

Oslo, 22.02.96

Dear Cheung Fai,

since last time we spoke, Bak-truppen has done some research in the Hong Kong material, ours and other's, and it is all so very XXL. When Hong Kong came into Bak-truppen's work it was 1993 and we worked on a series of performances called "Peer you're lying. Yes!". Bak-truppen had even changed name to Peer Gynt, and had been dealing intensively with its own cultural identity for quite some time. Via media we stumbled across the Hong Kong/China reunion, and made an impulsive decision to concentrate the work on that fact.

It was summer and we were in Zürich. The working-space had no windows or doors going directly out, so we rented a radar and put it on the roof to get a view over the Zürcher Sea. Each time a boat came into our alarm zone, it said beep beep beep, and then it was "Hong Kong, a state of complete happiness". Hong Kong functioned as a holiday of mind: we made a performance free from factual knowledge, our only relation to the subject was through labels on short-lived products.

After having been there, Hong Kong is no longer only a metaphor to us, it seems more like a complex collection of Everything. We have a lot of sound- and videorecordings, photos and texts from Hong Kong and will confront it with other material, and treat it consecutive in relation to the 1997-countdown. The Hong Kong work will split in two directions: a feature film and a series of performances.

The film work is so far limited to an ongoing development of a manuscript. There is already a slight unease about the neat and thorough process of a making a film - the way from idea to realization is long.

Live action is something else: we already did Hong Kong Promotion Performance part one and two. During this spring we will work out our Hong Kong experiences into a more comprehensive performance: "INSOLVENT GHOSTS". These days we look for co-producers to help us realize the performance, so far Tom Stromberg at Theater am Turm joined the project.

It is no secret that we would love to show it in Hong Kong, and to have a Hong Kong co-producer would be great! We are eager to have connections to Hong Kong anyway, and any kind of interest or participation in our work would be highly appreciated.

Bak-truppen - the rear-guard, is a group of 8-10 Norwegians who live different lives in different places: Bergen, Oslo, Lillehammer, Amsterdam and Berlin. We come together to produce performable material and related stuff: photo, video, books, etc. After spending some time in finding a good social and mental spirit, we work day and night

producing and putting together material in such a high speed that superstructure can't follow. The work of Bak-truppen is always highly dependent on site, time, invitation, social potentials, etc. Theorists place us between cabaret, conceptual- and performance art. We work more or less like a band; collectiv, on pleasure.

We like to appear in various public spaces and connections. As we are often put in theatres, we have done numerous attempts to extend the space - taking away curtains, opening doors and windows, gone out on the street with microphones, let people phone in during the show, used radar, and invited people on internet to participate.

Bak-truppen is supported by the Norwegian authorities, and by generous friends in Europe: Theater am Turm, Hebbel Theater, Kaai Theater and old Micky have all done a lot for our existence. We have been almost everywhere in West-Europe, and would very much like to confront our work with other parts of the world.

Enclosed with this letter you will find information about the performances "Super-per", "Tonight:)" and a little bit about "Insolvent Ghosts". I also send you some articles, critics and a video with excerpts from our work. You can watch Bak-truppen's only video-production: "Instructions for use" and some private recordings from "Super-per" and "Tonight:)". I hope it will give you an idea about what Bak-truppen is like.

In the middle of March we will perform "Tonight:)" at Electra, a festival for art and technology in Oslo. The 12th and 13th of April we will perform "Super-per" in Paris. "Insolvent Ghosts" will be shown in its first version sometime during May, in a so far unknown place. We will let you know.

In Norway it is snow and winter at this time, and it will stay like that for one more month. Also here it is very cold this year, -17°C right now. The sky is bright blue, and the snow sparkles. The sun is getting more powerful each day. It looks perfect, but the cold bites me in the face when I am out there.

All the best from BAK-TRUPPEN and