

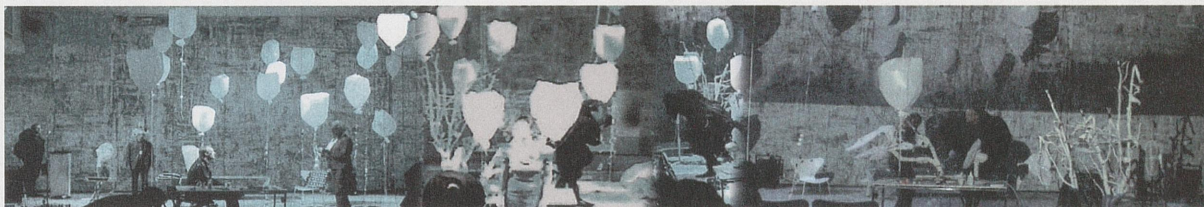
VERDENSTEATRET



SELECTED MISTAKES
RECENT WORKS

www.VERDENSTEATRET.COM

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VERDENSTEATRET are artists from different art-fields who work together and make live-art and other art-related projects. They endeavour to use a collaborative process to deeply integrate different artistic disciplines into projects that bridge the gap between artistic borders.

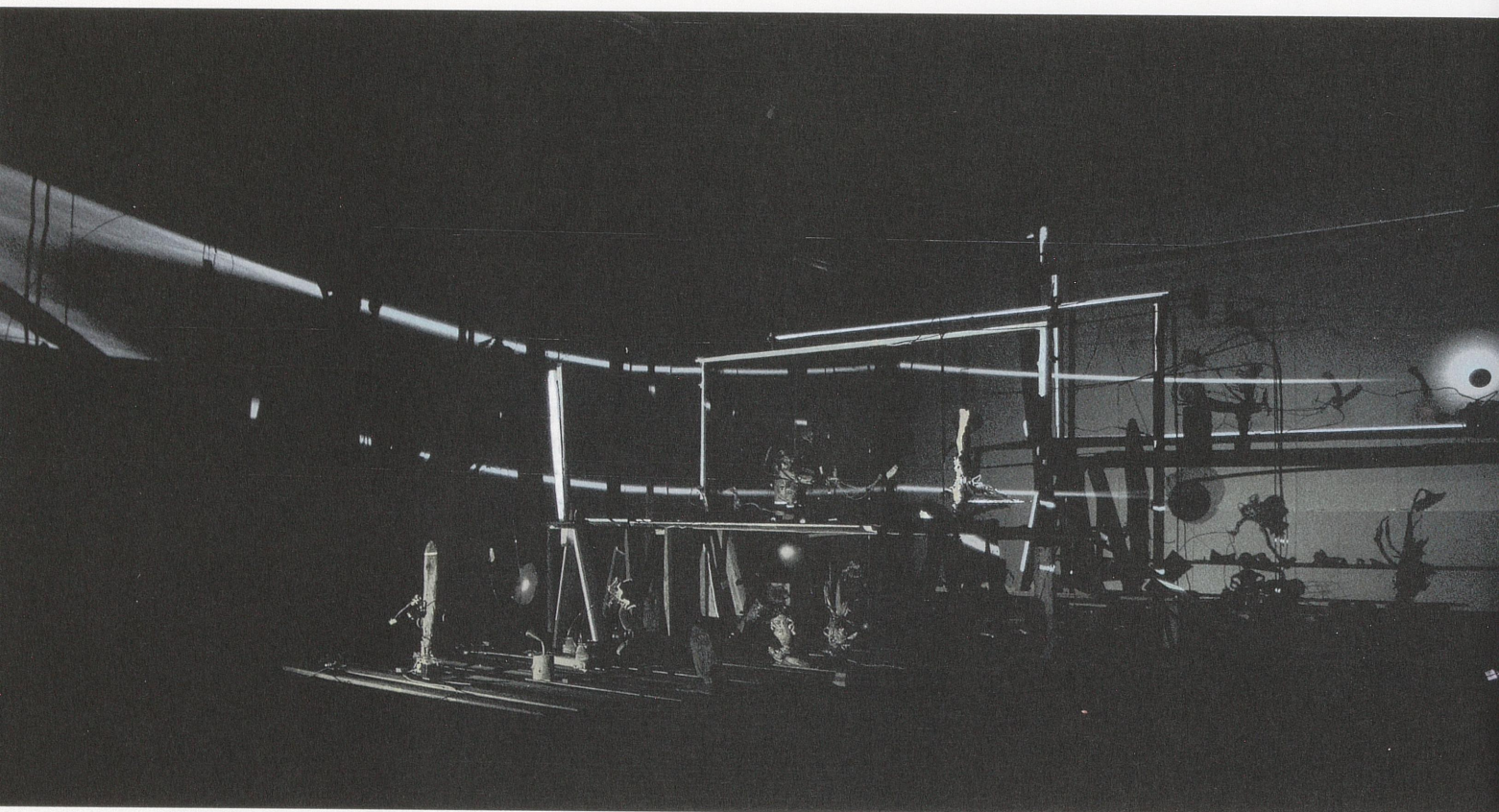
Characteristic for their work is that they are building exquisite links between seemingly incompatible technologies and materials. The experimental use of audiovisual technology in a close dialogue with more traditional and historic tools of artistic expression results in complex orchestral works or space-related musical compositions.

Seeing the sound, listening to the images.

Today Verdensteatret is one of the most innovative companies in Norway. Their works are presented widely international in different art contexts and locations, such as art galleries, contemporary music festivals and theatres. They have developed a unique and complex audiovisual style, where sound spaces mingle with sculptural scenography and stories of the fragile human soul.

They say that their activity now has become a "telling orchestra" that performs compositions in the "movable room genre". Established notions of form or style about "performance" are more or less useless for these peculiarly captivating works of art.

Verdensteatret is supported by Arts Council Norway and other official art-foundations in Norway.



The Telling Orchestra

www.verdensteatret.com

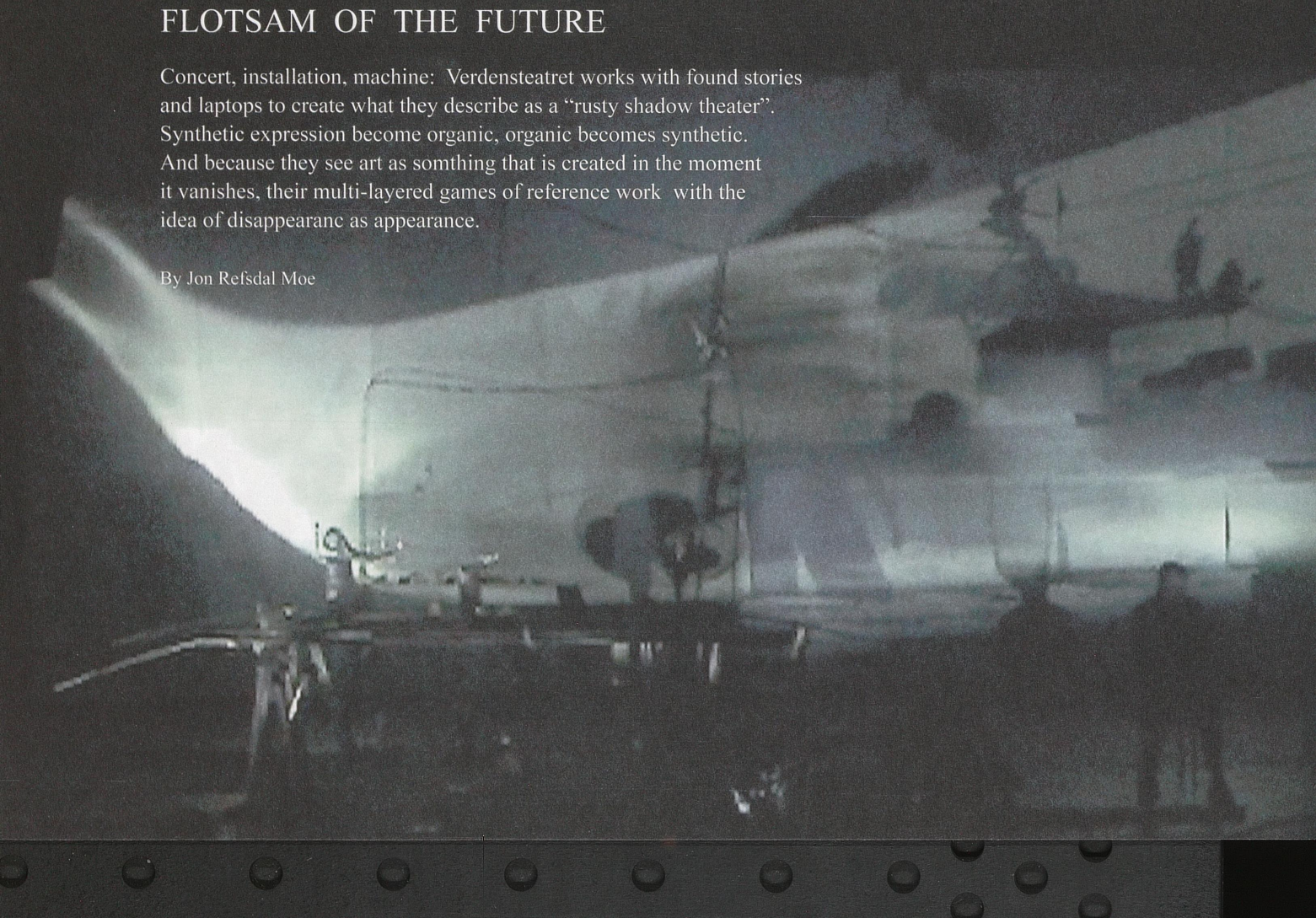
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FLOTSAM OF THE FUTURE

Concert, installation, machine: Verdensteatret works with found stories and laptops to create what they describe as a “rusty shadow theater”. Synthetic expression become organic, organic becomes synthetic. And because they see art as something that is created in the moment it vanishes, their multi-layered games of reference work with the idea of disappearance as appearance.

By Jon Refsdal Moe



An old university lecturer took a packet of tobacco out of his jacket pocket, after having spent the whole morning explaining the basic concepts of Aristotelian Metaphysics to a group of first-year students. 'In every physical substance there lies a potential form', he said to the students while he quickly rolled a cigarette between his fingers. 'And the point is,' he continued, pausing to lick the cigarette paper, 'that the form must of necessity be realised from the substance. But what about this cigarette? How shall its form be realised if its substance is not to disappear?' He lit the cigarette and took two deep drags. 'When its form is realised, it also ceases to exist as substance – it just ends up as ash.' The lecturer smiled and shut the door behind him.

We have just recounted how an old lecturer challenged the philosophical system that he had taught throughout his adult life. But this anecdote also touches on some important aspects of Verdensteatret's work. As with the lecturer's cigarette, it is pointless to speak of a fundamental form, an idea that is to be realised as well as possible in the artistic material. And just like the lecturer's cigarette, Verdensteatret's art takes form at the same moment as it disappears.

Instead of beginning with an all-encompassing idea, Verdensteatret takes the ashes as its starting-point, collecting fragments of contexts that may once have had meaning; old scrap that they have picked up from the roadside; a story that someone may once have read for them; a dream that someone once had. They call it flotsam, things that have come floating by, that may once have had a purpose. And through Verdensteatret's work, the flotsam is transformed into something aesthetic; twisted, bent and carefully reassembled to create new contexts. Verdensteatret's art is born when all these elements begin to work together. But their art is not the sculptures that they have created, nor the pictures that they project, nor the rusty mechanisms that they operate. It is the shadows that fall on the back wall, the shrieking machinery, the joke that you can't understand because it is told in a foreign language, the sound of a man hammering away on a piano. Verdensteatret's art is everything that comes into being and disappears again in the same instant.

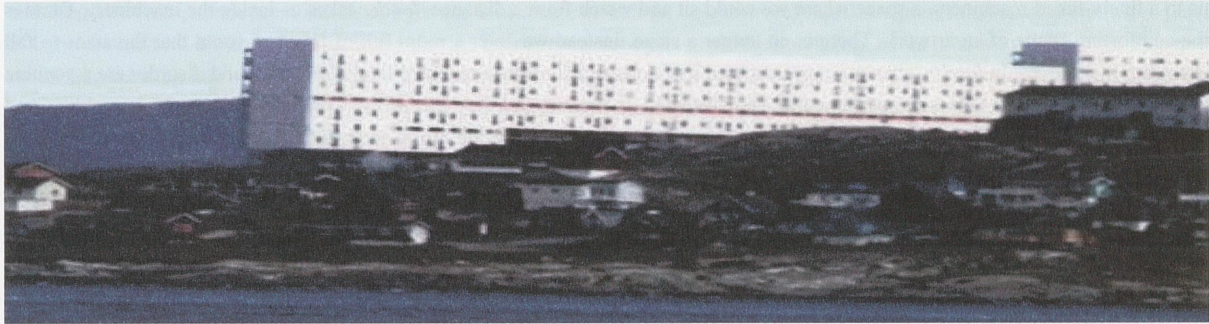
Verdensteatret has existed since 1986. For 30 years, the group has moved in many different directions. But on one point they stand fast: their connection to the European, and especially the German, theatrical tradition, with Brecht, Walter Benjamin and Heiner Müller as natural references. The latter has a special tendency to appear in their work – but you may not necessarily recognise him. Because Verdensteatret treats texts as flotsam, too – not as literary monuments, but as open landscapes in which they must orientate themselves. Following experiments in fields such as visual performance, environmental theatre and text theatre, in recent years the group has

worked towards a more intermedial form. Today, Verdensteatret consists of video artists, computer animators, sound engineers, musicians, artists and a painter – among others. They develop their work in a ‘flat structure’ – or, as they themselves explain, ‘everyone interferes with everything’. In this way they search for a form that includes many means of expression and despite the fact that it and involves a good dose of quarrelling it can be experienced or understood as ‘integrated’. Video pictures are processed with distorting mirrors and human voices are digitalised, synthetic elements are turned into organic ones, and vice versa. One of Verdensteatret’s favourite metaphors is that ‘the various elements should bleed into one another’, so that every dramatic element is linked to the others in so many different ways that we cannot tell where one ends and the other begins. Thus a vast game of references is set in motion, without presenting any clear meanings – instead an associative space is created where infinite numbers of new opinions can arise and disappear.

Verdensteatret does not present plots, or concepts that have to be explained, or structures to be unravelled. Their work is not based on a truth or an urtext that has to be interpreted, and it therefore has more in common with concerts, or with technical marvels. It is not Verdensteatret that produces the art, it is the machine. They simply make it work.

The name ‘Verdensteatret’ means ‘Theatre of the World’, but you should immediately cast aside thoughts of the worn-out metaphor that says ‘all the world’s a stage’ – even though it is just that. Think instead of the old cinemas from the early days of film, where people crowded in to be blinded by pictures they had never seen before, and by the wonderful technology that gave them these pictures. If we opened the door to one of these picture palaces, we would find machinery rusting away, and we might perhaps smile sadly at the fascination for things that once were new and spectacular. Verdensteatret takes us into such spaces and fills them with its own futuristic dream – samplers, Powerbooks and video projectors, technology that we may find fascinating now, but which will end up on the scrap heap after not too long. By combining them to form a rusty shadow theatre, Verdensteatret shows us that our own futuristic fantasies are also about to disappear – but that they will continue telling those, too.

The Telling Orchestra is the remains of a piece that was once called *Concert for Greenland*, but that no longer exists as theatre.



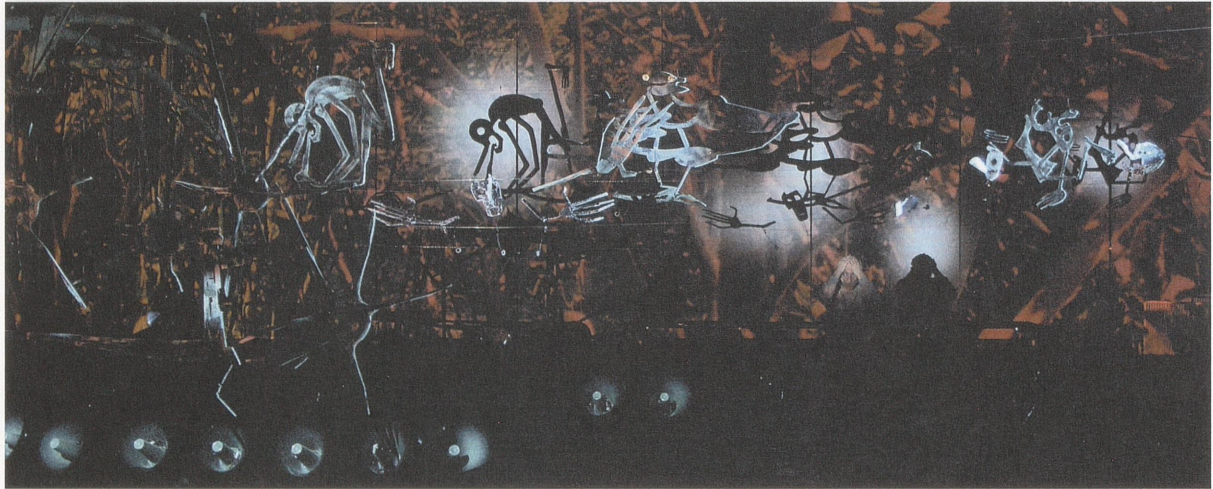
Nuuk, Greenland

However, *The Telling Orchestra* is hardly a relic of something that once existed; rather, *Concert for Greenland* was a concrete, time-limited performance using a machine that still exists, and that now tells other stories. The parts for the machine were collected during a trip to Greenland, an arctic subcontinent of an island that casts a shadow over us, and a country more affected by poverty and alcoholism than perhaps its idyllic population statistics might suggest. Greenland is known to me through the Inuit beggars at the main railway station in Copenhagen, and through news items that tell us that the ice sheet is melting. But Verdensteatret found something completely different there.

louder is also inspired by a journey. The landscape of the Mekong delta has achieved an almost mythical status in contemporary history, first through news reports, and perhaps most of all through Francis Ford Coppola's doomsday film scenario from 1978. Last winter, Verdensteatret sailed up the same river that in *Apocalypse Now* plays the veins and arteries around the heart of darkness. What they experienced there is neither very clear, nor very important, but the journey beats like a pulse throughout the performance. If Verdensteatret wanted to be obvious, they could have called the piece *closer*. Or *darker*. Where *Concert for Greenland* introduced

us to a finely-tuned machinery, a space where we could sit and watch from a distance, *louder* takes us inside the machinery. Gone is the comforting frame of an artwork. There is no longer a stage. Instead we enter a room full of chaos. A room that threatens to fall apart before our eyes. In *louder*, chance is not tempered by finely-tuned mechanics – here total dissolution and disorder are a genuine and constant possibility. You may not recognise Verdensteatret as theatre, and they themselves compare their work to machines and musico-spatial compositions. They have perhaps most in common with installation artists such as Christian Boltanski, who works in the same way with shadows, history and disappearances.

Or perhaps with one of installation art's older heroes, the Hungarian Nicolas Schöffer, who in the 1950s and 1960s planned monuments



louder

and futuristic cities, constructed ballets of light and kinesthetic machines; -electromechanical sculptures that created enormous plays of light and shadow. Nicolas Schöffer wrote that the task of the artist is not to produce meaning, but to produce productions. This may sound like splitting hairs, but in fact there is a major difference. Verdensteatret never presents you with a ready-made meaning, but rather shows the production of a meaning. By setting a large-scale, unstoppable play of references in motion, Verdensteatret lays the groundwork for meanings to develop.

Verdensteatret's audiences are never presented with a finished expression, but are witnesses to the creation of an expression. And because time, space and the viewer are drawn into the production, there is always an element of coincidence – the final expression is produced by a game of chance. But as in Schöffer's ballets of light, or in John Cage's happenings, or Alexander Calder's mobile sculptures, chance is always dependent on one strict condition: the rusty mechanics of the machine.

Verdensteatret takes from the world of avant-garde theatre the idea that art should come into existence at one moment, only to disappear the next. But the idea of the perfect moment, which was so defining for earlier generations of avant-gardists, may have fallen by the wayside. Instead, disappearance is made a part of appearance. Verdensteatret's art is always erasing itself, which is why there are so many historical references in their work. Therefore their work pays defiant homage to artistic production: a production that creates no stable values, but which instead chooses to cultivate moments that should really not be cultivable.

One of the less successful operations in military history was the *Charge of the Light Brigade*, known from Tennyson's poem of 1854. In glorious and flowery language, Tennyson describes how 600 soldiers obediently rode into a valley brimming with soldiers and cannons, in order to capture those very weapons. Heart-wrenchingly heroic, too, his portrayal of the few soldiers who returned from the jaws of death. But the loss of so many lives was of lesser importance than the greater purpose of war – aesthetics.

The history of art is full of similar Light Brigades, charging heroically through reality in search of the perfect artistic expression, a



louder

pure aesthetic moment that by its own momentum, and only lightly armed, can withstand the chaos that presses on it from all sides. Verdensteatret understands that such moments can only exist as they dissolve. We will never return home, we will never charge through the valley. Everything that exists is scrap metal and abandoned battlefields, packed bars and sunrises over the fjord.

On the screen at the back of the stage, Vietnam's peaceful landscapes meet ancient portrayals of the triumph of death in Europe. Among Brueghel, Bosch and the long-beaked masks of plague-doctors, we also find Paul Nash, the First World War soldier who painted barren and desolate landscapes at the front-line and gave them such titles as *We are making a new world*. Bitter, ironic, but not without hope. It is in our meeting with dissolution that we can begin to pick up the pieces, and construct fragile fictions against the wall of chaos.

"I am trumpeter Landfrey, one of the surviving trumpeters from the Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava". Just imagine, for the sake of poetry, that the old soldier has put on his uniform as he stands bent over the instrument. "I am now going to sound the Bugle that was sounded at Waterloo, and sound the charge that was sounded on at Balaclava on that very same Bugle the 25th of October 1854."

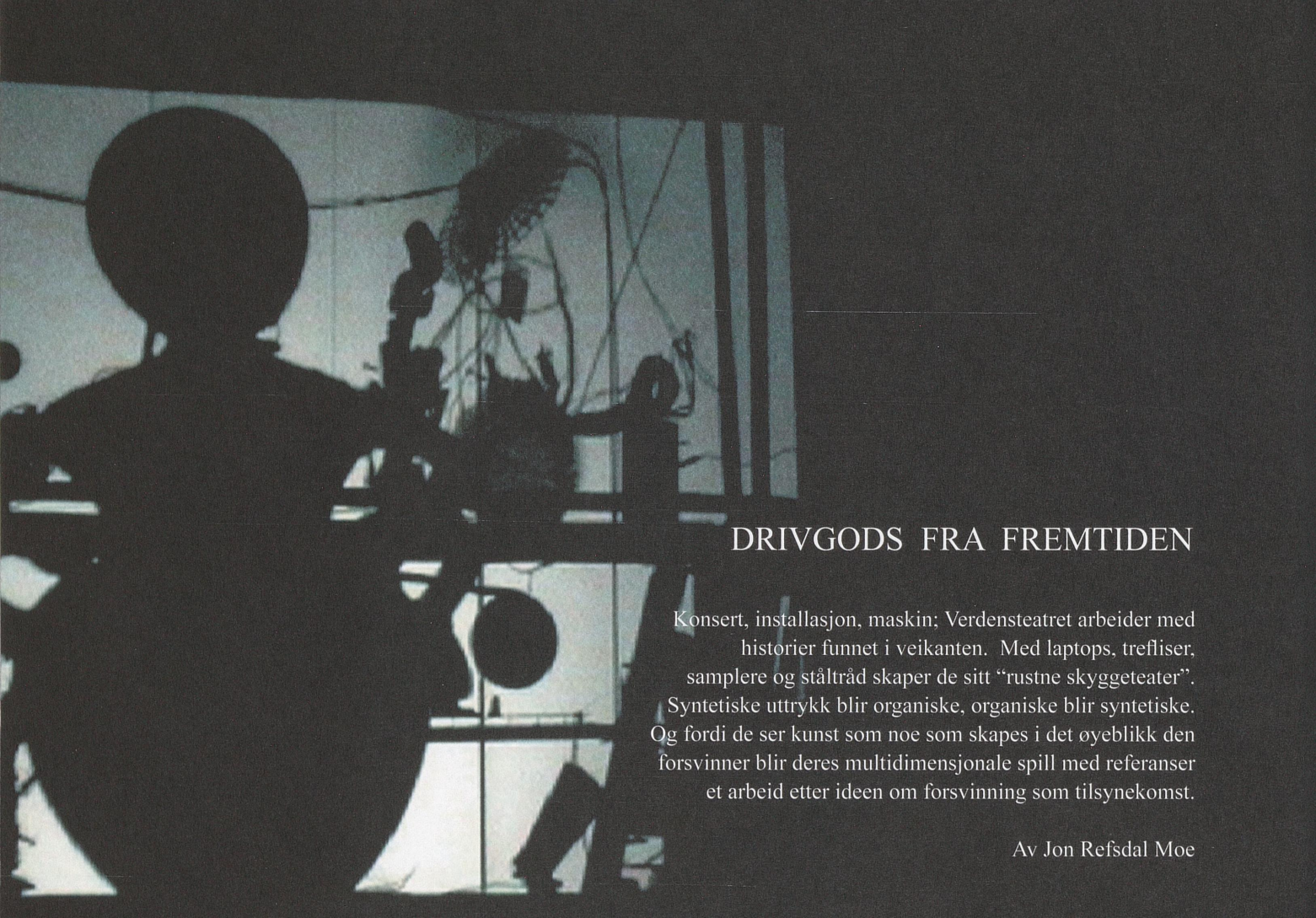
A woman interrupts to tell us that the recording is being made at Edison House, on Northumberland Avenue in London, and that the date is the 2nd August 1890. Then we hear a rusty fanfare. Trumpeter Landfrey disappears back into history.

When the university lecturer closed the door behind him, he left behind a lot of confused students. One of them was me. Twelve years later, I found these lines in a book – I like to think that he mumbled them to himself as he grinned broadly and smoked his cigarette:

"From what source things arise, to that they return of necessity when they are destroyed; for they suffer punishment and make reparation to one another for their injustice according to the order of time". (Anaximander)

Translated by Alison Bullock Aarsten.

In 2007 Verdensteatret presents three productions: The performance *louder*, the installation *The Telling Orchestra* and a new installation



DRIVGODS FRA FREMTIDEN

Konsert, installasjon, maskin; Verdensteatret arbeider med historier funnet i veikanten. Med laptops, trefliser, samplere og ståltråd skaper de sitt "rustne skyggeteater". Syntetiske uttrykk blir organiske, organiske blir syntetiske. Og fordi de ser kunst som noe som skapes i det øyeblikk den forsvinner blir deres multidimensjonale spill med referanser et arbeid etter ideen om forsvinning som tilsynekomst.

Av Jon Refsdal Moe

En gammel universitetslektor tok en pakke tobakk opp av jakkelommen, etter å ha brukt hele formiddagen på å forklare grunnbegrepene i den Aristoteliske Metafysikk for en gruppe førsteårsstudenter. - I et hvert fysisk materiale ligger en form potensielt, sa han til studentene mens fingrene kjapt rullet frem en sigarett. Og meningen er, her gjorde han en pause for å slikke sigarettpapiret, - at formen skal realiseres i det fysiske materialet. Men hva så med denne sigaretten? Hvordan skal dens form fullbyrdes, om den ikke også skal forsvinne som materie? Han tente sigaretten og tok to dype magadrag. - Når dens form realiseres, opphører den også å eksistere. - Til slutt blir det bare aske igjen, smilte lektoren og lukket døren bak seg.

Anekdoten forteller ikke bare om en gammel lærers tilbakevisning av det filosofiske systemet han gjennom sitt voksne liv var satt til å formidle. Den berører også Verdensteatrets arbeid på flere punkter som jeg oppfatter som vesentlige. På samme måte som med lektorens sigarett er det meningsløst å snakke om en tilgrunnliggende form, en idé som best mulig skal realiseres i det kunstneriske materialet. Og på samme måte som lektorens sigarett oppstår Verdensteatrets kunst først i samme øyeblikk som den forsvinner.

I stedet for i en samlende idé begynner Verdensteatret i asken; samler sammen bruddstykker av sammenhenger som en gang kan ha vært meningsfulle. Gammelt skrot de har tatt med seg fra en veikant, lyder de har hørt, en fortelling noen kanskje har lest for en av dem en gang, en drøm noen har hatt. Selv kaller de det drivgods, ting som har kommet rekende på en fjøl, og som kanskje en gang hadde en funksjon. Og etter hvert som Verdensteatrets arbeider blir til, forvandles drivgodset til estetisk materiale: det vris, vrenses og settes forsiktig sammen for å danne nye sammenhenger. Verdensteatrets kunst er det som oppstår når alle disse elementene begynner å arbeide sammen. Den er ikke skulpturen de har satt sammen, ikke bildene som projiseres eller den rustne mekanikken de betjener. Verdensteatrets kunst er skyggene som faller mot den bakre veggen, den er skrikene fra maskineriet, den er vitsen som fortelles på et fremmed språk og som du ikke kan forstå, den er lyden av en mann som hamrer løs på et piano. Verdensteatrets kunst er alt det som oppstår og går til grunne med øyeblikket.

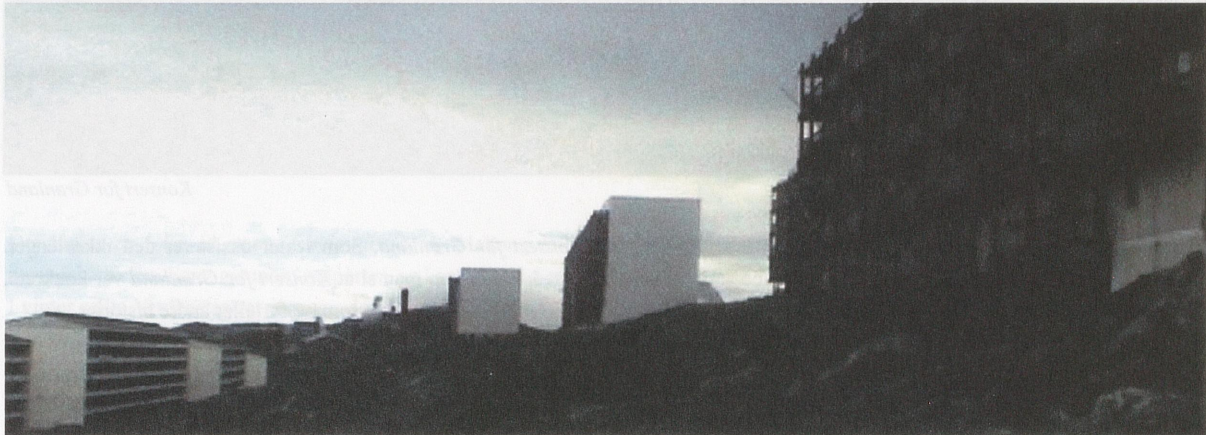
Verdensteatret har eksistert siden 1986. Gjennom tredve år har gruppen beveget seg i mange forskjellige retninger. Men på ett punkt holder de fast ved teatret, ved eksplisitt å forholde seg til den europeiske, og særlig tyske teatertradisjon med Brecht, Walter Benjamin og Heiner Müller som naturlige referansepunkter. Særlig sistnevnte har en tendens til å dukke opp i arbeidene deres. Men det er ikke sikkert du vil kjenne ham igjen. For også tekstene behandles av Verdensteatret som drivgods. Ikke som litterære forelegg, men som åpne landskap å orientere seg i.

Etter å ha forsket i former som visual performance, environmental theatre og tekstteater, har gruppen i de senere år arbeidet seg mot et mer og mer intermedialt uttrykk. I dag består Verdensteatret av videokunstnere, data-animatører, lydinstallatører, musikere, skuespillere og en maler. Blant annet. De arbeider frem sine verker etter en flat struktur, eller som de selv sier, ”ved at alle blander seg inn i alt”. Slik søker de mot et uttrykk som trass i at det spenner over vidt forskjellige uttrykksformer, og nok innebærer en anselig dose kranling, like fullt skal kunne oppleves som integrert. Videoprojeksjoner bearbeides med bøyelige speil og menneskestemmer digitaliseres: syntetiske uttrykk gjøres organiske og organiske uttrykk gjøres syntetiske.

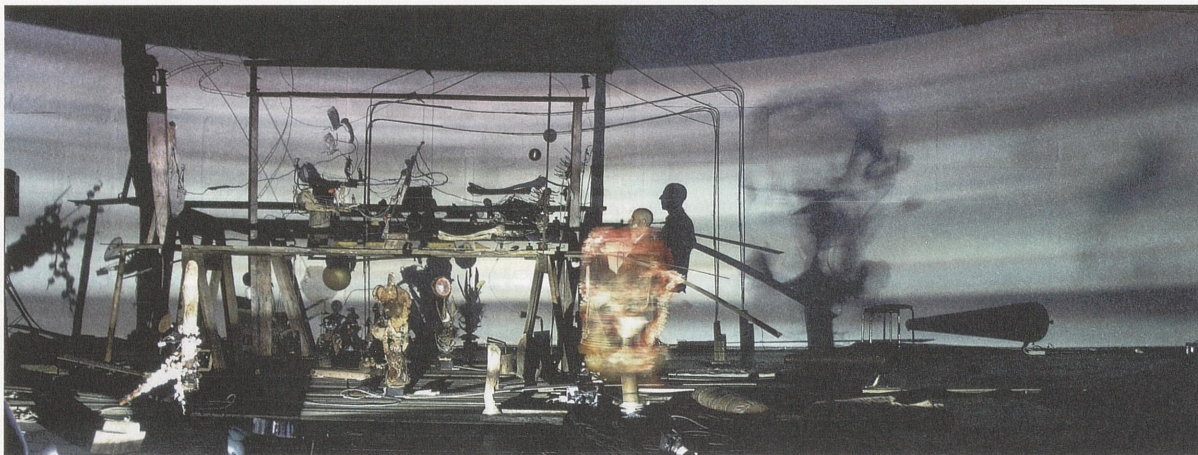
En av Verdensteatrets mye brukte metafor er ”at de forskjellige elementene skal blø inn i hverandre”, slik at ethvert scenisk element forbindes med de andre på mange forskjellige måter, og slik at vi ikke skal kunne se hvor det ene slutter og det andre begynner. Slik settes et stort referansespill i gang, uten at noen form for fastlagt mening presenteres. I stedet åpnes et assosiativt rom der et utall nye meninger kan oppstå og forsvinne.

Verdensteatret presenterer ingen handling. Ikke noe konsept som skal avklares eller struktur som skal dekodes. Det finnes ingen sannhet eller urtekst å fortolke, deres arbeider har derfor mer til felles med konserter, med tekniske vidundre, med en presentasjon av en maskin. Og det er ikke Verdensteatret som produserer kunsten. Det er maskinen. Selv nøyer de seg med å få den til å virke.

Ikke tenk på den forslitte metaforen at hele verden er en scene, selv om den kanskje nettopp er det. Tenk heller på de gamle kinohallene fra filmens barndom, der folk stimlet sammen for å la seg blende av bilder de aldri hadde sett før, og av de teknologiske vidundre som kastet disse bildene mot dem. Cirkus Verdensteater kaltes en gang disse salene. Om vi åpnet døren inn dit ville vi finne rusten mekanikk, og vi kunne smile lett sørgmodig over fascinasjonen for det en gang nye og spektakulære. Verdensteatret tar oss med til slike rom og fyller dem med sin egen drøm om fremtiden: med samplere, powerbooks og videokanoner, instrumenter vi nå kan fascineres av, men som om ikke særlig lenge vil fylle søplehaugene. Ved å sette disse sammen til et rustent skyggeteater, viser Verdensteatret oss at også våre egne fortellinger om fremtiden er i ferd med å forsvinne. Men at de like forbannet har tenkt å fortsette å fortelle dem.

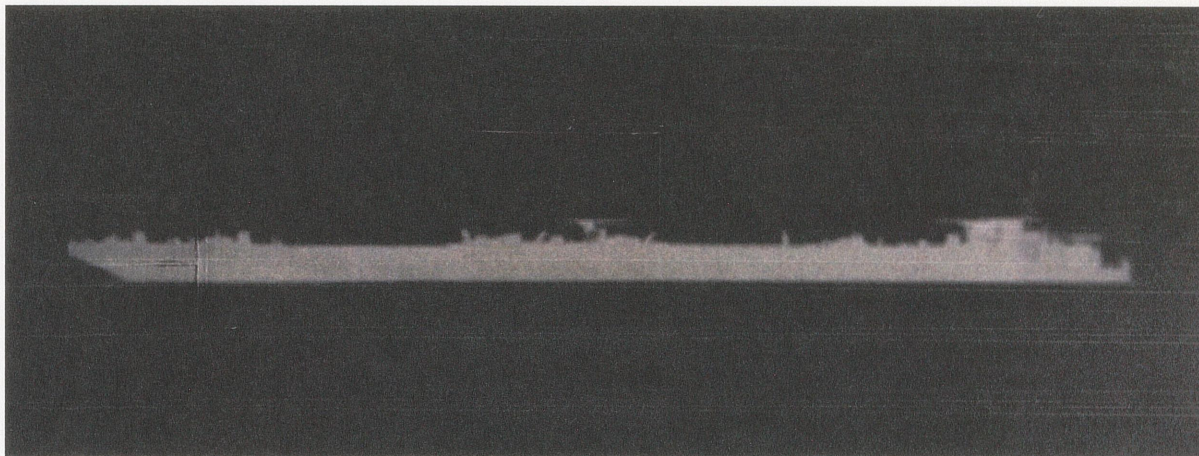


Nuuk, Grønland



Konsert for Grønland

Fortellerorkesteret er restene av en forestilling som en gang het *Konsert for Grønland*. Som teater eksisterer den ikke lenger. Men *Fortellerorkesteret* er ikke en relikvie fra noe som en gang fant sted, heller kan man si at *Konsert for Grønland* var konkrete, tidsinnrammede anvendelser av en maskin som fremdeles eksisterer, og som nå står i et annet rom og forteller andre historier. Materialet til maskinen ble samlet inn på en reise til Grønland. Som et arktisk subkontinent ligger øya der oppe og kaster skygge over oss, et land mer fylt med fattigdom og alkoholisme enn det idylliske folketallet skulle tilsi. Selv kjenner jeg Grønland først og fremst gjennom de inuittiske uteliggerne på hovedbanegården i København. På nyhetene sier de at innlandsisen er i ferd med å smelte. Men Verdensteatret opplevde visst noe helt annet der.



louder

Det ligger en reise til grunn for *louder* også. Mekong-deltaet er et landskap som har tatt opp en nærmest mytisk eksistens i samtidshistorien. Først gjennom rapporter, og kanskje mest av alt gjennom Francis Ford Coppolas filmatiske endetidsstykke fra 1978. I vinter seilte Verdensteatret oppover den samme elva som i *Apokalypse Nå* vikarierer som blodomløpet rundt mørkets hjerte. Hva de opplevde der vet jeg ikke. Det er ikke så viktig heller. Men reisen ligger gjennom hele forestillingen og dunker som en puls.

Om Verdensteatret ville være overtydelige kunne forestillingen også hett *closer*. Eller *darker*. Der *Konsert for Grønland* presenterte oss for et finstemt maskineri, et rom vi kunne sitte på avstand og betrakte, tar *louder* oss med inn i selve maskinen. Borte er den beskyttende billedrammen. Det er ikke lenger noen scene her. I stedet er vi kommet inn i et kaotisk rom. Et rom som truer med å gå i oppløsning foran øynene på oss. I *louder* temmes ikke tilfeldigheten gjennom finstemt mekanikk. I dette rommet ligger total oppløsning og kaos som en reell mulighet hele veien.



louder

Du kan kanskje ikke se at Verdensteatret er teater. Selv sammenlikner de heller arbeidene med maskiner og musikalske romlige komposisjoner. Og aller mest har de kanskje til felles med installasjonskunstnere som Christian Boltanski, som på samme måte arbeider med skygger, historie og forsvinninger. Eller med en av installasjonskunstens mer forgangne helter: Ungarske Nicolas Schöffer, som på 1950- og 60-tallet planla monumenter og futuristiske byer, konstruerte lysballetter og kinestetiske maskiner, -elektromekaniske skulpturer som satte voldsomme lys og skyggespill i gang.

Kunstnerens oppgave er ikke å produsere mening men å produsere produksjon, skrev Nicolas Schöffer. Det kan høres ut som et flisespikkeri, men det utgjør en stor forskjell. For Verdensteatret presenterer deg aldri for en ferdig mening, men de viser heller frem produksjonen av mening. Ved å sette i gang et stort og uopphørlig referansespill legger de til rette for at meninger kan oppstå.

Som betrakter av Verdensteatrets arbeid presenteres du aldri for et ferdig uttrykk, men du ser et uttrykk som er i ferd med å finne sted. Og fordi tiden, rommet og betrakteren trekkes inn i produksjonen er det alltid et element av tilfeldighet i Verdensteatrets arbeider. Det er tilfeldighetenes spill som produserer det uttrykk du til slutt sitter igjen med. Men på samme måte som i Schöffers lysballetter, John Cages happenings eller Alexander Calders mobile skulpturer, er tilfeldighetene alltid underlagt en dyp stringens: Den rustne mekanikken i maskinen.

Fra avantgardeteatret bærer Verdensteatret med seg idéen om at kunsten skal oppstå i et øyeblikk, for siden å forsvinne. Men idéen om et fullendt øyeblikk, som var så definerende for tidligere generasjoners teateravantgarder, kan ha blitt forlatt på veien. I stedet gjøres forsvinningen til del av tilsynekomsten. Verdensteatrets uttrykk er alltid i ferd med å viske ut seg selv. Derfor alle referansene til historien i deres arbeider. Og derfor blir deres arbeid til en trassig homage til kunstnerisk produksjon som sådan: en produksjon som ikke skaper noen stabile verdier, men som i stedet velger å dyrke øyeblikk det egentlig ikke burde være mulig å dyrke.

En av militærhistoriens mindre heldige operasjoner er *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, kjent fra Tennysons heltedikt fra 1854. I blomstrende og ærerike ord skildrer lorden hvordan 600 soldater lydig rir inn i en tungt befestet dal på jakt etter fiendens kanoner. Like tåredryppende heroisk er skildringen av brigadens sterkt desimerte tilbaketog. At så mange soldater hadde ofret livet i en meningsløs operasjon var av underordnet betydning. Først og fremst var krigen et estetisk forehavende.

Kunsthistorien er full av slike *light brigades*, som heroisk og halsende har sprenget seg vei gjennom virkeligheten på leting etter et fullkomment uttrykk, et rent øyeblikk av estetikk som utelukkende i kraft av seg selv, og med lett artilleri, kan stå i mot kaoset som presser seg mot veggplankene. Verdensteatret har forstått at det bare er i oppløsningen av dem at slike øyeblikk kan finne sted. Vi kommer aldri hjem. Og vi vil aldri sprengte oss vei gjennom dalen. Alt som finnes er skrapjern og forlatte slagmarker, stappfulle små barer og solopp ganger over Bunnefjorden.

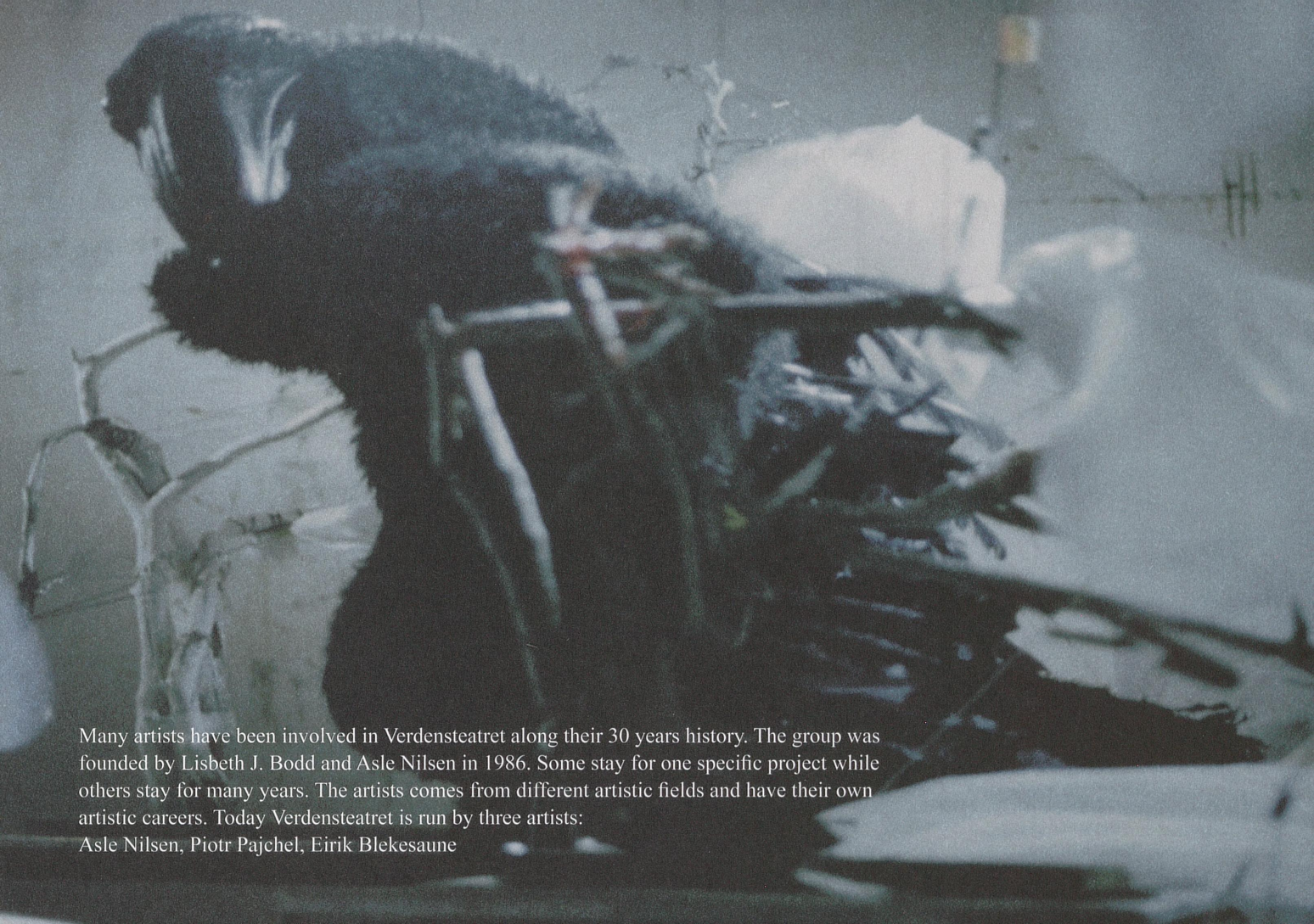
På skjermen bak scenen møter de rolige landskapene fra Vietnam eldgamle fremstillinger av dødens triumf i Europa. Blant Breugel, Bosch og pestlegemasker med lange nebb finnes også Paul Nash, soldaten som under første verdenskrig malte golde og ødelagte landskaper ved fronten og kalte dem "We are making a new world". Bittert og bitende ironisk, men ikke uten håp. Det er i møtet med oppløsningen vi kan begynne å plukke opp restene. Konstruere noen skjøre fiksjoner mot veggen av kaos.

"I am trumpeter Landfrey. One of the surviving trumpeters from the Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava". Se for deg, for poesien skyld, at den gamle soldaten har tatt på seg uniformsjakka si der han står bøyd over apparatet. "I am now going to sound the Bugle that was sounded at Waterloo. And sound the Charge that was sounded at Balaclava on that very same Bugle the 25th of October 1854".

En kvinne bryter inn for å fortelle at opptaket gjøres i Edison House på Northumbur Avenue i London, og at det er den andre august 1890. Så hører du en rusten trompetfanfare. Trumpeter Landfrey forsvinner tilbake, inn i historien.

Da den gamle universitetslektoren lukket døren bak seg, etterlot han mange forvirrede studenter. En av dem var meg. Tolv år senere fant jeg disse linjene i en bok. Jeg liker å tenke at han mumlet dem inni seg, mens han gliste bredt og røyka opp sigaretten:

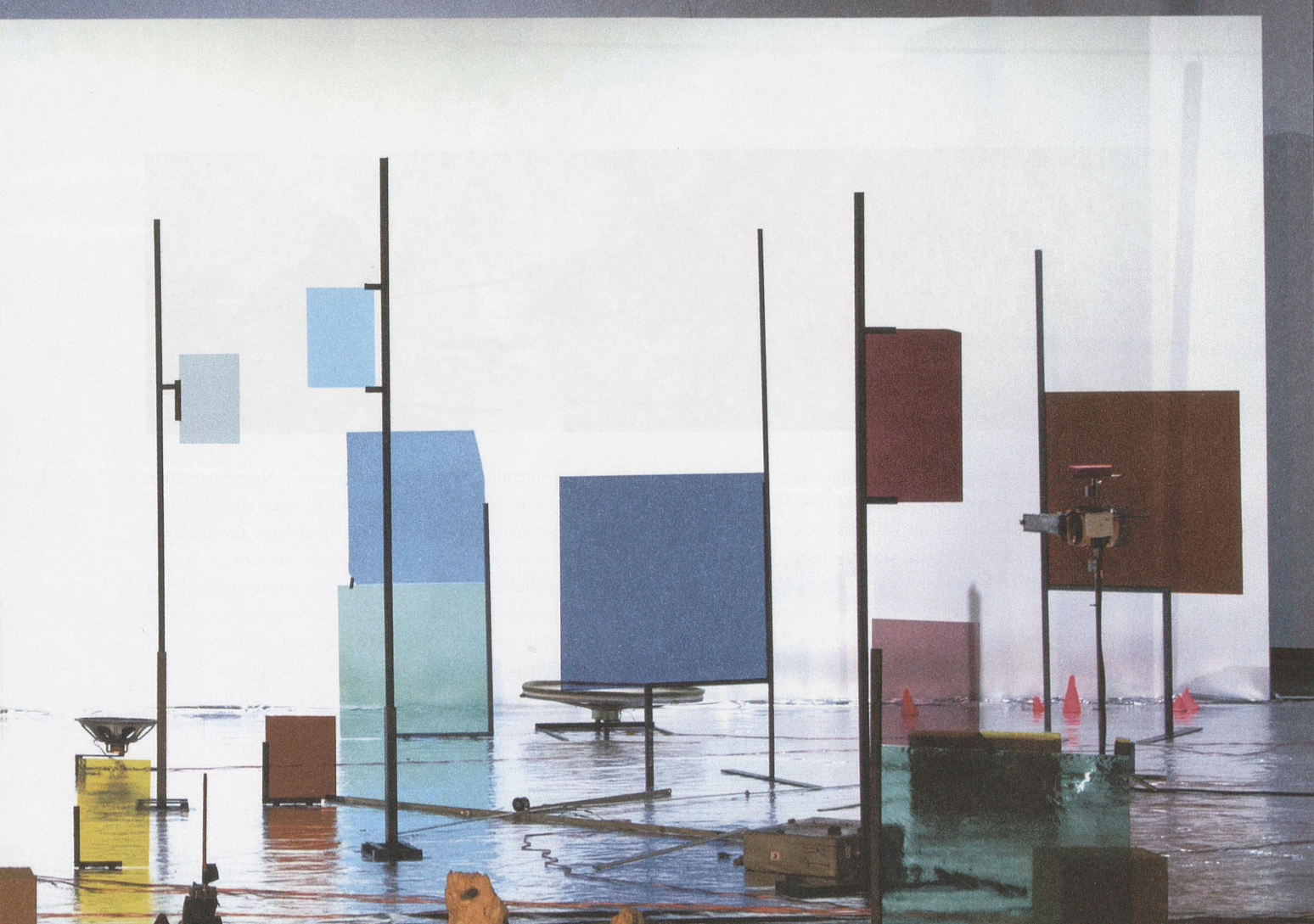
"From what source things arise, to that they return of necessity when they are destroyed; for they suffer punishment and make reparation to one another for their injustice according to the order of time". (Anaximander)



Many artists have been involved in Verdensteatret along their 30 years history. The group was founded by Lisbeth J. Bodd and Asle Nilsen in 1986. Some stay for one specific project while others stay for many years. The artists comes from different artistic fields and have their own artistic careers. Today Verdensteatret is run by three artists:
Asle Nilsen, Piotr Pajchel, Eirik Blekesaune

HANNAH 2017







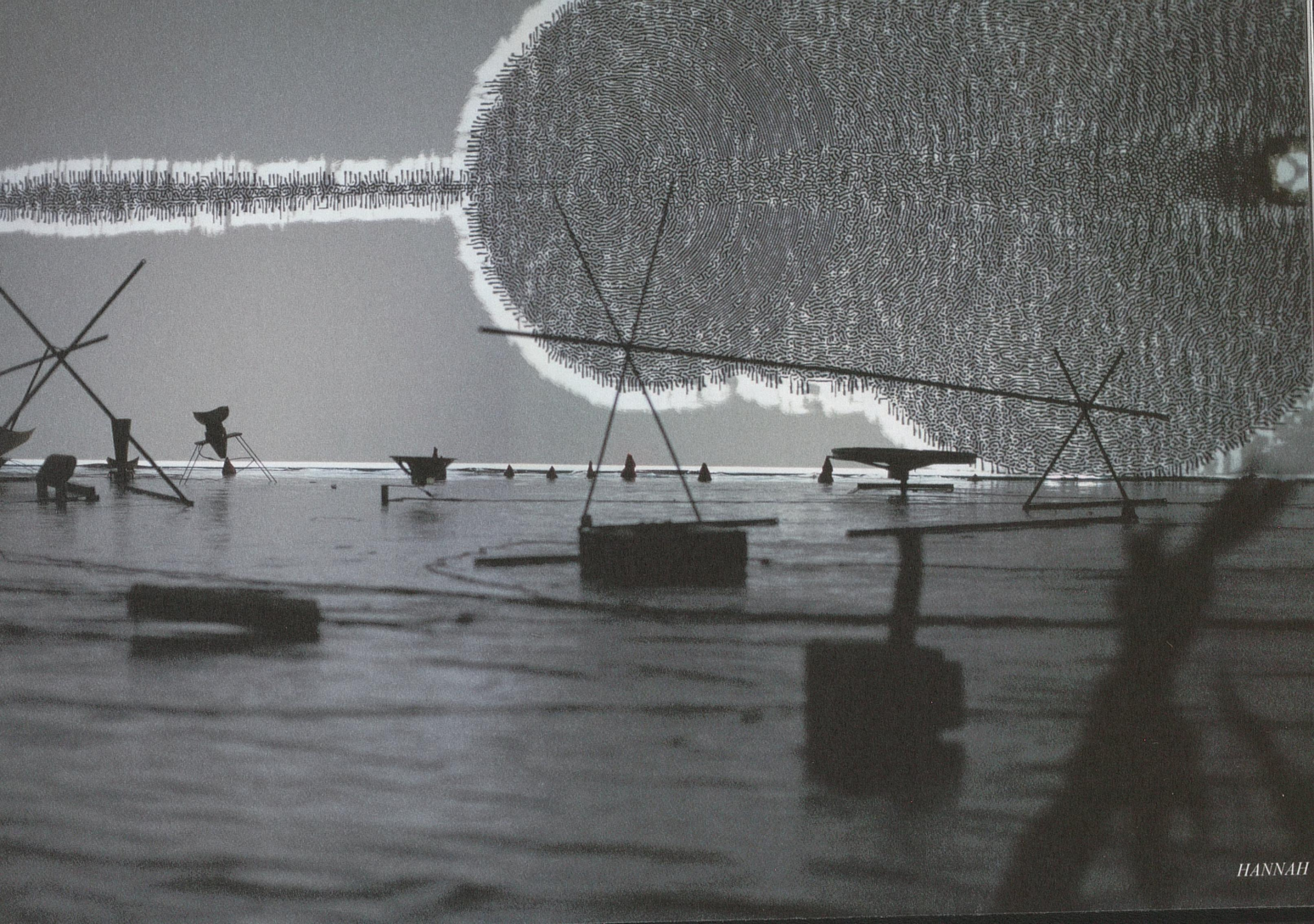
In HANNAH Verdensteatret are exploring ideas about geological time and attention fatigue as observatory. November 2016 Verdensteatret went on a research journey to the Mekong Delta in Vietnam, the same destination as they had 10 years ago. With this research Verdensteatret has for the first time chosen to repeat a journey and gather material from somewhere they have already been. Along this journey they have questioned the nature of repetition and if repetition is at all possible. A repetition points forward in time and is an integral part of what is seen and what is done. HANNAH is a complex spatial composition that provokes a state of absorption in an immersive audio-visual space. The composition consists of material generated in an electronic feedback system. This material forms a sedimentation process that unfolds as a fixed attention towards exhaustion and the act of observing slow changes. Like a physical object slowly affects its surroundings. A glimpse of a present, a state of transition and passages through phenomena.

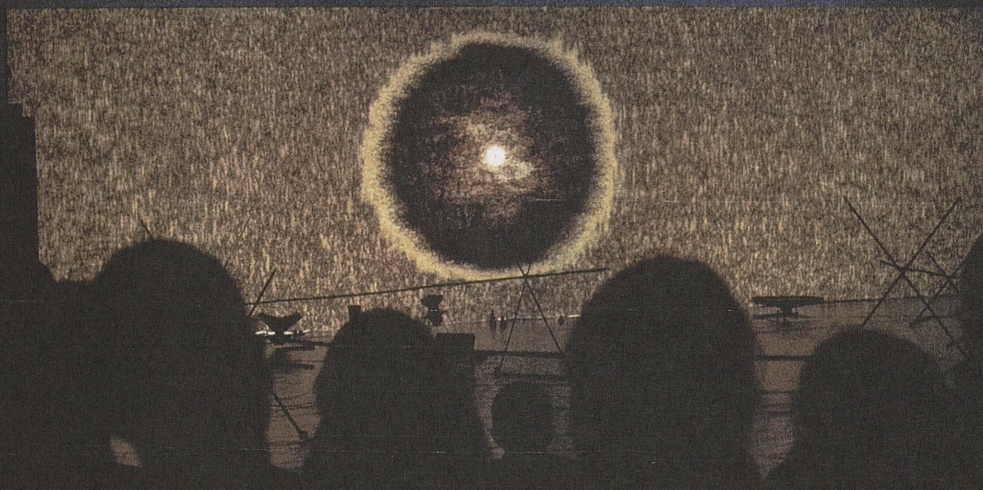
The present is a memory in motion. At the same time there has never been so much past before as there is right now.

By and with: Asle Nilsen, Piotr Pajchel, Eirik Arthur Blekesaune, Torgrim Torve, Niklas Adam, Janne Kruse, Ali Djabbary, Martin Taxt, Elisabeth Carmen Gmeiner, HC Gilje.

Other artists involved: Espen Sommer Eide, Sofia Jernberg and Magnie Finnsdatter Nilsen.

Photos by Jenny Berger Myhre and Andreas Turau.





"... There is something about the void in this piece and it quivers in line with the title 'HANNAH'. At first I was searching for meaning in the word (it can be grace, mercy and flower) but it is of course not what the title means but what it is which is the essence here; HANNAH is a palindrome, a word, expression or number that gives the same result either you read from right or left (...) and there we were, inside something both noisy and quiet, in contact with the infinite, palindromic."

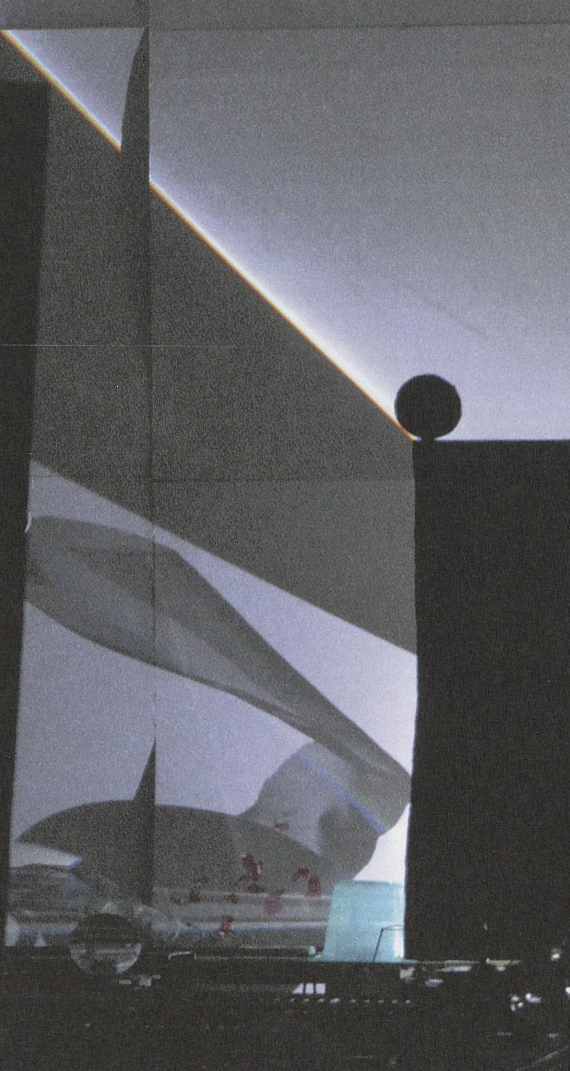
Elin Hoyland, Klassekampen.

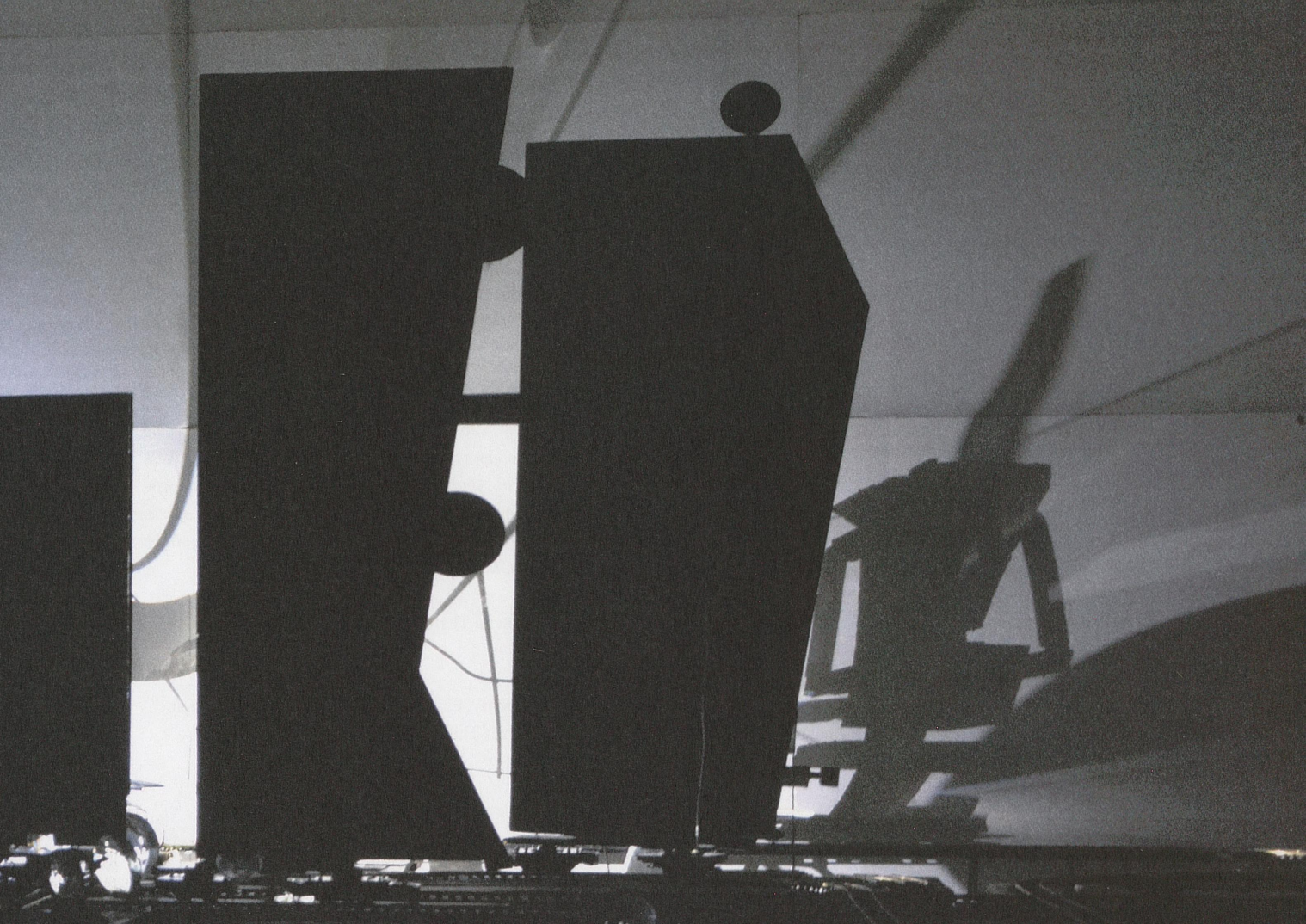


HANNAH

BROEN OVER GJØRME 2014

BRIDGE OVER MUD





The work towards this new piece started after returning to Oslo from a project Verdensteatret made in Kolkata, India in 2011. Among a great diversity of material to surface in *Broen over Gjørme* there are clear imprints from their stay in Kolkata, where they also presented the previous work *And All the Questionmarks Started to Sing* in the ruins of the former Reserve Bank of India (The Currency Building) in the centre of Kolkata city. *Broen over Gjørme* was first presented at Henie Onstad Art Museum in Oslo, September 2014. The work is in its very nature a fragmented and abstract work, set in a symphonic multimedial expression. The form profits both from visual art and video art, sound art and performance. The work may best be described as a room of many media that unfolds within a finely tuned audiovisual symphony. This spatial instrument is handled live by performers and artists from different artfields. The interaction is more finely tuned than ever. And the participants are less visible. The group sees the symphonic space as the messenger to our senses.

... "This time the setting is a wide flat "field" of tracks, transporting objects and sculptures in all directions. There is something about the tracks and the whole visual setting that makes me think of Tarkovsky's science fiction movie "Stalker" (1979). The film works well as a prism for this work, but while Tarkovsky lets his characters leave their everyday life and enter The Zone, this work embodies in so many ways a timeless Zone by itself. The span between deafening noise and the somewhat more fragile and unsteady, wavery space this performance creates seem to reflect the extremes of human existence. To get back to "Stalker"; there is another quote brought back to life by "Broen over Gjørme": "Weakness is something fantastic, strength is nothing."

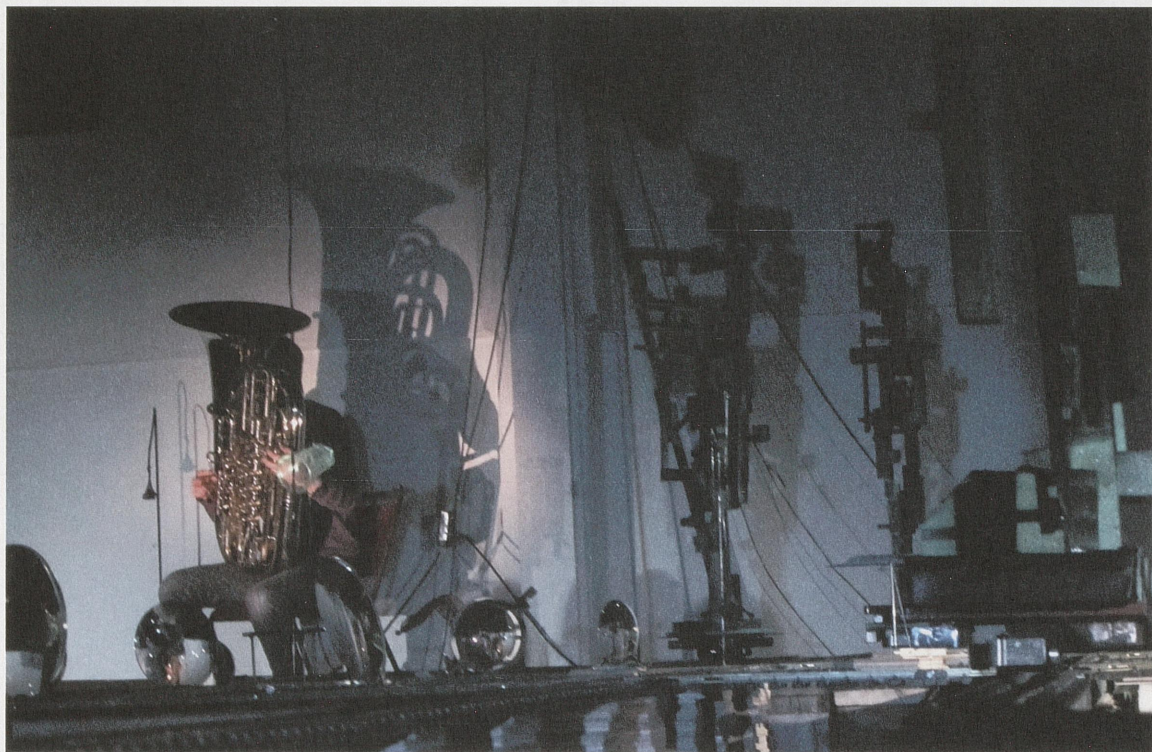
Anette Therese Pettersen. Klassekampen

Broen over Gjørme is created and performed by the artists:

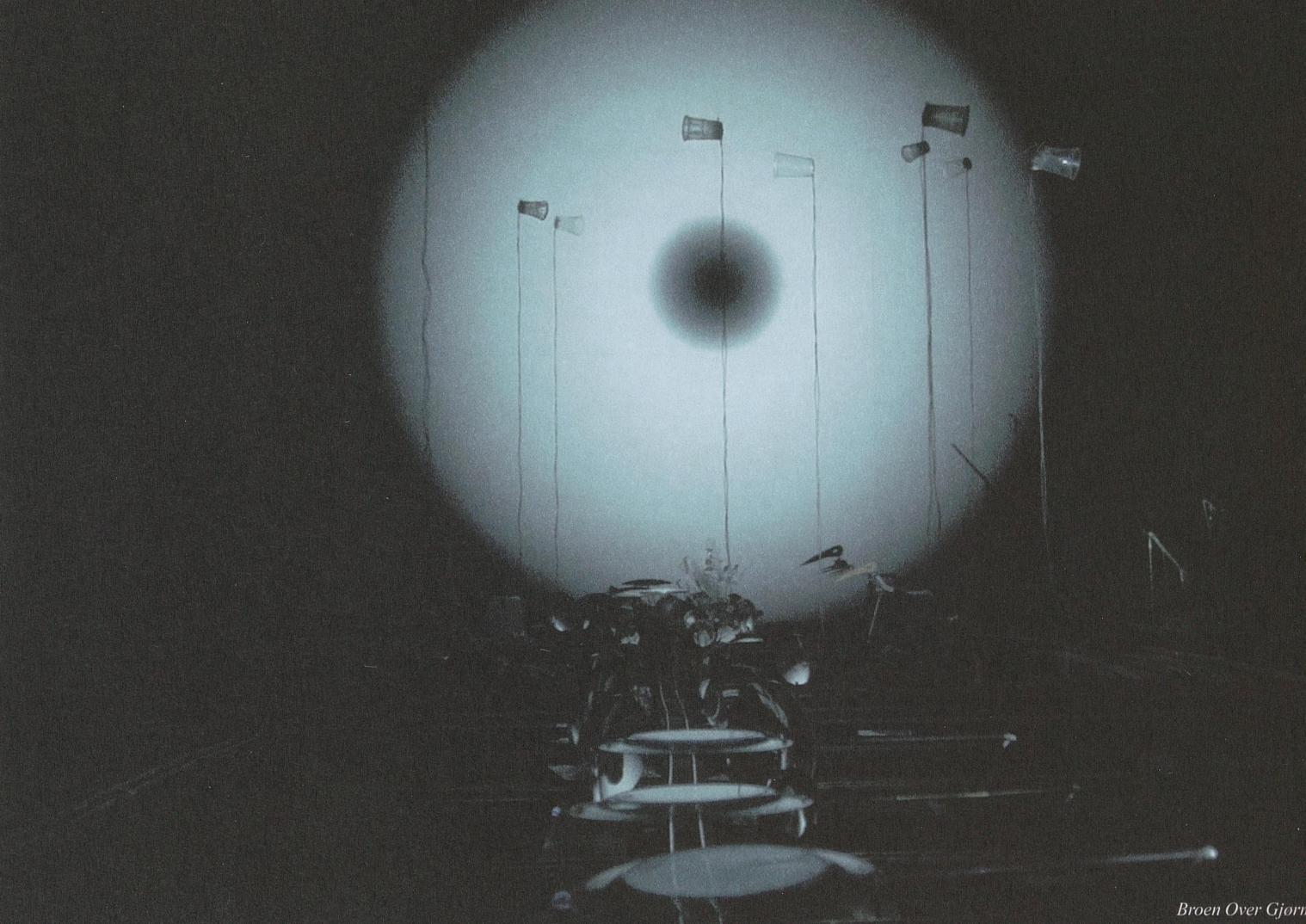
Lisbeth J. Bodd, Asle Nilsen, Eirik Blekesaune, Piotr Pajchel, Martin Tøxt, Alireza Djabbari, Espen Sommer Eide, Elisabeth Gmeiner, Torgrim Torve, Niklas Adam, Janne Kruse, Benjamin Nelson, Kristine R. Sandøy, Thorolf Thuestad.

Thanks to: Laurent Ravot, Piotr Nowak.

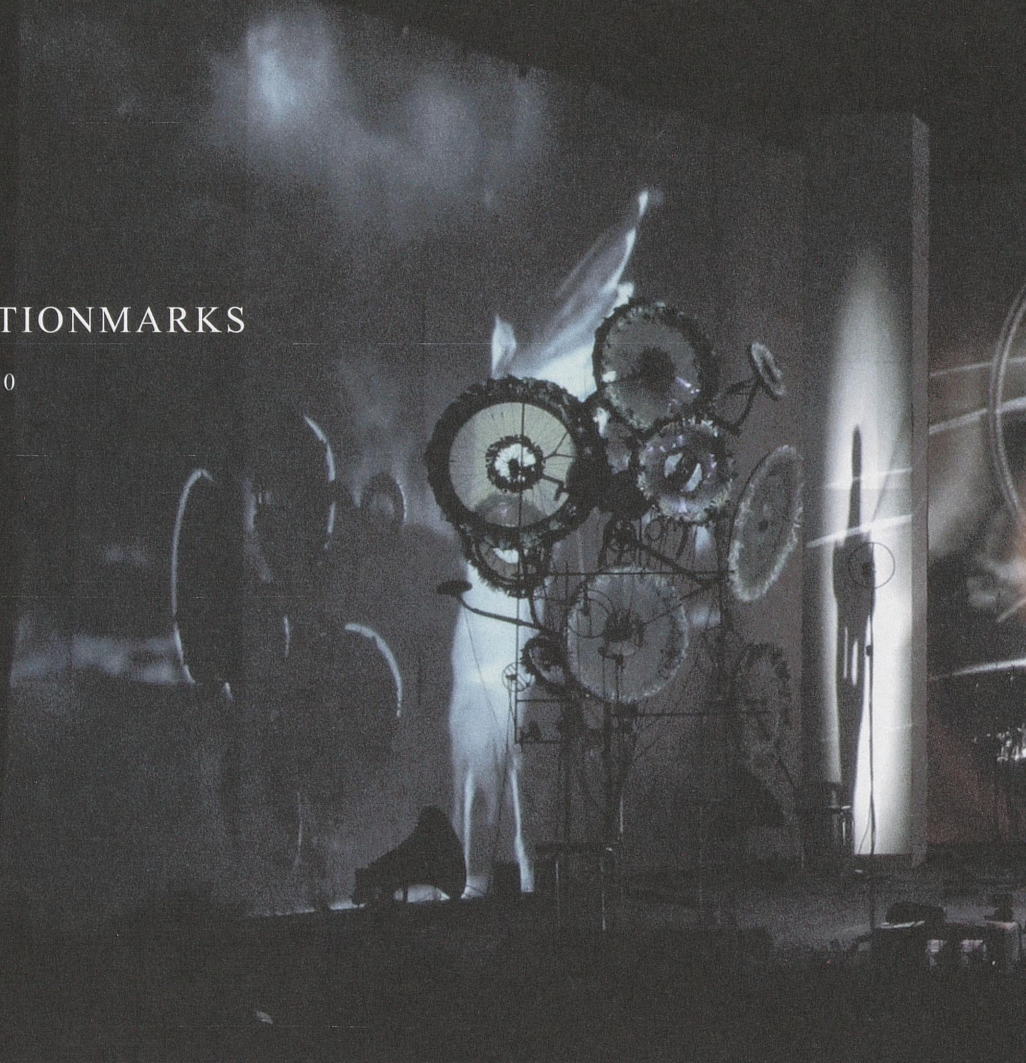


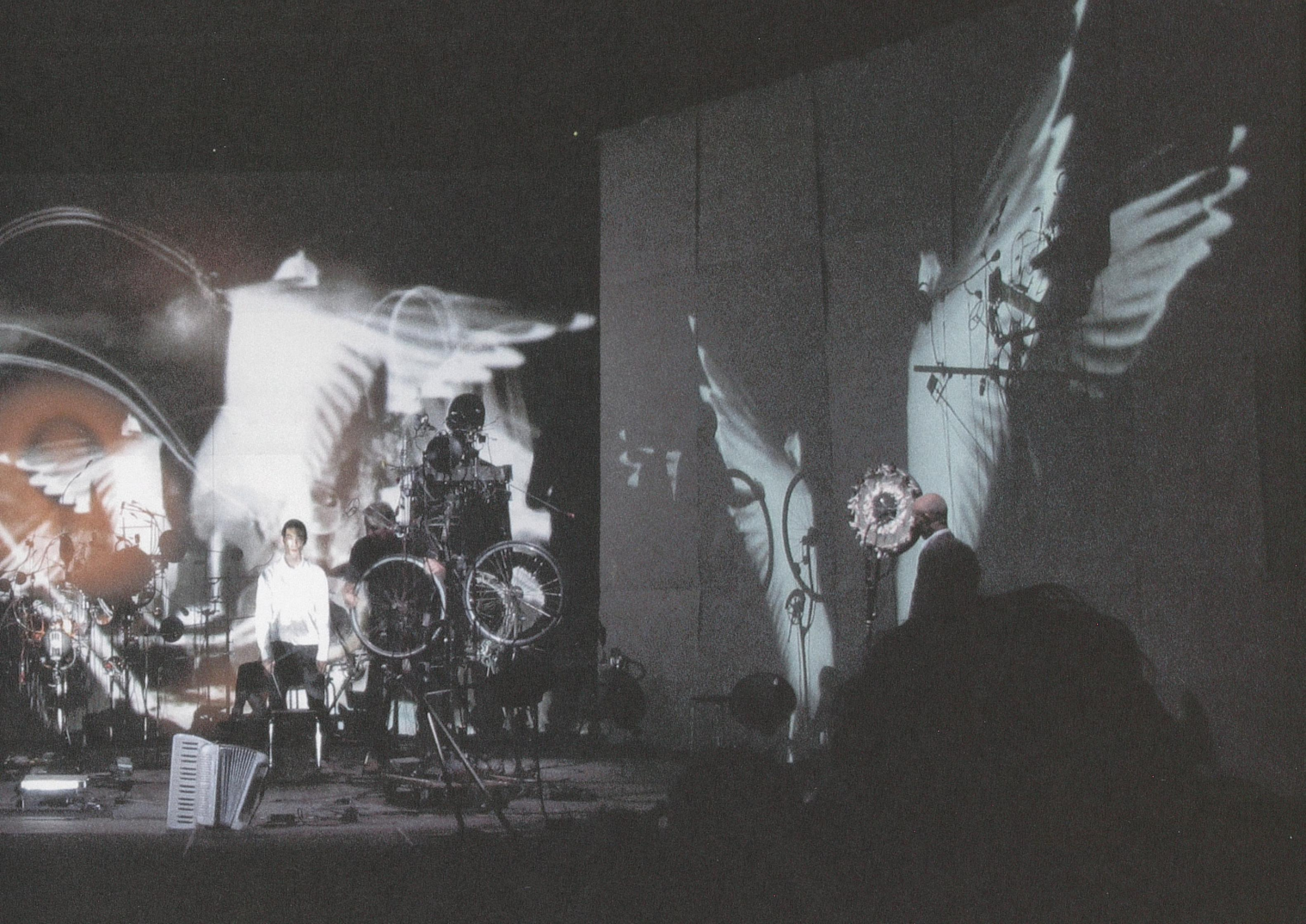


Broen Over Gjørme



AND ALL THE QUESTIONMARKS
STARTED TO SING 2010





And All the Questionmarks Started to Sing is a composition in the form of a hybrid between performance, concert and installation. It might be described as an art-machine played by musicians, performers and robots. Physically the work appears as a landscape of kinetic sculptures, that activate a diversity of animation techniques, micro puppetry, music, light and shadowplay. This landscape of kinetic sculptures creates a room in constant transformation. All objects produce art and are also a part in it. The idea of simultaneous perspectives and multiple functions tied to each object creates a work of works. A conglomerate of connections across media and layers. Some obvious, planned and controlled. Others seen by the single spectator only, weaving her story, from available threads.

And All the Questionmarks Started to Sing is presented in different ways depending on the context.

Live version:

performance/concert where performers/musicians play on and operate all the machines/sculptures and mechanical instruments.

Installation version:

A fully automatic computerprogrammed version for exhibitions.

Hybrid version:

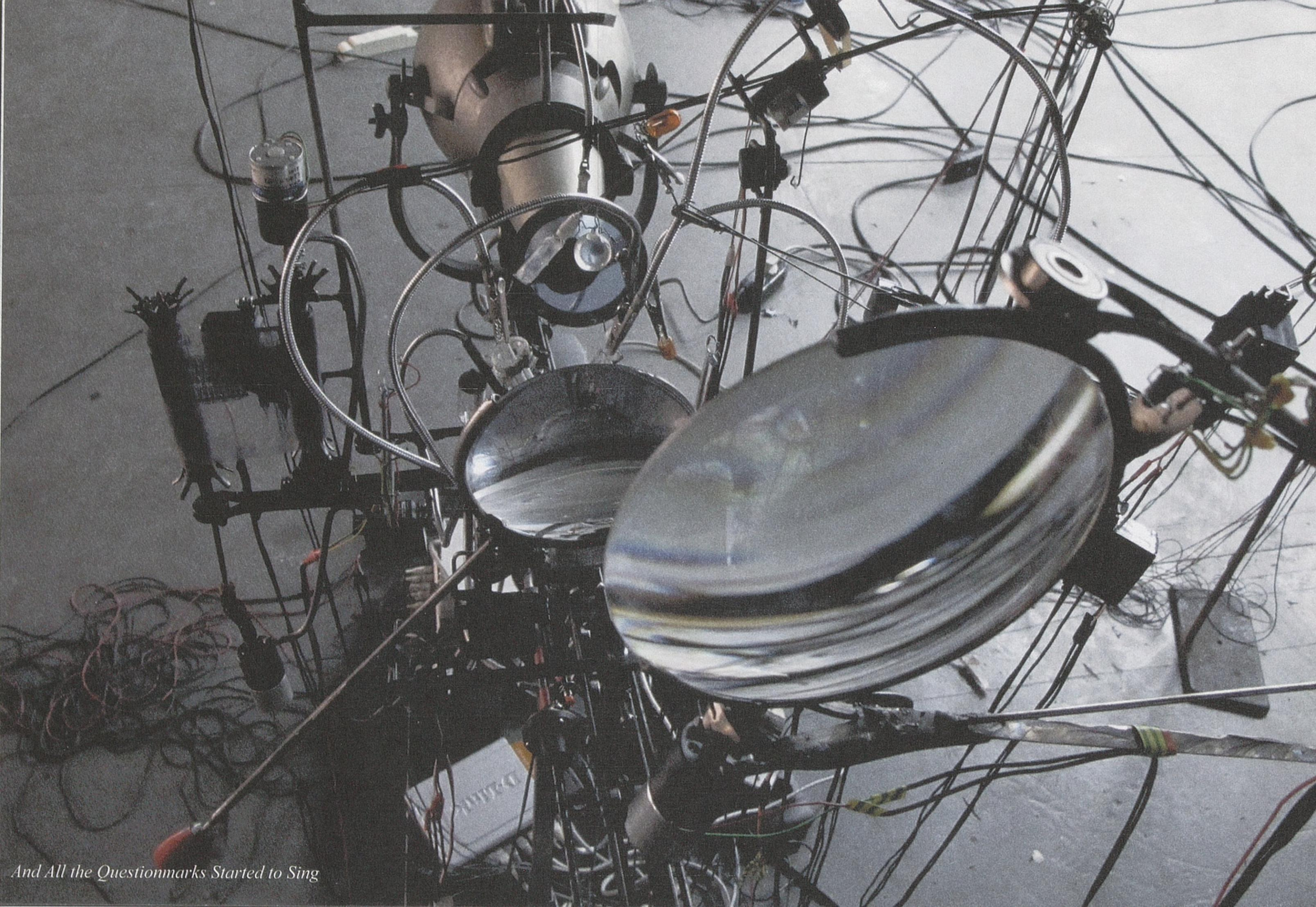
A combination where live sequences alternate with automation.

By and with:

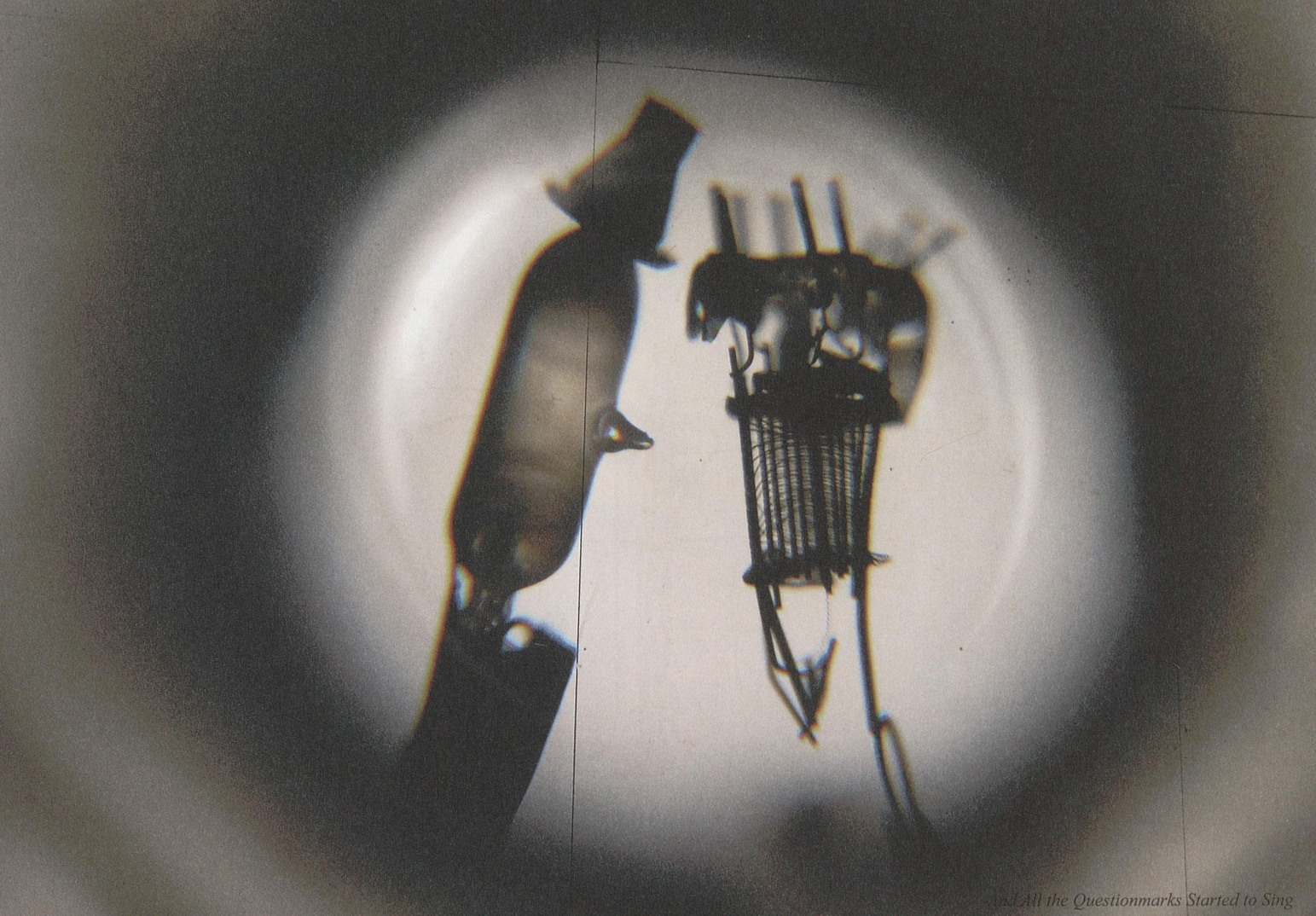
Asle Nilsen, Lisbeth J. Bodd, Håkon Lindbäck, Piotr Pajchel, Christian Blom, Kristine Roald Sandøy, Hai Nguyen Dinh, Ali Djabbary, Øyvind B. Lyse, Gjertrud Jynge, Espen Sommer Eide, Thorolf Thuestad, Eirik Blekesaune, Hans Skogen, Janne Kruse, Jannicke Lie, Elisabeth Gmeiner.

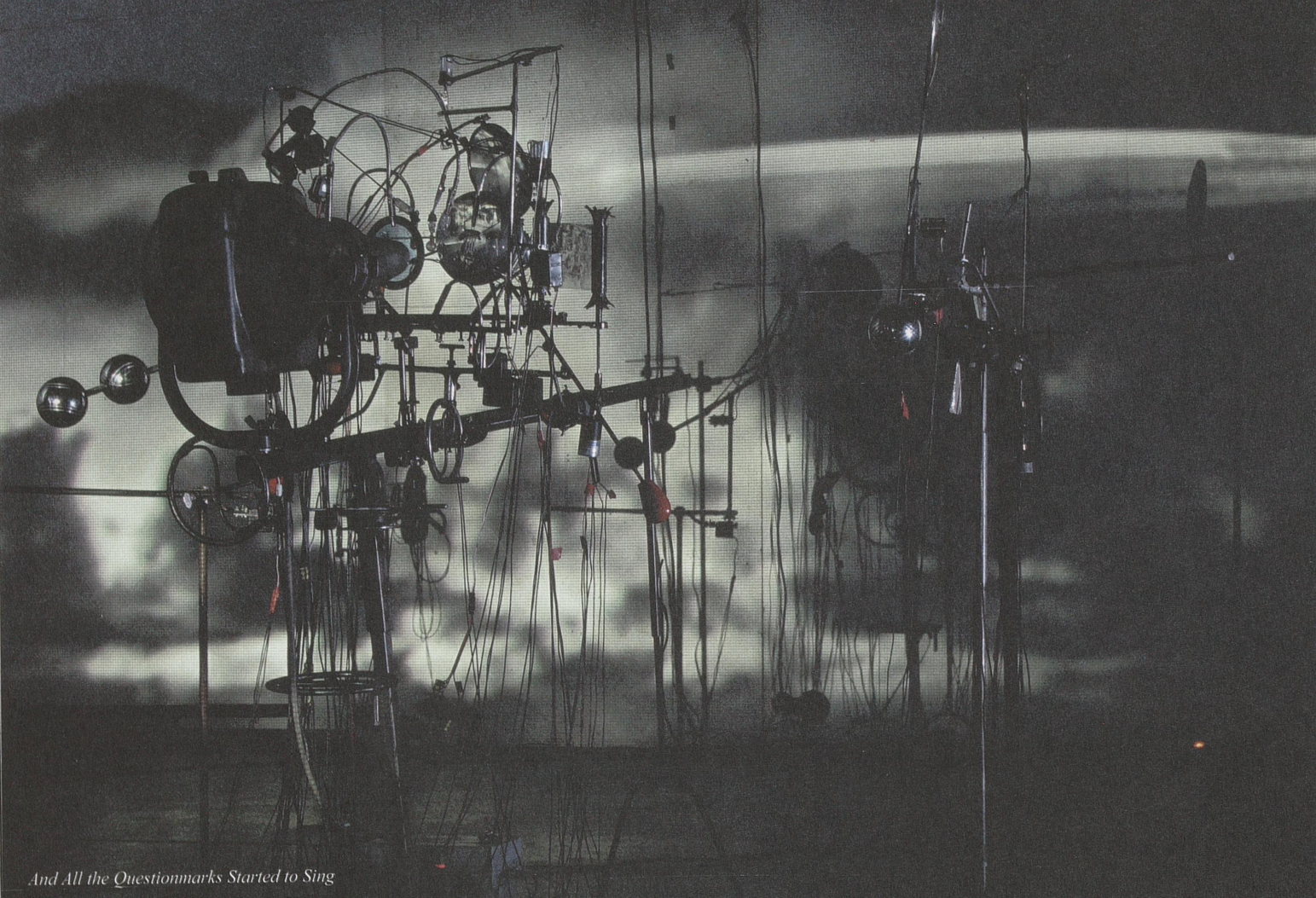


And All the Questionmarks Started to Sing

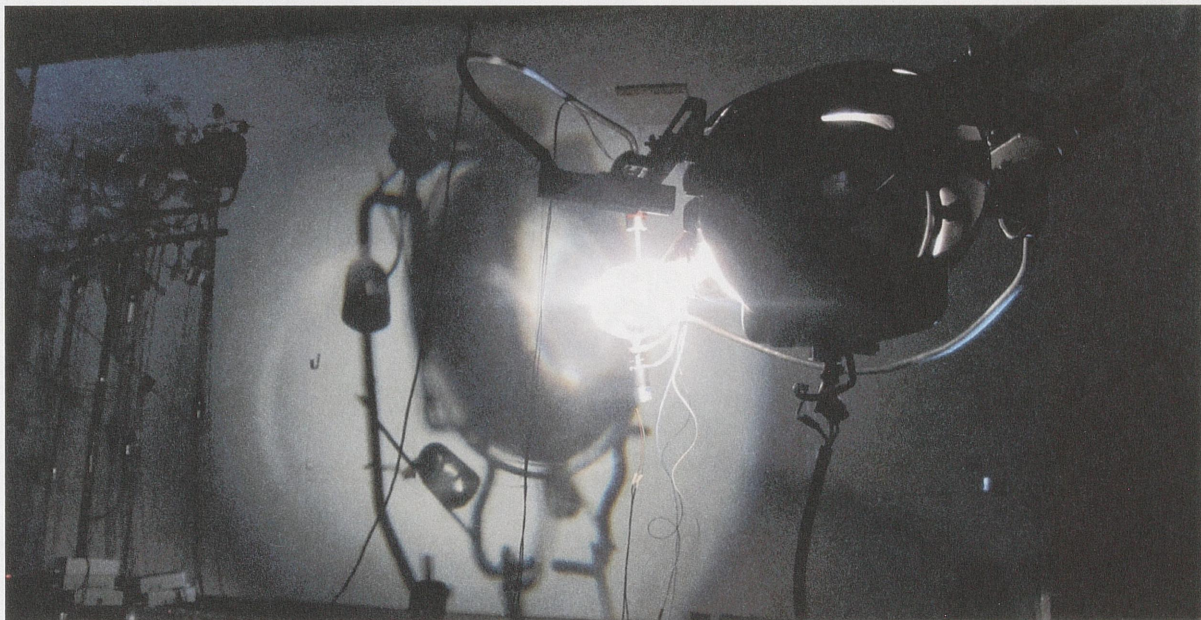


And All the Questionmarks Started to Sing





And All the Questionmarks Started to Sing



And All the Questionmarks Started to Sing

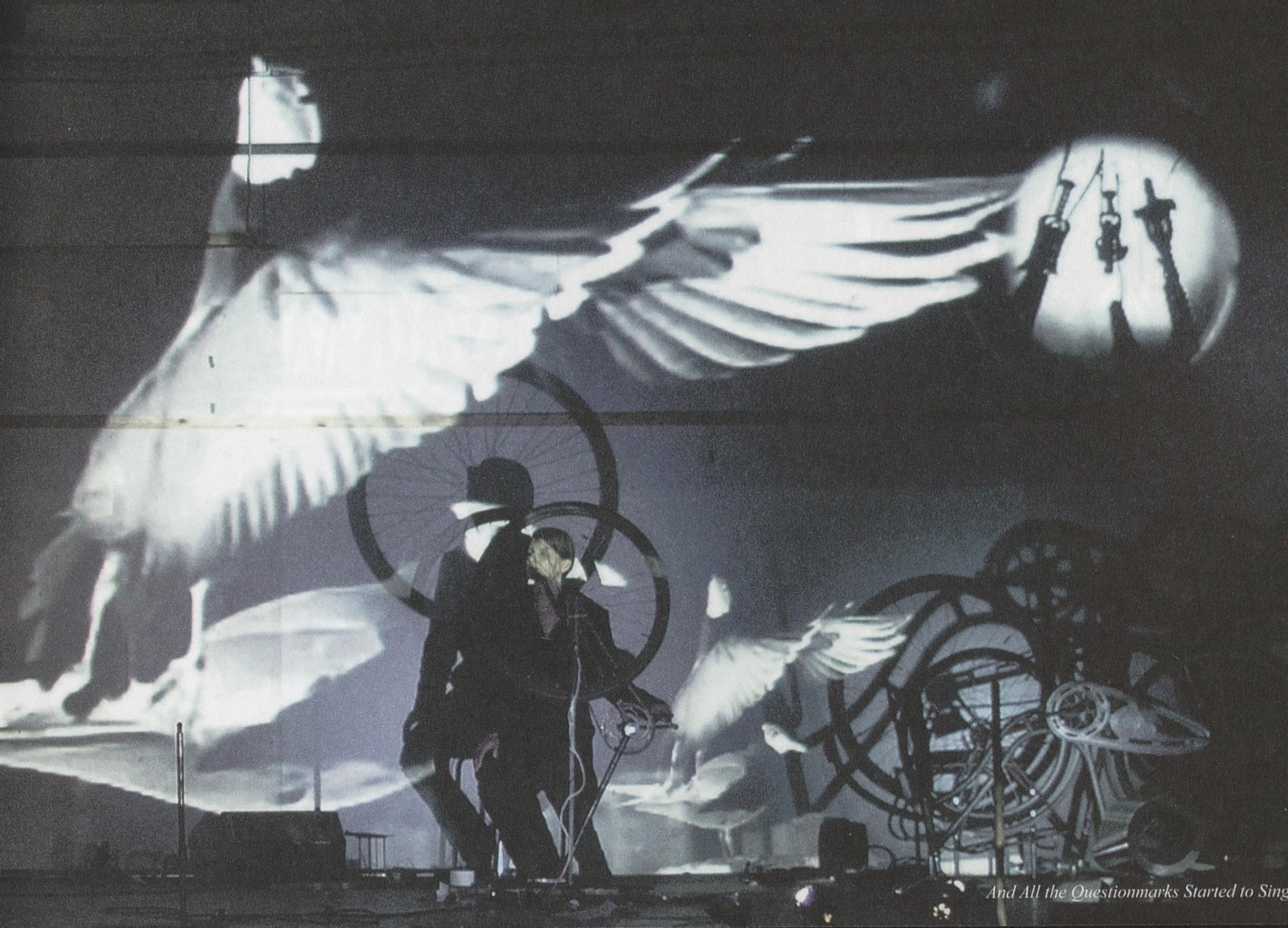


And All the Questionmarks Started to Sing



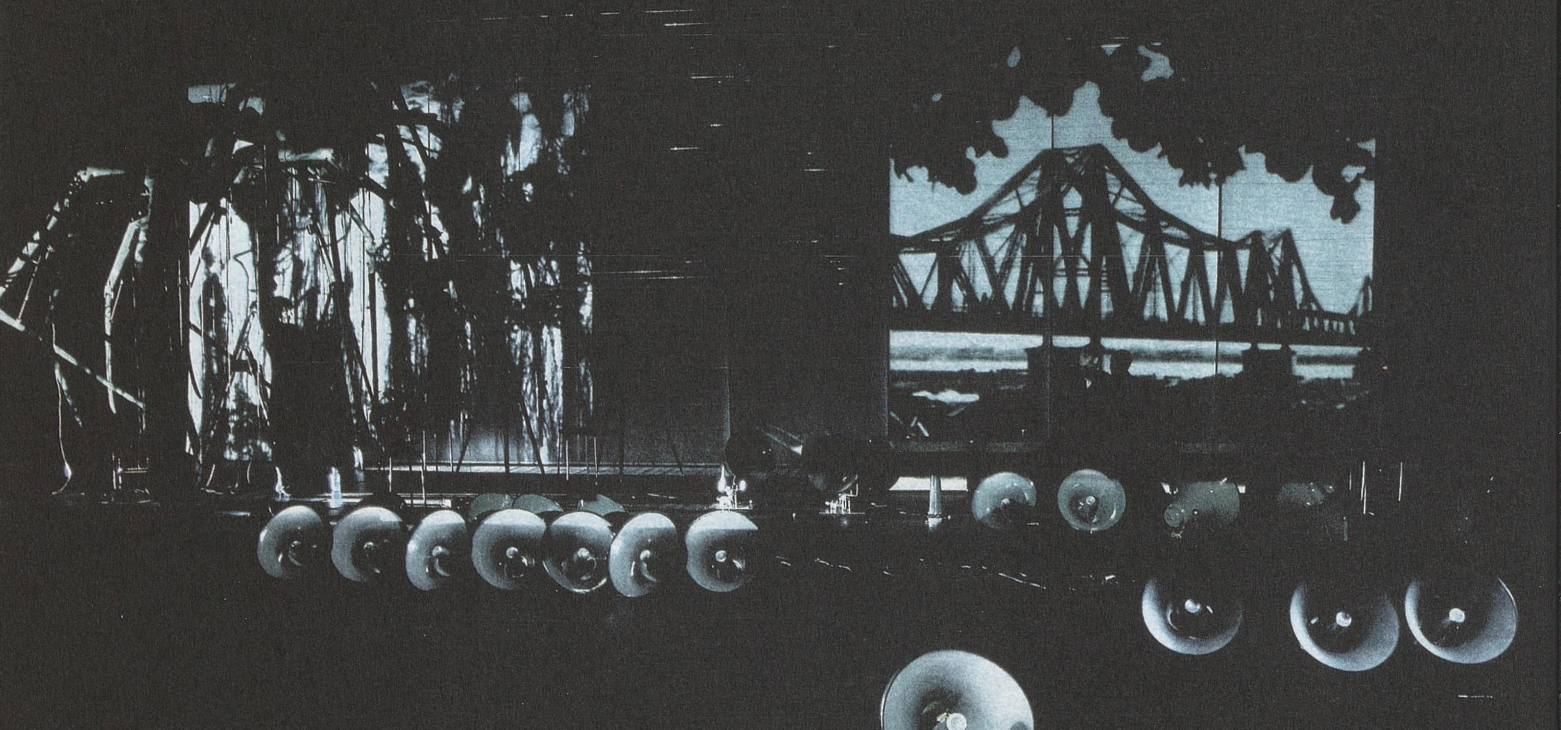
And All the Questionmarks Started to Sing





And All the Questionmarks Started to Sing

LOUDER 2007



“..because in time, the geography between here and there have gotten further and further apart. So we were too far away from each other to make any difference...”

John Jesurun.

based on *louder*. These works will first be shown in Norway and then presented internationally.

Winter 2007 Verdensteatret went on a journey to Vietnam and the Mekong-river. This was the first step towards the production *louder* and the new installation based on the same material.

“*louder* is a massive orchestral piece. A tidal wave of pictures and sounds is thrown at us by a machine so fragile that it is in constant danger of short-circuiting. Among a pile of megaphones that hurl sound in all directions, and a knot of wires so stretched that they may break at any moment, we glimpse people. People who are trying to interact with this landscape, tugging at strings that are everywhere in the room. The strings hanging from the ceiling form a stage for a mass of figures. A mechanical puppet play takes place here – over the heads of the performers. *louder* is a storytelling orchestra that hangs by a rusty wire and narrates a multitude of tales through sound and images. Tales from a distant past, tales from our time, about wars, river, the theatre, the nation, music, nature, technology, the journey and about exile. In the midst of this throng, we find a heart of darkness – a long, black barge on the open sea, radiating coldness and stories.”

Elisabeth Leinslie

louder is made by: Lisbeth J. Bodd, Asle Nilsen, Piotr Pajchel, Håkon Lindbäck, Petter Steen, Ali Djabbary, Marius Kjos, Mara Oldenburg, Bergmund Waal Skaslien, Elisabeth Gmeiner, Christina Peios, Christian Blom, Rune Madsen.

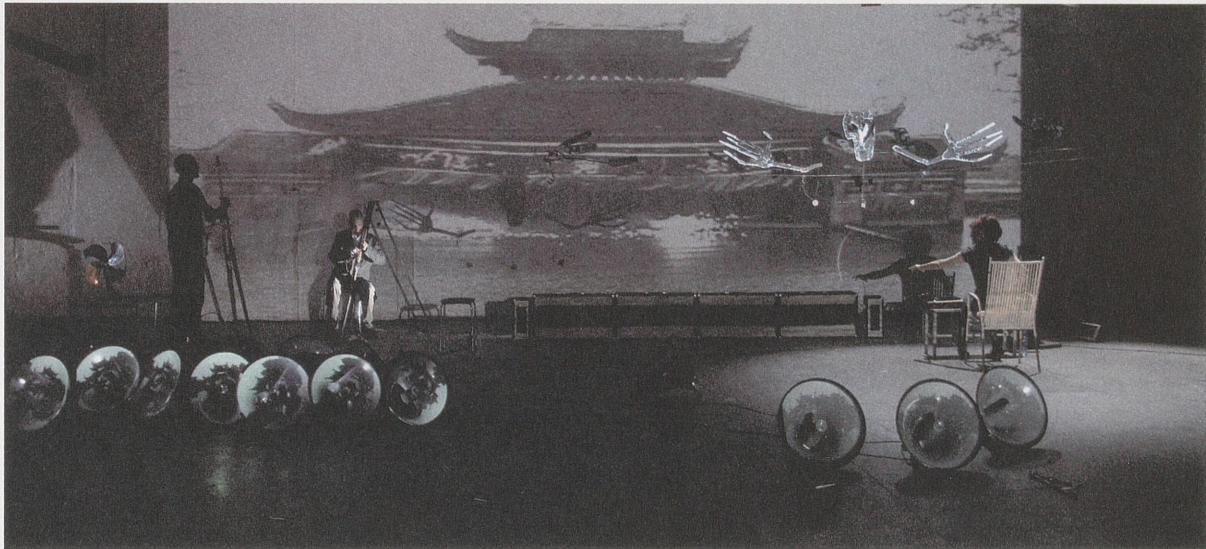
Others involved in the project: Trond Lossius, Elisabeth Leinslie, Andrea Austdahl, Hai Nguyen Dinh.

The Telling Orchestra (Fortellerorkesteret) is a room-installation. An electro-mechanical construction that function as an audio-visual



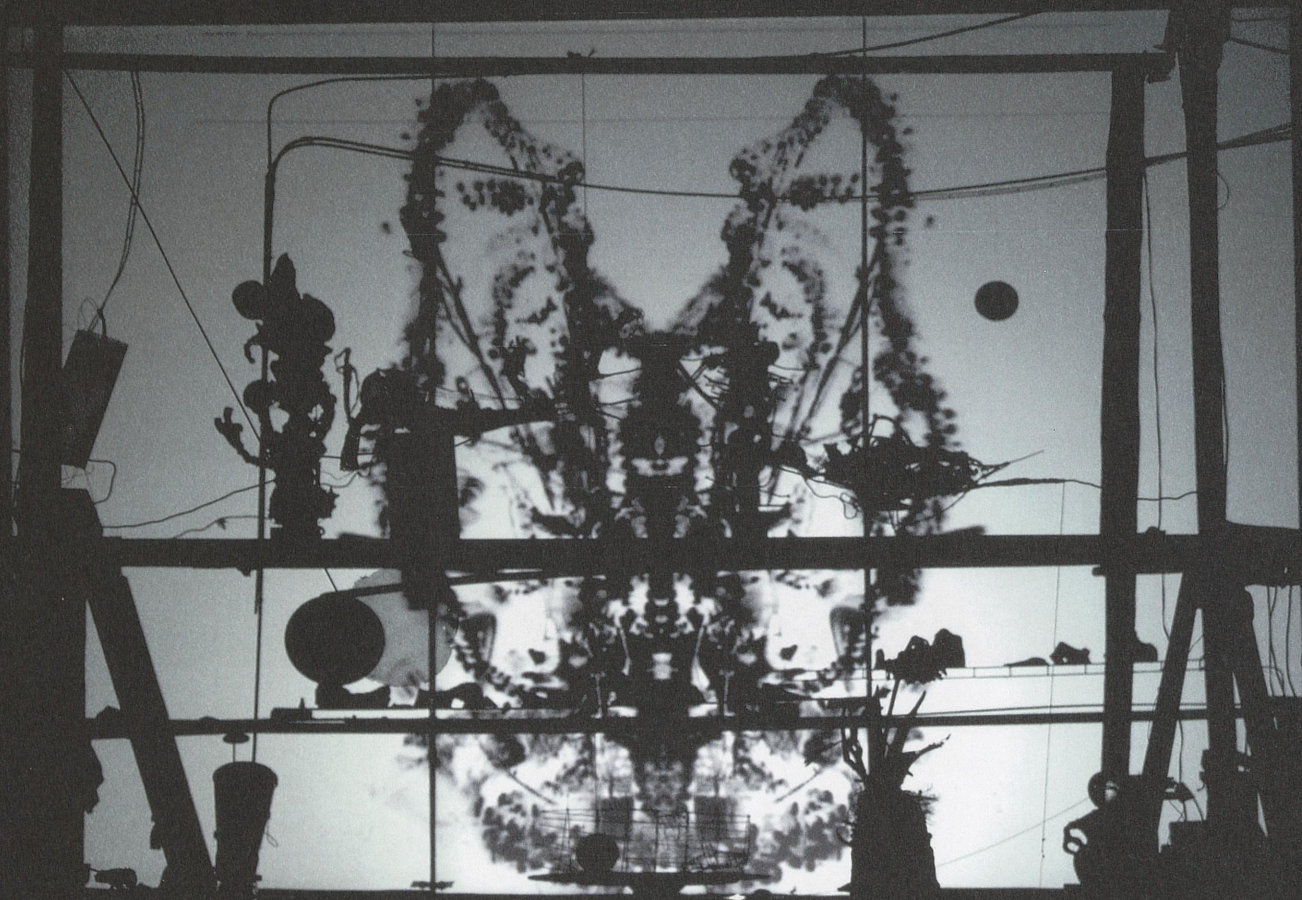
louder

THE TELLING ORCHESTRA



louder

THE TELLING ORCHESTRA 2004 - 2006

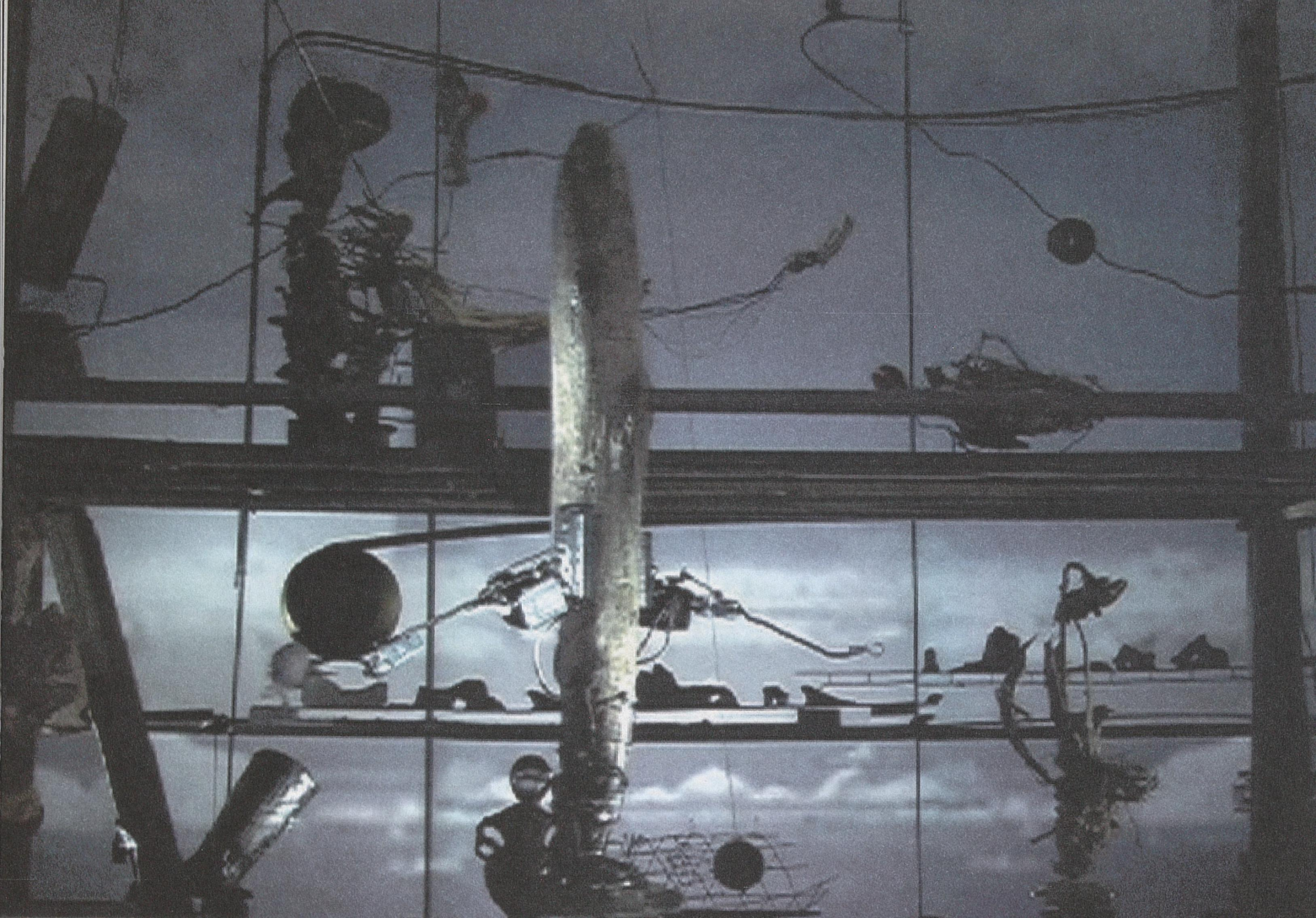


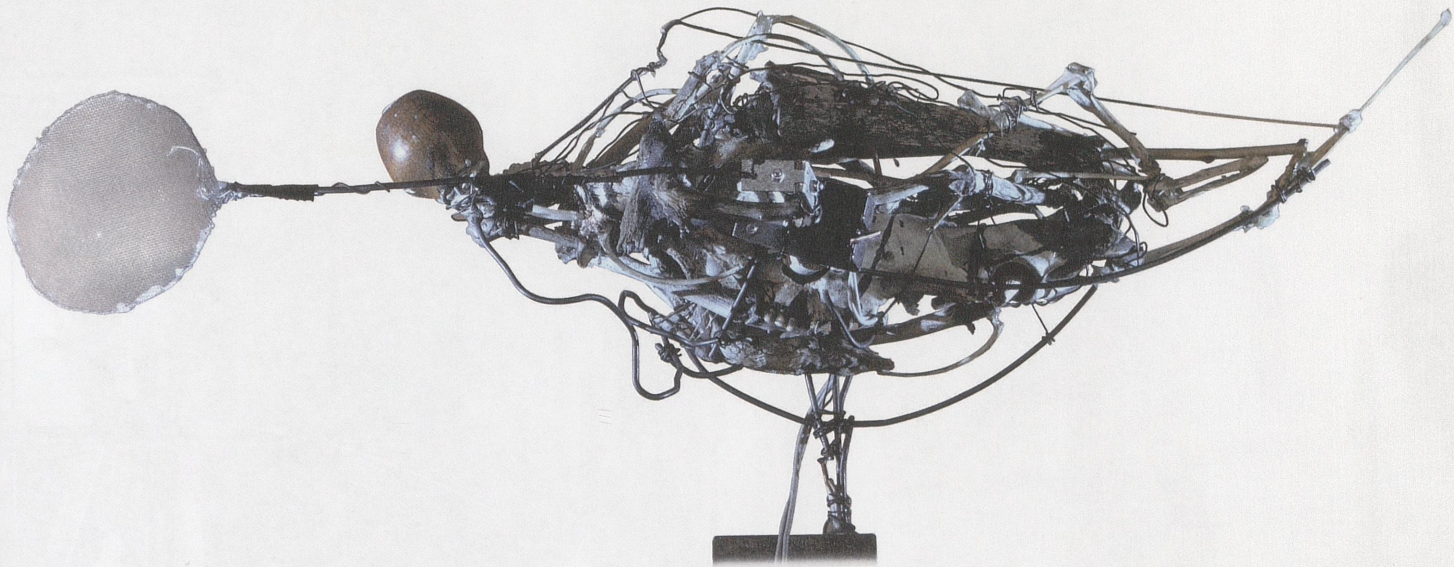
"animation-machine". By use of different motors and robotics the "primitive" wooden construction has become automatic and is programmed and run by computers. All the moving figures/objects, the sounds, all the visual parts, (video, light, mirroring images, etc) are run by computers. The installation can be viewed as a machine, as one complex instrument, or as a whole orchestra with many voices and tunes, many shapes and many stories.

The Telling Orchestra has gone through a constant development for almost three years and has become a very advanced and complex construction. The original concept and choice of material came first from our journey on Greenland in 2003 and partly from a sequence in the performance *Concert for Greenland*. It has now become a true telling orchestra that we can play almost anything on. It can produce music like an orchestra, it can produce complex visual sequences, mechanical ballets, shadowplay, twisted mirror projections, pure abstractions, literary stories, psychological relations between bonefragments, religious visions from the roadside, shipwrecks and machine romance...and so on forever. It is also a sculpture, -and a machine with the ability to change the room it is placed in, in a split second.

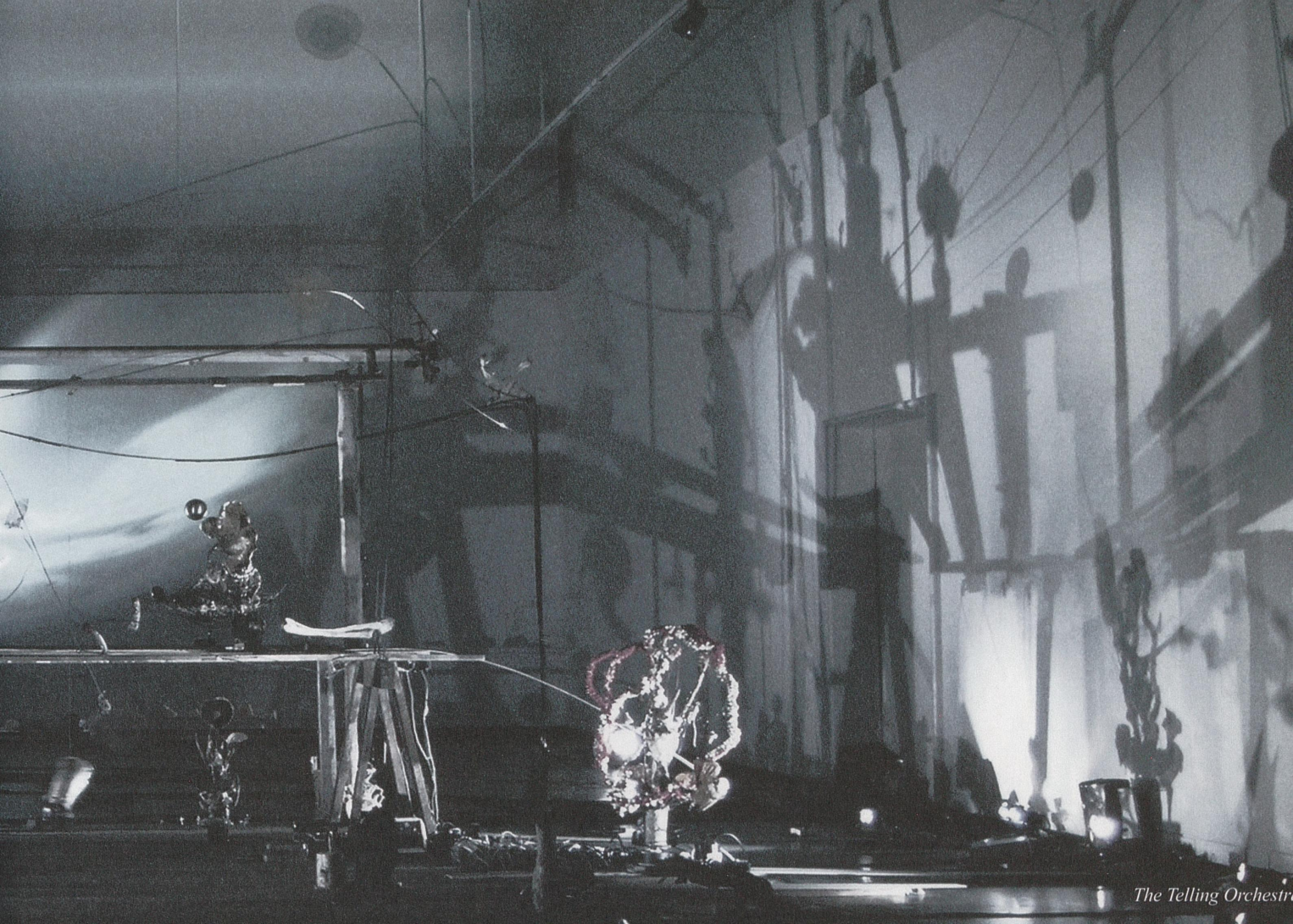
The artists who made *The Telling Orchestra*: Asle Nilsen, Lisbeth J. Bodd, Håkon Lindbäck, Piotr Pajchel, Christian Blom.
Other artists connected to the work: Trond Lossius, HC. Gilje, Bergmund Skaslien.

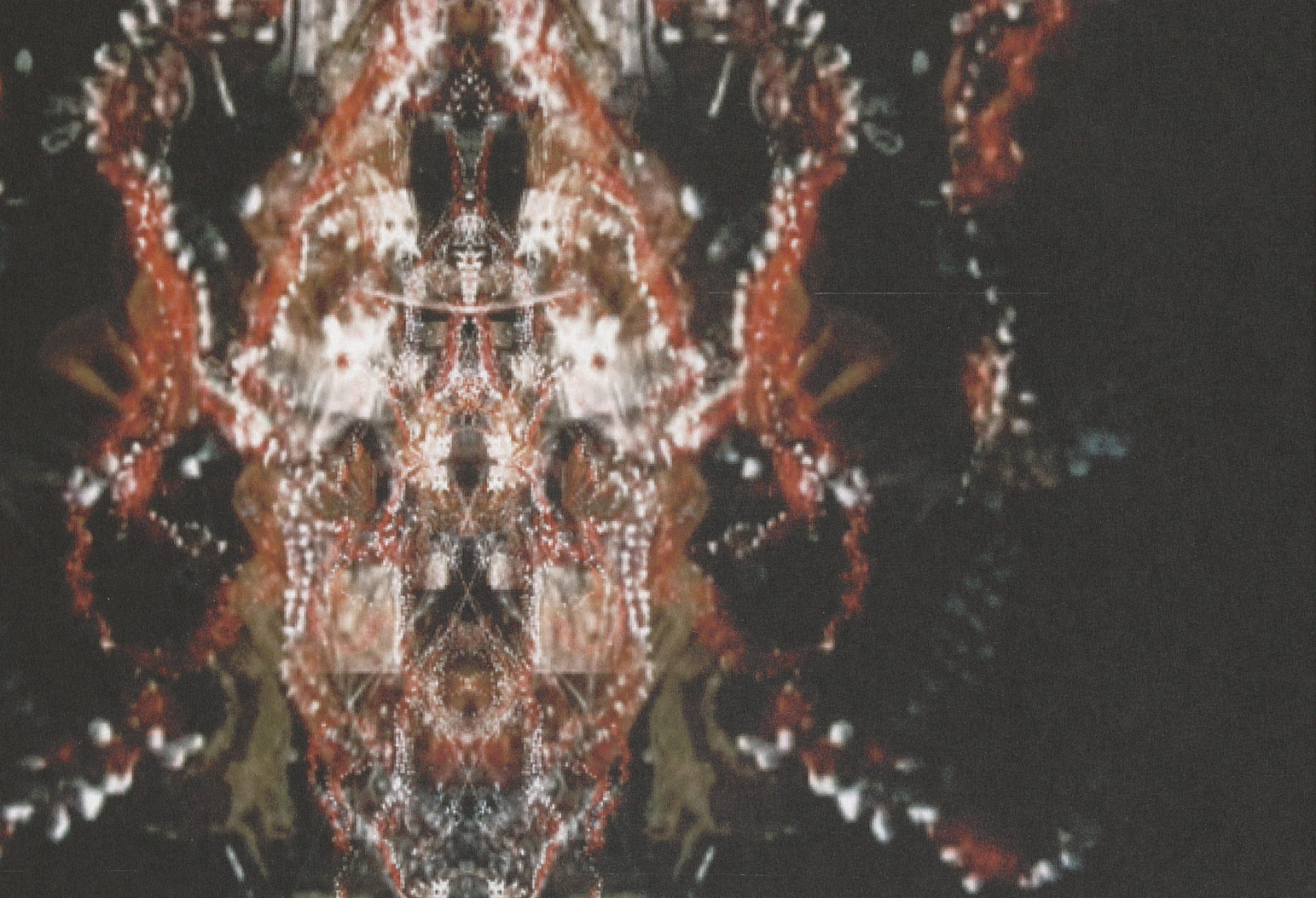












CONCERT FOR GREENLAND 2003 - 2005

“ That corpse you planted last year in your garden, has it began to sprout ? ”

“video-shadow-theatre” on Greenland.

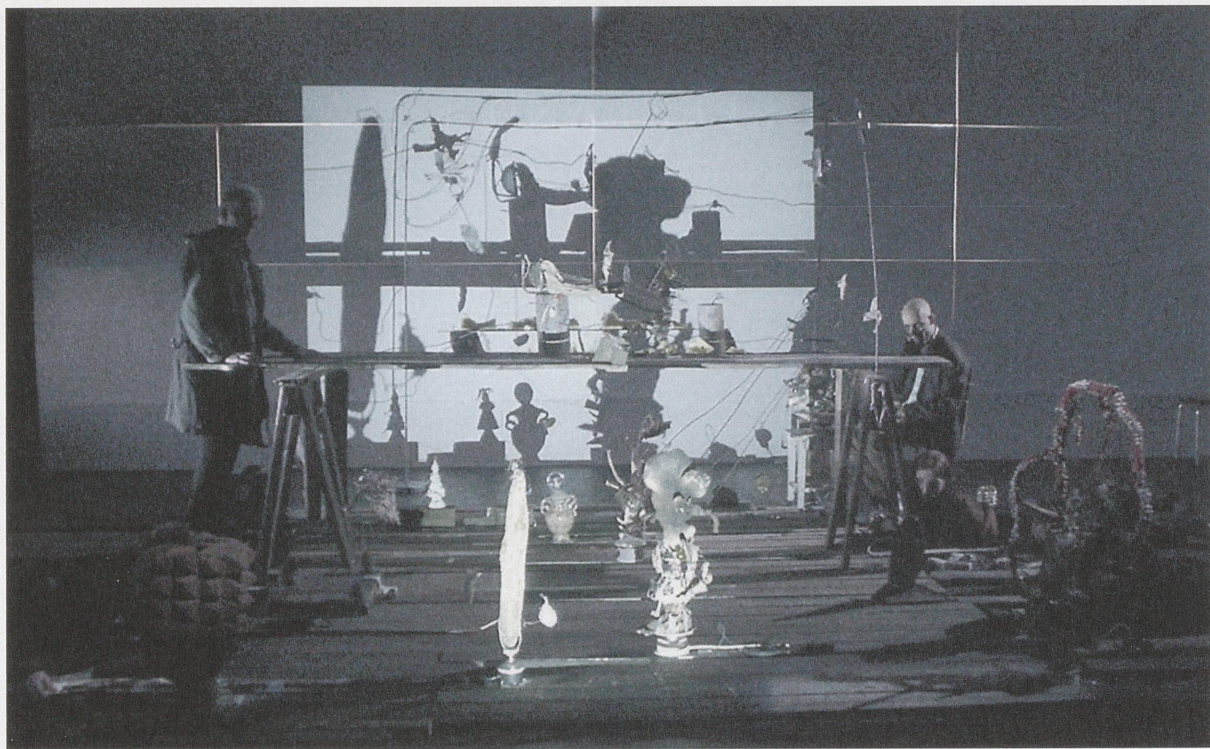
A performance/installation/concert where visual art, sound, video, installation, text and theatre try to unite into one composition.

The background for *Concert for Greenland* is a journey Verdensteatret made to Greenland and other north-Atlantic islands in 2003. Greenland is like an enormous shadow on the European map. Hiding other landscapes and other stories.

The ambivalent impressions we often felt during our stay in Greenland have changed into a deep fascination.

Artists involved in *Concert for Greenland*:

Asle Nilsen, Lisbeth J. Bodd, Håkon Lindbäck, Piotr Pajchel, Petter Steen, Ali Djabbari, Per Flink Basse, Erik Balke, Corinne Campos, Øyvind B. Lyse, Lars Øyno, Bergmund Skaaslien, Trond Lossius, Morten Pettersen, Kenneth K. Langås, Ulf Knudsen, Christian Blom.



Concert for Greenland



Concert for Greenland

TSALAL 2000 - 2002



TSALAL lies somewhere between a concert and a “live 3-dimensional painting”, or more like both at the same time. It reflects the journey on several levels simultaneously. It mirrors the actual trip with train through Ukraina, down to Odessa, -crossing the black sea and down the Bosphorus strait into Istanbul on the small russian passenger-ship *Gloria*. But the structure and artistic expression of the performance makes it feel more like the unconscious experience of travelling at large, or the memory of it rebuilt through dreams. On still another level it’s an expedition through a sound-scape and through language.

Participants in *TSALAL*: Asle Nilsen, Håkon Lindbäck, Lisbeth J. Bodd, Per Flink Basse, Trond Lossius, Lars Øyno, Mara Oldenburg, Ali Djabbar, Petter Steen, Marius Kjos, Øyvind B. Lyse, Ken Theodorsen, Reinert Mithassel, Kenneth K. Langås, Antti Bjørn.



