

Huis Clos / No Exit – Beyond (spectacle)

Training for a better world

Synopsis

Communication is never clean, smooth and transparent

A 5 days long experiment, where 6 net artists: **Ruth Catlow, Ursula Endlicher, Nicolas Frespech, Igor Stromajer, me and a sixth**, different in every performance, artist prepare and do a performance every day using an interface, in which we share, from our isolated positions scattered in space each in front of our webcam, a combined image- and soundspace of expression and responsibility, a playground, a laboratory.

The performances and the preparations are all open to the public, who can communicate with each other and the performers via a shared chat window.

During the telematic performances, the 6 artists will challenge one another into collective actions. Their communication will be handicapped by the constraint to only use their mother tongue, which means that they have to invent - on the fly – a new, shared language based on some shared words, code and their body.

The project is a follow up of the Huis Clos / No Exit – On Translation performance, presented at NIMk Amsterdam on the 29th of Mai 2010. This performance turned out to be a lot more political and personally disturbing than we expected: The monocultural person turned out to be severely handicapped, The experience was tagged with terms as ultimate loneliness, adolescent groupdynamics and partying.

<http://bram.org/huisclos/ontranslation/>

Huis Clos / No Exit – Beyond (spectacle)

Training for a better world

The project

A 5 days long experiment with 5 performance using an interface, in which the 6 net artists share, from their isolated positions scattered in space each in front of their webcam, a combined image- and soundspace of expression and responsibility, a playground, a laboratory.

As much a **scientific experiment** than a **performance series**.

The artists will only use their mother tongue and will have to invent a new, shared language based on some shared words, code(s) and body language.

Annie Abrahams - <http://www.bram.org> in Montpellier will only speak **Dutch**

Ruth Catlow - <http://www.furtherfield.org> in London will only speak **English**

Ursula Endlicher - <http://www.ursenal.net> in New York will only speak **German**

Nicolas Frespech - <http://www.frespech.com> in Montélimar will only speak **French**

Igor Stromajer - <http://www.intima.org> in Hamburg will only speak **Slovenian**

The **6th artist** will be multiple, different in every performance. They will be invited after the performance series confirmation. (Paolo Cirio, Jaromil, Burak Arikan, MTAA ...)

The **6th artist** will introduce "noise" so we can't repeat and will have to be attentive all the time.

What can we do together and why should we? What is left of communication when we don't share a common language to use while technological means create supplementary distortions? How to construct unity where there is none besides a mutual interest in art and the Internet? How, in front of an interface where you can see yourself all the time, to be more attentive to the others than to your own actions? How to both overcome and respect our differences?

Huis Clos / No Exit – Beyond (spectacle)

Training for a better world

Igor isn't understood by anyone. He understands us all.

Ruth is understood by all, but doesn't understand any one of the others.

Nicolas is understood by Annie, Ursula and Igor. He only understands Ruth.

Usula is understood by Annie and Igor. She understands all but Igor.

Annie is understood by Igor and Ursula. She understands Nicolas, Ruth and Ursula.

The performance will be visible online and as a big video projection on a wall or screen the venue.

The first day we will perform using exactly the same protocol as we used for the performance Huis Clos / No Exit – On Translation at NIMk in Amsterdam on the 29th of Mai 2010.

This protocol is available from <http://bram.org/huisclos/ontranslation> .

Selection of reactions of the performers, the public at NIMk and the online public:

" it showed us all the tensions of being both unique and multiple, the difficulties both technical and relational that entails having to invent a common ground that does not erase any particularities." Bérénice Belpaire.

"The animality of humanity in this context is both disturbing, brutal and uncompromising on humanity and its claim of technological progress." Pascale Gustin

"I felt myself, as part of the audience, inside the (virtual) Tower of Babel: this tower didn't go up but was fanning out in all possible directions." Ienke Kastelein

"Where narcissism becomes kaleidoscopic...." Martine Neddham

"...that was most interesting to see you try to be together, to create a common situation in an insuperable mode of communication." Sophie Valero

More available from <http://bram.org/huisclos/ontranslation>

After this first performance the process is open but the beforehand fixed starting time of the next performance and the use of the mother tongue.

Together, using the same interface as the one of the performances, we will determine each following performance, always trying to construct it in order to try to overcome our language and cultural differences and to

Huis Clos / No Exit – Beyond (spectacle)

Training for a better world

challenge one another into collective actions.

The unplanned intermediate preparative meetings will be in English and can be followed by the online and the venue public.

The online **public** can comment the process in a chat window that we will share with them.

Huis Clos / No Exit – Beyond (spectacle) is fragile and Free style.

Ref: Noise & Capitalism http://www.arteleku.net/noise_capitalism/?page_id=3

Everything but quitting can happen in these 5 days. Performances can become longer, or shorter. It will be an evolving event. Will we choose to use more or even less rules? Will we need a leader or continue without one? Maybe Ruth shall become a leader naturally because she is allowed to use English, the language understood by all. Will this training make us more receptive for the other, more flexible in our relations?

Shifts, interruptions, cuts, flux variations, temporary vacuums and coding errors in and between the images, are the aesthetic materials of the performance that will translate the possibilities and the limits of our capacities to be together in a cyberized environment.

The interface used has been developed by Estelle Senay of x-réseau - Théâtre Paris-Villette, using red5, an open source software.

Technical needs:

*Projection screen or wall during 5 days.

*Computer connected to the internet, a video projector and a sound-system. Computer needs a browser with the latest flash plugin installed. The interface has been programmed with opensource red5 software, but needs this plugin to be installed on the stream receiver's computer.

Huis Clos / No Exit – Beyond (spectacle)

Training for a better world

Huis Clos / No Exit- Beyond (spectacle) is embedded in **Huis Clos / No Exit**, an artistic research project I started in 2009.

Discussions, workshops, a collective writing project and real live and networked performances are part of a process investigating online collaboration. It's also about relational dynamics in a dispersed group. (2009 – 2012)

You can find elaborate information on the projects past from

<http://www.bram.org/huisclos>

While the world around us becomes more and more capitalistic, more and more hierarchized, I dream of a horizontal world, a world in which we will all be equal. Could this be true?

At the start of this project are assumptions and questions like: New technologies for collaboration exist and are ameliorated every day. But what about our human capacities? And how are these changed by the same technological means?

How do power relations in a group collaborating via the Internet develop? Which models are adequate? How is this collaboration influenced by physical absence, delays in the communication and distortions of the images and sounds? What about desires, anguish, hate and anger? How to handle hormones? How do groups articulate differences?

I tested this interface for the first time with 6 actors in an intranet form during a residency at CNES la Chartreuse in a performance called Huis Clos / No Exit – On Collaboration.

<http://bram.org/huisclos/oncollaboration>

After only a few hours of preparation, actors performed, each in his/her own webcam station, a performance protocol, written during another residency at La Chartreuse, using among others the collectively written text by visitors of a webpage on collaboration.

<http://bram.org/collaboration/>

Huis Clos / No Exit benefits from financial support by the French Ministry of Culture and Communication (aide à la maquette du DICRÉAM (09)), by the Région Languedoc Roussillon (aide à la création multimédia), and from a residency at the CNES La Chartreuse, Villeneuve lez Avignon.

The project is supported by le manège.mons/CECN, HTTP London, Kawenga territoires numériques (Montpellier), ConnaiSciences (Montpellier) and Nu2s (Barcelona).

Technological partner : Théâtre Paris-Villette / x-réseau.