think they hoped for different kinds of future selves.

Well, you don’t choose the size of your feet or the shape of your temporal counterparts.

Caro (she/her) comes from Switzerland where she developed an affinity with metaphysics, metaethics and literature. She is now studying theatre directing at ATD where she is learning to lean on her intuition and emotional drive. It is messing her purely analytical practice a bit up (in a good way).

kein hexenwerk

JUNE 2022 - ACADEMIE VOOR THEATER EN DANS AMSTERDAM



un/ **folding**

(the) t i m e