

the codes of theatre are stripped down – everything that has to do with the illusion of theatre dissipates when you don't have the curtains and the darkness in the white museum space. It directly influences the lighting effects; the conditions of a space reflect light in a certain way. I think that the impact on the perception or the psyche of the viewers is very different depending on whether they sit in a black or a white space, whether the audience is exposed to the light and therefore lit equally to what they are watching, or whether they sit in darkness and watch an illuminated show. These are massive shifts in perception, although the work may remain the same. At the moment I am very interested in how this can be fine-tuned. I could insist on producing exactly the same effect, regardless of the place, and in consequence my working strategy would be very different than if I set out to achieve two completely different effects from the beginning. It isn't always possible to rehearse or test the impact. Sometimes you have to depend on the moment of the performance as such, which is no less exciting. You have to analyse the given conditions and function within them.

L What I find interesting about your working context is that in both cases – in the white cube of the museum and what we might call the black box of the theatre – you are dealing with enclosed spaces that offer a form of intimacy. Your influence, the position you take on within each type of space, has a lot to do with the fact that you regulate, proscribe, and direct the process. That is a form of power – not in a negative sense – which seems essential to your work. Are there sometimes situations when you are no longer sure whether you will be able to determine the effect precisely? How do you relate to this element of uncertainty?

A I think you never really now. And that is also what's exciting about this medium. It is always about trying out and experimenting. These processes always relate back to the nature of the

work itself, it is always about interpretation and reinterpretation, about representation and its effects on an audience.

L I find that fascinating: that you can never be sure of the actual impact. It is never really certain how it will really work out. On the other hand of course you have experience, you develop a hunch of how it is likely to work. Still, I am always surprised that the same product functions completely differently in a black box in Zurich or in Beijing. There its impact might be political, while here it might be a cultural study in a particular genre. On an analytical level it is seen completely differently.

L I believe that many artists and exhibition makers have particular spaces in mind in which they would like to work one day – I certainly do. Is there a place, a hall or a building where you would like to realize a project? Interestingly I am working on a project, about which I can't say too much yet, but it has to do with architecture in the widest sense, about how architecture impacts on the choreography or the conditions of the body and the performance. Or the other way around: in what ways architecture can be shaped, formulated or determined via the body, how the habitus is influenced by these factors.

A To answer your question, there is no one place where I absolutely want to do a performance, or rather, there are potentially many such places. There are places that trigger something specific, something that has to be developed in relation to that place. But I don't have a fetish for spaces, I can work anywhere, in a school gym or a basement, as long as I can study and arrange the conditions of that space.

L It doesn't influence the outcome for you.

A The outcome is influenced in one way, but not in another. It is more important to me that the conditions are right, that I can work with the right people. I think 80% of my work is the casting, which is very important. Where I put these people also matters very much, but it is secondary.

wir präsentieren ihn so wie wir ihn sehen und so wie wir seine Arbeiten kennen gelernt haben. Wir eröffnen eine Sicht auf den Künstler, welche dieser vielleicht nicht unbedingt wählen würde.

L Wie sehen eure Inszenierungsstrategien konkret aus?

D Wir arbeiten normalerweise sehr subtil. Für mich ist es wichtig, aufzuräumen – gemäss der beispielsweise in Japan praktizierten Schlichtheit und Reduktion. Dann kann man ein unterschiedliches, feines Highlight setzen. Wir sind viele Szenografen.

L Inwiefern fliessen die den Raum Betretenden in eure konzeptionellen Überlegungen am Anfang eines Projektes ein?

D Die Besucherinnen und Besucher sind von Anfang an beinahe der bedeutungsvollste Faktor bei der Konzipierung. Wir versetzen uns dabei selbst in die Rolle der Besuchenden. Für uns ist es sehr wichtig, einen unsichtbaren Pfad zu etablieren, der die Besucher durch eine Ausstellung führt, sie leitet. Es soll sich ein natürlicher Ablauf ergeben, der das ausgelöste Raumempfinden steuert.

L Aus deinen bisherigen Ausführungen lässt sich schliessen, dass eure Bezugssysteme und eure Inspirationsfelder sehr weit angelegt sind, oder?

D Ich weigere mich, die Welt als dimensionales Gebilde zu sehen. Ich finde das Verbindende spannend. Mich interessiert die Vielfalt. Klar gibt es Szenografen, die mich beeinflussen, aber mich inspirieren auch Leute wie Tom Waits und Lou Reed.

L Heisst das auch, dass es für euch nicht wesentlich ist, ob ihr einen Raum oder ein Objekt gestaltet und die Herangehensweisen kaum divergieren? Ihr macht ja sowohl Raum- als auch Produktideen.

D Genau, das ist das Prinzip unserer Arbeit. Für uns ist es selbstverständlich, dass es sich dabei nicht um zwei verschiedene Arbeitsweisen handelt – und wir brauchen einige Zeit bis wir realisierten, dass dies andere nicht so sehen. Man möchte immer, egal in welchem Medium, eine Geschichte spinnen und Poesie erzeugen.

L Zusammenfassend gefragt: Welches sind die grössten Herausforderungen beim Raumdesign?

D Die Reduktion auf die absolute Essenz und die gleichzeitige Erzeugung von Poesie. Wenn ein Raum vollgepackt ist, laut ist, kann Poesie nicht entstehen. Die Inszenierung muss nicht derart offensichtlich sein, dass alle jedes Detail erfassen. Man darf ruhig Verstecktes entdecken und danach suchen.

TIDYING UP IS THE FIRST STEP

LACK After completing a degree in engineering you studied scenography at the Federal Institute of Technology. What interests you about this spatial way of working?

DANIEL I was always interested in designing spaces. I was attracted to scenography because of its roots in theatre, as a discipline that evolved from set design. By contrast our company Fontana, Hunziker, Design Works has its origins in design. The space of the stage in theatre is much more abstract, more reduced, more intellectually charged than the conventional staging of other types of spaces. I consider this reduction to essentials eminently important to my work in public spaces, or for art exhibitions. It is important to us that we never just design a space, but that we tell a story and evoke emotions.

L It is always a huge responsibility to design a space intended for showing things, since it determines the overall impression of a show. Do you agree?

D Yes, however it's a less heavy burden than that of the architect.

L What are the most basic differences to the work of an architect?

D Scenography is an architecture of festivity, a temporally limited architecture. Obviously, this means you get more freedom – you can experiment and charge your work emotionally. The beautiful thing about scenography is that you take on very little responsibility and you can react spontaneously.

L How do you include the established architecture in your work? Does it function like a container in which you place something, or do you work with the existing architecture and reshape it?

D That depends on the given situation; it's one of the most exciting aspects of our work. The interplay of the different components of a context, its multi-dimensionality, is central to our projects. If we are involved with an art exhibition, for example, a combination of the architecture of the space, our scenography and the work of the curators comes into play. This interconnectedness is important to us: we don't want impose a concept violently.

L So you are saying that when you develop an art exhibition, your starting point is the object to be exhibited and that you develop your concept based on that?

D Yes, definitely. Scenography can remain very much in the background. I want to make exhibitions to be experienced, exhibitions that bring art objects closer to people, that mediate between the viewer and the object without being didactic about it. We certainly don't want a purely intellectual, elitist approach. Exhibitions should be events on a high level. That to me is a very contemporary position.

L So you conceive of the design of a space as a means or a strategy to bridge the distance between the viewer and the exhibited object?

D Definitely. We want to stage the artist's work using the design of the space. In the first six months of developing a project the artist is very closely involved. However he is not part of the actual conception of the exhibition and we present our view of him and his works as we have come to understand them. We open up a view of the artist that they might not have chosen themselves.

L What are your concrete strategies for staging a work?

D We usually have a very subtle way of working. For me it is important to tidy up – according to a practice of simplicity and reduction on the Japanese model, for example. It is possible to highlight things in a low-key, understated way. We are quiet scenographers.

L To what extent do the people who come into a space influence your thoughts at the start of a project?

D The viewers are perhaps the most important factor when developing a concept. We try to imagine ourselves in the role of the viewer. For us it is very important to establish an invisible path that guides the viewer through an exhibition. There should be a natural flow that directs the spatial experience triggered by the design.

L From what you've said so far, we can conclude that your references and your inspiration come from a very wide range of sources, right?

D I refuse to see the world as a one-dimensional structure. I find the connections between things exciting; I'm interested in diversity. Sure there are scenographers who influence me, but I'm just as inspired by people like Tom Waits or Lou Reed.

L Does that also imply that it is not essential whether you are designing a space or an object, in the sense that your respective approaches don't diverge that much? After all, you also do product design.

D Exactly, that is the principle behind our work. To us it is obvious that these are not two different ways of working, and it took us some time to realize that others do not necessarily share our view. In the end one always wants to tell a story, to be poetic, regardless of the medium.

L To summarize then, what are the greatest challenges in spatial design?

D The reduction to the very essence of things, while simultaneously making something poetic. If a space is cramped and loud, poetry cannot happen. The staging must not be so obvious that everyone grasps every little detail. It's fine to have hidden things, things that you need to search for and discover for yourself.

1 Alexandra Bachzatzis, (born in Zurich) is an artist, performer, choreographer based in Zurich. Her professional background includes a range of disciplines: theatre, dance, visual arts. Her work constitutes an inquiry into genres of the performative techniques of choreography and form behaviour. Bachzatzis' main interest is in codes that govern gestures, both everyday life and on stage. Her work scrutinizes the mutual influences between the use of gesture and movement, (commercial) genres – as in romantic comedy, TV soap, or hip-hop video-clip – and in arts, such as modern dance and performance. www.alexandrabachzatzis.com

2 Daniel Hunziker, is a qualified engineer (ETH Zurich) and holds a Ph.D. in Scenography and Urban Design (Zurich). Daniel Hunziker works as a light and industrial designer and a product engineer. He constitutes one of Fontana, Hunziker Design Works. www.fontana-hunziker.com/

PHOTOGRAPHS Marianne Haltz, 1978, studied at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts – Design where she now holds lectures herself. She was awarded numerous residencies (others in Chicago and Johannesburg) showed her works in national as well as international institutions. Her work includes installations, drawings, photographs or videos – deal with their social functions and implications. Marianne Haltz knows how to bring every-day situations, scenes and settings into surprising, multilayered images. <http://old.lizeyou.com/artists/bia/mph7a-179> www.christingerdemayo.com/

DANIEL HUNZIKER

AUFRÄUMEN IST DER ERSTE SCHRITT

LACK Du hast nach deinem Ingenieurstudium an der ETH Szenografie studiert. Was interessiert dich an dieser Art von Arbeit im Raum?

DANIEL Raumdesign hat mich schon immer interessiert. Was das Studium der Szenografie für mich reizvoll machte, ist, dass es vom Theater her kommt und anhand der Erstellung von Bühnenbildern entwickelt wurde – im Gegensatz dazu hat unsere Firma Fontana, Hunziker, Design Works ihren Ursprung im Design. Der Bühnenbild-Raum im Theater ist viel abstrakter, viel reduzierter, viel intellektueller aufgeladener als bei der Inszenierung anderer Räume üblich. Diese Reduktion auf das absolut Wesentliche erachte ich als eminent wichtig für die Arbeit in öffentlichen Räumen oder Kunstausstellungen. Für uns ist es wichtig, dass wir nie nur einen Raum gestalten, sondern eine Geschichte erzählen und Emotionen evozieren.

L Den Raum, in dem etwas gezeigt wird zu gestalten beinhaltet immer eine grosse Verantwortung: Man bestimmt immerhin den Gesamteindruck. Siehst Du das auch so?

D Allerdings ist es eine viel weniger gewichtige Aufgabe als die des Architekten!

L Wo liegen denn die grundlegendsten Unterschiede zur Architektur?

D Szenografie ist eine festliche Architektur, eine zeitlich beschränkte Architektur. Das zieht logischerweise viel mehr Freiheiten nach sich – man kann experimentell sein und Räume emotional aufladen. Das Schöne an der Szenografie ist gerade, dass man wenig Verantwortung auf sich nimmt und schnell reagieren kann.

L Wie bezieht ihr denn die bestehende Architektur in eure Arbeit mit ein? Dient sie euch eher als Gefäss, in welches ihr etwas plaziert oder bearbeitet ihr die vorhandene Architektur und gestaltet diese um?

D Das hängt von der jeweiligen Situation ab und macht den spannenden Aspekt unserer Arbeit aus. Das Zusammenspiel der Komponenten und die Mehrdimensionalität sind Grundpfeiler unserer Projekte. Wenn es um eine Kunstausstellung geht, ergibt sich zum Beispiel ein Nebeneinander der Architektur des Raumes, unserer Szenografie und der Arbeit der Kuratoren. Diese Vernetzung ist wichtig – wir wollen nicht gewaltsam etwas aufstülpen.

L Das heisst, wenn ihr eine Kunstausstellung inszeniert, geht ihr vom auszustellenden Gegenstand aus und entwickelt anhand von diesem eure Konzeption?

D Ja, unbedingt. Die Szenografie kann durchaus auch im Hintergrund bleiben. Ich möchte Ausstellungen machen, die man erleben kann, die die Kunstobjekte zu den Leuten bringen, ihnen diese vermitteln, ohne didaktisch zu sein. Auf keinen Fall wollen wir einen rein intellektuellen, elitären Ansatz verfolgen. Ausstellungen sollen Events auf hohem Level sein. Das ist für mich eine sehr zeitgemässe Haltung.

L Dann seht ihr die Raumgestaltung als Mittel, als Strategie um den BesucherInnen den ausgestellten Gegenstand näher zu bringen?

D Auf jeden Fall. Wir möchten den Künstler durch das Raumdesign in Szene setzen und ihn durch unsere Szenografie inszenieren. Im ersten halben Jahr der Konzipierung eines Projektes ist der Künstler sehr stark eingebunden – bei der konkreten Ausstellungsarbeitung ist er aber nicht mehr dabei und