

A dark, moody photograph of a room. In the center, a large pile of dark wooden chairs is overturned and stacked haphazardly. A thick, light-colored rope hangs from the top left corner, looping down and then back up. The floor is dark with faint yellow lines. The background is a solid black wall.

BBB Johannes Deimling

a rolling stone gathers no moss

'a rolling stone gathers no moss' is a cycle of visual performances which BBB Johannes Deimling realized in 2013 and 2014. In these performances the artist focuses metaphorically on motion and uses very much the language of poetry to create these visual pieces. Following the fact that our whole life is based on motion as a consequence of a variety forms of repetition (e.g. breathing), Deimling creates performative statements talking about the co-existence of motion and its end. A stone gathers moss when it is not moving, when time can create its tracks and change its identity. Motion and still stand (or pause) are in constant interaction and create a rhythm like the heartbeat which nobody knows exactly why it has started and why it actually stops.



"If you try to decrypt Deimling's performative images with the logic of understanding they will simply disappear. You will miss the chance to receive their depth and beauty as they are fragile like wings of a butterfly. But if you give them time and air and let them fly, these images can cause amazing storms inside of you."

## 'a rolling stone gathers no moss # 13'

as part of M:ST performative arts festival  
Calgary, Canada 2014

### actions:

- pushing wet moss out of a pile of chairs
- pouring a line with yellow sand
- laying on the yellow line and flipping around
- binding a book on my face and drawing faces on the book sheets
- throwing tissues out of a box into the audience
- pulling a golden string out of a fishes mouth and eating the golden string
- blowing with a straw into a glass with liquid-soap
- creaming my head with silver paint
- climbing on the pile of chairs with a white wing
- while waving the wing creating strange sounds
- binding a fish around my neck
- pouring blue liquid on an umbrella
- shooting colored feathers in the air
- placing the fish on the wet moss

Video documentation: <https://vimeo.com/109745823>

# # 13











## Suffering in performance art kills creativity

Text by Francis O'Shaughnessy

There are many performers using the concept of pain to formulate any sort of artistic proposals. Looking back at society, it seems obvious that the artist gets inspired by the reality he's trapped in. From fictional to actual wounds, lamentations over human behaviour or obfuscations over scandalous topics, everything is good to make the performance art platform a "lieu de passion", a place of passion (etymologically leading back to "suffering"). Nowadays, the offering ideology ran out; it is time to get away from it. How to overcome this concept in performance art in order to subsequently make room for creativity? The real challenge is about freeing oneself from the chains of symbolic, the symbols of an obscure tradition in order to introduce performance art to brighter landmarks.

Orientations, trends and other reprehensible stereotypes of an intellectual art form lead the artist to shape a rather gloomy picture of what performance art is about (the subversive spirit and the pain). The suffering artist has now become a myth. Nevertheless, this degradation has never been an argument for performance art to be conceived as a way to nourish pain and suffering, neither a way to heal any wound. The spectator is not a healer to whom one would address his torments.

The performers Constanza Camelo Suarez, BBB Johannes Deimling, Sara Létourneau and Arti Grabowski are trying, just as much as I try, to engage a certain transformation in art, working through practice and teaching. We all try to understand what creation is about. To surpass art as being linked to suffering, a deep revolution seems to be necessary. A psychological revolution. How to proceed? what to do for it to happen? Hard is the task to change an artist's approach to performance art if he is conditioned to the tradition of pain and violence in performance. It may take a while before to convince a performer to invest himself in a form which is creative and bright.

Our experience as practitioners of art teaches us that there is only a restraint amount of creativity in an artistic work. The role of creativity is to maintain a phase of conflict (it's in the fear of losing its creativity that the artist reveals himself). With suffering, he composes. He doesn't want to lose any of his bearings, all these experiences, ideas which are creating a conditioned artist towards pain. This exact same scheme is a reactualisation of nowadays preoccupations, the preoccupations of another generation. Right now, the

motivations of a performer are strictly different from what they used to be, as a result one could wonder why does this romanticism still persist? The artist can produce work and explore other subjects in many other ways to express himself. Which is the case for BBB Johannes Deimling. Whom does not use the neurotic pictures society imposes him. He most definitely does not require any guidance, whatever guide (authorities, theories, definitions and meanings) to define himself. He puts a lot of efforts into his own researches by being listening as much as possible. By this mean, he goes away from any prefigured thinking or action (Live Art, Body Art, furtive practice) to literarily become his own authority and fight his own boundaries. In other words, Deimling begins on his own a psychological revolution: he radically differs from any other performers. His works aims for the untouchable: this little "Je ne sais quoi" (I don't know what) which reveals a joie de vivre. In his work "A rolling stone gathers no moss#13" performed at Mountain Standard Time (Canada, 2014), the images he built revealed his artistic genius. I goes away from the "known" (the past, conditioning) to fight the unknown parts of his own: his creativity.

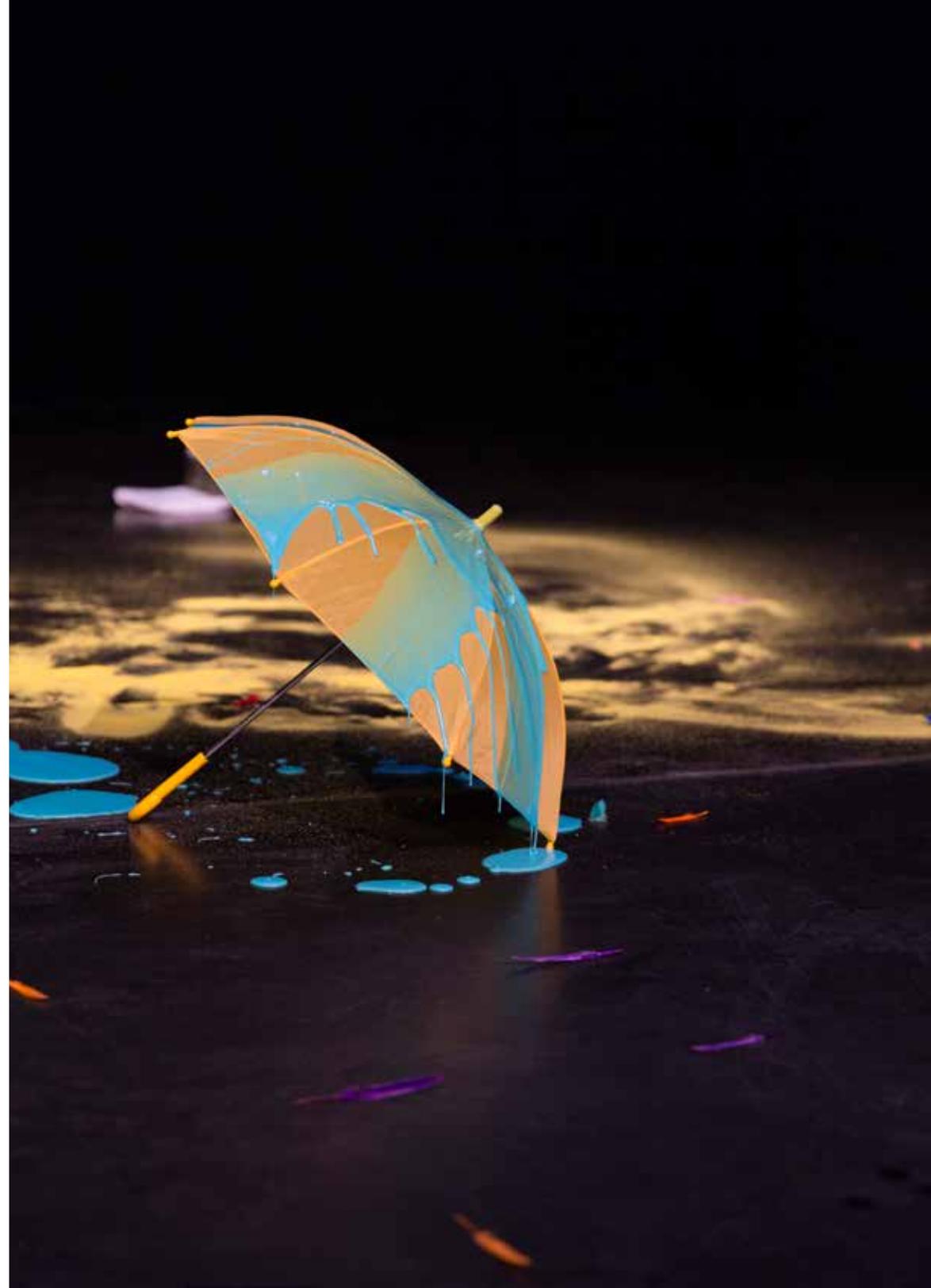
In the way he acts, he allows himself a great freedom despite the "supposed" conventions in performance art. As a performer, BBB Johannes Deimling's role is to poetise his existence by using a certain gestural with great sensibility. His performative language is a way to discover oneself via the self sculpture. Any artist working in the same way as Deimling is aware that suffering in performance art kills creativity. The artist discovers that wherever one feels emotionally related to something there is no creativity. Creativity does not depend to any sort of remembrances, creativity depends on the "positive reaction" regarding the past. To transform and to overcome any suffering, Deimling and I are orientating our work towards a different set of mind, a different behaviour that permits us to free ourselves from any conditioning. By giving up on the performative legacy, we stand against the creation of a "negative" suffering. In other words, it means being happy in the heart of what most people call suffering. By this mean, choosing to live creativity, daring to have pleasant experiences and being happy.

Deimling and I, are fully aware that it is impossible to have a total rupture with the traditions in performance art. No matter how gloomy it is, the artistic legacy (remembrances, experiences, theory) is necessary to create a transition toward a more creative art form. We all belong to the past, we are ruled by formulas and conclusions all gathered through theories. As a result, we all are forced to "react" when it comes to the past. The work Deimling and I develop isn't only to contradict and protest, we are altering a certain sense of continuity in the past. Away from any sort of routine simply based on a self

transformation and other disasters, both of us are generating a positive field, a loving space. Following this idea, innovation in performance art is not solely based on problems emerging from the past, but on "checkpoints". Avoiding any participation in the gloomy world of this practice, we are not ruled by performance art as a performative authority.

Defenders of creativity, we give ourselves the mission to contribute to a rethinking of the identity crisis performance art is confronted to by enhancing every positive actions. It s all about operating a certain change into the artist's set of mind (motivations, behaviours and ways of being) towards a new set of tools when it comes to consider possibilities of existence , ways to exist. This ambitious project aims for a positive reaction regarding our recent art history. Begins a psychological revolution in favour of the artists and their performative achievement. We aim for a complete abolition of the ruins of this previous paradigm. If art history means ideas that develop into a time period, then we, as creators, have the hope to introduce a new approach to performance art, ergo transmitting the will of living experiences that won't fall into imitation.

translation from French to English: Correntin M. Leuven



## 'a rolling stone gathers no moss # 12'

as part of PAS | Performance Art Studies #36 | "between the lines 7"  
Rehlovice, Czech Republic 2014

actions:

- holding a chair on a twisted rope
- rubbing my hand strongly on my eyes
- grasping 'something invisible' and putting it in the trousers pocket
- taking out of that pocket white cotton
- letting black liquid running out of my mouth
- taking a deep breath and holding it as long as possible
- turning the chair on the rope around
- blowing with a straw into a glass filled with soap-liquid
- pouring yellow color on the floor
- placing the chairs around the yellow color-circle
- inflaming the note sheet on the note stand
- pouring hundreds of water marbles out of a basket on the floor

Video documentation: <https://vimeo.com/102814234>

# #12











## Momente der Aktion, Momente des Stillstands

Text Kristin Klein

Etwas, das fortwährend in Bewegung begriffen ist, entgeht dem Stillstand, der Festschreibung, der Kategorisierung. Gleichzeitig bedeutet dies jedoch auch den Verzicht auf Ruhepunkte, auf reflexive Atempausen. Diese beiden Seiten sind dem Sinnspruch *A rolling stone gathers no moss* eingeschrieben, welchen der gleichnamige Performance-Zyklus von Johannes Deimling aufgreift, ohne dabei eine scharfe Trennung zwischen der Dichotomie des Gleichbleibenden und der Veränderung vorzunehmen. In der kontinuierlichen Wiederholung von Elementen aus vorhergehenden Performances und deren Variation zeigt er sowohl Momente der Progression als auch solche des Innehaltens, des Sich-Gewahr-Werdens.

Allein die Handlung in ihrer Wiederholung ist bei genauerer Betrachtung nie exakt die gleiche, sondern schließt Abweichungen mit ein. In der Verbindung einzelner Elemente und im Remix von Handlungen aus verschiedenen Performances werden darüber hinaus Möglichkeiten der Wahrnehmung und der Sinnzuschreibung offen gelassen. In immer neuer Zusammensetzung und durch die Modifikation des Ablaufs oder des Materials entstehen visuell sichtbare Narrationen und Choreographien, nicht nur von Dingen und Handlungen, sondern auch von Bedeutungen. *A rolling stone gathers no moss* ist ein Zitat im Zitat im Zitat, das sich irgendwann selbst überwindet, weil es zu etwas völlig Neuem geworden ist.

Ein ehemaliger Stall, der Boden in kühlem Blau, die Wände bis unter die gewölbte Decke weiß gekalkt. Zu Beginn steht Johannes Deimling, in ein weißes Hemd und eine beigefarbene Hose gekleidet, mit Blick in Richtung Publikum. Er hält einen Stuhl, welcher durch ein eingedrehtes Seil an der Decke befestigt ist, über seinem Kopf fest. Hinter ihm liegt ein Turm, konstruiert aus hölzernen Stühlen; links von ihm befindet sich eine Karaffe mit einer gelben Flüssigkeit und ein Notenständer mit einem einzelnen Notenblatt darauf, rechts hinter ihm ein geflochtener Korb.

Auftakt: Johannes Deimling lässt den Stuhl los. Dieser windet sich in schnellen Umdrehungen von der Decke herab. Von seiner alltäglichen Funktion, vom Stillstand befreit, führt das mobil gewordene Möbelstück durch den Impuls für kurze Zeit ein Eigenleben, bevor es lautstark und mit schabenden Geräuschen den Boden berührt und wieder erstarrt.

Johannes Deimling geht zum Notenständer, bleibt dahinter stehen, atmet tief ein. Er hält die Luft an, mit erhobenem Brustkorb, so als würde er ein Stück

der Raumzeit sich einverleiben wollen, um vor der nächsten Handlung Ruhe zu gewinnen.

Angehaltenen Atems lässt er den noch immer am Seil befestigten Stuhl nun durch weit ausholende Bewegungen um seinen Kopf kreisen, stellt dem Moment des Atemstillstands dem der Aktion entgegen. Erneut erhält der Stuhl von außen Antrieb, solange, wie die Luft ausreicht. Dann sinkt er zu Boden. Wieder Stillstand.

Eine schwarze Flüssigkeit quillt aus dem Mund von Johannes Deimling hervor, tropft auf das saubere Hemd, beschreibt ihren Weg über den weißen Stoff, an der Hose entlang bis auf den Boden. Erst rhythmisch, dann sprudelnd tritt sie aus dem nun zu einem Grinsen verzerrten Mund heraus. Schwarzes Lachen, die Augen dazu rot gerieben, morbider Schalk.

Er hält eine gläserne Karaffe in die Höhe, aus der sich langsam eine zähflüssige, gelbe Lösung zum Boden hin hervorarbeitet. Es bildet sich in einem ununterbrochenen Farbfaden eine Verbindung zwischen der Karaffe und dem Untergrund. Hier scheint es, als sei der Moment von größerer Dauer als es die Erfahrung der Wahrnehmung zugesteht, als verlängere sich mit dem zähen Fluss der Masse gleichzeitig der Augenblick.

Aufeinandergeschichtete, ineinander verkantete Stühle, ihrer Standfestigkeit beraubt: Johannes Deimling begibt sich in das Innere des aufgetürmten Stuhlbergs, richtet sich und das verästelte Gebilde auf, das sich wie eine Baumkrone um seinen Oberkörper formiert. Langsam bewegt er sich im Raum. Holz, zersägt und zu einem einfachen Alltagsgegenstand zusammengefügt, wird hier in einem größeren Maßstab zum konstruierten Artefakt, ein vom Menschen durchsetztes Abbild von Natur oder auch ein Abbild von deren Nutzbarmachung. Es entsteht eine fragile, dynamische Skulptur, die mit jedem Schritt an Stabilität verliert, schwankt, an Einzelteilen verliert, bis sie schließlich vollkommen zerfällt. In diesem Bild liegt die Ahnung von einem menschengemachten Kreislauf des Hervorbringens und der Umformung zivilisatorischer Entwicklungen. Aktion belebt kurzerhand das (materiell) Geschaffene, das Konstrukt, führt jedoch unweigerlich auch zu dessen Ende. Johannes Deimling konterkariert dieses Bild allerdings gleich wieder, indem er die herabgefallenen Stühle anschließend in einem Kreis anordnet. In diese stabile Form gebracht, verbleiben die Stühle bis zum Schluss in einem scheinbar beständigen Arrangement.

Durch das Anzünden des Notenblattes, welches sofort in Flammen aufgeht, wird das Ende eingeleitet. Das Gewesene verlischt und damit auch die

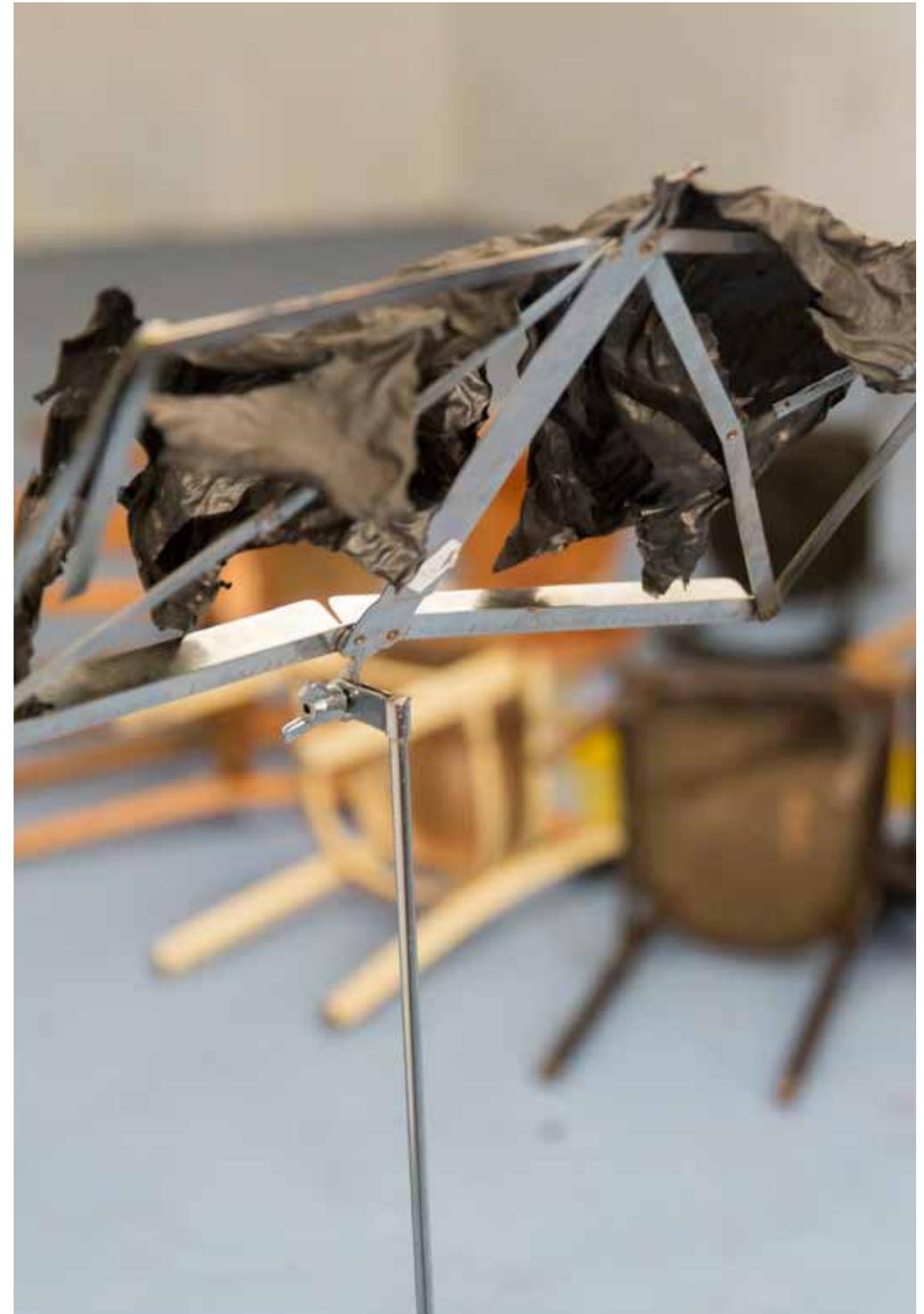
Komposition und die klare Setzung, die sich damit as-soziieren lassen.

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Closing: Zuletzt nimmt Johannes Deimling den geflochtenen Korb auf und kippt dessen Inhalt aus. Hunderte Farbpunkte springen aus dem Korb und verteilen sich über den gesamten Boden – bunte Gela-tinekugeln, die mit den Augen zu fixieren erst gelingt, wenn sie ihre endgültige Position eingenommen haben. Man meint, man müsse nur weit genug weggehen, dann würden sie sich zu etwas Größerem fügen, dann könne man ein Bild erkennen, das sich – vom Zufall gemalt – dahinter verberge. Dennoch bleiben die Punkte bis zuletzt unverbunden, stehen dabei aber als stille Reminiszenz an andere Teile des Performance-Zyklus *A rolling stone gathers no moss*.

### Raum-Zeit-Spuren

Deutlich sind in diesem letzten Gesamtbild Stellen auszumachen, an denen sich die Präsenz Johannes Deimlings während der Performance konzentrierte – eine schwarze Pfütze und ein sonnengelber Fleck etwa zeugen davon – gegenüber Stellen, die unberührt blieben. Daraus setzt sich eine Landschaft aus Definiertem und undefiniert Gelassenem, aus Schärpen und Unschärpen zusammen, in der sich die Zuschauer nun gedanklich bewegen können. Räume, Handlungen und Bedeutungen, die graduell zwischen diesen Polen liegen und nicht verbal zu fassen sind, Momente von Zustandsänderungen, um die wir zwar instinktiv wissen können, die zu beschreiben jedoch kaum möglich ist, bleiben dabei un-geklärt. Johannes Deimling hat dafür ein Vokabular entwickelt, eine Sprache, die ohne Worte auskommt und gerade deshalb neue Bedeutungskontexte eröffnet. Es ist ein Denken in Bildern, das aufmerksam macht auf Wahrnehmungsgewohnheiten, die nicht verbal beschreibbar oder verhandelbar sind und darüber hinaus auf die Ausschnitthaftigkeit unserer Wahrnehmung von Wirklichkeit anspielt.

Was übrig bleibt, sind Spuren einer Erzählung, die dem Publikum als letzter visueller Eindruck dienen, angereichert mit dessen eigenen Erfahrungen und Vorstellungen. Gleichzeitig verweisen diese Spuren dokumentarisch wiederum auf Fragmente vorhergehender und auch folgender Performances aus dem Zyklus, wodurch sie einen Zwischen-Zeit-Raum öffnen, in dem sie koexistieren und gegenseitig aufeinander Bezug nehmen. So stellt die Reihe *A rolling stone gathers no moss* zwischen den einzelnen Teilen Verbindungen emotionaler, formaler und auch metaphysischer Art her. Im Bewusstsein der Nichtwiederholbarkeit der einzelnen Performance wird trotz repetitiver Elemente ihr ephemerer und sich selbst erneuernder Charakter stets aufs Neue betont.





## 'a rolling stone gathers no moss # 11'

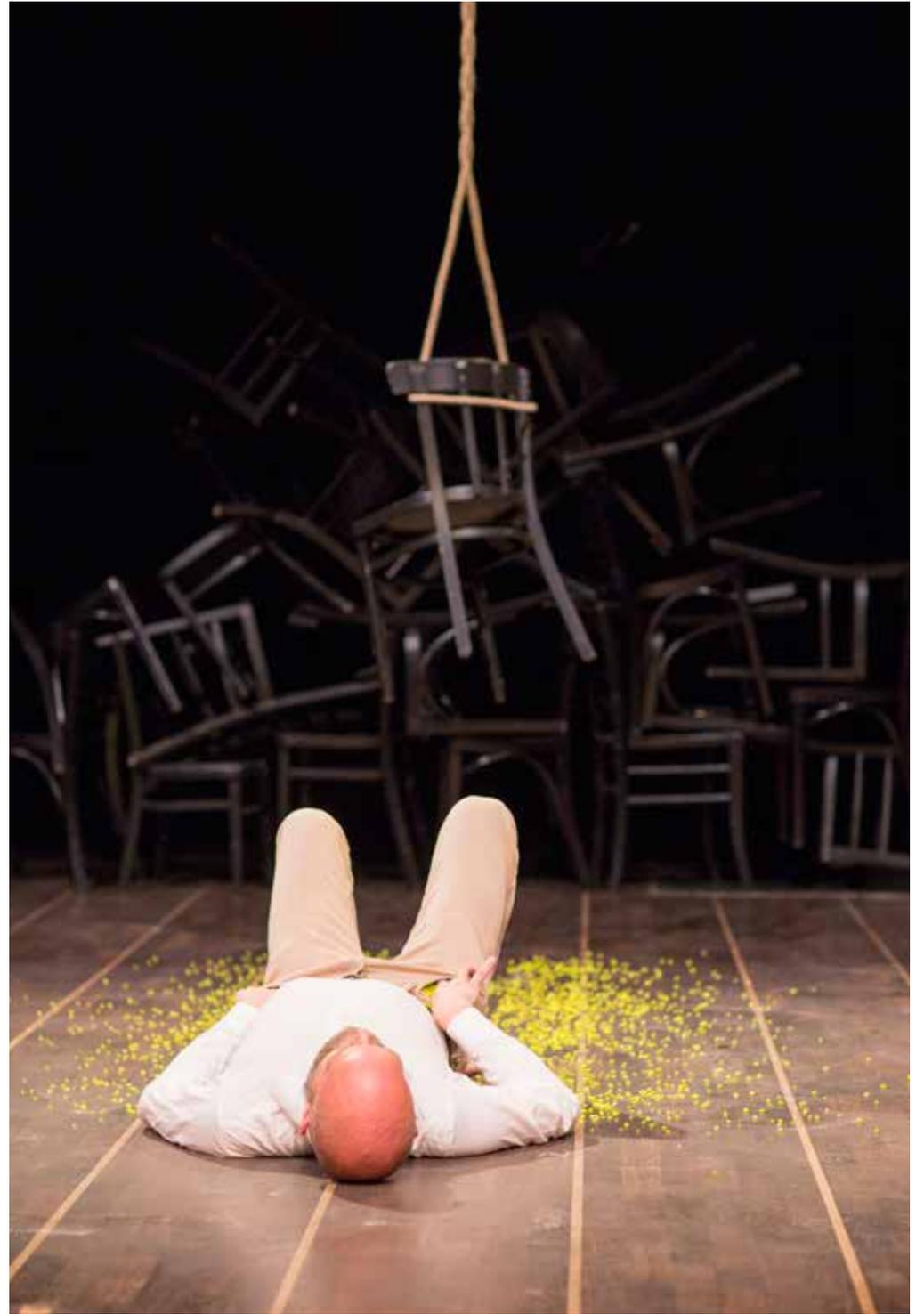
as part of the PAS performance art evening "so biss ich in die Zwiebel als wäre es vertraut", Stellwerk  
Weimar, Germany 2014

curated by Matthias Pick

### actions:

- holding a chair on a twisted rope
- crawling on the back and pouring green stones out of my pockets
- placing 7 'X' made from cardboard on the floor
- writing 'illusion' with chalk on the floor
- pushing the chair-wall to the front
- increasingly drumming on a cymbal
- binding the 7 'X's' on the head
- not drumming on the cymbal
- sitting on a swing
- pouring water marbles out of a bucket
- licking the word 'illusion'
- pouring golden liquid into my mouth

# # 11















'a rolling stone gathers no moss # 10'

old townhallsquare, CREATurE Performance Festival  
Kaunas, Lithuania 2014

curated by Vaida Tamoševiciute and Daina Dieva

actions:

- standing with 12 chairs packed on my torso
- drawing with my feet a sun with liquid chalk
- a choir is singing "Ode to joy" and waving Euro notes tissues
- singers attaching the tissues on the chairs
- shaking the chair construction
- standing on top of the chair pile
- eating an apple

Video documentation: <https://vimeo.com/98796166>

#10







'The aim of art is to represent not the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance.'  
(Aristotle)

Text by Vivian C. Ezugha, 2014

The performance by BBB Johannes Deimling has changed the way I see myself in relation to my country, to my heritage and to the world. During an epic display of struggle and courage with the sound of joy and new beginnings from the choir, I started to question what it means to be human? In the performance, the choir started singing the European national anthem, as they each took out a sheet of tissue paper that resembled one hundred and five hundred euro notes. As they sang, they waved it around in the air, which created an overwhelming sense of pride and loss, in contrast to Johannes who stood still with a crown of chairs weighted heavily on his body. The whole experience gave a resounding meaning to quote, that 'The aim of art is to represent not the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance.'

In my heart I felt a deep unquestionable sadness. For in front of me was a



display of our economy and human existence. The performance made think deep about the state of man, for never has man known so much like what we know now. Yet in this is a sad truth that some are still displaced and suppressed. We talk about liberty and equality yet we destroy our lands and steal from each other. We talk about sustainability and equal opportunities yet money is spent on bombs and nuclear weapons while our children die of starvation. We speak of so much good yet the heart is full of evil.

The performance gave me a new perspective on the world I thought I knew. Suddenly I saw myself as an ungrateful self-righteousness person, who is blessed to be living in a country where liberty is taken and freedom is exemplified. Nevertheless, I take these blessings for granted and focus on the things that have no relevance. Like having the latest bags or shoes. The contrast between the self and the selves enabled me to see how precious life is and how lucky we are to have a structure, which can enable us to fall and stand up again.

As the chairs came falling down in the performance, I saw the fallen kingdoms of Africa, I saw Europe with her children, I saw my people as they crumbled, and even in that moment with the chairs, the ambiguity created a clear distinction between the action and the traces of that action.

The fallen chairs remained on the pavement as people walked past, some were stopping and observing the wreckage, while others stopped to take the paper euro notes that were dispersed around the chair. Nevertheless, no one tired to rebuild the fallen chairs, not even I could rebuild destruction that came from this event. Turning the performance into a metaphor of our existence and activities, when things fall we stand, look, take and keep going. So in this I ask the question, what have we done?

Performance has the power to take the ordinary, like a chair and turn it in to an extraordinary like 'a rolling stone gathers no moss #10` .... I have learnt a lot from this performance but one lesson is clear and that is that we are all responsible for what we see and for how we act upon what is presented to us.



## 'a rolling stone gathers no moss # 9'

Milles Feuilles PERFORMANCE festival,  
Nantes, France 2014

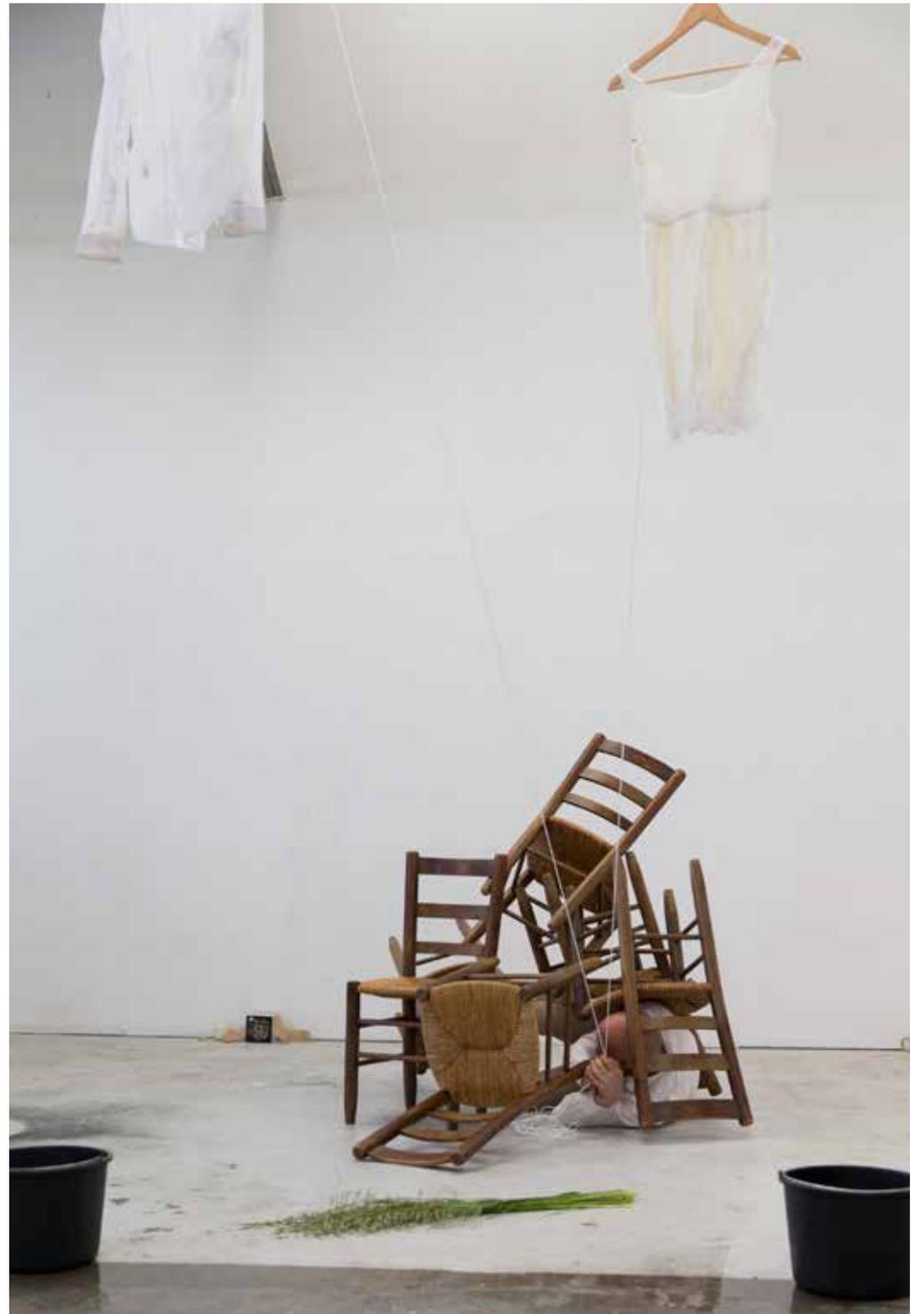
curated by Romain Boulay and Melaine Rouger

actions:

- laying under a pile of chairs
- pulling two strings attached to a white shirt and a white dress laying in two buckets with water
- standing up slowly
- holding the strings and letting blue color running out of my moth
- placing the chairs in a circle
- pushing one chair aside
- drawing a green cycle on the floor
- binding a box with tissues on my mouth
- sitting on the chairs and pulling the tissues out of the box
- running on the chairs in a circle
- placing the wet green tissues on my face
- hitting with a bundle of grass shirt and dress
- binding the shirt on a wooden stick and waving the flag
- throwing water with water marbles in the air
- pulling the chairs out of the space
- playing a small pocket barrel organ ("Ode to joy")

Video documentation: <https://vimeo.com/97921349>





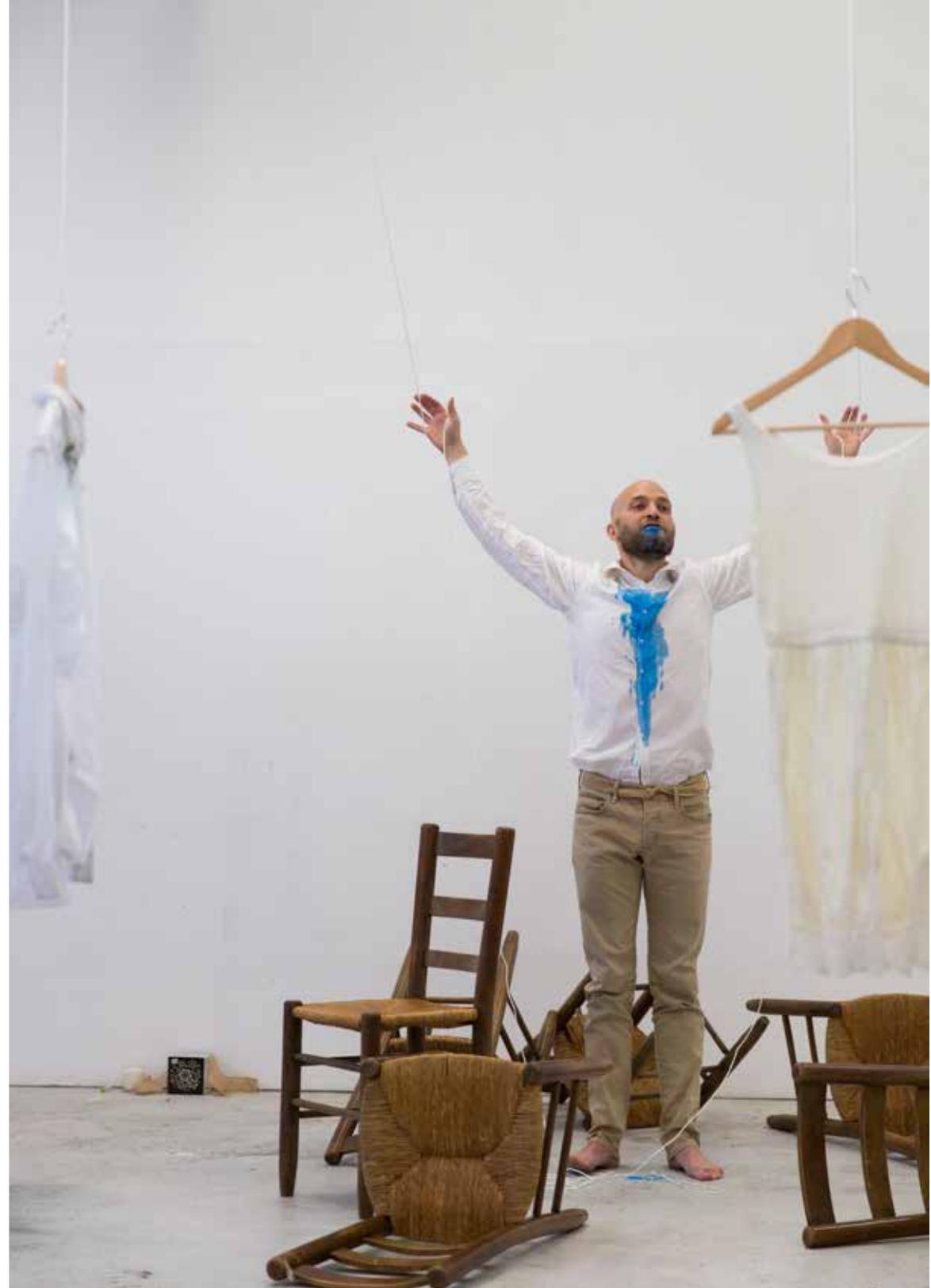


BBB Johannes Deimling a rolling stone gathers no moss # 9.

Text by Annika Hagstrøm, 2014  
taken from 'if it's not leaking - its not performance'

BBB Johannes Deimling uses an interesting collage technique in his performance consisting of different images. In front of us we can see various scenes; two buckets with a shirt and a dress in it that are connected to threads, some straws and a huge pile of wooden chairs. Under the sculpture-like pile of chairs we can see the artist. He begins to slowly pull the strings so the clothes in the buckets rise towards the ceiling. They are wet and small water drops are dripping down on the floor. It's completely quiet except from the sound of water drops. The artist is breaking out of the chairs, still holding the thread connected to the clothes. He gets to the centre of the room with his arms out like a crucified man. He is looking at the public and suddenly a blue liquid appears from his mouth. While the color rains down on his shirt he is slowly sinking the clothes again.

Johannes turns to his next image. He is arranging the chairs to a circle. When he has finished this task he takes one chair out and drags it in front of him





around the circle. While dragging the chair to the floor it creates a sound that is strengthened by the gallery space. It is like the chair is almost protesting.

In the next image he puts a tissue box in front of his mouth and starts coloring the floor with a mixture of milk and the color green. After he has managed to create a circle of color he sits down on the chair and drags the tissues out of the box and throws them into the paint. He leaves them there and returns to the circle of chairs and starts running in circle on top of them. As his speed increases the chairs start to fall and break the circle.

The artist returns to the tissues that are now soaked in paint. He glues them to his face so they block his sight and mouth. Then he starts searching blindfolded for the threads again. When he finds them he gets the clothes to his level and takes up the straws and violently starts hitting them. The tissues from his face fall off. In the next image he ties the shirt to a stick that he puts in the pile of chairs. He then returns to the buckets where he starts throwing up water and small balls of various colors that jumps towards the public. They instantly start to collect them and feel their surface.

The artist leads us to the last image where he takes a rope through the pile of chairs and ties it to himself. In his pocket he takes out a small music box that he starts turning so the music comes out. Slowly he walks out of the gallery and outside with the chairs after him.

If it had not been for Johannes' calmness and ability to bring all the images back together again, this could have been difficult to follow. But due to his calmness and presence he presents us to different small stories that he connects to each other and makes to a whole. The aspect of time is difficult to get a grip on. He does not explain anything or uses his voice. Above all he shows us these small stories visually. They can be read as glimpses of memories, small windows to the past that he combines together.



There is a certain sense of sadness and passed time over it. Johannes is using a visual scene to take us back to some distant memories. We get a feeling of a parallel universe. Sometimes we can experience references to a childhood, like building a fortress out of chairs or the play with colors. But there is also the feeling of searching for something blindfolded. If they are real memories can only the artist himself answer. But it appears like it isn't the specific memories that matter, but to recreate feelings and atmospheres, which he projects and shares with the public. The fact that the public started to collect the colorful balls and take them with them as a small memory shows that the performance made an impact on them.







## 'a rolling stone gathers no moss # 8'

Savy Contemporary, as part of 'The Present Tense' series  
Berlin, Germany 2014

curated by Chiara Cartuccia

actions (with Lotte Kaiser):

Johannes:

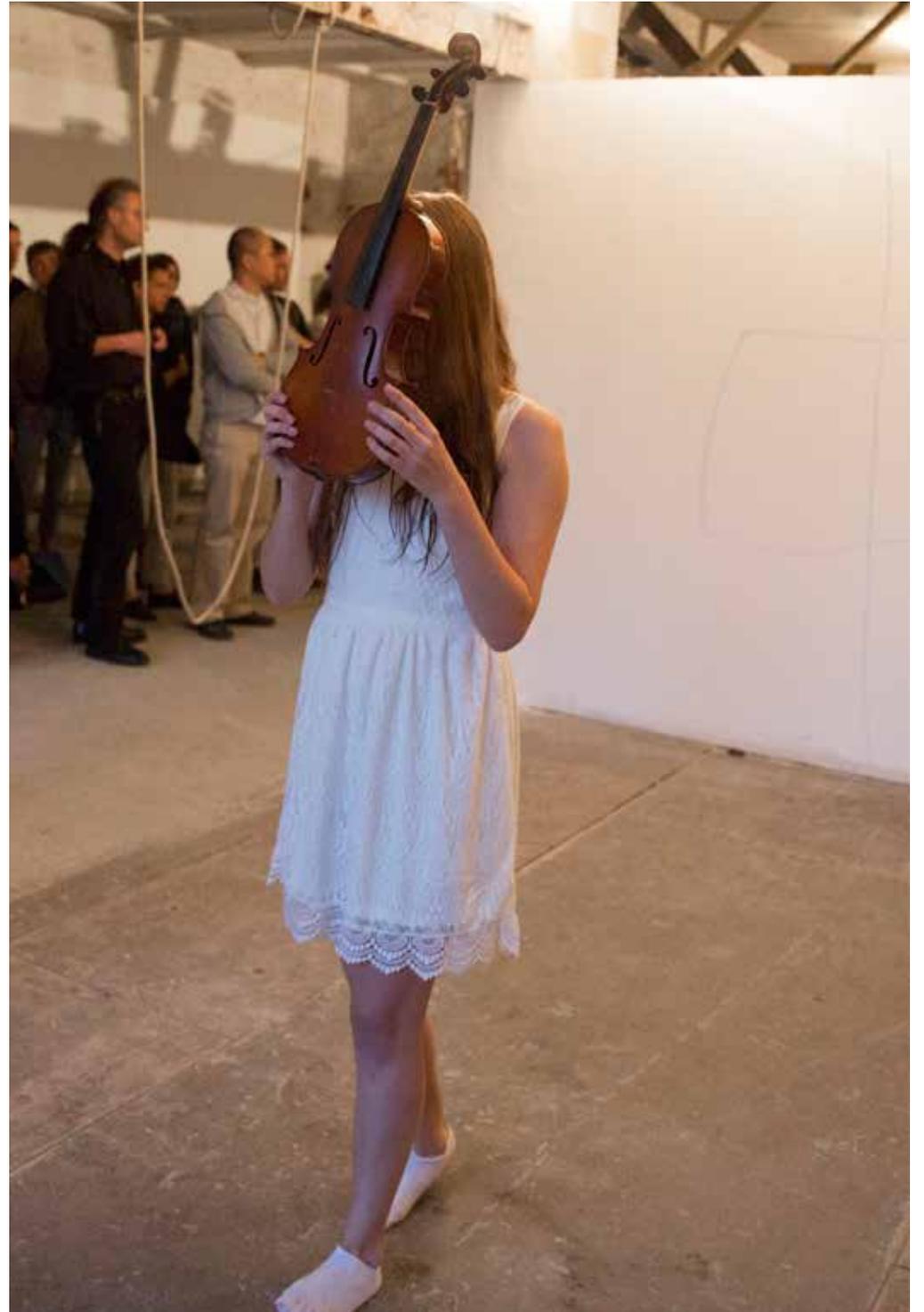
- laying under a pile of chairs
- turning a small pocket barrel organ on a violin
- standing up and holding the violin in front of the head
- exchange the violin
- creating a circle with the chairs
- running on the chairs-circle
- hanging a poster (picture of my great grandmother) on the wall
- sitting on a chair and pulling tissues out of a box, fixed to my eyes
- inflaming the violin from inside
- distinguishing the flames with milk
- folding a boat out of the poster
- going to Lotte place
- going together with the boat to the other side
- gluing the boat at the wall
- blindfolding the eyes
- spraying the face golden
- singing and throwing confetti

Lotte:

- drawing with chalk the game 'Himmel und Hölle' on the wall
- throwing a stone and jumping on the same spot
- taking the violin and putting it at the end of the space
- hitting the wet hair against the wall
- swinging on a swing
- peeling a red beetroot
- showing the red hands
- bringing the violin to Johannes
- taking two white chairs
- making the feet wet and walking - leaving tracks
- rolling the peeled Beetroot on Johannes' shirt
- taking the boat and going with Johannes on the other side
- blindfolding the eyes
- spraying the face silver
- singing and throwing confetti

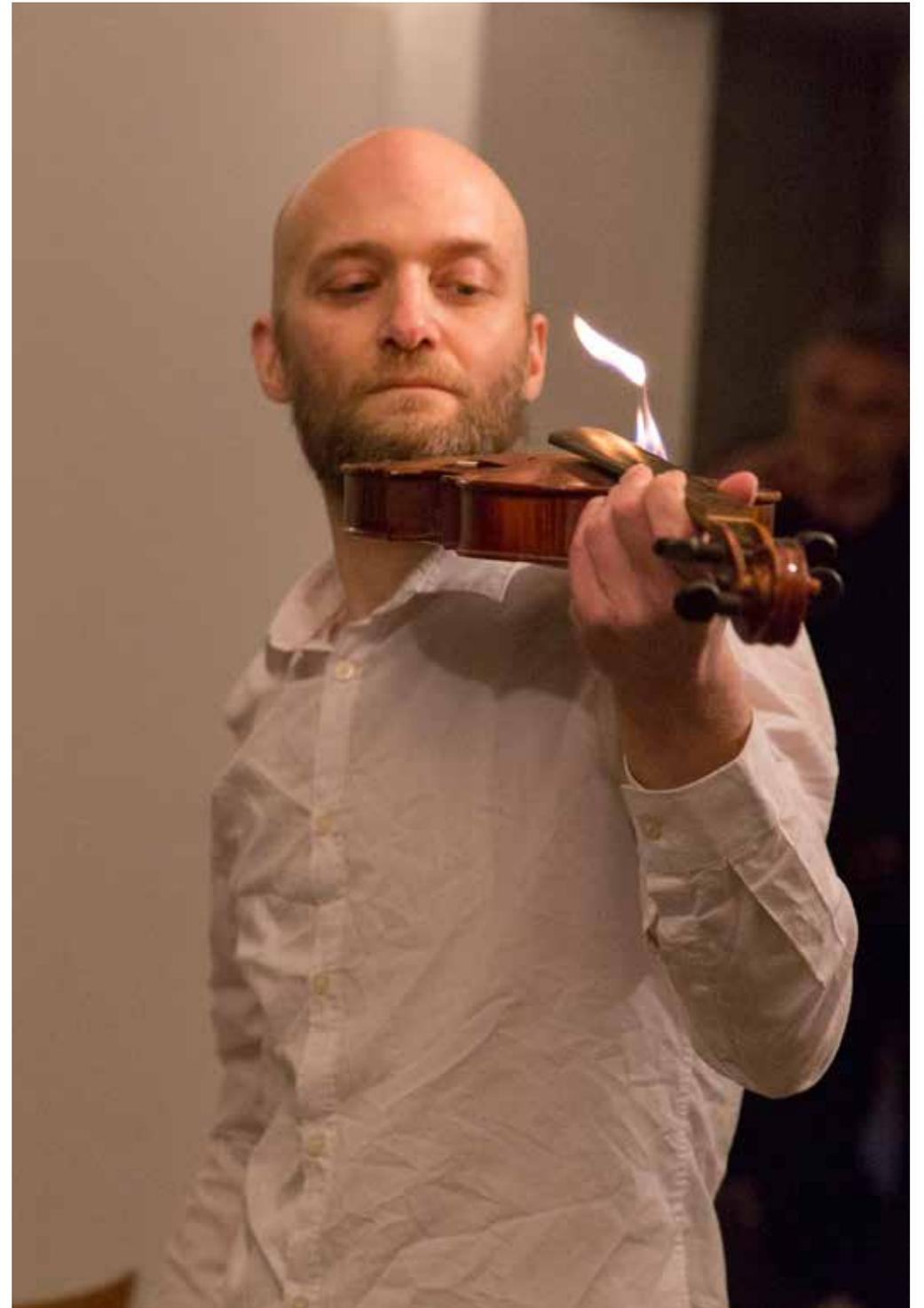
Video documentation: <https://vimeo.com/98026775>

# 8













## Lotte Kaiser

(b. 1999) discovered performance art during a PAS youth studies with BBB Johannes Deimling, later she matured a strong interest in this art form as an ideal tool for teenagers to express what is not expressible through words. Lotte has presented her works already in several art spaces, among others at Grimmuseum, Berlin. This is the first time Lotte performs together with BBB Johannes Deimling as part of the performance 'a rolling stone gathers no moss #8'.

For further information about previous performances by Lotte Kaiser (tutored by BBB Johannes Deimling) please visit:  
<http://tinyurl.com/PAS27-lotte-kaiser>  
<http://tinyurl.com/PAS-charlotte-kaiser>



“That wish to enter into an elusive element which had urged Cosimo into the trees, was still working now inside him unsatisfied, making him long for a more intimate link, a relationship which would bind him to each leaf and twig and feather and flutter.”

(Italo Calvino)

Text by Chiara Cartuccia, 2014

Since late 1980s German artist BBB Johannes Deimling has been working in the multifaceted field of performance art, elaborating a peculiar and very recognizable manner to treat this artistic non-medium. The performance art pieces of Deimling have been called *agierte Bilder*, literally “acted images”, making clear reference to the visual potential of his work. The hundreds of performances Deimling ideated since the beginning of his long and fruitful career are all characterized by a wise use of the material, a large attention to the visual impact, and an almost paradoxical limitation of gestures, echoed by his motto: “It is not the action that makes the performance”. BBB Johannes Deimling is also well known for being a performance art teacher, working in independent and public institutions; the topic of researching, learning and sharing is constantly at the bases of his artistic practice, and the visual performances cycle *A Rolling Stone Gathers No Moss* in not an exception.

The English proverb “A rolling stone gathers no moss” can have both a positive or a negative acception, on one hand being in a constant state of movement means to keep on evolving, changing without letting time impose its traces, on the other to be a perpetual wanderer implies do not have the capacity to settle down some necessary roots. BBB Johannes Deimling accepts both the meanings of this sentence, and sum-up them in a third option: to be involved in a constant movement does not mean to not have roots, rather to spread those roots everywhere. Becoming aware of the distance, as well as of the proximity with the objects of the world, the artist opens his practice to infinite possibilities, making his gestures an active part in the flux of the elements, and a vehicle of change.

In the performances composing this cycle Deimling creates visual moments that are connected one to the other by a system of subtle relations, which develop a composite collage of imaginative actions. The performance pieces are the sum of several figurative constructions, shaped by the interaction of artist’s movement with the objects, with their forms and colours, but also with their inner, symbolic meanings. BBB Johannes Deimling elects the

metaphorical language of poetry as the idiom of his performance practice: the objects that the artist chooses have the capacity to create a clear sense of beauty, while expressing, or suggesting, something more behind the simple optical gratification. Roses, soap bubbles, marbles and wooden chairs are some among the recurrent objects the artist uses in the series *A Rolling Stone Gathers No Moss*; all of these tools can encourage in the audience certain basilar feelings, if the rose suggests both beauty and ephemerality the chairs inspire stability and familiarity, to make an example. The physical intervention of the performer on the material, his interaction and play with his instruments, has the power to give a different form to the spontaneous sensations and interpretations of the audience, overturning its perception of common elements from plain everyday life.

The performative actions of *A Rolling Stone Gathers No Moss* recall the concept of motion as change, as described by Aristotle in his *Physics*; the ancient Greek philosopher talks about movement as actuality of potentiality, stating that the essence of change, and its reason, is always to be found inside the element that changes. To explain this concept Aristotle uses two examples, the case of the teacher and the learner and the one of the clay and the pot. In the learner and the clay there is a full potentiality, translatable into actuality through engagement into movement, which means transformation. The teacher only stimulates a revolution that is already in the learner, as the clay has always contained the possibility of the pot.

BBB Johannes Deimling seems to embrace this same notion of inducement to movement/change, both when he works on objects, as in the case of performative interventions like *A Rolling Stone Gathers No Moss*, and when he interacts with his students. Deimling is aware that cannot be possible to define a clear distinction between the subject and the object of an action, the move and its result, the cause and the consequence, and there is no such thing as passivity in art or teaching.

1. Calvino, I., *The Baron in the Trees*, translated by Archibald Colquhoun, New York, London: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1977. Original version: Luigi Einaudi Editore, Torino 1957.

2. See Kosman, L. A., “Aristotle’s Definition of Motion”, in *Phronesis*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (1969), pp. 40-62



## 'a rolling stone gathers no moss # 7'

as part of 'infinite records: Repetition and co-affecting' - archive  
project initiated by the NTA - Norwegian Theatre Academy, Muthesius  
Kunsthochschule  
Kiel, Germany 2014

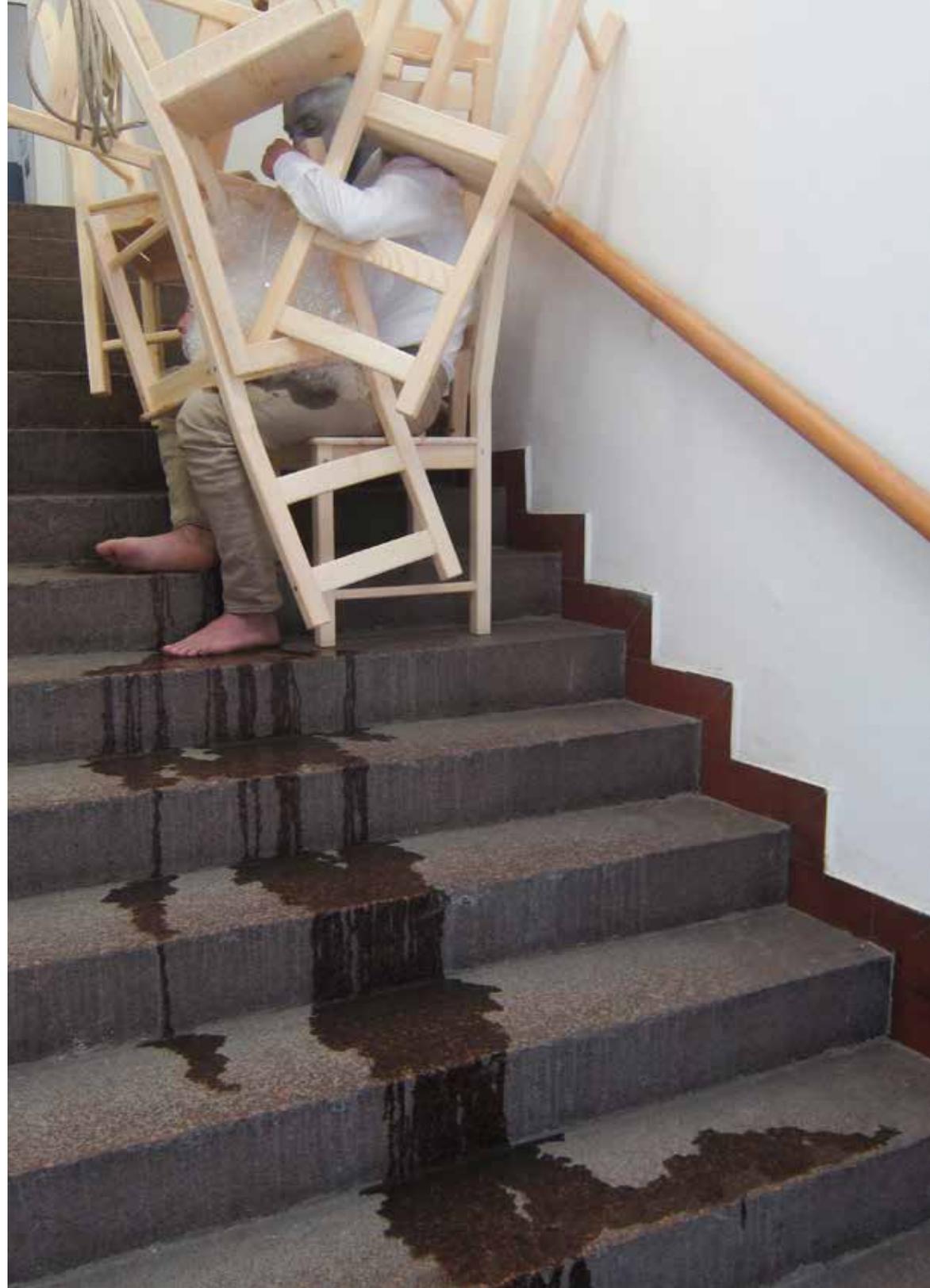
curated by Karmenlara Ely

### actions:

- sitting in a pile of wooden chairs on a staircase
- blowing into a straw creating bubbles in a bowl with water and soap
- standing up slowly and crawling down the stairs









## 'a rolling stone gathers no moss # 6'

Espai d'art contemporani de Castelló  
Castelló, Spain 2013

curated by Bartolome Ferrando

### actions:

- pushing wooden chairs into the space
- releasing white ping pong balls from a white, crackling plastic bag
- drumming on my belly with flat hands
- holding two toilet paper rolls in front of the eyes
- enrolling the toilet paper
- dancing in a strange and funny way
- spraying gold color into my face
- blowing into a straw, creating bubbles in a water glass
- pulling the chairs out of the space

Video documentation: <https://vimeo.com/82208504>

# #6













## 'a rolling stone gathers no moss # 5'

Centro Parraga, as part of the 'Abierto de Accion',  
Murcia, Spain 2013

curated by Domix Garrido

actions:

darkness

- lighting up a flash lamp while cowering under a pile of black wooden chairs
- burning incense
- trying to cut off a piece of a white stone with knife and fork
- binding a bread on the face
- drumming on a snare drum
- imitating the rhythm of the drum with a dance
- sitting on a swing
- creating eyes and mouth into bread - destroying the face
- throwing water marbles in the air

darkness

Video documentation: <https://vimeo.com/82323315>

# #5













## Una piedra que rueda no cría moho #5

Text by Domix Garrido

Como una luciérnaga en mitad de la noche, vemos una figura animal reptando entre una multitud de sillas, al atravesarlas toma la forma de un ser humano para descubrirnos el fuego por primera vez en la historia.

La evolución de esta performance nos transporta a nuestros ancestros, donde lo ritual formaba parte de la vida cotidiana. Un ritual que se transmuta en arte para intentar masticar aquello que no es posible: una piedra viva\*.

Deimling transforma los elementos de su entorno hasta velar su visión del mundo cegado por un enorme pan anudado a su cabeza. Ritos, ritmos y danzas son invocados a la acción como el escaparate de la propia evolución humana. La percepción de estas imágenes y sensaciones surcan la base de nuestra cultura junto al poder del hechicero que asciende en su móvil pedestal, meciéndose en su desnudo columpio por encima de nuestras cabezas.

Este acto, cargado de simbolismo, nos remonta de nuevo a un mundo onírico, totalmente imposible de aprehender con la razón, obligándonos a contemplar en silencio su faz impasible mientras él nos observa a través del alimento básico por excelencia en la cultura europea: el pan; alimento divino y sagrado, esencialmente humano. El trigo que brota de la tierra y es elaborado por humildes manos para alimentar el cuerpo y el espíritu.

El uso del tambor tiene la capacidad de expandir los sonidos de la lluvia y la recolección de las semillas. Un eco intenso que retumba en nuestro pecho y paraliza el lenguaje. Reverberación motriz entre las oscuras paredes del espacio.

Deimling realiza un ejercicio de búsqueda de los sentidos psíquicos, reclama el derecho a la sinrazón, buceando en la profundidad atemporal del génesis de los arquetipos universales. Una piedra que rueda no cría moho une lo divino y lo humano, lo animal y lo vegetal, el pasado, el presente y el futuro, la razón y la emoción en un mismo contexto,. En una sola acción se precipitan y yuxtaponen el inconsciente colectivo y la consciencia personal.



## 'a rolling stone gathers no moss # 4'

Abierto de Accion', international performance art festival  
Malaga, Spain 2013

curated by Domix Garrido

actions:

- sitting in a pile of wooden chairs
- blowing into a straw creating bubbles in a bowl with water and soap
- spraying the face golden
- pushing one chair while leaving the space

Video documentation: <https://vimeo.com/83435399>

# #4









## 'a rolling stone gathers no moss # 3'

Atelier ANX, as part of PAO - performance festival  
Oslo, Norway 2013

curated by Franzisca Siegrist-Schmid and Tanja Thorjussen

actions:

- standing in a pile of brown wooden chairs
- turning a small pocket barrel organ while the audience is entering
- crawling over the chairs
- screaming in a pillow
- increasingly pointing with my forefinger at the audience
- rubbing two opinions into my eyes
- blowing into a golden horn
- releasing feathers out of the pillow while swinging
- waving a withe tissue and leaving the space

Video documentation: <https://vimeo.com/78539678>

# #3





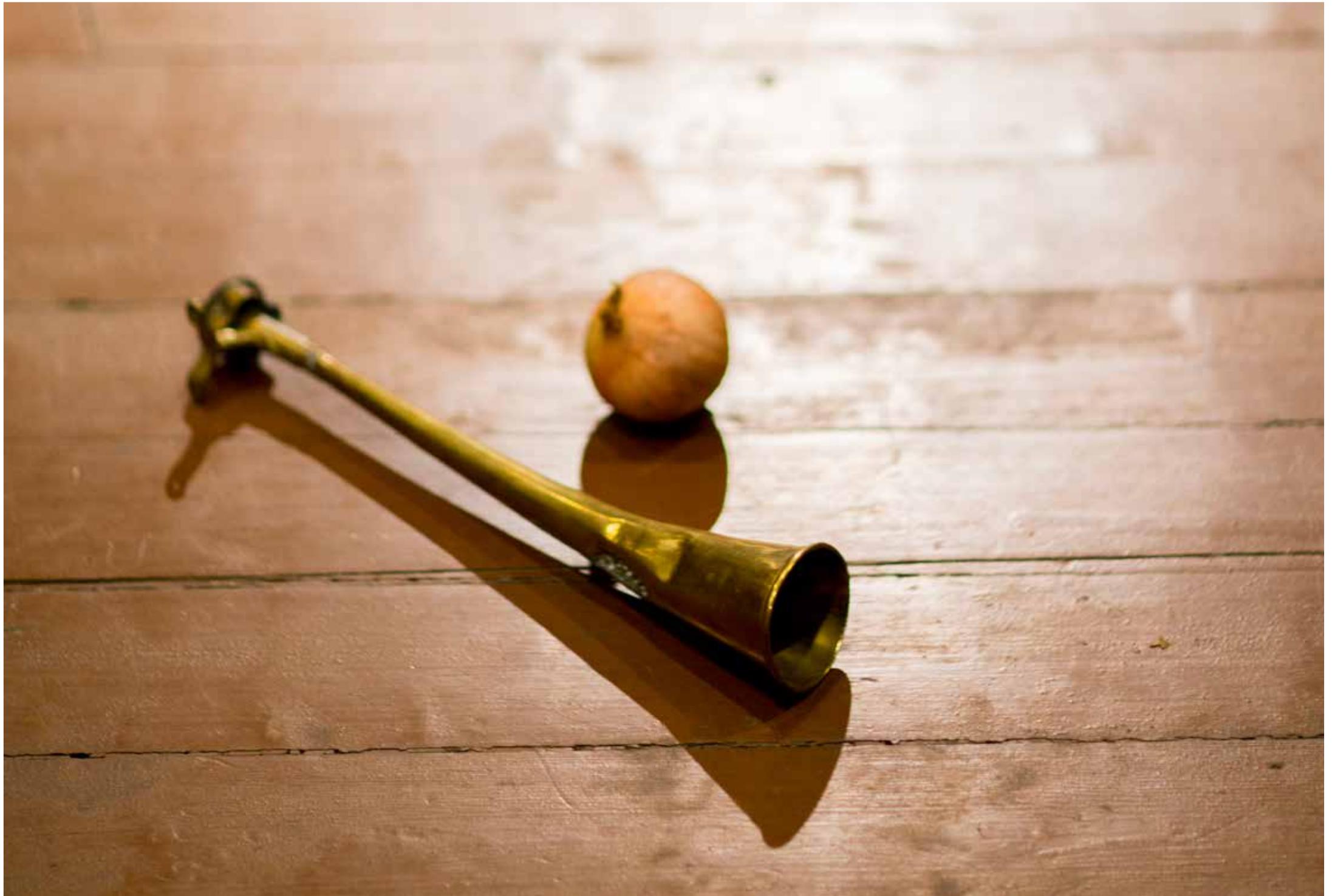












## 'a rolling stone gathers no moss # 2'

Turbinenhalle, as part of 'performNOW' performance festival  
Winterthur, Switzerland 2013

curated by Tom Huber

### actions:

- sitting on a swing packed with chairs
- releasing hundreds of black water marbles
- letting the chairs fall on the floor
- pointing with my finger at the audience
- rolling a stone with the feet through the space
- placing the chairs in a line
- walking over the chairs
- waving a white cloth
- smashing a fish with the stone

# #2















## 'a rolling stone gathers no moss # 1'

as part of PAS | Performance Art Studies #31 | "between the lines 6"  
Rehlovice, Czech Republic 2013

actions (mit Christopher Utpadel):

Johannes

- standing covered with wooden chairs
- slowly freeing from the chairs
- walking over the chairs
- waving a red scarf
- cutting two loafs of bread in half
- inflaming the half's in the hands
- distinguishing the flames by putting the half's slowly together

Christopher

- sitting in a pile of garden tools
- releasing milk
- slowly freeing from the tools
- crawling with a pickaxe to the front
- inflaming the half's in the hands
- distinguishing the flames by putting the half's slowly together















Monika Sobczak  
photographer and artist

Monika Sobczak (\* born 1989 in Inowroclaw, Poland) is since 2011 the personal photographer of BBB Johannes Deimling and is following his performative and educational work since then.

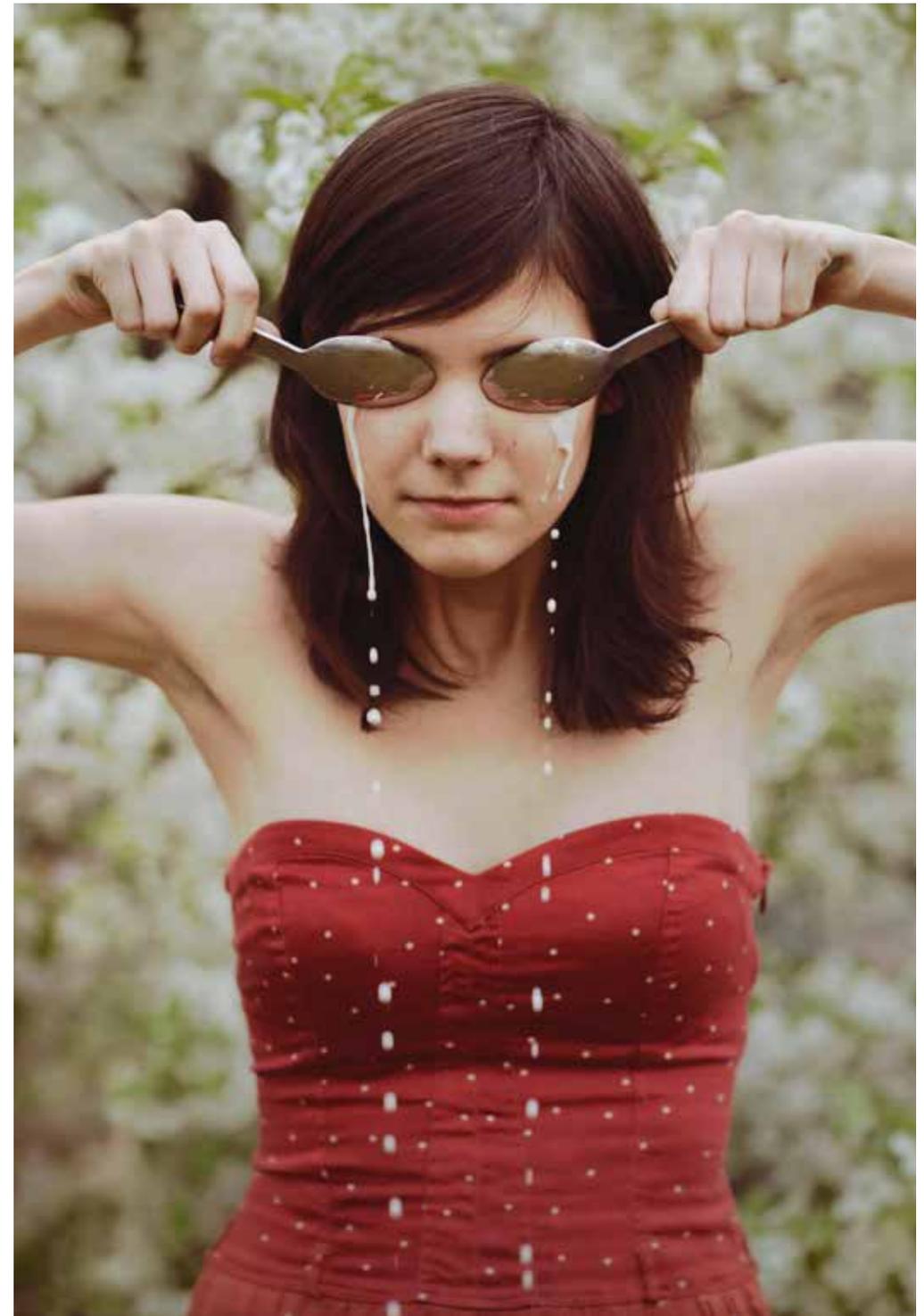
She followed the cycle 'a rolling stone gathers no moss' with her camera and created a holistic view with a distinct understanding for Deimling's artistic process. The photographs of this cycle are an extension of the live event and transporting its soul.

Starting from studying sociology in Poland, Monika Sobczak developed a diverse interest in societies and people, especially in their behavior. "They are influencing my work a lot" she states and focuses in her artistic processes on observing people in all kinds of life situations. "I get inspired by meeting or just seeing them, but mainly my inspiration is coming out of observations and talks I listen to". The camera is a perfect tool for people that are not so talkative, as you can hide behind it. Monika Sobczak communicates with her camera and the photographs she takes. She tries to catch the moments that are telling by itself the story and is giving her silence back with the photographs she takes. "I became a photographer as this art form let me think out loud by creating images."

Documenting live events is a logical step in her work. She documented various performance art events, theatre productions and as well street art projects the past years. The needed 'third eye' is visible and respected in her pictures: When you don't look at the camera, she takes the picture.

Because she is pointing her camera at people, she consequently turns the camera around on herself. Self-portraits were her first experiences with photography and became during the past years a stable part in her photographic work. Taking pictures from herself closes the circle of communication by using the camera instead of spoken words.

More information: [www.mmonikasobczak.com](http://www.mmonikasobczak.com)



"Anyone can make the simple complicated.  
Creativity is making the complicated simple."  
[Charles Mingus]

To present complex contents, situations and moments in a simple and elementary way is a signature of the art of BBB Johannes Deimling: the term 'Performance Art Povera' describes his works. These are the intersections that inspire and provoke his approaches to the perception of aesthetics, concept and content of his work. The 'acted images [agierte Bilder]' of the artist are initially created purely visual, but gradually access to all the senses to create a holistic view on the banalities of everyday life with all its changes.

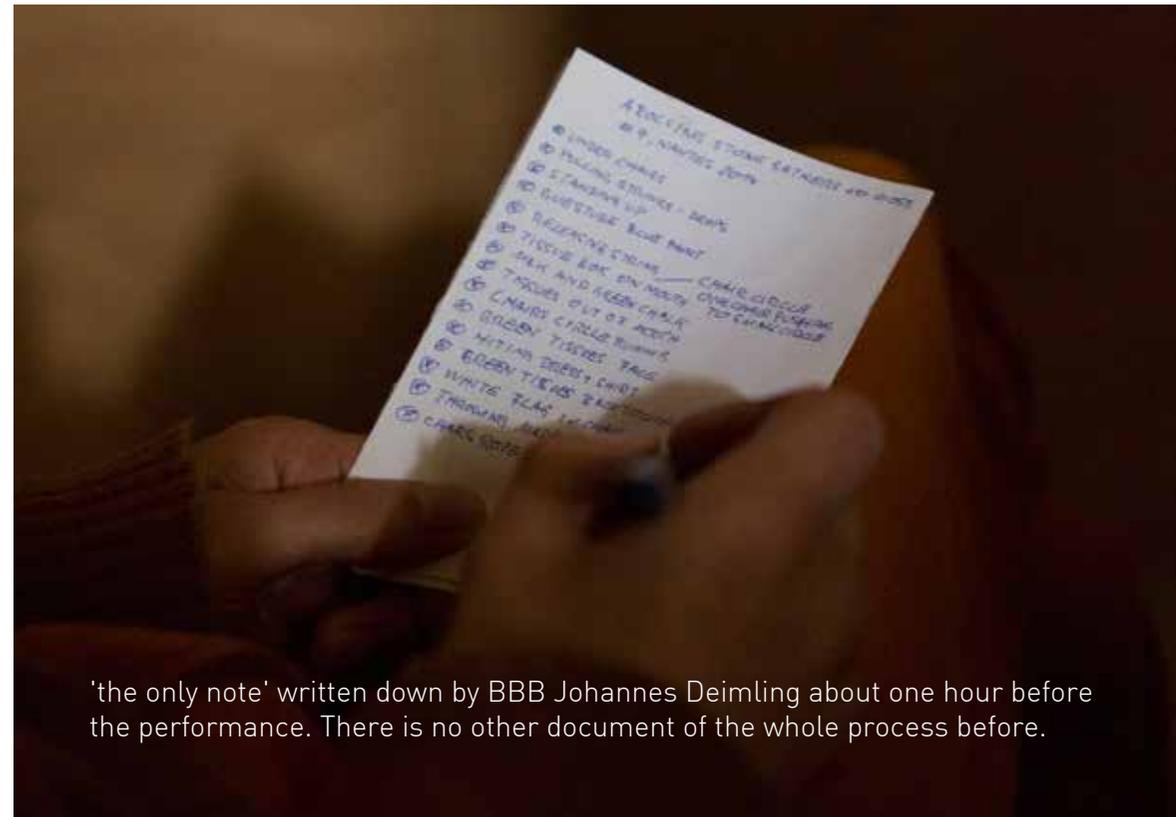
With a deep interest in the aesthetics and transformational potential of materials and objects, BBB Johannes Deimling enters the performative field with a purely visual approach. Deimling suggests "it is not the action that makes the performance, but the quality of an image created in combination with materials, objects and action in correspondence with space and time". To begin the creative process Deimling forms single images. The so called 'acted images' consist of reduced, simple actions often with only one object, one material or one gesture. With a passion for details, a visual alphabet of acted images accrues, allowing Deimling to literally and visually write his art that is performance. Using the technique of Collage he combines several acted images that allow Deimling to play in a cinematic way with all of the visual elements by deconstructing the course of actions and putting the parts anew together. The pureness of his artistic language causes the images to interlock. During this process various intersections appear in which unpredictable new images emerge. The material and objects begin to perform as Deimling treats them more like puppets. 'What's in my head', 'Leaking memories', 'Around the World' and 'A rolling stone gathers no moss' are just a few titles of cycles in which BBB Johannes Deimling includes several performative Collages. From a simple single image the artist offers a complex and holistic universe of visual imagery.

The ephemeral Collages appear more poetic than descriptive and rather metaphoric than symbolic. The metaphor is an image which falls apart at any attempt of approaching it and invites the viewer to read the action in order to stop searching for words of explanation and to look for attributions. Deimling creates ephemeral images, not made to be interpreted and drowned out with the logic of language. The balance of the metaphoric, surrealist image and transformation of the artist into a unique readable sign, is what makes the works of Deimling so fascinating. The precision of his movements, the possibility of failure, and the presence of coincidence, achieve an

uncontaminated visual sensation where simplicity generates a humorous magic moment that is imminent in all of Deimling's performance art.

The artist continuously invites a dialogue between other art forms including poetry, sculpture, architecture, dance, sound, and drawing. Deimling's performative Collages are a forum for interdisciplinary discourses where performance is used as tool for communication where viewers are invited to take part in the performative process.

The absence of rehearsal plays a distinct role and manifests the value of the creative act. Imagination and forethought are important tools that bring the artist's concepts to life. This working method includes the possibility of 'failure' as to sharpen the focus and increase the artists' concentration on absolute being within the moment. By removing the process of rehearsal, the sensation of a shared space is highlighted as the action unfolds in front of the viewer. Based on these experiences Deimling creates a visual knowledge that touches the base of memory, strokes the desire of tomorrow, and manifests the beauty of now.



'the only note' written down by BBB Johannes Deimling about one hour before the performance. There is no other document of the whole process before.



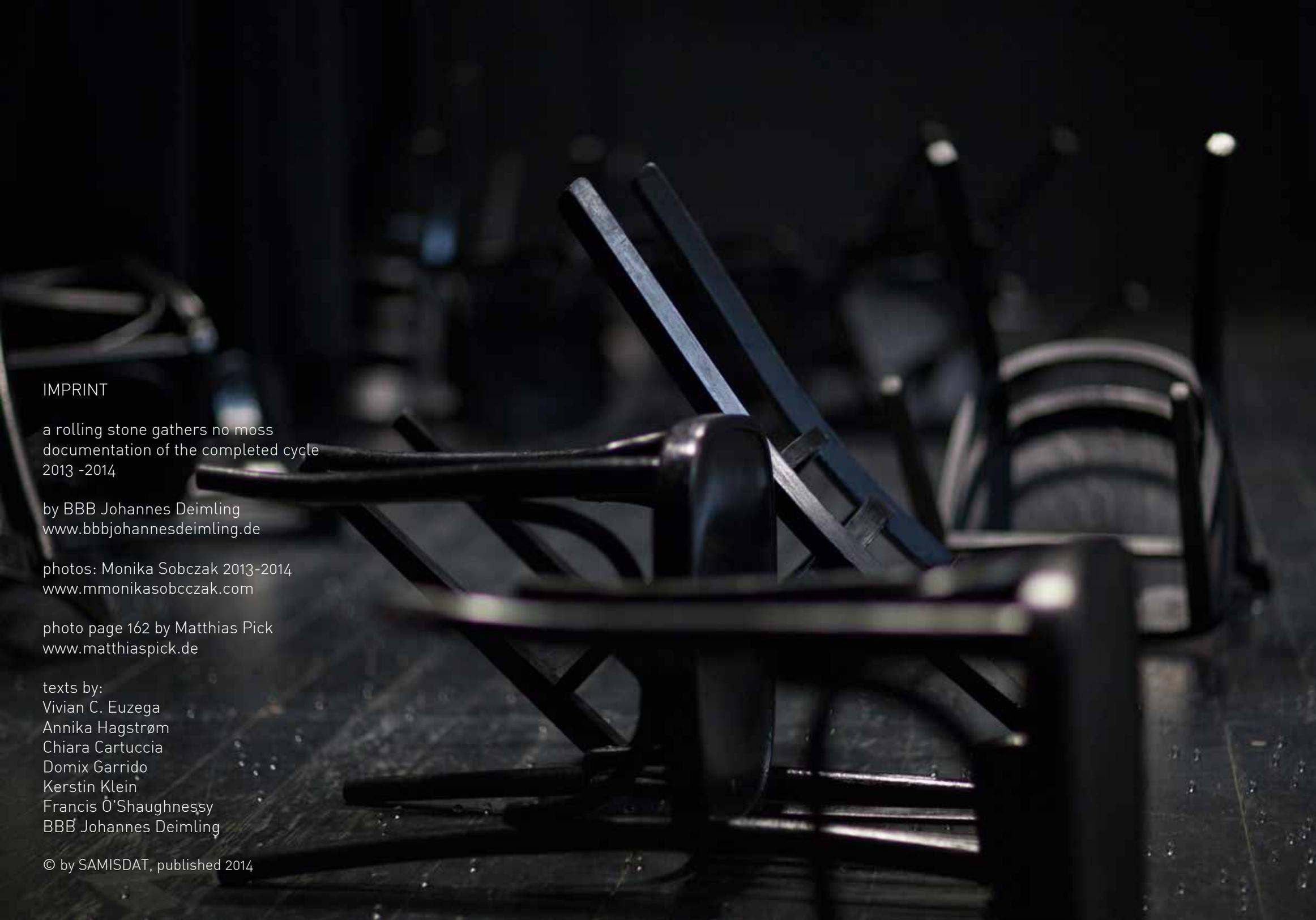
BBB Johannes Deimling's (\* 1969 in Andernach, Germany) artistic practice encompasses performance art, action art, video, installation, drawing, sound and education. Since 1988 Deimling has traded on everyday objects to create living images that would reflect a society full of contradictions, sentimentality, stupidity, creativity and cooperation. Searching for and finding ideas and suggestions in the banalities of daily life, Deimling transforms topics such as patience, will, war, religion or transportation into physical and poetic images. His ephemeral work has been on show internationally including the ICA in London, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Kiasma I museum for contemporary art in Helsinki, Center for contemporary art in Tel Aviv, Art Hall in Tallinn, Cornerhouse Gallery in Manchester, Neuer Berliner Kunstverein. Deimling participated in several international Performance Art Festivals, such as Interakcje in Poland, 7a11d in Canada, Bone in Switzerland, AccionMAD in Spain, Venice International Performance Art Week in Italy.

Since 1998, Deimling has been actively lecturing and teaching on performance art at various academic institutions, including the F+F, school for art and media design in Zürich, Switzerland; the Estonian Art Academy in Tallinn, Estonia; the Akademi for Szenekunst in Fredrikstad, Norway, and the TU Dresden in Germany. Since 2012, he is Associate Professor for Performance Art at NTA – Norwegian Theatre Academy at the Østfold University College. In 2008 he founded PAS-Performance Art Studies, a workshop project for international art students and young artists, hold in Canada, Germany, Israel, Serbia, France, Poland, Norway, Czech Republic, Lithuania, China, Cyprus, Netherlands and Estonia.

#### Performance cycles by BBB Johannes Deimling

- 2013 - 2014: a rolling stone gathers no moss
- 2011 - 2013: Around the world
- 2011 - 2011: leaking memories
- 2009 - 2011: What's in my head
- since 2000: Deutschland, Deutschland
- since 2000: Blanc
- 1999 - 2003: Media, Myth and Fairytales
- since 1998: Don't Hurt Me
- 1997 - 1999: Landscapes
- 1994 - 1995: Variaktion

more information: [www.bbbjohannesdeimling.de](http://www.bbbjohannesdeimling.de)



IMPRINT

a rolling stone gathers no moss  
documentation of the completed cycle  
2013 -2014

by BBB Johannes Deimling  
[www.bbbjohannesdeimling.de](http://www.bbbjohannesdeimling.de)

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