



MONTH OF
PERFORMANCE
ART
-BERLIN

Hector Canonge performs SHIP AKA at Alexanderplatz | Photo by Nina Ybarra | MPA-B 2014

MONTH OF PERFORMANCE ART-BERLIN (MPA-B)

1-31 May, 2014 ♦ 4th edition

For each new edition, MPA-B develops new strategies, approaches and collaborative models for the making and presentation of independent performance art works. MPA-B 2011, MPA-B 2012 and MPA-B 2013 were developed through an open call for programme partners and curators, who contributed to the MPA-B's May programme by creating individual performance art projects, which were then weaved together by a small organising/production team into a 31-day-long platform.

For its 4th edition, MPA-B has launched the **CO-LABOURER INITIATIVE**, an experiment in collaborative sustainability, community building and infra-activism, which strives to develop new frameworks and relations that can bring forth independent performance art practices too often confined to the outer edge of cultural policy making and funding distribution.

The idea behind this new initiative is to strengthen MPA-B by transforming it into a true collaborative framework, and to form a supportive alliance of performance art makers that, over the course of several months leading up to May 2014, will facilitate an ongoing dialogue to explore and confront different strategies of curating, producing, promoting, presenting, understanding and talking about performance art.

After a 2-months-long, national and international open call, a group of **CO-LABOURERS** has been formed. The Co-labourers are a wide group of independent performance artists, organisers and curators, who, since September 2013, have been organising, hosting and participating in monthly meetings. The

meetings have been set up to discuss practicalities of MPA-B; to organise its full programme for May 2014, and to share practices, exchange knowledge and generate a discourse on contemporary performance art's qualities and values.

Through this initiative the Co-labourers have also become members of the MPA-B organising team, sharing tasks such as production, promotion, fundraising and lobbying. This was seen as a necessary step to continue the development and support of MPA-B which, to date, is still a non-funded platform running on the work of a handful of committed individuals.

In addition, the Co-labourers have been invited to join a new non-for-profit association of independent performance art organisers ("eingetragener Verein/e.V." according to German law), the **Association for Performance Art in Berlin (APAB)** which was set up to promote, sustain and bond together Berlin's diverse performance art community and practices, and to represent the community in the public sphere and towards funders and policy makers.

HOW DO THE CO-LABOURERS WORK?

- Starting September 15th, monthly meetings have been set up, organised and hosted by different Co-labourers.
- Non-Berlin based collaborators, and those based in Berlin who cannot attend all the meetings, have been appointing someone locally, or formed a collaboration with someone already part of the working group, who have been representing them at the meetings, as well as assisting them in organising their MPA-B projects. The physical presence by proxy has been set as a mandatory requirement for the participation to MPA-B's 4th edition
- Co-labourers have received access to an online production management platform, so that tasks, such as programme scheduling, press/PR, artists liaison, grant writings, sponsor seeking and other administrative workload can be shared. Co-labourers have also been invited to join a closed Google and Facebook groups so that news, updates, announcements and other information can be easily shared.
- Each individual, or group of Co-labourers, will be responsible for the funding, organisation and running of his/her/their own performance art projects. He/she/they can refer to and draw support from the rest of the Co-labourers for any matter concerning their projects.
- The performance art projects stemming from the work of the Co-labourers, will be the only projects to be featured at the 4th edition of the Month of Performance Art-Berlin.

THE MPA-B HUB

As well as continuing to interconnect and present the diversity of independent spaces across Berlin, MPA-B 2014 will feature a CENTRAL HUB that will host the main bulk of the MPA-B's programming. The hub will function as a month-long permanent base: a meeting and gathering point, a hive for ideas, encounters and exchanges, as well as a space for performances, workshops, discussions, dinners and the MPA-B's information centre/lounge. For all the Co-labourers in need of a venue to present their projects, the hub will be the place to do it. The name and location of the HUB will be announced in January 2014.

ABOUT THE MONTH OF PERFORMANCE ART-BERLIN

MPA-B is a 31 day, city-wide and artist-run platform for independent performance art practices that connects and brings together hundreds of artists, spaces, networks and initiatives who collectively contribute to a unique and radical month-long programme, featuring: indoor and outdoor performances, site-specific interventions, talks, workshops, screenings, public encounters and interactions, dinners,

durational and days-long actions and other formats and projects which do not have, or reject, any definition.

MPA-B was founded in 2011 with 5 main objectives at its core:

1. to facilitate connections and cooperation amongst venues, curators, networks, organisations and other independent players working in the field of performance art;
2. to support and draw attention to Berlin's unique community of performance artists and practitioners;
3. to foster innovative critical discourses, practice-based exchanges and interactions between performance art makers and new audiences;
4. to explore and confront new models and methodologies of curating, producing, promoting, sustaining, creating, making, understanding and talking about performance art;
5. to document the history of contemporary performance art practices in the city through the annual Berlin Performance Art Report.

During its past three editions, MPA-B took place at over 90 locations in 10 city neighbourhoods; facilitated local and transnational collaborations, partnerships and artists' mobility; promoted and interconnected independent spaces and performance art practices working at the fringe of mainstream and funded performing arts structure, and brought a new, daring, experimental and unique platform dedicated to performance art to the city's broad cultural panorama.

As a non-profit, non-funded and artist-run platform, and with its jointly assembled programme, MPA-B represents - and strives to continue to work towards - new models and strategies of self-administration, self-efficacy and survival against a backdrop of commercial, state funded and exclusive cultural and artistic projects in the city.

Each participant contributing to the MPA-B programme is individually responsible for curating and organising their own programme, determined by their interests, curatorial enquiries, networks, spacial requirements, and budget capabilities. This diversity of approaches sets MPA-B as a platform apart from most festivals and makes it a unique project reflecting the individuality, experiences and creative force of the city's independent performance art community.