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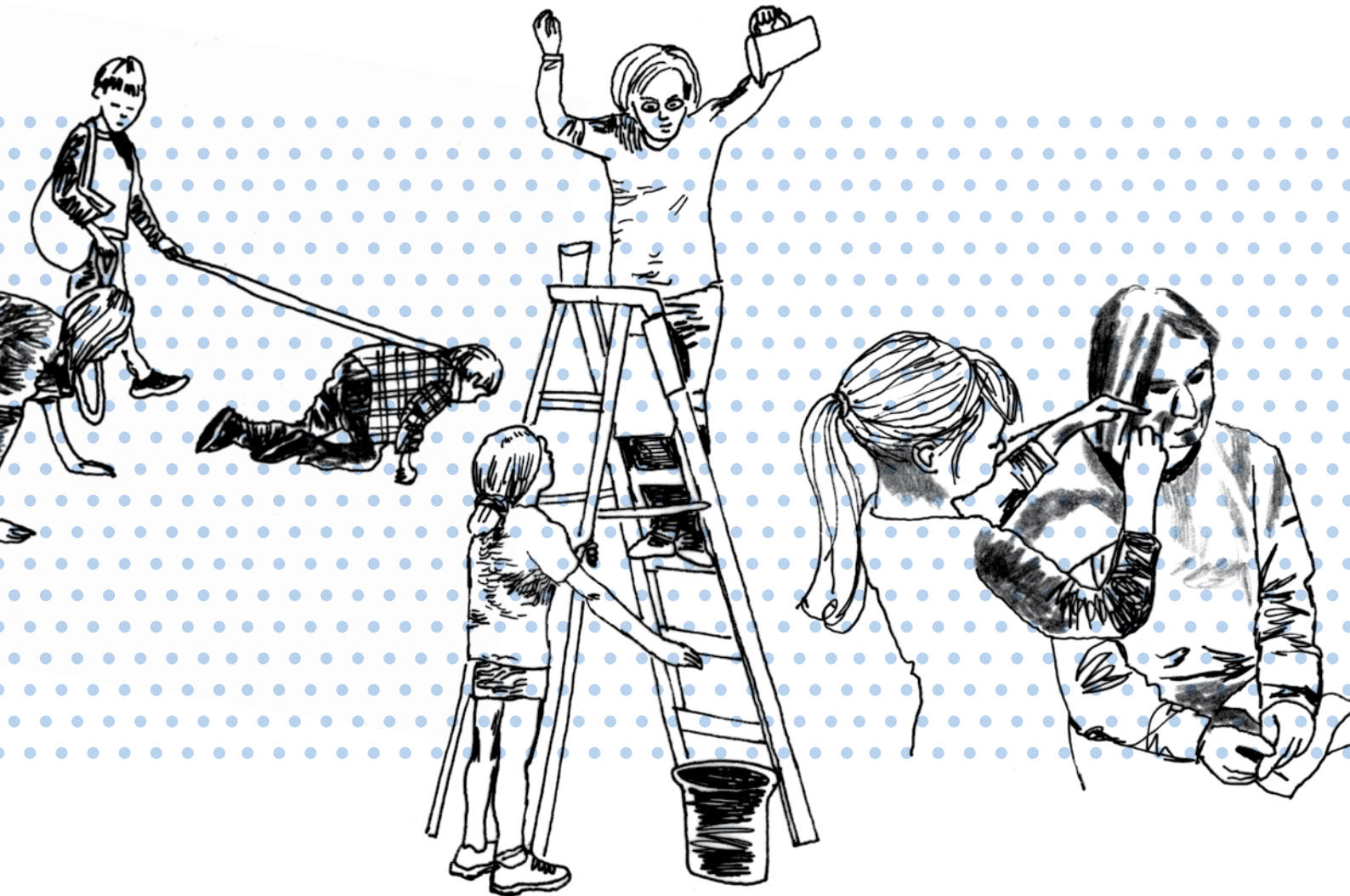
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ON  
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PRIVILEGE

TOOLKIT



Live Art  
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# performing research

How to conduct research projects with  
kids and adults using Live Art strategies

SIBYLLE PETERS /  
THEATRE OF RESEARCH (GERMANY)  
2017



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## How to conduct research projects with kids and adults using Live Art strategies

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In 2016 Sibylle Peters collaborated with LADA on two key initiatives – *PLAYING UP*, a Live Art game for kids and adults, and a Study Room research residency exploring practices and methodologies in relation to intergenerational Live Art.

The development of *PLAYING UP* drew on Sibylle's distinct methodologies, and as part of her research residency she has created this toolkit on how to conduct research projects with kids and adults using Live Art strategies.

# Introduction

For 15 years the Theatre of Research has been conducting projects in which artists, scientists and children collaborate as researchers. Working through more than a dozen projects I have developed something like a methodology of how to organise this kind of process: using means, practices and formats of Live Art and participatory theatre, which can be understood as cultural strategies. In a long series of workshops and seminars, and supported by participants and colleagues<sup>1</sup>, I extracted a few central guidelines and this text provides a brief overview of methods, tools and formats. Of course, much more can be said about art based research, Live Art and kids, and participatory knowledge production. This text is not meant to be comprehensive, but is more of a rough, hands on guide on how to conduct these projects. As we basically *are* a ‘theatre of research’ the text focuses primarily on the research aspect of things, rather than on the interplay of generations. Many of the ways of working described here can also apply to similar diverse projects with other participants.

1. Thanks to Esther Pilkington, Daniel Ladnar, Matthias Aton, Katharina Duve, Christina Witz, Hanno Krieg, Hannah Kowalski, all the kids I had the pleasure of doing research with, the people working at Theatre of Research, FUNDUS THEATER Hamburg, and to all of my students.

# 1. Wish production: Developing a research project

Doing research is very simple. We all do it from an early age: we want something – for example, we want to learn something, experience something, absorb something, have something, achieve something – and so we try. Mostly, it does not work out the first time. So we try again, and again it does not work out, and then again, somewhat different than before, and now it almost works. So again, we try something a little bit different, and, oops, what just happened? This way we start a series of tests, keep going and do not allow ourselves to be disappointed too quickly. And thus, research has already begun.

In their early research, children often have amazing experiences of success. Indeed, they succeed in standing, walking, speaking, drawing. No wonder that for a while many of them think that everything is possible: if you can learn to speak, why not to perform magic or attempt to fly? And as a matter of fact, humans have learned many things that at first appeared to be magic, and by now we can also fly. However, we have not achieved this on our own, but together with others, in complex constellations of humans and things.

Yet, instead of growing into this joint research, children and adolescents are often taught something completely different: namely, that there are certain things they have to learn regardless of their desires and wants. And furthermore, they learn that certain wishes can be fulfilled and others cannot (at least not for them), and that there are predefined ways that have to be followed in order to fulfill the more realistic wishes. Ways that are often connected to years of learning.

As inevitable as these experiences may seem, they often harm our primary sense of research. It wastes away, and then a societal division of labour takes effect: research becomes something that only a few can afford or are allowed to do. Only those who are best at learning and who go to school the longest and then go on to university become researchers in the end.

In contrast to this typical development, to undertake performative research means to use methods of Live Art in order to keep the primary sense of research alive, which is driven by our desires and wants, and to playfully shift from individual to collective research. In this process, the sense of research and the sense of possibility are deeply linked: we will only continue to do research if we believe that there is a chance for our wishes to come true.

At the Theatre of Research, we therefore always start with participants' wishes. We call this "wish production". At first sight, it seems easy to wish for something, but in fact we often first have to activate our "wish energy". For a long time, we have conducted so-called "wish meetings" with people of all ages at the Theatre of Research. With adults, we often had similar results: more time, health, a happy family, travelling, justice, peace. Nothing against these wishes! It is truly difficult enough to fulfil them. However, with children these "wish meetings" are more interesting.

Here are some wishes of children aged seven to eleven from which research projects have been developed in recent years, or are currently being developed, at the Theatre of Research:

I want to be an inventor  
and I want all my inventions to work.  
Perhaps meet a ghost?  
I wish to have a time machine.  
I want to be a pirate.  
I want to be rich.  
I once would like to experience  
a real miracle.  
I want to be an astronaut  
and live in space.  
I would like to be queen.  
I would like to be able  
to talk to animals.

Children are often "better" at wishing than adults. In return, it is more up to the grown-ups to determine which wish is suitable for a joint research project, because for this certain conditions have to be fulfilled:

The wish should be big and strong and shared by many (the "oh-yes-effect").

The wish should not be easy to fulfill. At the Theatre of Research we speak of an "improbability field" that is generated by a wish.

In order to fulfill the wish "I want the new PlayStation", one does not necessarily need a research project. The wish "I would like to be able to talk to animals" is different. However, it is important to always take into consideration the context: if in one group the wish for electronic devices is very strong and at the same time financial resources are particularly low, a research project can by all means start with the aim to build a PlayStation.

The projects of the Theatre of Research aim to enable children and adults, artists and scientists to do research together. To make this possible, our project development is based on a wish triangle:

Here again, the wish is the starting point and also the point of the triangle where the children enter the process.

The second corner of the triangle stands for the starting point of knowledge production, the entry point for the adult researcher: which research question can be connected to the wish? What kind of discourse, what kind of expertise may exist, perhaps in academia and science, that can help fulfill the wish?

The third corner of the triangle is the artists' entry point. Their task is it to come up with a setup, with means and experimental practices to realise the wish. This includes experimental artistic practices, design, building equipment, public interventions, writing, music etc.; and last but not least the resources of art as an institution: spaces, time, money, social relations, publics, etc.

In order for a wish to become a research project, ideally all three corners of the wish triangle should be defined. It is the task of the adults to guide the transition from wish to wish triangle, from wish meeting to a first concept for a research project. For this, inspiration and also a bit of luck are needed.

## For example

I want to be an astronaut  
and live in space.

At first this childhood wish appeared to us as the kind of wish that only comes true for a very few. Only a few dozen people have made it to space so far – after years of studying, military training and a fierce selection process.

Only after we read Buckminster Fuller's texts, which suggest we think of the earth itself as a spaceship, that we found an approach to turn this wish into a research project (second corner: knowledge production). His writings have been an inspiration for a whole generation of artists and researchers. After watching the pictures made by the Apollo astronauts they had a new image of our planet in their heads – how it floats though the infinite night, in its beauty, uniqueness and vulnerability. The research question connected to this: how can we change our everyday experience in such a way that we can actually experience the earth as spaceship and our existence as a journey through space?

This is where the artistic expertise kicked in (third corner artists' creation): We built a mobile space station from tents to be set up in a schoolyard or public space, and filled it with all kinds of equipment to practice being astronauts without leaving the earth. We founded the Club of Autonomous Astronauts, developed audioguides for experimenting with gravity ("Flying While Lying") and came together in the theatre for assemblies of the club presenting our research results to each other.

So, wish, knowledge production and artistic creation – all points of the triangle were defined.

## Common challenges

Many art based research projects run the risk of failure because two mistakes are made at the very beginning:

### 1. They rely too much on curiosity

Of course, all researchers and all children are curious. Curiosity is a very important feeling in research processes. However, it is less sustainable than one might think: if one encounters a problem in the research process and the process enters a state of crisis (and this inevitably happens sooner or later), curiosity can run dry quickly. It is difficult, if not impossible, to again inspire pure curiosity, once it has faded. However, if a collective research project is instead based on a collective wish, the process can overcome a crisis. For we are all used to this: making wishes come true is not something you do just like that, you have to try again and try differently.

### 2. They are too open

Research shouldn't be confused with drifting openness. The conceptual framework of a joint research project has to be really clear to allow children, and all kinds of heterogeneous partners, to act, explore and create on eye level and drive the process together.

## 2. Role play in the improbability field

If a research set-up is developed and all corners of the wish triangle are defined, then between them emanates what we call the “improbability field”. The collaboration between children (wish energy) and adults (knowledge of discourse and artistic means) seems to make something possible that seemed impossible before.

The research process now starts by trying to experience and manoeuvre this possibility as something real. Performative role play is a good way to do this and at the same time an easy entrance into the performative research process.

### For example

I once would like to experience  
a real miracle.

Starting from this wish of a child we researched the history of cabinets of wonders in early modern history, (wonders and miracles being one and the same in German: Wunder). At that time – before the establishment of modern academia and the separation between natural and human sciences – scholars collected objects that appeared wondrous to them in so-called cabinets of wonder. The attitude of these miracle searchers and collectors seemed worthy of imitation to us: instead of waiting for a miracle, they wandered the world searching for the extraordinary. And they were successful. If we adopted this attitude today, what would we classify as extraordinary and wondrous?

The project “The Search for Miracles” thus started by taking on this attitude: all participants, children as well as adults, transformed into ‘miracle searchers’. The research process could take its starting point from the creation of these roles. What makes somebody a good miracle searcher? How do we have to change our perception in order to search for miracles? What kind of equipment may a miracle searcher find useful? How does a searcher for miracles proceed?

To become a searcher for miracles means engaging in performative role play. In contrast to taking on a role from a dramatic text, this role is not fictional, but real. Hence, taking on a performative role is not like playing theatre. The logics of traditional theatre seem somehow inverted here: instead of embodying a fiction as authentically and realistically as possible, our improbability field might appear as a fiction at first sight, but subsequently becomes a part of reality. We really become miracle searchers, as much as we really become astronauts on spaceship Earth. These roles rather resemble those we also take on in our everyday lives, in families, at school, in neighbourhoods, and so on. Of course, these new roles are also “improbable roles”. And as such they are always in competition with our everyday roles. This is good, because it offers a meaningful kind of friction. To make this productive, the performative role play needs special attention, a special frame and many good ideas for the embodiment, so that it can be experienced as real without being superimposed by our other everyday roles. Children are good accomplices for the development of such a kind of role play, as they are practiced in playfully taking on roles.

To fill the performative role play with life is a big step in the performative research process, as it creates two crucial advantages:

1. As all participants in the project transform into miracle searchers or Earth astronauts, they all can meet as equals. It is their collaboration that made the invention of the new roles possible in the first place. As a consequence, it is easier than before to act as equals. The new roles can thus also be connected to new rules of interacting with each other.
2. Through performative role play, a research concept becomes a physical process. Hence, with the beginning of the performative role play everybody can join the research process and find his or her own approach: What kind of miracle searcher am I? How do I feel as an Earth astronaut? What is needed for me to really fill and enjoy my role?

Here are a few formats to enter into the performative role play:

#### **Initiation**

Carry out a small ritual in which everybody takes on the new role for the first time!

#### **Address**

Write and then deliver an address to the assembled miracle searchers or Earth astronauts or ...

#### **Signs of membership**

Give out membership cards or badges so that everyone can identify themselves in their new role.



### Motto

Develop a motto, a slogan, a secret code or a common gesture together.

### Equipment or costume

Find an object that everyone receives and uses who takes on the new role, something in between tool, gear and symbol.

### Marking time and place

Have a flag that is always flown, or a sheet that is laid out whenever the performative role play takes place or a special kind of clock allocates the time frame in which the new roles are taken on.

## Common challenges

The role play completely shifts into the fictional.

The special appeal as well as the explorative character of the performative role play are dependent on embodying the improbable role in a way that is as real as possible. Playing the role in a fictional way can be helpful again and again for finding new ideas to take this play into reality. However, it should not take the lead in the process. Thus the question if something shifts more into the direction of fiction or into the direction of reality can be asked and discussed repeatedly throughout the process.



### 3. The process of joint research

On the level that is easiest and accessible to all, to do research in the improbability field is first and foremost a process of trial and error: as the research set-up is based on a wish, its aim and common intention are a given. The art practices, the discursive questions and presuppositions that are added to the wish set the course for the actual activities with which the group of researchers now attempts to reach the aim.

In practice, this interaction is of course often a little more complex. It is important for the collective research process, however, to repeatedly align the procedure with the intention or aim. Only thus will all participants be able to take part in the collective assessment, reflection and regulation that should take place after each intermediate step of the process:

Did this step bring us closer to our aim? Yes or no?  
Why? Did it bring us somewhere else instead?

It is important to note that difficulties which occur during a research project are by no means caused by mistakes in the conduct of the process, but are often the form in which results of the joint research first become evident. The actual difficulty then lies in identifying the insight that is hidden in a practical problem, while at the same time trying to solve it.

In research projects including children's "simplicity" is important. However, different from what one might think, this simplicity does not necessarily have to be an obstacle to the research. In contrast, it forces the adult co-researchers to be clear and to thoroughly think through the collective procedure. Discursive manoeuvring and obfuscating jargon do not help here.

## For example

I want a time machine!

This wish for us seemed related to cultural studies research on the notion of time: the basic thesis here is that rather than a universal condition of our existence, what we call “time” is in many respects a device, produced socially and through media, which structures all societal practices. Simply put: together, we produce time. From a historical and ethnographic perspective, it also becomes evident how different what we call “time” can be respectively. Nevertheless, it is apparently difficult for us to initiate changes on the level of the production of time and temporality: how to act consciously and collectively in order to transform “time” as such? We mainly experience time as something that happens to us and to which we are subjected. Why is that? And is it generally possible to consider and experience time as something that we can produce this way or another? Can we build a societal time machine with which we could actually change time? We tried to do this in the project *School Clock and Time Machine*, the first research project ever conducted at the Theatre of Research. Primary school seemed like an ideal research field to us, as all of us learn fundamental things about time when we start going to school.

In numerous interviews that we conducted with children, primarily from second grade three, notable characteristics of school time became evident: the concept of punctuality, the difference between working time and leisure time, and that we often have to do something now, in the present, if we want something particular later, in the future. Thus, school time is a first version of what we later

in life simply understand as “time”. Therefore, we went to school to find out, together with children, how time is actually produced at school and if and how we could change it. In order to approach this complex question in the simplest way possible, we suggested the following experiment to the children: to collectively turn off school time. In keeping with scientific procedure, this experiment would offer us insight into the factors that produce school time. Starting from the aim to at least temporarily turn off school time, which was shared by all participants, the research process proceeded in various sub-steps.

In the first step we banned all clocks from the class room.

*“Is there still school time?”*

*“Yes – there is still the bell!”*

Accordingly, the next step was an excursion to find out where the bell sound came from. As it was regularly found that the bell could not be turned off, the group at this point decided to develop a different way of measuring time in order to oppose the time structure prescribed by the bell. As a performative method for this we used a big soundproofed box. With it the children now developed a form of “box time” – for example, by agreeing that our lesson of time research should take as long as it would take all children to sit inside the box on their own once. The activity of the children became the relevant unit of time. This method usually led to a partial success with regard to our intention:

*“Is there still school time?”*

*“No – now there is box time.”*

In research projects that run for a longer period of time, it is advisable to divide the greater undertaking into several smaller ones in order to generate various experiments and tasks for each new phase of the project. Ideally, this division is made on the basis of insights that are collectively gained in the research process. For example:

*“Do you already feel like an astronaut?”*

*“No, astronauts can fly.”*

*“But we are flying through space on Earth.”*

*“But I cannot feel that.”*

*“OK, then the next question would be: how can we do that – feel that we are flying on Earth? We can develop a special flight training. This is our next task.”*

Here it becomes evident how important the moment of failure or of non-achievement is for the process. This is one further reason why the joint procedure should be defined as clearly as possible and why it should be formulated and pursued with a certain level of ambition: because it is only this clarity that brings with it the possibility of failure and thereby creates the condition to really advance the research.

## Common challenges

### 1. Research is often confused

Research is often confused with either data collection or merely experiencing something. However, research is different from both of them due to the fact that it enables us to actually fail, and then learn from that failure and shift our practice. Nevertheless, data collection as well as experience are an important part of research.

In doing research on time machines it is, of course, useful to review different types of chronometry that have existed in different times and that exist in other societies before inventing one's own device in form of a box. Likewise, it makes sense to find out how professional astronaut training works in order to consider which elements of it could be adopted to the training for Earth astronauts. These kinds of investigations are fun. Moreover, they confront all participants with the task of presenting results to each other in an interesting way.

### 2. Ideal and reality of the process

The process of trial and error is necessarily presented here in a straightforward way. In reality it is not always that easy to decide on the next step after the moment of failure, of not achieving one's goal in the process. Instead, it often takes time and a good night's sleep. It is important to recognise the moment of error as such, share it with everybody and cherish it as a chance for the next step, even if this step might not be immediately obvious. It is also important to enjoy each sub-step irrespective of its success in achieving the desired result.

Thus, each sub-step has to be planned and designed in a way that intensifies the experience in the improbability field and the performative role play by involving interesting tasks and new impressions for all participants. The way is the goal. (And sometimes, the goal is actually in the way.)

### 3. Process and presentation

Later on we will look at ways of presenting research on stage. Nevertheless process and presentation are closely related and should be throughout. A research process is very different from a production process that is aimed first and foremost at producing a stage show, a presentation. As the model of the production process is still predominant in the performing arts, it is not easy to leave that logic behind. At the same time, this attempt can result in the opposite problem: in order to focus on the research process as such, it is initially organised independently from the presentation. At some point, however, the date for the presentation quickly approaches. Suddenly, the process is determined and changed by outside factors and practical constraints. Established roles and task divisions take over and put an end to research. Frequently, this is the point in the process when the social cohesion among the project participants is challenged. If possible, such a development has to be avoided by relating process and presentation to each other from the outset.

In a performative research process many presentational elements are already in place during the process. Once the equipment has been developed that is needed to search for miracles, beautiful material for the concluding presentation is also already at hand. Once an initiation ritual has been found that marks the shift from everyday life to space travel, this can be repeated with the audience in the final presentation. And once a “box clock” has been developed, it can also be used to time the final presentation itself.

Conversely, presentations are embodiments and materialisations of research hypotheses. This is why they are always also relevant for the research. Often the attempt to present an idea, statement or result in a way that makes it palpable brings with it something completely new. Therefore, it always makes sense to incorporate a small presentation task as a sub-step into the process. For example: everybody brings the most wondrous object that he or she can find and presents it to the others. This way, a lot of material is already developed playfully during the process that can then be used for final presentations.

## Documentation during the research process

In this context, the documentation of the research process is of great importance. No general formula exists for this; every process needs its own appropriate form of documentation.

### As a basic rule

Each research step should be documented in a form that is defined beforehand. What has to be avoided here is the danger of indeterminately focusing a camera on an event for hours. This produces too much and mostly bad material that takes too long to edit. The clearer the concept for documenting, the less work has to be put into the evaluation of the material and the more the documentation can be part of the research itself. The documentation should be considered as an instrument of research rather than an independent procedure taking place alongside the research process. At the same time, the process of documentation can and should be used to structure each respective phase of the research.

### Example: photographs

As part of a miracle search excursion the participating children can be divided into smaller groups. Each group is given the task of taking one and only one photo of an object or an event pointed at with the “miracle arrow”. This way the group will consider in detail, what they would like to take a photograph of and the limited number of photographs that are thus produced will themselves become an intermediate research result. At the next

meeting, all participants can look at the photographs together and can discuss whether they succeeded in photographing a miracle or not, and whether it is at all possible to capture a miracle through media.

### Example: video

As part of the project *School Clock and Time Machine*, we installed a camera invisibly in a small silver box and told the children that they could use the box to send messages to the future. Each child then had the possibility to deliver such a message. Later in the process, and thus in the future, we played these messages back to participants, and thereby could at the same time discuss how all media recordings somehow can be considered time machines and how participants imagined the particular future to which they had sent the messages.

### Example: text

The tents of the space station of the *Club of Autonomous Astronauts* have little windows through which astronauts see parts of the surroundings, for example school and schoolyard or a public space. Astronauts are asked to try and adopt the perspective of someone, who has just landed on Earth and can only see this small section of the planet and write their observations down in a log.

As is evident in these examples, all participants are involved in documenting the process. There is also a productive ambivalence between what is a document and what is trace of the project, and how one might turn into the other.

## 4. Improbable institutions, alternative publics

There are wishes and wants, which both Live Art and knowledge production cannot fulfill, not even by joining forces.

### For example

I want to become rich.

The wish for money, for wealth, can be found in every round of wishes. The reason for this is not only the fact that money is presented to us as something like a universal medium to fulfill our wishes. Often it is the participants' own experience of poverty that fuels this wish. Statistics show that children generally are subjected to poverty much more often than adults.

For a long time, we had wanted to develop a research project that engages with this problem. However, despite the seriousness of the issue, the other two corners of the wish triangle stayed blank: after all, in the arts, too, there is never enough money. Only when we learned about alternative currencies in the course of the financial crisis and met citizens and researchers who had founded their own banks and issued community currencies, did we realise the huge potential for research inherent in this wish. Together with children, students and local shop owners we founded The Children's Bank and printed our own money: Adventure Money, with which children really were able to pay for things and services in the shops that are part of our network.

“And now that we are a bank and are printing our own money, are we actually rich?” What actually is wealth? And what does one learn about the connection between wealth and money when printing one's own money?

On their own, the Theatre of Research, the university which was involved, and the participating schools would not have been able to found the *Children's Bank*. It was only the participation of the shops from the neighbourhood that made this possible. In order to motivate the shops to participate, the *Children's Bank* had to be developed as a cooperative model that by helping the local community had advantages for everyone involved.

During the assemblies of the *Children's Bank*, which took place on stage at the Theatre of Research, everybody came together: shop owners, children, students, experts for alternative currencies or child poverty, neighbours, parents, pedagogues and artists. Together with the children we prepared these assemblies in detail: we designed the assembly space including stage set and technology and we rehearsed small presentations in which the children could share their experiences and findings with the adults. We prepared documentary material for the assembly and created ways to collectively decide on the future of the project.



Looking at *The Children's Bank Hamburg*, the *Club of Autonomous Astronauts* and also the *Ghosts Insurance*, which will be discussed next, it becomes evident that our research projects often generate improbable institutions located between reality and fiction. The improbability field seem to take the form of trial institutions into which our theatre temporarily transforms. This is fun and makes sense, because within such an institution everyone can take on different roles and tasks in order to both work on something like a trial reality and simultaneously do research.

At the same time, the example of the *Children's Bank* shows that performative research projects, of course, have a huge potential to bring people together. What is explored are often also new forms and possibilities of gathering and of citizenship: how do we want to live and act together as citizens of tomorrow?

As part of *Children's Bank*, many people who do not usually interact in everyday life in their district really met for the first time. The participating children are key for this development: when they are empowered to play a role in the district's public life, for example as 'children bankers', they have the capacity to bring neighbourhoods and communities closer together. This also works on a smaller scale, for example during a miracle search when children ask older neighbours what miracles they have experienced.

Children give a lot to others and, after overcoming the initial shyness, they are happy when they are empowered to do so, like we all are. To become miracle searchers or children bankers offers above all the possibility to try what it is like to take on a public role and take part in public life in a way not experienced before. One fundamental effect of this kind of research is the generation of a project-specific public. It is worthwhile to stay in contact with everybody who participated in a project, for example via email, not least because then they can all be invited as an audience for the concluding presentation. Of course, it is a lot of work to generate a project-specific audience that way. However, it is worth the effort: when successful, the final presentation is thus transformed into an assembly of people who have a real interest in the research and who can recognise and reflect their own contribution to the results.



## 5. Presenting research results – calling assemblies

An assembly, in which everybody comes together who participated in the performative research project in one way or the other, possibly bringing a few friend, is an ideal forum for the concluding presentation.

Compared to a straightforward stage presentation, an assembly offers different, more extensive possibilities, as the assembly itself has to be staged: the entrance, the address, the seating arrangement, the participation of the audience members who might for instance be given food and drinks or specific personal equipment.

Generally, understanding the audience as an assembly creates a special situation and atmosphere. What is at stake here is not least an appreciation of the knowledge that was generated in the course of the research project. The results of a research project are generally valued in relation to the question who they are actually relevant for. Thus, it is of great importance that a context is created as part of the project in which the research results that are produced collectively can be relevant.



## Common challenges

### Learning instead of researching

When it comes to work with children as participants there is a lot of talk of research and exploring; however, the knowledge that is collectively produced in these projects is often not valued as real knowledge or insight. Often, children are asked to do research in order to acquire knowledge that seems to have existed beforehand. In these cases research is understood as research-based learning and its value is measured primarily with regard to the effect it has on the learners. Of course, research processes ideally have a positive effect on the participants. And admittedly, the difference between learning and researching is not always that clear in this context, as preexisting knowledge keeps changing, transforming and expanding as soon as it is embodied and tested in new contexts. As a basic principle, however, the effect of the research project on the researchers is especially positive when the knowledge they have produced and the experience they have made are appreciated as such. Of course, it cannot be expected that a research group including lots of children contributes new insights into the physics of chronometry. However, this does not mean that they are generally unable to generate new insights, because it always depends on the context and the respective public the research is addressed to whether knowledge is new and important: It is of real interest to people thinking about time management in school how children might deal with time, when empowered to do so. It is of real interest not only to the citizens of our district, but also to experts engaging with child poverty or alternative currencies, what the children have experienced and found out in the course of the project *Children's Bank*.

Performative research projects generate very different kinds of results: experiences that can be reported, equipment, photo and video documentation, interviews, protocols for interaction, choreographies, experimental set-ups and many more. Thus, there is no general answer to the question how the results of such a process can be presented. However, the process itself often already suggests a certain format, such as a cabinet of wonders visitors are guided through by the participants of the process.

As already mentioned, process and presentation should relate to one another from the very beginning of a research project: presentational elements are ideally developed throughout the entire process. When planning the final presentation, however, the most important question is what function the event can have for the research process itself.

## For example

Perhaps meet a ghost?

Starting from this wish *The Ghosts Insurance* is a project based on the ancient concept of the genius loci as in 'spirit of place' or 'local spirit'. Whenever a school takes out a ghosts insurance with the Theatre of Research, a team of performers visits the school in order to investigate its *genii loci* together with the children of that school.

First, a psychogeographical mapping is carried out by the children: they draw maps of their school and mark on them in colour the different atmospheres that can be found at school. The mapping is then analysed together: are there places with which the children associate the same, or very different, strong feelings? These places are visited in groups in order to observe and describe their atmospheres in more detail. Different perception and movement exercises culminate in the use of our ghost searching machine. When the children agree on a certain atmosphere that can be sensed in that space, it manifests itself in the form of a spirit that we then bottle into a glass with the help of the machine. The children name the spirit and speculate about the reasons for its emergence, its needs and its desires. This process is documented through

questionnaires, photos and sound recordings. The documents and the glasses with the spirits are then taken to the headquarters of the insurance company, that is to the theatre, in order to be further investigated. Shortly afterwards, children and teachers of the school are invited to a public séance. There, the children first hear about the theatre's spirits – about "Animat" or "Wechsler" ("Shifter") who help us bring objects to life or to embody different roles; but also about "Funke" ("Spark"), the spirit of ideas, and about "Kleingeist" ("Small Mind"), a spirit that likes destroying ideas and is in disbelief.

Then the spirits from the school are released from their glasses one after the other and encounter the theatre spirits contained in the large circle of chairs which are arranged around the stage. Through animation and improvisation, the spirits temporarily take form; an interactive concept enables the audience to intervene into this manifestation. Often, this setting enables participants to address conflicts, but also potentials of their school in a new way. Based on this experience the children are then asked to decide: Which spirits should return to school and officially become part of school life? And which spirits should rather remain in storage? What possibilities for improving the atmosphere at school arise from the search for local spirits?

This example shows how the presentation of results, in this case the séance, can itself become the culmination of the collective research process, instead of just showing the results as such. The assembly, the séance, completes the investigation of the spirits as manifestations of atmospheres at school. Only the collective presence makes a joint decision about the future of the spirits possible. As the children found, or rather invented, the spirits in small groups, the gathering is also the moment when they all learn about the spirits of the others. A comparably close relation between process and presentation can also be produced in completely different research projects. In order to devise such a relation, the following questions should be asked early on in the process:

*Who should be the audience the final presentation is addressed at?*

*What is the attendees' relation to the research process?*

*Can they still contribute to the research?*

*Are they, for example, meant to be inspired to become bankers, miracle searchers, Earth astronauts or time researchers themselves and are introduced to the process by a quick run-through?*

*Can the audience use the outcomes of the process in any particular way for themselves? Or can attendees function as a kind of jury regarding the presented outcomes?*

*May they help to implement certain measures that have proven desirable in the course of the project, so that in the end everybody could take action together?*

Considering questions like these can help turn the closing event as a whole into an improbability field, into a trial reality, in which all attendees can try participating in the performative role play. This is the moment when it becomes evident whether the trial reality, which was still very fragile in the beginning, has been developed and playfully differentiated in the collective research work in a way that allows a broader public to take part in it.



The Collaborative Arts Partnership Programme (CAPP) is a transnational cultural programme (2015 - 2018) focusing on the field of collaborative and socially engaged arts practice across artform and context. CAPP is made up of a nine organisation network, led by Create the national development agency for collaborative arts in Ireland.

CAPP is a diverse range of dynamic cultural and artistic organisations supporting the development of artistic projects of excellence. Partners include: Agora Collective (Germany), Create lead partner (Ireland), hablarenarte (Spain), Heart of Glass St Helens (UK), Kunsthalle Osnabrück (Germany), Live Art Development Agency (UK), Ludwig Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art (Hungary), m-cult (Finland), and Tate Liverpool (UK).

The overall goal of CAPP is to improve and open up opportunities for artists who are working collaboratively across Europe, by enhancing mobility and exchange whilst at the same time engaging new publics and audiences for collaborative practices. The different strands of the CAPP programme consist of national and international professional development opportunities, artist residencies, commissioned works, touring and dissemination, and a major showcase in Dublin (Ireland) 2018.

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