

steirischer herbst 2014

“I prefer not to ... share!”

“I prefer not to ... share!” When steirischer herbst borrows from Herman Melville’s dissident *Bartleby* for its leitmotif in 2014, it is because we are torn – between the knowledge that we need to share more and, at the same time, need to give up more if we want to stop the richest and poorest of the planet from drifting even further apart. We know that we need to change our ways, very specifically in our private lives as well as the subject of our habits as consumers, the way we conceive our children’s training and careers to an ethical reality check. And we need to ask ourselves to what extent we are prepared to accept the consequences of our political convictions, even in our everyday lives. Sharing can also become a compulsion. It is the new buzzword in the age of social media. Not sharing is no longer an option in today’s digital world. “Like”? Where do I go today if I do not want to share, if I do not want to communicate or network, if I want to get out of the vast group of supposed friends and communities? These considerations run like a red thread through the 2014 steirischer herbst festival, now clearly visible, now more subtle or surprising.

Opening day is already about testing communities: the legendary **Needcompany** headed by **Jan Lauwers** and **Grace Ellen Barkey** are putting together a night of performance – a festival opening without a safety net, a singular event that blurs the boundaries between art and entertainment – “All Tomorrow’s Parties I+II”. As well as at the **festival centre**, that opens the following day, this year at Palais Wildenstein in Paulustorgasse. A place to be shared by everyone – artists, the public and the festival makers. It’s being designed by the Graz-based architects **Supersterz + .tmp architekten**. Their main interest will be the backyard. A “Fortress of Backyards”, which will be a playground for personal activities and rituals, for new and unusual neighbourhoods, an arena for craftspeople, botchers and bricoleurs. The 2014 **herbst exhibition** is also taking place at the festival centre: “Forms of Distancing. Representative politics and politics of representation”, curated by **Luigi Fassi** and **Stefano Collicelli Cagol**, focuses on a special aspect of the leitmotif – distancing oneself, refraining from immediately taking a stance on everything and thus making more space for independent thought. Opposite, in Antoniuskirche, **Dennis Feser’s** film installation “Rahnnacht” kicks off and will also be accompanying this year’s festival on its various journeys outside of Graz.

This time around, the rich and varied steirischer herbst programme is pulsating not only in Graz. If we were to sum up this year’s festival, the phrase would inevitably be “new departures”. We are setting out – in more ways than one – increasingly testing the limits, with the steirischer herbst festival also radiating out into Styria every weekend. It kicks off with a number of commissioned visual artworks – with Heidrun Holzfeind in Laafeld and Tobias Putrih in Bad Radkersburg, along with an exhibition at Meierhof zu Kornberg. On the second weekend, the artist collective **machina eX** takes a tour of Wildon, a Wildon hitherto unknown: to places behind the façades of this little market town, places that have fallen out of space and time – a trip between reality, science fiction, mystery and audio drama. With the aid of his self-made theatre machine, in which he acts as director, performer and stage engineer in one, **Benjamin Verdonck** builds a bridge from here to Graz, where his stage version is set to go on show in coffee-house-table format. On the third weekend, Stainz takes centre stage, with the composer **Georg Nussbaumer** undertaking a very special experiment:

steirischer
HERBST

he combines traditional folk and choir song with his composition to create "Ein Weststeirischer Wasserfall", sending seven choirs and us, the audience, on a journey celebrating water, that precious common property, in songs, with everything finally flowing together in a large stream in the church at Stainz. The last weekend presents "A Párt – Die Partei – The Party" by **Árpád Schilling** in Bad Gleichenberg, the final highlight. Schilling is one of the most innovative and important Hungarian theatre-makers and founder of one of the best known independent theatre groups **Krétakör**, who is able to fund his critical works on the political situation of Hungary only with the aid of international partners such as steirischer herbst. The Romanian group **Aparatus 22** are drawing up a map of the town's inhabitants and visitors at the music pavilion in Bad Gleichenberg. Pianist **Marino Formenti** will be accompanying the festival traveling to all of its venues. In his project "One to One", which takes place in private settings, he strives, hour by hour, to engage in a musical dialogue with one visitor in each case, creating a new space of experience beyond the usual concert conventions.

Of course, the steirischer herbst programme in Graz itself will be as tightly packed and many-voiced as usual, with numerous commissioned works and premières of performance. Two works of performance are docking on to the visual art interface on the opening weekend: Cypriot artist **Maria Hassabi** is presenting her choreographic body sculpture "Premiere" and New York artist **Rashaad Newsome** is staging "Shade Graz 2014" – with a local crowd from all sections of society. By now the most well-known New York Off-Off-Off Broadway company in Europe, the **Nature Theater of Oklahoma** returns to Graz on the second weekend of the festival. They're bringing along their large-scale "Life & Times" project – with episodes 4.5 & 5, and number 6 premiering at steirischer herbst. Parallel to this, they will be creating episodes 9 and 10 – a music video with local performers – in a herbst Academy workshop. Other premières include one by **Die Transmissionare**, a formation headed by Styrian author Natascha Gangl (in cooperation with UniT) and one by Austrian choreographer **Christine Gaigg**. Also on show is "Gorkij Park 2" by Swedish performance and film artist **Gunilla Heilborn**.

The festival exhibitions are spread out around the whole city and beyond – with the steirischer herbst partner institutions linking up with the subject of sharing and not sharing in a wide range of different forms: territorial occupation of land and postcolonial power relations that are based on exploitation and do not allow the population any share of the wealth is the topic examined by **< rotor >**, for example, or non-semantic language and linguistic refusal at **Kulturzentrum bei den Minoriten**: "Dort wo unsere Sprache endet, gehe ich jeden Tag vorbei". Visitors can experience what it's like to live in Paris's "Tour Bois le Prêtre", an outstanding example of rehabilitating mass housing from the sixties and seventies by Druot, Lacaton & Vassal, at **Haus der Architektur**, accompanied by Simon Allemeersch's lecture performance "Rabot 4-358". The exhibition "The Militant Image" at **Camera Austria** ventures into various networks and forms of militancy, **esc medien kunst labor** is transformed by feminist hackers into a server with a new operating system, and **Grazer Kunstverein** takes a look at accepted forms of covering up in the process of communicative sharing based on the works of American artist Ronald Jones and Italian photographer Elio Montanari. In "ordinary freaks", Christian Egger and Schorsch Kamerun examine the principle of coolness in pop culture, theatre and museum at **Künstlerhaus, Halle für Kunst und Medien**. "Parallel Borders 1" is a cross-genre nomadic project by Maltese artist Mark Mangion that goes on show at **Forum Stadtpark** and in public space in Graz. Also showing at Forum Stadtpark is the audio-space-installation "Kleiner Pelz

steirischer
HERBST

StrichCode Suada" by Helmut Schranz, winner of the **lime_lab – laboratory for interdisciplinary radio drama** competition initiated by Akademie Graz, Forum Stadtpark, Literaturhaus Graz, ORF Steiermark and steirischer herbst.

In the south of the city, at a former lemonade bottling plant, the **Schaumbad – freies Atelierhaus Graz** with its more than forty members have set up camp to spotlight and explore the area in a project entitled "Am Südrand. Co-Industrielle Lebenswelten". There are also a number of new partners in the field of visual arts outside Graz: **Schauplatz Kornberg** at Meierhof zu Kornberg, where "Zum Verzehr" focuses on food, means of art and culture techniques, or **Zollamt** – formerly an Austrian-Slovenian frontier post in Bad Radkersburg, today a venue of art – where Slovene artist Tobias Putrih is relocating the prehistoric cave Potočka Zijalka from the Karawanks in "Routine Inspection". At **Pavelhaus / Pavlova hiša** Austrian artist Heidrun Holzfeind takes us to "Never Neverland" – exploring individual life-histories and political realities of the Austrian-Slovenian border region around Bad Radkersburg.

An illustrious group pay their respects to Herbert Marcuse on the third weekend of the festival: author **Thomas Ebermann**, **Andreas Spechtl**, head of the band Ja, Panik, actor **Robert Stadlober**, and **Kristof Schreuf**, former frontman of Kolossale Jugend, present an evening of concert theatre – "Der eindimensionale Mensch wird 50". The duo **Lundahl & Seidl** whisk us away to a world full of images and sounds in "An Elegy to the Medium of Film" while the author and director **Young Jean Lee** subjects an age-old male self-image to scrutiny in "Straight White Men". **Barokthegreat**, one of the most fascinating groups of a young Italian dance and performance scene, celebrate the magical moment before you cross the threshold to success in "Victory Smoke", based on the repetitive chords of an electric guitar.

When it comes to music, two series of concerts – **Neue Heimat** and **Altes Revier** – run through the festival with live acts by Mark Ernestus and Jeri-Jeri from Senegal, the American-German-French Fenster quartet, Selvhenter from Denmark, and Jacco Gardner from the Netherlands et.al.

musikprotokoll opens its doors for the forty-seventh time despite severe budget cuts by ORF. Artists, musicians, composers and experimenters from across the globe are coming to Graz to share the current results of their work: "...feeding the future" with Klangforum Wien, Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, Arditti Quartet, Radian & The Necks, Andrey Kiritchenko, Klaus Lang and many more. This year's **herbst conference** re-examines the festival's leitmotif in depth the same weekend: "Academy of Asociality. Today everything is about sharing. I don't like."

Trash and profundity, naked flesh and gender awareness **Ann Liv Young's** works deconstruct pop culture stereotypes or, for example, interpret fairy tales in very unusual ways, as we saw at last year's festival. "Elektra" is her take on Sophocles's classical tragedy, a première and a sequel to our close cooperation with the American performer. Greek mythology is also the starting point for **andcompany&Co.'s** piece "Orpheus in der Oberwelt. Eine Schlepperoper" about that border river in Eastern Europe, known in Greek as Evros and in Turkish as Meric. In recent times, countless dead bodies have been washed up on its banks and are buried in a "cemetery of illegal immigrants" – with metre-high fences and minefields sealing off this outer border of Europe.

steirischer
HERBST

"You're not the same, Batman!" **Jörg Albrecht** and **Gerhild Steinbuch** claim, retelling the legend of this superhero as the next instalment of their series of performative readings that kicked off with "Friendship is" at the 2012 steirischer herbst. The topics treated by French choreographer and dancer **Boris Charmatz** are existential ones. In his latest piece, "manger", a coproduction with Ruhtriennale, he examines our ambivalent relationship with "food". Charmatz observes the intake of food in terms of its imagery, joining forces with fourteen dancers in his piece to explore how we manage to swallow and digest bitter reality day in and day out. On 19 October, the very last day of the festival, **Marino Formenti** serves "One for the road" for brunch in Bad Gleichenberg and, finally, we will all come together to cry when **Moonface**, alias Spencer Krug – cofounder of the successful indie rock band Wolf Parade, sees the evening off with a melodramatic love story put to music for voice and piano at Graz's Antoniuskirche. Let's share that!

Information and tickets:

t +43 316 816070, info@steirischerherbst.at, www.steirischerherbst.at

Festival Centre / Paulustorgasse 8 / 8010 Graz

steirischer herbst press office

Heide Oberegger and Anna Narodoslawsy

Sackstraße 17 / 8010 Graz / Austria

t +43 316 823 007 61, presse@steirischerherbst.at

steirischer
HERBST

info@steirischerherbst.at / www.steirischerherbst.at