

BAGS - the body bouncing back

[durational performances proposed by radical_hope]



... sleeping BAG, peeping BAG, leaking BAG, creeping BAG and other BAGS are performances on resilience : making use of speechless and motionless communication (pure bodily presence, camouflage, invisible relocation and rumours), BAGS is a means of rehearsing speculation and paranoia.

A performer commits him-/herself within a given public setting (festival lounge, shopping mall, public space, etc.) to dress in a bag-costume, lay down in a sleeping position and move as little as possible and for as long as possible. He/she waits for 'blind moments', during which an unrecognizable change of location can take place.

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Resilience : staying power and the ability to bounce back.

How can we communicate when speech and recognizable movement aren't available instruments for connecting with each other any longer ?



Camouflage : becoming an object and blending in with the surroundings.

The design of the bag-costume will depend on the context, space and type of venue, be it a festival-foyer, 24-hour event or public space in daily use.



Stillness : setting a norm of motion.

The normal mode of presence for a 'bag-performer' is being 'static'. Since this is not actually possible to achieve, performing 'being static' demands a kind of motion which allows the body to communicate the illusion of stillness. It is comparable to a state of meditation where the performer maintains a tension between being aware and almost being absent - 'sleeping'.



Relocation : motion with, within and around a body.

While maintaining the physical well-being of his/her body by moving muscles and bones in a certain way, the performer needs to be aware of the surrounding bodies in order to find 'blind moments' during which a relocation in space can take place. Without drawing attention to him-/herself, the performer moves to another place where he installs him-/herself quickly in order to then go back to a state of 'stillness'. The bag literally disappears from one location and becomes present in another.

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Rumors : stories and paranoia.

In order to establish a connection between the 'still' and 'invisible' body, and the public, different rumours about the BAG are spread beforehand. The circulating contradictory information produces fragments of unreliable stories, causing a state of 'positive paranoia' — an attitude of speculation which makes it possible to refer to a reality that is not yet identifiable, certain, stable or predictable.



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<<< photos : first BAGS performance, with 6 relocations in 17 hours, in the frame of the 24-hour event, 'Let's swim to our islands' organized by the French artist NG, hosted by Nadine, Brussels, on the 1st and 2nd of May 2010. <http://ngng-news.blogspot.com>

radical_hope is a character at work, confronting us with what art does and can(not) do. The guiding question is how, from an artistic point of view, a context can be touched and challenged without losing its natural complexity. The practice of radical_hope generates in-situ instruments for social transition and tries to put into action the principle of changeability.