



On the occasion of the artist's solo exhibition "We Lived So Well Together" at the Kunsthalle Mainz, this three-day workshop with Walid Raad aims at initiating a dialogue between art and academia on the re/production, the witnessing and the performance of knowledge. Walid Raad is an artist, a historian, a storyteller, a founder of imaginary foundations and a performer. In his artistic work, objectivity and fiction present as two sides of the same coin. He confronts the recent history of Lebanon, the country in which he was born, and plays with contradictory political imaginaries of the so-called "Middle East". By producing performative installations, lecture performances, photographs, and documents, he exhibits the practice of thinking in multiple possibilities and celebrates the simultaneous co-existence of different perspectives instead of presenting events as linear narratives or the results of clear chains of causation (Leon Gabriel).

Taking Raad's interest in the lecture performances as a starting point, the workshop will examine the performative dimensions of knowledge production and hopes to illuminate some of the ways knowledge is witnessed and observed in performance. Lecture performances have gained international popularity in the visual and performing arts in recent years. As flexible performance formats they can easily be realised and toured. They are mostly solo performances and hardly require any props: they usually feature only a speaker, a lectern or desk, a screen, and a projector. However, defining what makes a



performance a lecture performance is more difficult than it first seems to be. The term refers to performances that critically reflect how lectures are staged and performed (Lucia Rainer). Thus, the lecture performance is a form of art and of rhetoric at the same time and it connects the process of art-making and analytical-discursive reflection in the lecture hall. It pays attention to the performative dimensions of knowledge production and transmission, and the social and political position of the lecturer. As such, the lecture performance is a hybrid form of knowledge production and presentation.

Based on Walid Raad's work and his central working practice, we want to discuss three themes, the re/production, the witnessing, and the performance of knowledge:

# IMAGINED KNOWLEDGE – TESTIFYING TO KNOWLEDGE

In this context, 'testifying to knowledge' means the presentation of a research/event/thesis in front of witnesses. Only by their presence and an artistic and/ or institutional framing does the moment of testifying and the generation of evidence occur (Sibylle Peters & Martin Jörg Schäfer). What forms of witnessing, what (counter-) strategies can be observed by the spectators? What are the possibilities garnered by the presence and complicity of the participants (Donna Haraway)?



# IMAGINE THE SITUATION – WITNESSING KNOWLEDGE

Traditionally knowledge is generated through scientific methods (such as experiments), sociological practices (such as field research and witness interviews) or literary or historical analysis (such as archival work and the evaluation of sources). We ask: How does the artistic process of generating facts and producing knowledge 'work'? When is this process to be seen as a critique and not as a mere repetition of liberal gestures (Julia Schade)? And: What role(s) do the performers play in relation to these performances of knowledge? Are they artists, personas, fictional figures, or private persons? To what extent do they bear responsibility for what is said and shown?

# IMAGINED PRESENTATION – PERFORMING KNOWLEDGE

This block expands the paradigm of the 'art of the lecture' via a panel about the performance of knowledge from an artistic, social, popular, and economic perspective (Jon McKenzie/ Sibylle Peters). How can boundaries shift and relations between art, economy, consumption, and everyday life be re-defined through the experience of performance knowledge? How do techniques of performance determine the medial and cultural practice of witnessing?

JOHANNES GUTENBERG UNIVERSITÄT MAIN





Kunsthalle Mainz Day 1 @ Kunsthalle Mainz (Am Zollhafen 3-5, 55118 Mainz) Day 2 & 3 @ JGU Mainz, Fakultätssaal 01–185, Philosophicum (Jakob-Welder-Weg 18, 55128 Mainz) Day 2, Artist Talk @Kunsthochschule Mainz (Am Taubertsberg 6, 55122)

## **Timetable**

MONDAY May 9, 2022 @ KUNSTHALLE MAINZ

15.00 Registration Onwards opportunity to visit the exhibition

16.30 WELCOME Benjamin Wihstutz & Stefanie Böttcher, organisers

16.45–17.00 WELCOME Yana Prinsloo & Lina Louisa Krämer, organisers

17.00 INPUT Contemporary Practices of Witnessing – Opening Questions Chris Tedjasukmana & Benjamin Wihstutz, JGU

18.00–18.15 *Break*  TUESDAY May 10, 2022 @ JGU MAINZ

9.30–9.45 *Coffee* 

9.45–11.15 KEYNOTE Afterlife and Withdrawal: Fabulation as Critical Inquiry of the Present Leon Gabriel & Julia Schade. RUB

11.15–11.30 *Coffee* 

11.30–13.30
WORKSHOP
No Way of Knowing
What the Show(ing)s
are Showing: a lectureworkshop on representation in physics and
performance
Cory Tamler, CUNY

WEDNESDAY May 11, 2022 @ JGU MAINZ

9.30–9.45 *Coffee* 

9.45–11.00
KEYNOTE
Consuming Art /Consuming Knowledge?
Lecture Performance
Between Art and
Marketisation
Clio Unger, CSSD

11.00–11.15 *Coffee* 

11.15-12.45 SESSION II: IMAGINE THE SITUATION

*Listening as political practice* Madlyn Sauer, UZH

Seeing nothing. Towards an architecture for withdrawn artworks. Julia Gyemant

Chair: Marlène Harles, KHM

12.45–13.30 Lunch break 18.15–19.30 KEYNOTE & ARTIST TALK

I have called you by your name: "We Lived So Well Together" Walid Raad & Shulamit Bruckstein (House of Taswir)

Welcome Drink

20.30/20.45 Supper (optional) El Burro, Dominikanerstraße 2, 55116 Mainz 13.30–14.15 Lunch break

14.15–16.45 SESSION I: IMAGINED KNOWLEDGE

Performing Visual Knowledge – Agency, Subject Formation and Human Flourishing after Saba Mahmood's Politics of Piety Elisaveta Dvorakk, HU

What new knowledge can be gained from performing research? Clementine Butler-Gallie, HKW

The repetition of the repetition Lina Louisa Krämer

Chair: Yana Prinsloo Free time/opportunity to visit the exhibition

19.00 *Artist Talk,* Walid Raad @ Kunsthochschule Mainz 13.30–16.00 SESSION III: IMAGINED PRESENTATION

Sell yourself (!) as an artistic strategy: An approach to artists' entanglement in neoliberalism
Yana Prinsloo, JGU

On the convergence between the lecture performance and the essay form. Jasper Delbecke, UGent

*Generalstreik* (ongoing project) Philipp Scholtysik

Chair: Lina Louisa Krämer

16.00–16.15 *Break* 

16.15–17.15 CONCLUSION A fictional publication – Imagining a possible Follow-up Isabelle Zinsmaier, JGU

18.00 Possibility to join the Walkthrough with Walid Raad



## **KEYNOTES**

ALMUT SHULAMIT BRUCKSTEIN (House of Taswir) in conversation with Walid Raad

I have called you by your name: "We Lived So Well Together"

In her artist talk, Bruckstein addresses aspects of Walid Raad's solo exhibition at Kunsthalle Mainz by a detour via Freud's reading techniques from his Interpretation of dreams. Every manifest image gives way to a narrative divided by two: one that lies open on the artist's lips, one that remains hidden; and it is the hidden one that holds the key to the secret of the image. So how to negotiate the divide? Noli me tangere! Averting the gaze from the object, Bruckstein takes a different route, focusing on the grammar of names, on the objects' given names and their deviance in repetition. This way she approaches the world of shadows, withdrawal, indifference, and quite a specific tunnel condition in Walid Raad's work in which objects switch faces and escape scenes of division and war - "we lived so well together" - objects may even kiss (t)here without any further notice. Istanbul, March 2022

CV: Almut Shulamit Bruckstein, also known as House of Taswir, is a writer, thinker, and theory artist. She has published essays on the work of Walid Raad in Texte zur Kunst, Art Unlimited Istanbul. Among her own publications are House of Taswir. Doing and Un-Doing Things. Notes on Epistemic Architecture(s) (2014), Freud. Talmud. Taswir (2019), Wednesday Society Dossier (2020-ongoing). Her international exhibitions include Taswir (2009), The Red Gaze (2016), Lady Dada Kalam (2017), Wednesday

Society. The Couch of Meret O. (2019), and more. She is the founding director of Taswir projects, International Platform for Artistic Research and Diasporic Thinking, www.taswir.org

LEON GABRIEL & JULIA SCHADE Afterlife and Withdrawal: Fabulation as Critical Inquiry of the Present

In Walid Raad's works, symptoms of the afterlife of violence as well as of political-economic entanglements manifest themselves as artworks: These symptoms consist of what Raad calls "fantasies, constructed from the material of collective memories." In this way, they operate in the broad spectrum between fact and fiction. Raad's practice of fabulation constantly raises doubts and questions the spaces of exhibition, archiving, and knowledge-production. In particular, fabulations give way to that which eludes the apparatus of contemporary art. The joint lecture will illuminate central motifs that constitute Raad's critical inquiry of the present - for example, the movement of withdrawal, the notion of the tunnel and the process of 'shape-shifting'.

CV: Julia Schade (PhD) is a performance scholar and post-doctoral research associate with the graduate research training group "Documentary Practices: Excess and Privation" at Ruhr-University Bochum. She researches decolonial, queer-feminist, more-than-human temporalities at the intersection of theory and performance. In her current project she investigates aesthetic practices of the Oceanic between migration, decolonization and relationality. Leon Gabriel's (PhD) research focuses on theatre and globalization, politics of representation, spatial arts.

dramaturgies, history of violence, and artistic ways of working. Since 2018, he is a post-doctoral researcher at the Institute of Theatre Studies at Ruhr-Universität Bochum. In 2021, his book Bühnen der Altermundialität: Vom Bild der Welt zur räumlichen Theaterpraxis (Berlin: Neofelis) was published.

CLIO UNGER
Consuming Art/Consuming
Knowledge?
Lecture Performance between Art
and Marketisation

Following the organisers' question how "relations between art, economy, consumption, and everyday life can be re-defined through the experience of performance knowledge", this keynote session considers to what extend lecture performances can be understood as alternative modes of knowing. I start from the contradictory observation that lecture performances often aim to counter-act dominant or hegemonic knowledge, their implementation and circulation often betray a proximity between artistic and cognitive labour and the marketisation of knowledge in the global knowledge economy. Following Tom Holert's assertion that the recent "epistemization" of art has blurred the "fault lines between established conceptions of art and knowledge" (2020, 10), I trace the feminist, queer, indigenous, or bodily forms of knowing with which practitioners of the lecture performance seek to redraw epistemic hierarchies. Yet, with Holert, I also caution against the assumption that the form 'performance' can or does resist the commodification of knowledge - especially in an art market full of constantly updated knowledge products, which invite a consumerist rather than politically empowering engagement from their audiences. This session will offer a space to consider and discuss this two-fold character of the contemporary lecture performance.

CV: Clio Unger is a PhD student at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London, where she works on the contemporary lecture performance and the politics of the knowledge economy. Her essay 'Share Your Work: Lola Arias's Lecture Performance Series and the Artistic Cognitariat of the Global Pandemic' won the 2020 Postgraduate Essay Prize of the Theatre and Performance Research Association (TaPRA), UK. Her work has been published in Contemporary Theatre Review, the International Journal of Performance Art and Digital Media, and in Design Issues. Unger is the co-editor of Platform: Journal of Theatre and Performing Arts and works as a freelance dramaturg.

# **INPUTS**

CHRIS TEDJASUKMANA & BENJAMIN WIHSTUTZ Contemporary Practices of Witnessing – Opening Questions

Based on the observation that political movements and historical events as well as wars, murders, and crimes are witnessed and authenticated differently today in a digitised and globalised world, the paper raises questions about the relationship between media, activism, and contemporary practices of witnessing. How is witnessing practiced and 'performed' today in everyday life and on social media? How do institutional. infrastructural, and media conditions influence practices of witnessing? Can witnessing be seen as a collective practice based on sharing, duplicating,

and distributing? How are falsifications and half-truths staged as witnessing, and under what circumstances is testimony misused for propaganda purposes? And in what way do these observations of a new global, political struggle on truth, knowledge, and image-based evidence imply new perspectives and methods in cultural, theatre, and media studies?

CV:Chris Tedjasukmana (Dr. phil.) is a Professor of Everyday Media and Digital Cultures at the Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz (Germany) and principal investigator of the research group "Attention Strategies of Video Activism on the Social Web," (funded by the Volkswagen Foundation). He is also a member of the editorial board of the German journal "Montage AV: Theory and History of Audiovisual Communication". His research focuses on media witnessing, critical phenomenology, political aesthetics. film theory, social media studies, gender and gueer studies.

Benjamin Wihstutz is Associate Professor / Juniorprofessor of Theatre and Performance Studies at the Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz, Germany, where he is currently leading a research project on the History of Disability Performance (within the CRC 1482 Humandifferenzierung) and a German-Italian research cooperation (funded by DAAD) on the change of the performing arts during the pandemic. He holds a PhD from Freie Universität Berlin and has published widely on contemporary political theatre. disability performance and the history of spectatorship.

## CONCLUSION

ISABELLE ZINSMAIER
A Fictional Publication –
Imagining a possible Follow-up
Working Session

This working session aims at a common reflection of how questions and (joint) knowledge that emerged from the three days of Imagining the Situation could possibly be gathered in a publication or another form of mediation. Taking Daniel Gubbay Blangas ideas on 'a fictional institution' as a starting point, the participants are invited to imagine a fictional publication. In groups, they are asked to reflect on how, in which (collaborative) forms, and in which formats, outcomes and intersections of the last three days could be followed up.

CV: Isabelle Zinsmaier is a practitioner and researcher in the field of performing arts. She is an assistant researcher at Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz and currently writing her PhD on transnational memory and witnessing in performing arts. As part of the theatre collectives Zaungäste and ZonaLux she is doing theatre projects in various contexts.

# SPEAKERS (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

CLEMENTINE BUTLER-GALLIE
What new knowledge can be gained
from performing research?

In the workshop, Butler-Gallie will perform the curatorial research process of her current exhibition *Distant Divides*, which explores the artistic exchange between Lebanon and Germany during and post periods of divisions in both countries. Weaving together stories and voices from her research that both did and did not make it into the final presentation, she attempts to reveal the cracks and caveats of curatorial research whilst also posing the question: what new knowledge can be gained from performing research?

CV: Clementine Butler-Gallie's work merges curation, artistic research, and writing. Her practice stems from an interest in testing and developing durational exhibition models that emphasise curation in chapters and methods of exposing research processes. She is the curator of the exhibition *Distant Divides* which is currently on show at HALLE 14, in the Spinnerei Leipzig.

#### JASPER DELBECKE

On the convergence between the lecture performance and the essay form

Delbecke contributes to *Imaging the Situation* by exploring the format of the lecture-performance through the lens of the essay, inspired by Theodore Adorno's seminal text *The Essay as Form*, he will illustrate the overlap between the lecture-performance and the essay form with performance examples of Ho Rui An. Frédérique

Aït-Touati and Bruno Latour, and Walid Raad's walkthrough-performance *Two drops per heartbeat* as part of his most recent exhibition *Cotton under my Feet*, presented at the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza'.

CV: Jasper Delbecke is a doctoral candidate at the interdisciplinary research centre S:PAM (Studies in Performing Arts & Media) at Ghent University (Belgium). In 2018 his conducted research on the dissemination of the essay form beyond the realm of literature and film was granted with the PhD fellowship of the Research Foundation – Flanders.

#### ELISAVETA DVORAKK

Performing Visual Knowledge – Agency, Subject Formation and Human Flourishing after Saba Mahmood's Politics of Piety

Drawing on Saba Mahmood's (1962-2018) work on the women's mosque movement in Cairo in 1995-1997, this paper develops a critique of normative secular-liberal accounts of agency within contemporary visual discourses on the 'Middle East'. New modalities of agency that go beyond resistance are outlined. The nexus between bodily performative practices, the ethics of politics and discourses of visual knowledge allows for a productive engagement with new (re-) conceptualisations of agency, subject formation, human flourishing (Saba Mahmood) and agency photography (Ulrike E. Auga).

CV: Elisaveta Dvorakk is a PhD candidate at the Department of Art and Visual History at Humboldt University in Berlin. She studied Art History, Theory and History of Photography, Gender Studies and Protestant Theology in Berlin, Zurich, and Vienna. Her

research interests include Critical Theory of Photography; Gender, Postcolonial and Post-Secular Theory; Aesthetics of Totalitarianisms. She is a scholarship holder of the German National Academic Foundation.

#### JULIA GYEMANT

Seeing nothing. Towards an architecture for withdrawn artworks

Withdrawal, absence, and a void only perceptible to the hypersensitive are informing elements in Walid Raad's work which the presentation will explore while grappling with the nearly impossible task to talk about *nothing* without delineating it and confining it to a certain shape. Trying to forgo the reflex of interpretation, of laying out in order, and classifying the talk will try to tunnel those ordering devices, stirring towards a possible architecture of shifting frames that might stay faithful to nothingness.

CV: Julia Gyemant (1983, Budapest. Hungary) is an independent curator, writer and cultural producer based in Berlin. She holds a Master's degree in Fine Arts with a focus on art theory from the Hochschule für Bildende Künste Hamburg. She is a long-term collaborator and board member of Taswir projects, an international platform for artistic research and diasporic thinking. Her essay and visual poetry The Spider's Architecture or the House of Study (Art Unlimited, Istanbul, no. 59, September 2020) was published in the framework of Wednesday Society Dossier, a collaboration between Taswir projects and Art Unlimited Istanbul sprung from the exhibition Wednesday Society. The Couch of Meret O. (curated by A.S. Bruchstein Coruh, Artam Antik Palace, 16th International Istanbul Biennial September 19-October 18, 2019).

# LINA LOUISA KRÄMER The repetition of the repetition

In a sense, a repetition is part of every performance practice that starts with an idea often thought over and over again and that later unfolds in rehearsals until the 'finished' performance is defined. While a lecture performance is a hybrid between a bodily performance and a spoken lecture, I want to examine the very unique interaction of movement and the spoken word in my contribution.

CV: Lina Louisa Krämer (b. 1989 in Mainz. Germany) is a curator based in Berlin, Germany, currently working at the Schinkel Pavillon with a special interest in socially and politically engaged art practices She is further interested in collective (un)learning processes. She has previously worked with various arts institutions such as Kunsthalle Mainz, Marta Herford, 9th Berlin Biennale - KW Institute for Contemporary Art, basis e.V. Ausstellungsund Produktionsplattform Frankfurt and curated numerous exhibitions. latest, the group shows In theory I'm fine focussing on labour conditions, gender stereotypes, and body politics and Wir leben auf einem Stern with alumni and current students from the Kunsthochschule Mainz. She holds an MA in Art History from Goethe University Frankfurt and is currently a PhD student at HfG Offenbach in the Art Theory and Science department.

#### YANA PRINSLOO

Sell yourself (!) as an artistic strategy: An approach to artists' entanglement in neoliberalism

Walid Raad applies two main strategies to/in his works of art: a

fictional one and the accentuation of the side-issues, which are presented in a performative manner of selling the unlikely. What role does the fictional side-issue of an art performance play in the polarized discussion about the artists' entanglement in neoliberalism? To what extent can the artists' work indicate a hyper-affirmative appropriation? My contribution examines forms of self-presentation used by lecture performers such as Walid Raad and Ada Mukhina (How to sell vourself to the West?). How do they use (performative) selling strategies regarding their (supposed) biographies and the fictionalized history of their homelands? To what extent can self-presentation as a form of self-selling be understood as an artistic strategy? How can the processes of framing, fictionalizing, and focusing the side issues impact the embattled on debate?

CV: Yana Prinsloo is a research assistant in Theatre Studies (FTMK, JGU Mainz). Her master's thesis on processes of judgement was published by Tectum-Verlag in 2017. From 2017 to 2021 she worked as editor for 3sat Kulturzeit. She is currently working on her PhD, which focuses on the interdependencies between artist myth and entrepreneurial cult in independent theatre. Her PhD-project is part of the collaborative Research Centre 1482 "Human Categorization". She is a founding member of the interdisciplinary doctoral student network DIS(S)-CONNECT (2019), elected spokesperson of the GTW coordinating collective "PhD Theatre Scholars" (2021) and a performer of the sound collective "dark matters".

# MADLYN SAUER Listening as political practice

Around the world, civil society is convening alternative trails in the name of law to end impunity for state crimes and state injustice. They counter the state's perspective on law with an alternative and creative knowledge of justice that centres around the questions: How can civil society provide recognition and justice to victims of state-perpetrated injustice outside official frameworks? Madlyn Sauer will discuss this question on the example of the Cologne NSU Tribunal, which convened from 17-21 May 2017 at Schauspiel Köln at the same time when the official NSU court trial took place.

CV: Madlyn Sauer (\*1989) is doing her PhD in Cultural Analysis at the University of Zurich. She works as an independent artist and writer and studied Stage Setting & Costume Design and Applied Theatre Studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Dresden.

# PHILIPP SCHOLTYSIK Generalstreik (ongoing project)

Is an international general strike a possibility of the nearer future and what would it look like? With this speculative question as a starting point the project *General Strike* combines journalistic and scientific research strategies. The talk will present the unfinished intermediate state of the ongoing project.

CV: Philipp Scholtysik works as a dramaturg, performer, and director. He studied economics in Regensburg and Berlin as well as dramaturgy in Frankfurt. As a dramaturg, he works both in the independent scene and in municipal theatre, most recently

in the 2018/2019 season at the Schlossstheater Moers, and in 2020 as a guest at the Hessisches Landestheater Marburg.

#### **CORY TAMLER**

No Way of Knowing What the Show(ing)s are Showing: a lectureworkshop on representation in physics and performance

This workshop considers representation as a "nomadic notion" (Rosi Braidotti) drifting between two fields, performance and physics. In both, representation is one of the key ways people pluck knowledge into the world of communicable experience—but if, as physicist David Bohm pointed out, 'correct' appearances are not reality but "in some way related to the reality," then representation can be an inroad in both fields into asking what knowledge is. The workshop will begin with a discussion of some examples that interweave with the conference's second theme of witnessing knowledge, asking what it's possible to witness in a few examples from contemporary physics and performance. In the second part, we will work in groups to create and share short responses in lecture-performative formats to the prompt: Can the nomadic notion of representation bring performance and science into a collaborative exchange where performance does something other than represent science to a witness?

CV: Cory Tamler is a PhD candidate in Theatre and Performance at The Graduate Center, City University of New York. She is a former Fulbright scholar, and a 2021-2022 visiting DAAD scholar at the Institute for Applied Theatre Studies at the University of Gießen. Cory also makes research-based performances with In Kinship (Wabanaki/Maine, USA).

### **Directions**

JGU Fakultätssaal Philosophicum Jakob-Welder-Weg 16 55128 Mainz Room 01.185

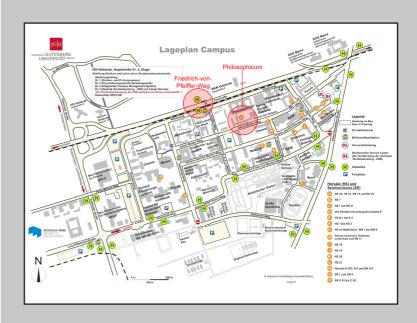
Bus and tram lines 51, 53, 54, 55, 56, or 59 from Hauptbahnhof West (rear exit of Mainz Main Station); get off at Friedrich von Pfeiffer-Weg, from where it is only a short walk to the Philosophicum. The Fakultätssaal is on the first floor in the front wing of the building.

Walking distance from Mainz Hauptbahnhof (main station): 2 km (Plan your journey with Google Maps) Kunsthalle Mainz Am Zollhafen 3–5 55118 Mainz

Bus lines 70 and 76, get off at Feldbergplatz/Stadtwerke Mainz

From Mainz Hauptbahnhof (main station): Bus 76 or 1.5 km walking distance

(Plan your journey with Google Maps)



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Di, Do, Fr 10–18 Uhr Mi 10–21 Uhr Sa, So und an Feiertagen 11–18 Uhr 28/02/22, 15/04/22, 17/04/22 geschlossen

Eintritt: Erwachsene 6 Euro Ermäßigt 4 Euro Tue, Thur, Fri 10am–6pm Wed 10am–9pm Sat, Sun and public holidays 11am–6pm 02/28/22, 04/15/22, 04/17/22 closed

Admission:
Adults 6 euros
Concessions 4 euros

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