



PERFORMANCE
PHILOSOPHY

PERFORMANCE PHILOSOPHY: AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION AND RESPONSIBILITY

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Introduction

In the emerging field of Performance Philosophy we are looking for possibilities to use philosophy for analyzing (contemporary) performances, or integrate performative concepts in the way we understand philosophy. Performance artists can become philosophers and philosophers are performing. Who the makers of both philosophy and performance are is a central topic, not limited however to stereotype notions of *the* performance artist (the person who puts him or herself on stage for an audience who is looking at him or her) or *the* philosopher (that—in most cases—slightly quixotic man writing his thoughts on for example the world, the self or love being isolated at his attic chamber, not taking part in society at all). No—the persons who make performance and/or philosophy are more connected to worldly issues than ever. Our current society asks for active participants, responsible citizens in democracies that are trying to hold on to their last social certainties. Performance artists and philosophers are trained in making up possible worlds, criticize these same parallel universes, and calling into question everything we once held for sure. In short, they are able to change our perspectives on the world, and more importantly, question our own position in society. Yet, whose position exactly?

In creative contexts, in particular participatory performances, the audience is claiming its own important part. Spectators are mobilized in creating their own stories. As such, they take up active roles in creating the content of performances. The turn to active participation in art manifests itself throughout Western European history (Bishop 2012). The historic avant-garde in Europe in 1917, the so-called 'neo' avant-garde leading to 1968, and the fall of communism in 1989 all reconsidered

the role of participating in art in a changing society (Bishop 2012, 3). In short, the periods in which change and reflection on the state of the art of society took place are characterized by a dramatic shift in our world order. Currently, we face developments making a call on our moral responsibility as human beings. Are we spectators who only watch thousands of refugees drowning trying to reach Europe, or close our eyes for the people living in miserable conditions in refugee camps? Or do we take our responsibility and reach a helping hand when we face the other?

In other words, contemporary society asks for citizens who take their responsibility (Bauman 2000). Challenging the division between 'actors' and 'onlookers' in democracy (Rancière 2009) is required for making sense of the changing nature of participation—the fora where people actively participate have increased both online and offline. New approaches to participation are needed to explain the complex interplay between private and public meaning-giving practices in contemporary culture, society and in particular democracy. The field of *Performance Philosophy* can make a difference in this context: it offers insight in the mechanics of performance and philosophy, how we give a meaning to and question important issues surrounding us and define who the actors are in various circumstances (and the grey zones between both).

In this article, I will map out how the field of *Performance Philosophy* is relevant in thinking about the role of spectators, viewers and audiences members as *responsible participants* in both the performance of philosophy and the philosophy of performance. I will make clear that considering the moral responsibility of all participants of performances can learn us more about how philosophy can become a practical act in aesthetic events as opposed to an abstract set of questions and theories, and vice versa how philosophy as a method of making performance validates the important position of artistic projects as critical, question asking institutions in contemporary society.

In the first part of the article I will introduce an interesting perspective on thinking differently about the act of viewing: an in-depth reading of Jacques Rancière's notion of the *emancipated spectator*. This concept has many possibilities for the field of performance philosophy and for the role of performance and philosophy in society, because spectators are approached as creative, active, and responsible thinking citizens. It is important to shed light on the condition of spectating, because here the condition of performance starts in the first place. Without spectators there is no performance. According to Rancière, we should change our conception of the act of viewing however, and consider spectators as 'both distant spectators and active interpreters' (Rancière 2009, 13). In the second part of the article the practice of participatory performance is the central theme. I will make clear that performances have become hybrid art forms which can incorporate multiple perspectives. Performance creates a stage for exploring the changing relations between individuals and the community. Grant Kester's (2011) concept of *dialogical aesthetics* is an important theme here. The third part of the article will have a relevant Dutch performance as central topic. In the performance *Order of the Day* (my translation from the Dutch: *Orde van de Dag*), performed monthly by theatre company Het NUT a news-reel is staged in a theatre setting. The artists create a show in one day, presenting the topics of the hour. The audience can think with the makers about which topics will be staged, and is talked to as dialogue partner. This news show in the theatre is

an example of how performance can create an arena for discussing important societal topics. And how changing the notion of the audience as static onlookers forms actively participating citizens.

I will conclude the article by stating that we need new concepts for analyzing their changing role, both in performances and contemporary (Dutch) society which has become more participatory and relying on the responsibility of citizens. I aim to make clear that the access to images and information provides us with knowledge and, at the same time, makes us responsible for what we see. A critical attitude towards all topics we are presented with is required to survive in contemporary society. Here the field of performance philosophy offers potential: value every visitor in his position as spectator, not as passive perceiver of images but as a person who can make a change. We have to start somewhere, and why not in the space of the theatre where everything is possible?

Emancipating the spectator

Rancière's theories on the *emancipated spectator* and the *distribution of the sensible* offer a radically different perspective on the state of contemporary democracy than we are used to. These concepts could be taking notions on participating in society and in aesthetic events, and the responsibility of philosophers, performance artists and audiences to a next level. Rancière uses theatrical terms to describe democratic politics. In Rancière's view democracy means that all people have a right to be heard, yet a struggle is needed to challenge the division between 'actors' and the 'audience'. Our conception of spectating has to alter, because 'the spectator also acts' (Rancière 2009, 13). Democratic politics occur when the *emancipated spectator* questions this separation of roles and the division between the people acting and the people standing by becomes unclear (Rancière 2009, 19). Consequently, the theatrical terms used to describe contemporary democratic politics seem to challenge a classical theatre structure: the separation of roles between actors and spectators is debated. This struggle for democratic politics is visible in the theatre, especially in participatory performances. Theatre makers and audience members participating in the theatre together create a space for critical reflection. Seen in this way, theatre as both aesthetic act and event in the everyday life could fulfill an important role in a democratic society.

Central to Rancière's discussion of the position of the spectator in contemporary society is the idea that the condition of spectating itself has to be revalued. The spectator should not be approached as a matter of secondary importance, but as a necessary element actively creating the conditions and the content for performances. Even as the most important factor in constituting performances that matter in the social and political sphere (Rancière 2009, 2). However, despite the fact that the audience is crucial for performance art, there is a *paradox* in the position of the spectator (Rancière 2009, 2). The audience is necessary for calling an artistic event theatre or performance in the first place, but at the same time '[t]o be a spectator is to be separated from both the capacity to know and the power to act' (Rancière, 2009, 2). Consequently, on the one hand, a performance cannot proceed without a spectator, on the other hand, the audience has no real influence or role in the passive condition Rancière describes here. Spectators do not really participate, but are forced in the position of static *onlookers*.

In order to bring back the *action* to the theatre (Rancière 2009, 3), a different conception of the position of the spectator is needed. The notion of the viewer as someone standing by and not taking part in the action should be rejected, and seen as a crucial part of any dialogue. Instead, the spectator should be valued as a participant, someone who uses the images presented on stage to generate new personal knowledge (Rancière 2009, 4).

In the theatre, an interest in participation was already visible in Bertolt Brecht's epic theatre and Antonin Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty (Rancière 2009, 4). In the epic theatre, one of the most important aspects is the *Verfremdungseffekt*. This form of alienation is used to establish distance between spectators and the events shown on stage, resulting in a changing of the audience's attitude towards the theatrical action (Brecht 1964, 57). They are encouraged to make the performance work for them personally. The Theatre of Cruelty does the opposite: in this form of theatre the spectators are immersed in the event. They are placed in the centre of the theatrical action, resulting in physical participation which engages the spectators with the *spectacle* (Artaud 1958, 93). Another form of engagement in the theatrical action is Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed, in which audience members become participant using the stage for changing social realities (Boal 2008, xxi).

Thus, theatre makers have been using a theatrical framework in very diverse ways, as such enabling participants to form their own opinion. Theatre is at the same time a fictive space and a dimension of reality, which opens up room for critical reflection, either through distance or through immersion in the theatrical event. Traditional dual roles of theatre makers and their audiences are contested, resulting in questioning issues of equality and inequality. In this respect, theatre has an important participatory aim, because performance can function as a starting point for the mobilization of people in daily life.

In particular *participatory performance* has the power to change and rearrange perspectives through elimination of dramatic structures and to make the audience aware of the way view, vision and interpretation are culturally and historically shaped. Lehmann (2006) describes a changing theatre aesthetics since the 1970s, in which the theatrical situation is explicitly used for drawing the audience into the role of performing and thinking participants. Spectators are actively participating, because the format of what he describes as *postdramatic performance* demands questioning static roles between actors and spectators. In this respect, participants are challenging frameworks visible in contemporary democratic society. As such, they are performing an act of struggling for their voices to be heard and questioning 'allegories of inequality' (Rancière 2009, 12). These qualities of participatory performance make this genre of performance an example of theatre as emancipating activity in contemporary democracy.

These qualities fit in the mechanisms of contemporary culture: we are all makers, creators or philosophers. With the increasing presence of media in contemporary culture, politics and society, it is possible for many people to let their voices be heard, their opinions known and their standpoints formed through multiple canals. The question is, how we deal with these changing responsibilities. According to Rancière, we have to be aware of the *distribution of the sensible*, or

how the positions we occupy in society are divided and the connotations that stick to these positions. Rancière calls it '[a]n *a priori* distribution of the positions and capacities and incapacities attached to these positions. They are embodied allegories of inequality' (Rancière 2009, 12). Contrary to the theories and theatrical experiments of for example Brecht, Artaud and Boal, it is thus not the form of the theatrical event that is at stake, but the meaning we give to the role division of communicative situations like performances. When we start to see that the positions we occupy are quite rooted in patterns, it is the perception of our performances that can be reshaped. Regarding this standpoint, it is the condition of viewing that must be recognized as an *a priori* position, an affirmation of the two poles needed in a communicative situation, in particular a performance: the actors and the onlookers. Following the paradox in this statement however, viewers also act. The notions of actor and spectator must be challenged and questioned, not through changing their particular positions in the process of performance. But by means of acknowledging their equal importance for the transmission of knowledge. At this point, potential for the emancipation of the spectator appears.

Why is this so relevant for thinking about the moral responsibility of the audience? Because while participating in performances, the spectators are encouraged to create their own individual stories, based on their previous experiences, their unique positions in the world. The artists do not intend to force their perspective on the audience, rather they provide spectators with possible perspectives. They give their ideas to viewers, who can use these for creating their own opinion on the topics presented on stage, but also in their lives outside the framed theatre event. The spectators are approached as *translators* (Rancière 2009, 17) united in diversity: they are enabled to translate performances for their own personal usage. As do other audience members from the same performance, who probably perceive other messages. They are equal in this process through both their uniformity and diversity, as the players of leading role in their own story. The distance between them, between other spectators and artists, is a space full potential for emancipation, because it is no man's land (Rancière 2009, 15).

In this scenario, in acknowledging the distance spectators have in performances to other spectators and actors, and the idea that they play this role willingly, a rupture of the *distribution of the sensible* takes place. This shattering of the division between the actors and the onlookers does not take the form of a real break, but on the contrary through confirming these positions we occupy, and making them a powerful statement. The spectators act in their own stories, in the first place they are not merely decorum for performances, but rather active participants who give a meaning to the event by translating its content into stories that fit in their own book of life. Every participant already possesses the knowledge to find out how he can place the content of the event in his own life, how interesting perspectives can be translated in useful information (Rancière 2009, 17). The emancipation consists of the shifting between being actor or onlooker, between artist or spectator, between previously framed roles in society, in short, between the fading of boundaries that were drawn before (Rancière 2009, 19).

This is connected to contemporary art, in which the positions of actors and interpreters are already interchangeable and linked to similar processes in politics and society. The idea that artistic events

can be empowering, can point to how they function in a society where traditional notions of democracy are not working any longer. The dialogue between equally important participants, acknowledging their unity in diversity, can form a starting point for a change in attitude concerning societal issues. Participants have to take their responsibility, because they are the leading role players in their own stories, but are indissolubly connected to other players in their individual stories. They are all responsible for the continuation of the performance, therefore they are prepared to question their roles in both artistic events and in society in order to '[h]elp us arrive at a better understanding of how words and images, stories and performances, can change something of the world we live in' (Ranci re 2009, 23).

Creative dialogues in participatory theatre

Taking this statement as point of departure, we could claim that participating in performances is both an aesthetic and a political act. In participatory projects, the public and the theatre makers perform and test democracy (Bishop 2012, 284) through a cross over between art and politics. The deconstructed format of participatory theatre facilitates onlookers in becoming emancipated spectators, who challenge the division between 'actors' and 'onlookers'. This emphasis on the form eventually constitutes room for the political. In this respect, participatory performances contribute to the democratization of society. Not by mixing art and politics up, but by approaching the aesthetic as 'reconfiguring the "landscape of the possible"' (Ranci re 2009, 105, cited in Woolf 2013, 46).

In this context, the approach of *dialogical aesthetics* (Kester 2011) is an interesting perspective on how spectators take their responsibility in subjects that are important in contemporary society. In this concept, a dialogue about matters that are important *now* in which the speakers are not anonymous is central. Participants are explicitly making themselves visible on stage and act from their specific positions in the world. Power relations, like in conventional theatre, are broken up: the performance artists listen to their audience and co-participants on stage, giving attention to multiple perspectives present in the space of theatre. In these artistic events, performances will become ambiguous events resulting in 'new configurations unbound by concepts' (Woolf 2013, 46).

From Kester's concept of *dialogical aesthetics* several elements can be extracted which make it into a suitable framework for the analysis of the responsibility of spectators in participatory theatre. Kester is claiming that we should approach 'the work of art as a process of communicative exchange rather than a physical object' (Kester 2004, 90). In participatory theatre, a communicative exchange is the starting point of the aesthetic act. Kester suggests a politics of *listening*, which integrates perspectives from different participants in the artwork. This incorporates a dimension of equality in the performance.

In *participatory* theatre, it is acknowledged that all participants have their specific *parts* in the performance, which must be brought together in order to operate in the space between elitist art and everyday life. In this respect, a process of *creative dialogues* is started in the theatre. In playful situations, there is creativity through which new insights are generated about self and society. This

process has the potential of continuing after the framed theatrical event has ended. The theatre maker does not try to force his or her ideas on an audience, placing himself in the role of educator of an unknowing audience. Often participants in contemporary performances are *experts of everyday life*: they are not professional artists, but have certain skills in everyday life which they expose on stage.¹ This breaks down the Romantic idea of the artist as *heroic* figure. Rather, the artist becomes a mediator, who confronts an audience with important matters in the absolute here-and-now across time and boundaries. The public sphere is extended to a process of communication between people with different perspectives, in which the various background positions these participants inhabit are explicitly used to reach a common ground instead of feigning an abandoning of all a priori knowledge when entering the public debate.

An interaction between multiple voices, both artists and spectators, brings back a philosophical, ethical dimension into discussions. In the theatre, the process of theatrical communication is used to introduce a set of ethical questions, concerning societal issues. The medium of theatre reflects multiple perspectives at contemporary society, enabling the participants to place oneself in someone else's shoes. A reflection on self becomes possible through the participation in a theatrical event. Even more important, this individual purpose of aesthetic experiences is transcended into a social, community forming activity when the performance functions as a catalyst that generates philosophical questions having the potential to transform the lifeworld. The professional artworld is kept intact, but in participatory theatre the format is more democratic than in conventional theatre. People from everyday life have a voice in participatory theatre, which creates active citizens who get knowledge through experiencing aesthetic acts. This makes them potentially more critical citizens in other realms of society.

Particular performances can generate insight in how participatory theatre functions as a philosophical practice in the contemporary public sphere. In the theatre, a dialogical process is started, without dialogue (in a broad sense) the theatrical event would be meaningless. At least two partners, often more, especially in participatory theatre, are searching for mutual understanding through communicative exchange. In addition, these processes are not fixed, but are marked by a certain mobility, which is helped forward by the notion of creative reflection, another element inherent to the theatre. Theatrical encounters between participants who are equally important transcend the framed event. The artwork in its autonomy is kept intact, yet the meaning of art is also becoming an entity that is important in the lifeworld.

In this respect, theatre has a similar function like philosophy. Both philosophy and theatre are reflecting on societal issues by means of asking critical questions, holding up a mirror in which society and self can be seen, our own reflection mediated by a tool created by humans. Theatre and philosophy are also human activities. They find their inspiration in the life of everyday, but have to transcend this to safeguard their critical function. Only from a distance, knowledge from the everyday life can be evaluated. And as in a never ending circle, translated for society again. The theatre becoming philosophical balances between the framed artistic event in which precisely this autonomy is remained, and the artwork that is always already coupled back to issues with societal importance since it takes place in the everyday world too. Theatre is an institution which has its

own specific place within culture, and yet its characteristics of creating another, possible world next to daily life generate a potential of reflecting on society as well. Therefore, the theatrical act may end formally when the curtains close, when the applause fades away and when the actors take off their masks. However, since everyone has played its own, unique part, and extracted his or her personal meaning from the event, the concrete boundaries of the theatre building are perhaps left behind, but the reflection on ourselves and society might be applied to our personal lives and society in general, creating citizens who are actively participating as lead players in their own stories.

How does this work in performance practice? Het NUT, *Order of the Day*

In the performance *Order of the Day*, performed monthly by theatre company Het NUT, a critical attitude towards issues important in contemporary society is required for making sense of the scenes on stage, and, more importantly, for making these scenes in the first place. *Order of the Day* follows a format in which the show is created in one day by a team of writers and theatre makers who are partly always the same and partly new each show. Furthermore, the audience members are asked at the beginning of the show which news items from the last month must be considered, and these suggestions are written during the show. Most of the scenes are performed while the actors are holding prints of the texts and reading from the articles, the scenes written last minute are not even rehearsed at all. The performance consists of speedy satirical sketches, monologues, dialogues, dialogues with the audience by the presenter of the evening, presentations, music, songs and video fragments. All makers are on stage, the working progress is visible while the writers are making new scenes on their laptops, the actors are changing on stage. For every scene a new tableau is created and the musicians sometimes forget to play a song while a décor for another sketch is built up.

In short, *Order of the Day* is performed up-to-the-minute on the edge of fiction and everyday life. The artists and viewers make use of a sort of shared knowledge and collective images: they refer to news items and topics they have seen or heard in the media, in TV shows, on Facebook or in the news article. The artists engage with these topics, but they need the input of the audience and the shared knowledge framework for deciding on the importance of the themes. The show can only work when artists and audience members have the same vocabulary to refer to. A forum for audience participation and a dialogue between the writers, the host of the show, the artists and the viewers are needed for determining together which topics are currently important in society, in politics and in other realms of culture, not limited to the Dutch society, but broadened to issues taking place in the entire world.

These themes can be very small, like in the performance from October 2015. The performance of that particular evening coincided with the final episode of the television show *Heel Holland Bakt*—the Dutch equivalent of *The Great British Bake Off*. Beforehand, the host of the show asked all visitors entering the theatre if they really wanted to be there, or had rather watched the final episode of *HHB*. On stage, a table with ten pies stood there the entire show—later on it became

clear that it was the birthday of one of the writers. I do not know what happened when I left the theatre, but no one touched the pies during the show, we could only watch, similar to *HNB* in which you would also only have looked to pies. Viewers are reminded of that other event happening at that moment, the topicality of the show is stressed by playing with the given of the television show happening at the same time. This is just one small example.

Other important societal issues are discussed in the form of songs and satirical sketches, for instance the debate on refugees in The Netherlands and especially reactions by Dutch citizens at so called 'participation evenings' organized by the local authorities of villages where these refugees are to be housed (temporarily). On these evenings, citizens of the particular villages can let the authorities know what they think of refugees coming to live in their community. One of these events in Steenberg went dramatically out of hand when a group of people not living in this village at all started yelling at and threatened one of the authorities who argued in favor of the housing for refugees. She had to be escorted out of the building by the police and the next week, images of the yelling 'citizens' were all over the media.

In the various sketches the artists use to discuss this issue of participation in political decisions they are approaching the topic from various angles. One important factor they share is humor. They are theatricalizing the events that have happened through placing an artistic framework around the events. They are presenting an analysis of the facial expressions of the yellers, asking audience members what they see at the pictures of the event. It turns out that the rioters have happy faces, they like kicking up a row! Another form of audience participation is visible when the musicians sing a song about the case in Steenberg, trying to let the audience sing with them. The text is quite offensive, but when the audience sings this changes in a ridiculous song. The offensive text becomes a song that makes fun of the rioters. The same happens in a scene about a participation evening situated at a kitchen table. An uninvited guest, not part of the family, uses his right to participate for deciding on buying washing machine or not. An absurdist dialogue, in which the participation evening has become a right everyone uses for the smallest cases, shows how silly the idea is to invite the entire village for discussing political matters. In the end, the authorities do not listen at all and do what they want—the housing for refugees is going to be there anyway. This participation evening turns into a fictive construction when a dialogue is imagined, but the participants do not have equal rights to perform their roles.

These participation evenings have kind of a parallel with the concept of *The Order of the Day*, with one important difference however: the position of the audience. It makes clear why the participatory format of the performance *Order of the Day* does work in approaching the spectator as already active in his role of viewer, and why the participation evening in Steenberg turned into a drama—in the negative meaning of the word. In the theatre, the audience is not anonymous, contrary to other media, in which the participants are literally invisible, hidden behind their screens. This helps in the performance of an equal dialogue in which spectators really have to perform their own act in order to let the artistic event work. The performance becomes a forum where people share knowledge on a variety of topics. The makers do not try to educate the audience, but ask a certain responsibility of them: they are challenged to interpret the scenes they

see being created in front of them and in doing so, perform their role of active viewers. The political participation evenings are an interesting attempt to give people speech, but this is partly fictive speech. It is precisely not what Rancière had in mind with the notion of the emancipated spectator—people do not have to be moved in this fashion. These evenings are not really meant to give citizens a voice, after all nobody is listening. In the theatre, however, this wrong notion of participation is deconstructed: the artists and the audience perform the role they are meant to perform in this context. It is not feigned that the audience has to act as the artist or the maker of the performance. At this point the idea of the *emancipated spectator* differs from other theories, like those from Brecht, Artaud or Boal: the spectators needed in precisely the condition in which they came to the theatre, as emancipated spectators using the theatrical event to form and act out their opinion, not as an audience who has to be activated in order to make a change or initiate a transformation. Changing our mindset about the activity of spectators is the biggest transformation we are facing, not their activation.

Performance Philosophy and the responsibility of the spectator

The case of *Order of the Day* makes clear how researching participatory theatre is relevant for discussing the field of *Performance Philosophy*. If we define philosophy as the act of asking critical questions and making societal topics discussable for a broad audience, and performance more or less the same, participatory performance can learn us more about how to value the dialogue that appears in both disciplines. A central concept is responsibility, not only in the performance event, but as the very notion of bringing together spectators, artists and philosophers in society. It lies in our reactions and answers to matters of general concern appearing in society, issues we are confronted with through our participation in different fora where these topics are discussed. The approach to knowledge sharing is depending on how we deal with spectatorship.

Concepts like Rancière's notion of the *emancipated spectator*, and Kester's *dialogical aesthetics*, provide us with new perspectives on participatory politics in society and in the arts. Events in contemporary society and artistic events ask for makers and spectators who are able to decide for themselves how they use the information surrounding them. Responsibility is thus not a matter of forcing people to become active. It is rather a question of deepening and changing the positions we already occupy in society. In their position of viewing, spectators perform an act of thinking critically. It is here that the fields of philosophy and performance overlap and create new chances for responsibility in a society in which we are surrounded by images of all kinds.

In both fields, topics of general concern and topics personally important for participants are addressed. Bringing performance and philosophy together demonstrates their valorization in contemporary society: the fields are connected in the middle of society in their ability to discuss important topics, asking critical questions and generating new perspectives through artistically framing knowledge. They make the information and images ready for use, taking into account multiple positions participants occupy in this process. The field of Performance Philosophy provides a new possibility for analyzing the changing participation of audiences through combining

sensibility for various roles being played in art and contemporary society and the urge of being aware how we perceive knowledge in an age of omnipresent media and images.

Notes

¹ A direct reference can be made to the postdramatic work of German theatre company Rimini Protokoll (Germany), who make use of 'Experte des Alltags': they put 'normal' people onstage considered to be experts in daily topics. They use a format in which people who are not actors create the performance together, like in *100% Berlin* in which 100 Berlin residents represent the city. In this performance (and other performances Rimini Protokoll created), the separation between an audience of only 'artworld insiders' and a broader public is broken down. Participants have the opportunity to take part in the creation of the performance and gain skills of the apparatus of theatre, which enables them to use a former elitist form of culture in their daily social life.

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Biography

Alice Breemen (The Netherlands) graduated in Theatre Studies, Media and Performance Studies (Utrecht University, 2009 & 2011) and Philosophy (Tilburg University, 2013). She has presented her research nationally and internationally (e.g. at the *Theater, Performance, Philosophy* Conference, University Paris-Sorbonne 2014 and at *The Politics of Performance and Play - Feminist Matters* Conference, Leiden University 2016). Her research interests are performance philosophy, theatre and democracy and the social function of art. Currently she is employed at HKU University of the Arts Utrecht Theatre Library, and working as an independent researcher.

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