Report on two sessions of research of TkH (Belgrade, December 25-28 and Paris, January 19-24, 2011)

In the notes hereunder, we map out the area and scope of the investigation of the relationship between performance, choreography and the public space, as we grasp it now. Hence, the broad lines of thought sketch out directions in which this research project may develop, especially as we plan to involve other external collaborators. The goal we set up in these two meetings was to formulate a preliminary thesis, pose initial questions and problems, define a conceptual framework, first tasks and assumptions, delimit the field of research, collect sources of theory, history and art practices. In other words, this document serves as a map of departure, rather than a research plan.

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<u>Introduction: "What is public space?"</u>
(considered from the viewpoints of acting, action, act, performance, intervention, practice)

What is public space?
Is it different from **the social** space?
Not every social context is public.
How is the social dissociated from the public space? In what ways the social isn't the public space?

Is public space the space of **the common**?
The common brings back the question of "us" (multitude of singularities)
The public – in practice, in both capitalism and communism – belongs to no one; how to make it belong to any-body and yet not structure it on the definition of what is common for everybody ?
The common vs. public

The public is traditionally defined by the opposition to the **private** (everyone can distinguish the public from the private)
What does the collapse of borders between the public and the private mean in the light of Foucault/Butler's motto "**the personal** is political??

Do we imply that the public space is the **political scene**?
dominated by "speech" (not only spoken words, but also issued or "utterred" images, sounds, movements, bodies etc.)

What is public space again?
Only that which we produce, but do not own?
That which we have to share?
That which we belong to, but it doesn't belong to anyone individually?

How are public space and **public good** related?
According to Hannah Arendt, the general interest of the public (=the public good) is beyond the sum of individual interests, as the neoliberal thinkers interpret it; the public good is outside material interests, benefits, profit
In that case, what is the public good driven by? Ideology?
Some critics, like Rancière, point to the misreading of Arendt in neoliberalism, they insist, but also find it a weak point of her theory, that the public good isn't the sum of individual interests; Arendt is right in that the good can't be reduced to the interests, but at the same time interests can't be excluded either

Who governs the public space today? Who has access to it? Who exercises the right to it? Who does the public space belong to? Can we rethink the public space in the situation where private property rules? (questions of **access and property**)

- political parties – government, economic power
- mass-media – information, knowledge
- creative industry – entertainment, leisure

contemporary art has a limited place

Does public space have geography? When do we need to localize its territory? Is it the city? Or does it also include the historical cultural perspective?

Is the public space **one and unique** ? Or, are there numerous public spaces that are present simultaneously in co-habitation or in struggle?
Earlier, in the 1970-1980s, the public space was counteracted by the underground, alternative and independent scenes – critical to the public space (which was seen as the one and unique)
The abolishment of the underground shifted its critique to Internet - which is the private space ?
The answer to the question of one or several public spaces is a strategic one:
- if we admit that there are several, like it was during the identity politics in the 1980s and 1990s, we risk to lose the public space – the situation we have today; there is always a hierarchical distribution of the many, which doesn't dissolve the hegemony of the one
- a more oblique position would be to claim one public space, and admit the struggles of many for predominance

Is, or should public space be:
a space of discussion (Athenian democracy, Enlightenment)?
or
a space of performance (Socialist regimes were characterized by the performance of discussion; the case of Goli otok in SFRY is peculiar in this sense, when some of the actors of the public space / political scene overidentified with the 'role' of debator or failed to recognize that the debate had the structure of performance with predetermined roles, procedures and outcomes)?
or
Is every discussion in public a performance of the discussion? Or is performance characteristic only for totalitarian regimes? And not for democratic ones? If democracy fosters and entertains public debate, and if this debate is structured like a performance with a normative structure for success, should the performance indicate the degree of totalitarianism?

<u>sources</u>
Walter Lippman *The Ghost of the Public*
John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems*
Richard Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man as Actor*
Philip Auslander, *From Acting to Performance*
Bruno Latour, Peter Weiber, *Making Things Public* , ZKM
Aristotle, *Nichomachian Ethics*, *Politics*
Hannah Arendt, *On revolution, The Human Condition*
Boris Groys, *The Total Art of Stalinism*
….. to be elaborated

We distinguish three categories in which we examine publicness of performance

category#1 SOCIAL & POLITICAL PERFORMANCES IN PUBLIC SPACE

1) **social drama** and **social choreography** as the interpretative framework for the "political unconscious" (*Fredric Jameson) – "gesture"; social drama in the NATO "intervention", bombardment of Serbia; social choreography in Taylorism in relation with Laban and Meyerhold's biomechanics;
2) **state performance** and **state choreography** that manifest the political "consciousness" of the state, its institutions, its "ideological state apparatuses" (*Louis Althusser); "slets" in Communist/Socialist countries, in comparison with *Körperkultur* and *Sokoli* (the movement "Falcons" in Slavic countries); Harun Farocki's *Democracies*
3) **political actions** and **artivism** that proactively instrumentalize art - "action"; artivism and political activism (*Aldo Milohnic, *Brian Holmes); student and civic protests in 1996/1997 in Belgrade / gay pride in Eastern Europe in 2000 / antiglobalist movement end of 1990s (Genoa, Seattle)
4) "assembly" (*Bruno Latour**,** "Making Things Public")
5) "community" (*Isabel Lorey's analysis**)**

sources
Victor Turner *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play* (1982), PAJ Publications
-, *Liminality, Kabbalah, and the Media* (1985), Academic Press
Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*
Roger Caillois, *Man, Play and Games*
Jon McKenzie, *Perform or Else! From Discipline to Performance*
The Anthropology of Performance (1986), PAJ Publications paperback:
Richard Schechner, Public Domain (1968)
_, The Future of Ritual (1993)
_, Performance Theory (a revised version of Essays on Performance Theory, 1988, revised again, 2004)
_, Performance Studies—An Introduction (2002, revised second edition 2006)
Andrew Hewitt, *Social Choreography: Ideology of Everyday Movement*
Clifford Geertz "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight"
On Civil disobedience: Emerson, Thoreau, Jon McKenzie
Aldo Milohnic, "Artivism", *Maska*

category#2 PERFORMANCE OF THE SELF IN SOCIAL LIFE
articulating difference between doing and showing doing (*Richard Schechner)

1) **performance of the self** : social roles, social behaviours, presentation of the self (*Erving Goffman)
2) **man as actor** in history in three decisive paradigms, the Ancients, Englightenment, the legacy of the 19th century for 20th century (*Richard Sennett); charismatic leadership (presidents as actors, Berlusconi, Obama, Reagan)
3) **technologies of the self**: care of the self, biopower, biopolitics and discipline **(*** Michel Foucault), from *Körperkultur* in Germany (1920 / 1930s) to the New Age body systems (yoga, Alexander technique, Feldenkreis, BMC, fitness culture)
4) **performativity of identity**, including difference between performativity and performance (*Judith Butler), social networking (Internet)

5) **performance of the entrepreneurial self** in the neoliberal capitalist context (post-industrial production, mass media, free market and competition etc.), actualizing possibilities, the value of performances (* Jon McKenzie), economic value of communication, expression… (* Maurizio Lazzarato); managerial handbooks and trainings (behaviour, body postures, gestures, body language)

sources
Erving Goffman
1959: *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, University of Edinburgh Social Sciences Research Centre.
1963: *Behavior in Public Places: Notes on the Social Organization of Gatherings*, The Free Press.
1971: *Relations in Public: Microstudies of the Public Order.* New York: Basic Books.
1974: *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience.* London: Harper and Row.
Gregory Bateson, *Theory of Play and Fantasy* (The question of seriousness and unseriousness)
D. S. Schwayder, *The Stratification of Behaviour* (Austinian traditions)
Michel Foucault: History of Sexuality; essays *Ethics*: "Technology of the self", "Care of the self", "Biopower", "The Birth of Biopolitics" etc.
Judith Butler: *Gender trouble*; *Bodies that matter*; *Undoing gender*; "Performing Identity – *intervju* (Ana ima)
Rudolf von Laban, *The Laban Sourcebook*, Routledge, July 2011
Meyerhold, *Biomechanics*
Century of the Self BBC documentary film that focuses on the family of Sigmund Freud, particularly his daughter and nephew, who influenced the way corporations and governments throughout the 20th century have thought about, and dealt with, people.

category#3 ART ENGAGING ISSUES OF THE PUBLIC/PRIVATE
(we exclude the genres of community art and public art)

- audience as a narrowed sphere of public
- artistic citizenship (*Randy Martin)
- contextual approach (in Socialism and post-Socialism) vs. contextual art (*Paul Ardenne)
- Participation and/in art (*Claire Bishop, *Irit Rogoff)
- Historical: direct democracy of Joseph Beuys, clandestine hijacking of Tomislav Gotovac (Belgrade / Zagreb)
- Thomas Hirschhorn
- Wochenklausur
- Public Movement (Israel)
- Arpad Schilling, Kretakor and the "community specific" theatre (Budapest / Paris)
- Théâtre Permanent (Les Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers)
- Christoph Schliengensief
- Urban Campment
- Aernout Mik
- Tania Bruguera
- theater in private space (at home), the living room theater of Jean-Lorin Sterian and private house festival in Madrid and Berlin, Rabih Mroueh about performances in Beirut, Collective Actions in Moscow 1980s (Andrej Monastirsky et al.)
- Hannah Hurtzig's *Blackmarket of Knowledge*

sources

Campbel, Mary Schmidt and Martin, Randy. *Artistic Citizenship: A Public Voice for the Arts*. New York and London: Routledge, 2006.
Aernout Mik, http://www.citizensandsubjects.nl/
Extérieur Danse Essai sur la danse dans l'espace public, Livre-DVD, Editions L'entretemps

<u>The following CONCEPTS make up the framework of our research</u>.

We distinguish between concepts whose readymade definitions we consider and concepts that we propose or invent (although they may use common terms)

Concepts and theories of reference:

- Public space
- Public good
- Public/private
- Performance
- Performativity
- Hegemony
- Contemporaneity
- Rhetorics
- Public opinion, public debate, common sense
- Opinion-making, programming, curating, PR
- Social performance, social drama
- Social choreography
- Politics and ideology
- Biopolitics, biopower, discipline
- Political unconscious
- Men of action
- Act, action, intervention
- Object, subject, situation
- Outside
- Heterotopia
- Gesture
- Scene
- Performance of the self
- Technology of the self
- Performance and practice
- Rehearsal and repetition
- Actor-network theory

Concepts to be invented:

- Public space of discussion
- Performance of discussion
- Social choreography
- Acting, act, actor vs. performing, performance, performer
- Bio-bourgeoisie (part of the creative class)

The ASSUMPTIONS and QUESTIONS we pose

1) concerning the problems of performance and performativity today:
Do we affirm and struggle for a right to performance (Butler)?
Do we critique the general paradigm of performance in the context of postindustrial capitalism (McKenzie)? If so, what do we affirm (not essence or substance)
What is the role of performance in two antagonistic political systems of the 20th century, namely, capitalism and communism?
Capitalism: performance – from competence to competition, from productivity to efficiency; performance of the individual's competence, hiding its ideology; instrumental performance
Communism, Socialism: performance of the ideology, the state or the people perform itself/themselves (self-referential, tautological);

2) concerning the difference in the status of public space in former socialism and capitalism today:
Investment in situations – by interest/profit (pragmatism)
Investment in public good – by duty/concern (dogmatism)
Third way proposed by the philosophers of science, insisting on situations and networks, "complexity", deferral, no resolution, process, participation, struggle (Latour, Stengers)
Fourth way, our ideas, approaches we are interested in: legacy of the socialist approach to public space in the context of neo-lib capitalism/ private property

3) The focus is on the actual social context and time. But three historial periods (fictionalized or not) are important:

- Ancient Greece (Athenian democracy)
- 18th century & Enlightenment etc
- 2nd half of the 20th century & communism, socialism

4) Our departure is equality, and not constituted differences (or differences to be constituted) like in community art

We conceive of the preliminary TASKS as follows:

- investigate the concept of public space in ancient Rome – why it didn't exist in Greece?
- examine the definitions of social drama according to Schechner and Turner, of performance in McKenzie, of social choreography in Hewitt, ie whether they are useful or appropriate to the phenomena we will investigate today
- explore the etymology of performance in languages other than English, the verb to perform (and related terms: show, do, present, act, represent)
- consider the common of the public space in relation to Rancière's "sensorium"

At the moment, we pose the following THESES FOR ELABORATION

Thesis#1 concerns public space
The public space in Western liberal democracies today isn't defined by genuine discussion, but is marked by the performance of discussion. Performance here implies rhetorics, seduction, and manipulation, and it also implies and indicates rules, procedures, codes, and conventions that limit and normativize the scope of what could be said and by whom, and not only how.
(*This could be observed from the notion of the meaning of the form – interpretation by poststructuralist means and methods; from Hjelmslev to Deleuze and Guattari, Kristeva etc.)
Our critical thesis could be supported by an interpretation of the socialist/communist public space in the second half of the 20th century that shows it as the space where discussion was, had to be restricted, whilst in the democratic one it is performed?
We are uncertain about genuine discussion as a real possibility in any political system. We don't have any recourse to an ideal model, nor do we support projections of Athenian democracy.

Thesis#2 concerns action in public space
We propose to shift perspective from performing to acting in public space in order to emphasize action, the verb to act and the act (but not necessarily activism as a genre). Action not as an expression of free will; but coordinated effort toward an end
Acting, act, action and actor are a set of terms that offer advantages to performance: 1. acting means activity, shaping actively, intervention, intrusion 2. it also implies fiction, "as-if" role, which endows it a speculative dimension
Performance is prescripted, its success is in its failure, in breaking or betraying the rules (competence, procedure, completeness, intentions). Acting, by contrast, doesn't presuppose or prefigure rules. To act might also mean to enact a new situation.

SIDE REMARKS/NOTES

1) The model of Athenian democracy: elitist
2) In representative democracy, for the subaltern that doesn't speak, representation should be provided by others – Spivak, problematic the transcendental logic
3) Action and gesture (Action – self-caused, teleological (by intention) or not. Gesture – a matter of effect, undergoing another cause, not self-caused) Repeatibility or uniqueness of gesture, performative, expression
4) The personal and the social, the private and the public, collapse into each other already in the19th century (elaborate!); in the 20th century escalation of this process under the imperative of communication, transparency, intimacy (through mass media); the result the loss of the public sphere for action
   complaint about alienation, demand for self-expression
   Vs. civility (mask, acting or performance)

NOTES FROM THEORETICAL AND HISTORICAL SOURCES
Notes#1 from Richard Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man as Actor*

"Man as Actor"
in the 18th century, the public actor is the man who presents emotions
presentation ≠ representation today, report of authentic and personal
presentation based on convention

three models in the 18th cent:

1. *theatrum mundi*
2. Diderot's theory of acting
3. Rousseau's critique of cosmopolitan life

1. "the world as a stage"

detachment of the actor from the act, separate characters of the actor and the act (cf Schechner doing vs showing doing (=performance)); no role is fixed in the city; recognizes pleasures and playfulness; confusion between who's on stage and who's wathcing (Montesquieu's *Persian letters*)

2. Diderot introduces the most secular idea of acting based on the separation between natural and artificial emotion in acting

Acting = simulating by artifice; artifice is superior to nature in expressing an emotion; studying emotion at distance to define its "essence" (as an object)
Yields repeatable social acts, thanks to three ideasL distance, appearance, calculation
An actor is the one who master the emotion in terms of its effectiveness, or arousal in the spectator; Sennett argues this as a situation of inequality
Diderot's *Paradox of the Actor* written in 1778, but published only in 1830; it reflects the war between Sentiment (reality, truth) and Calculation (fiction, artifice)
Cf. Huizinga the history of …play…

3. Rousseau – as the most ardent critic of the modern city (as an expressive milieu) and cosmopolitan life he dissected his object of critique meticulously

Introduces the third term between the citizen and the city *Mœurs* = the complete manner, the style a person possesses
Rousseau sees a corruption of mœurs in abundance and play in social interaction beyond necessity (duty); dependence on others for a sense of self – loss of an internal sense of self
"The great city is a theater. Its scenario is principally the search for reputations [pursuit of fame as an end in itself]. All city men become artists of a particular kind – actors. In acting out a pulic life, they lose contact with natural virtue. The artist and the great city are in harmony and the result is a moral disaster"
R. advocates life in a small town, more leisure time which allows search for a true self [honest soul]

"The End of Public Culture"
the 19th century responsible for an ideology of intimacy, which sees impersonality, alienation and coldness as the evils of society;

in the 19th century a confusion of public behavior and personality; in *theatrum mundi* all men are artists because they can act, then losing belief in the expressive powers of the individuals, elevating the artist as someone who is special because he can do what ordinary people can't
the culture of personality, emotional representation on which the social bond is formed, endorses the humanitarian spirit of a society without gods: warmth is our god; transmutes political categories into psychological categories
expression is made contingent upon authentic feeling
the dissipation of "group ego" interest – what people need, want or demand, not immediate emotional impressions
the notion of community is based on a fantasy of sharing a collective personality; thus the formation of community tied to localism (the family, the school, the neighborhood)
"intimate society": now what matters is not what you have done, but how you feel about it (motivation, intention)
individual is an actor deprived of an art
in the political realm the leader is the one whose personality will be strongly declared; citizens as passive spectators of a political personage who offers his intentions, his sentiments, rather than his acts, for their consumption
charismatic leadership today – media deflects followers from measuring his acts, his charisma depends on the ability to dramatize his own motivations
"fraternicide" – community seen as a fraternity narrowing itself down, excludng outsiders

what Sennett proposes instead:
"civility" – it is the activity which protexts people from each other and yet allows them to enjoy each other's company; wearing a mask is the essenc eof civility, but the masks must be created by those who will wear them, through trial and error
active expression requires human effort, and this effort can succeed only to the extent that people limit what they express to one another

<u>Notes #2 Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life*, 1959</u>
Situation of human interaction: definition of terms
8-9, **Interaction** – face-to-face, the reciprocal influence of individuals upon one another's actions when in one another's immediate physical presence; an encounter
Performance – all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants; those who contribute the other performances are the audience, observers or co-participants
The pre-established pattern of action which is unfolded during a performance and which may be presented or played through on other occasions may be called a **'part'** or **'routine'**.
When an individual or performer plays the same part to the same audience on different occasions, a social relationship is likely to arise.
Simbolicki oklop/okvir -

Definition of the situation:
4, Together the participants contribute to a single overall definition of the situation which involves not so much a real agreement as to what exists but rather a real agreement as to whose claims concerning what issues will be temporarily honoured.

6, the individiaul effectively projects a definition of the situation when he enters the presence of others
Working consensus
Each participant is expected to suppress his immediate heartfelt feelings, conveying a view of the situation which he feels the others will be able to find at least temporarily acceptable.
Society is organized on the principle that any individual who possesses certain social characteristics has a moral right to expect that others will value and treat him in a correspondingly appropriate way.

Defensive (protecting one's own projection) and protective practices (save the definition of the other)

"The arts of impression management"
combination of advice to business professionals and etiquette of upper middle-class
unmeant gestures, inopportune intrusions, faux pas, creating a scene – failures of the performative utterance
135, When these flusterings or symptoms of embarrassment become perceived, the reality that is supported by the performance is likely to be further jeopardized and weakened, for these signs of nervousness in most cases are an aspect of the individual who presents a character and not an aspect of the character he projects, thus forcing upon the audience an image of the man behind the mask
- dramaturgical loyalty
- dramaturgical discipline
137, A performer who is disciplined, dramaturgically speaking, is someone who remembers his part and does not commit unmeant gestures or faux pas in performing it. He is someone with discretion: he does not give the show away by involuntarily disclosing its secrets. He is someone with 'presence of mind' who can cover p on the spur of the moment for inapporpriate behaviour on the part of his team-mates, while all the time mainatining the impression that he is merely playing his part.
138, Perhaps the focus of dramaturgical discipline is to be found in the management of one's face and voice.
- dramaturgical circumspection
a method is to prepare in advance for all possible expressive contingencies: one application of this strategy is to settle on a complete agenda before the event, designating who is to do what and who is to do what after that.
- protective practices
147, Etiquette as regards tactful inattention, and the effective privacy it provides

<u>Notes #3 Erving Goffman *Frame analysis*</u>
Reality and perception of reality: William James – Alfred Schutz – Harold Garfinkel – Gregory Bateson
Concepts and question of: perception of reality, multiple worlds, seriousness and unseriousness

Goffman's concern: "The book is about the organization of experience – something that an individual actor can take into his mind – and not the organization of society."

For us, it might be interesting to consider in relation to perception, effects, results and consequences of acting/performing in the public sphere. How do we affect something by our action if the action is perceived differently by different actors that also take part in a social situation? Or, if it is so, then how to influence / orientate / direct / manipulate the perceptions?

Ana & Bojana, an analysis of ways / manners / modes of acting in public space: acting (gluma), performance, action, gesture, praxis, (social) behaviour