

Dampfzentrale Kesselhaus

MI 11.5. | 18:00 | anschliessend Festivaleröffnung mit Konzert von Dewey Dell

DO 12.5. | 19:00

**Christophe Meierhans (Genf/Brüssel)**

Verein zur Aufhebung des Notwendigen – A hundred wars to world peace

Konzept & Regie: Christophe Meierhans

Nach einer Idee von: Verein zur Aufhebung des Notwendigen e.V., mit Dank an R. Komarnicki

Dramaturgie: Bart Capelle

Szenographie & Mitdenken: Holger Lindmüller, Michael Carstens

Produktion: Hiros

Koproduktion: Kaaitheater Brüssel, Vooruit Gent, BIT Teatergarasjen Bergen, BUDA Kortijk, Nouveau Théâtre de Mont-reuil, Vaba Lava Tallinn

Sprache: Englisch und Deutsch (Der grösste Teil des Textes wird schriftlich projiziert. Spontane Wortmeldungen werden am 11.5. für Hörbehinderte in Gebärdensprache übersetzt.)

Dauer: ca. 2h

Die Vorstellung beinhaltet ein Abendessen. Kommen Sie hungrig!

Verein zur Aufhebung des Notwendigen ist ein Abendessen über Demokratie. Nicht über Demokratie als institutionalisierte Massnahme, um grosse Organisationen zu steuern, sondern über Demokratie als etwas, das wir als Individuen in unserem Alltag verinnerlicht haben. Über Demokratie als Verwirklichung unserer individuellen und kollektiven Wünsche.

Es gibt kaum etwas Geselligeres als ein gemeinsames Mahl. Doch beim Essen scheiden sich die Geister auch aufs Tiefste – aus ethischen, ökologischen, ökonomischen, religiösen, egoistischen oder körperlichen Gründen. Die Küche ist also das perfekte Setting für einen politischen Showdown! Jedes temporäre Mitglied des Vereins zur Aufhebung des Notwendigen hat das Schicksal der ganzen Gemeinschaft in der Hand, die Verantwortung ist geteilt. Aber die Zuschauer\*innen sind sich nie einig. Sie mögen unterschiedliche Sachen und verteidigen diese auch. In dieser Produktion geht es nicht um Konsens!

Wir sind, was wir essen. In dieser Performance essen wir, was wir sind, und niemand weiss, ob das schmecken wird.

Der in Brüssel lebende Romand **Christophe Meierhans** begeisterte letztes Jahr das AUA-Publikum mit der Lecture-Performance *Some use for your broken clay pots*, in der er eine neue Verfassung präsentierte und das Publikum zu heftigen Diskussionen bewog.

**Einfach gesagt**

In dieser Aufführung bereitet das Publikum gemeinsam ein Abendessen zu. Es gibt klare Regeln dazu, aber jede und jeder in der Gruppe hat auch seine eigenen Wünsche. Können wir so auf die Schnelle zusammen ein feines Essen kochen?

## **ANKÜNDIGUNG DER GRUPPE**

Verein zur Aufhebung des Notwendigen is a dinner and it is about democracy. Not democracy as institutional engineering for mass organisation, but democracy as something we internalize, as individuals, at the level of our day to day existence. It is about democracy as the realisation of our individual and collective desires.

A meal brings people together, it is warm and convivial. Yet, food is also home to our most intimate convictions: existential, ethical, aesthetic, economic, social, ritual or religious. In other words, dinner is the perfect set for a political showdown. The kitchen will be our theatre of operations.

For the duration of the performance, and in many ways, all those present in a theatre hall form a community. In our case, this temporary community is given the untranslatable name Verein zur Aufhebung des Notwendigen, the club, or association for the abolishment, or lifting, or conservation, but also transcendence of the necessary, of the indispensable.

Each individual member will hold the destiny of the whole community in his hands. It is a shared responsibility. But spectators often disagree, they like different things and are ready to defend them. This performance is not about consensus.

It is sometimes said that we are what we eat. In this theatre piece, we will eat what we are and nobody really knows what that will taste like.

This performance includes an evening meal.  
Please don't eat before the show. Come hungry.

<http://www.hiros.be/en/projects/detail/verein-zur-aufhebung-des-notwendigen---a-hundred-wars-to-world-peace>

## **BIO CHRISTOPHE MEIERHANS**

°1977, Geneva, Switzerland, lives and works in Brussels.

Christophe Meierhans works with and within performances, public spaces, theater, installations, sound, music and video. His work consists mainly in developing strategies for interventions in our daily life protocols through manipulating conventional agreements, social habits or simple usages. Fragments of reality such as an existing speech, a café, a theater performance or our daily audiophilia become frameworks for artistic operations which attempt to redirect banality so as to only let it reappear under peculiar angles. His work raises questions of norms and conventions by confusing casual contexts with another and confronting the spectator with some kind of otherness, the strangeness of being in the “wrong” place, or of the place itself being the “wrong” one.

[www.contrepied.de](http://www.contrepied.de)

## **CUT FOUR ONIONS INTO LITTLE PIECES, THEN TOSS THEM INTO THE AUDIENCE**

*Interview with Christophe Meierhans by Evelyn Coussens*

**Some couples don't need to be told: more arguing takes place in the kitchen than anywhere else. In his 'theatre dinner' Verein zur Aufhebung des Notwendigen/One hundred wars to world peace, Christophe Meierhans takes on the organization and preparation of a collective meal to put our penchant for consensus to the test – not in the form of a theoretical thought exercise, but by forcing us to get to work. Let's cook!**

Swiss artist Christophe Meierhans (b. 1977) is a composer, video director and performer. Until 2012 he was part of the Brussels collective C&H, with which, among other things, he carried out the striking urban intervention Postcards from the Future. In 2014 he broke, well, pots with the 'lecture performance' Some use for your broken clay pots, in which he proposed a new constitution based on the 'voting-out-of-office' of politicians. Meierhans's intensive argumentation and scrupulously thought-out plan drew the audience into a passionate debate – a practice of speech which, rather than the act of persuading the spectators, was the actual goal of the performance. With Verein zur Aufhebung des Notwendigen, Meierhans wants to make the leap from a politics of speech to a politics of action: 'I'd like for people to lose themselves in the action.'

**Christophe Meierhans:** In essence Clay Pots remained a theoretical thought exercise, a science fiction in which you speculate together over something that could exist. In doing so you engage in politics, but only at the level of commentary. With Verein the question was: how can we set up a concrete exercise in politics in which something is really at stake? In which a group is confronted with an actual problem – it's hungry – and a real longing – it wants to eat. That should lead people to reverse the order of thought and action: first they act, before they go and reflect on what they've done and what the consequences are.

**In Verein zur Aufhebung des Notwendigen you thought up an ingenious system whereby hundreds of spectators will ultimately prepare a meal together – or not. Where does the political potential of this action lie?**

**Meierhans:** In the tension that emerges between what the individual does and what the group expects. Each spectator receives an instruction with which he or she can do something in the large kitchen on stage. It's not a task they can follow blindly; it requires an interpretation. The choices that person makes are determining for the entire group. If someone decides to prepare meat, they'll be excluding the vegetarian part of the audience from the meal. If someone lets the potatoes burn, that's a problem because there'll be no rice to use as a backup. Each individual decision or action has consequences for the community. From the try-outs for Verein it appeared that we are thoroughly conditioned to do what is socially acceptable, to seek a consensus – precisely the behaviour that I want to challenge. During a specific try-out a spectator came onto the stage who had been asked to do 'something' with the onions. He spontaneously began to juggle with them, but a bit later he decided in the end to cut up the onions neatly into little bits. We easily assume that our individuality – the longing to juggle with those onions or if necessary to toss them into the audience – is something that must be curtailed for the benefit of the community. But why would the community not grant that individual the space to express him- or herself freely? For me it's a question of always being able to reconsider a particular 'self-evident' assumption. In this case it's about the assumption

that a 'good' community is by definition a consensus-based community. Well, in that case I'll just prepare a nice meal for everyone – we'll eat well, but we'll have missed the point.

**Why did you explicitly choose for a theatre to carry out this political experiment?**

**Meierhans:** The context of the theatre allows you to create a situation with 'strange' parameters. A bit like when you step into a lift that then gets stuck: at a stroke you find yourself in a special situation with a special set of relations to the other people in the lift – you've never spoken before, but you become a part of their 'community' from sheer necessity. At that moment reality receives a little push, and perhaps you'll remember that day for the rest of your life. Theatre also offers the opportunity to tweak the parameters of normality – and the audience accepts that. When a politician starts spouting fascistic crap in a speech, you get up and leave, but in the theatre you remain seated, until you understand why the performer is saying those things and what it means.

That's a question of trust: you give yourself up to what can happen, in the belief or the hope that it has meaning. That contract between performer and spectator is sacred, but it can be worked out in different ways. The mental opening that emerges when the expectations are not met is a moment of grace: you get the opportunity to make a leap outside your own frame of meaning.

**To what extent can you as an artist influence or determine that 'strange situation'? If you guide it too much, don't you run the risk of replacing the expected 'stage play' by an event, a meal on stage?**

**Meierhans:** That's the whole question of balance: you can't just replace one frame by another – you have to make sure that a certain tension emerges between the different frames, that a situation arises with which you can play. There are three layers in Verein: the cooking, the political level, and a certain show factor, because the fact is you're in a theatre with a watching audience. The trick is to tune those three to one another so that neither predominates. There was a try-out in which we tried to boost the performativity and to entertain the people a bit more, but the result was a party on stage – fun, but not a disruptive situation. You've got to break the rules of the theatre, but at the same time you've got to keep meeting a minimum of fictional expectations – otherwise you might as well move the event to a club or a restaurant. The spectators must keep relating to the 'unusual' context and to the community that is watching what they're doing.

**You often play in your work with the border between fiction and reality, between the passive and active participation of your audience. In both Clay Pots and now Verein the interaction with your audience is even determining. Why do you choose for these interactive forms of performance?**

**Meierhans:** I think I don't like art for which you have to be 'initiated', in which, say, the theory of this or that philosopher is presented in images and the spectator simply has the task of decoding the work, while an author who has all the answers hides behind the artwork. I call that 'encryption': you wrap something up in a difficult manner, the performance consists in finding the key to it and in getting the message – a fine intellectual challenge, certainly if the 'secret' is rather complicated, but in essence it's nothing more than solving a Rubik's Cube. I prefer to develop forms that are open, easier to understand for everyone. Because it's not about explaining something or offering insight, but about putting something in motion. We can ask ourselves 'why are we all so consensus-oriented', but it's better to install dissensus, to try out dissensus. Hence also the decision to choose specifically for cooking. It's something real. It's not a metaphor, you don't need to understand it, it's

something that happens in the here and now. The situation speaks for itself. If the food burns, that's the way it is; if people walk out, they walk out. There's no illusion. That's radical.

**It's radical, but it also involves a risk for the maker. As in Clay Pots you give the audience a lot of power – they can make or break your performance.**

**Meierhans:** Funnily enough I rather feel the opposite: with Clay Pots I was very nervous about the part where I myself give the introductory statement, and therefore where I was in control. Once the audience started asking critical questions, however, I relaxed. I'm not a theatre-maker, I'm not an actor, I don't feel at home on stage. It's not that I'm afraid of speaking in front of an audience, but I have the feeling that I lack the mandate to begin a monologue without reason. In Verein no one will be on stage; there's only the kitchen which the spectators will gradually be invited into. Strangely enough few spectators seem to have trouble crossing that threshold between auditorium and stage – so far, in any case, virtually no one has refused to take part. But it could happen, yes, that people refuse to participate, or sabotage the performance one way or another. I wouldn't see that as a failure. The worst that can happen is that the shift between what people are used to doing and what they do in a special situation fails to happen – then the play won't have taken place. Hence also the title: it's about the Aufhebung – the lifting, the suspension – of what is necessary. The objective is not only to satisfy our direct urge for food. The tangible stake is the meal, but the process leading to it is more important. You go through something, and that transforms you – or not. That's why the instructions are not only instructions for a recipe, but also for an exercise in politics.

**What, for you, is the ideal outcome of such an evening?**

**Meierhans:** That by the end of the evening you're eating something you find bizarre, or something there's not enough of, or something you simply didn't want to eat – but that you realize that it wasn't about food, but about the question as to how it got that far, how you ended up in this situation. And so that you, in your thoughts, fill the gap between what you expected and what really happened. In the most radical case all the food will have been burned and the kitchen turned into a disaster area and together we have to acknowledge that this is it, that this is what we did together, and so that we ask ourselves how we reached that point. In that sense we are not what we eat, but we will eat what we are: if everything blows up, that has to do with that specific dynamic between the people who were present in the theatre that evening.

**Is playing with frames, the shaking of expectations a constant in your oeuvre?**

**Meierhans:** (pauses to reflect) I think that for me it is indeed always about creating 'exceptional' circumstances – think of the lift. Yes, that longing is something you can trace all the way back to the start of my career. Challenging normality, independently of the specific subjects of actions or performances, because I'm not fixated on a certain topic. I see the way society functions and relations between people a bit like a computer's operating system which you can only rewrite from the outside – from inside the computer itself you can't change the configuration, for that you have to use an external disk. I want to take up that external position, I want to create that platform, so that we can question and tweak the operating systems of our society from a distance. Yes, let's try something different. (laughs)

Pressematerial (Fotos in druckfähiger Auflösung und Pressedossiers zu den einzelnen Produktionen) stehen auf <http://auawirleben.ch/de/presse> für Sie zum Herunterladen bereit.

Für weitere Auskünfte, Unterlagen zu den Produktionen, Bild- und eventuell Videomaterial wenden Sie sich bitte an +41 (0) 31 318 62 16 resp. [nicollette.kretz@auawirleben.ch](mailto:nicollette.kretz@auawirleben.ch). Wir stehen gerne zu Ihrer Verfügung. Spezielle Wünsche wie Interviews oder Porträts melden Sie bitte frühzeitig an.

## **PRESSE**

Etcetera #143 (December 2015)

### **Food Politics**

#### **Danae Theodoridou in conversation with Christophe Meierhans on Verein zur Aufhebung des Notwendigen – A Hundred Wars to World Peace**

*By Danae Theodoridou*

Swiss artist Christophe Meierhans (b.1977) is a composer, video director and performance artist. His latest work Verein zur Aufhebung des Notwendigen (2015) is a dinner about democracy not as institutional engineering for mass organisation but as something we internalise as individuals at the level of our day to day existence. For the duration of the performance a meal brings people together who have to cook it and eat it on stage.

**DT: The first questions are the 'expected' ones, the title for example. You use a double title. Its first part is the German phrase Verein zur Aufhebung des Notwendigen. And the second one A Hundred Wars to World Peace. What lies behind this choice?**

CM: The first one is actually the real title and it is not translatable.

**DT: Why do you say that?**

CM: Because of the word 'Aufhebung'. This was, in fact, the name of a restaurant I had in Berlin with a friend there. It was a chaotic restaurant and quite experimental. We opened only when we wanted, and we did quite some cooking experiments there. And then we also did here, six or seven years ago, a similar action for a festival of Constant. We organised a restaurant evening and did something similar to what this piece does. People would come to the restaurant, into that room, and they would get a menu with only one instruction, each one had a number and above the kitchen door there was a screen and they would be called one after the other. That was very strict, the recipe was fixed and people would have to perform only one act, which was for instance 'put that much salt in pot number two'. But they didn't know what they were making and at the end they were serving the food they had cooked of which nobody knew what it was. I thought that there was a lot of potential in bringing this to the stage, which is why I wanted to do a kind of adaptation of it. At the beginning I thought it would be rather easy by changing a couple of things. I never thought it would turn out to be such a hassle.

**DT: And in terms of the meaning of the phrase?**

CM: 'Verein' means an association or a non-profit, in any case a group of people gathering around a certain cause or activity, from politics to sports, on a voluntary basis. And then 'Notwendigen' is the 'necessary', but 'Aufhebung' is a very strange word because it means a lot of different things that contradict each other. It means 'to pick up' something from the ground, and also 'to keep' something, for instance when you eat and keep something for later. But at the same time it means 'to abolish', 'to stop'. And then there's the Hegelian term also where it means 'to elevate'. Hegel used it as something which showed 'transcendence', to go beyond, to transcend something and define it anew as something else. So in the piece there is the idea that through eating you cancel out the necessary, i.e. hunger, and you also pick it up, you cultivate it, but at the same time you transcend it. The subtitle came after some complaints we received from venues that the first title

cannot be translated and understood. Many places have communication departments that have somehow become very strong and they were telling us that the piece is not sellable this way. Some even suggested that we should change the title, but this didn't really seem good enough as an argument to us. This subtitle can be translated in any language. At first it was A Hundred Steps to World Peace and then we changed it to 'Wars' because it appeared through the showings that audiences were strongly biased towards immediately seeking consensus when tensions would arise, and that's not what the piece is about. It's more about living out the conflicts that are inherent to food and community. And then of course 'World Peace' is exaggerated, but it also forces us to make a link between household politics and our global fate as mankind. It is ironical but at the same time it is not, depending on how you look at it. The bigger framework is there to allow us to relativize, to have a bit of reflexive distance, although the idea of the piece is to really be in action, to dive into this kitchen fire, and lose yourself in its acts.

**DT: What was your starting point? And this also connects with another question: how does this piece relate to your previous work, Some Use For Your Broken Clay Pots, and to your work in general?**

CM: I was thinking of continuing something that originated in Some Use For Your Broken Clay Pots. I wanted to approach the same questions - how do we live together, how do we decide, what kind of rules we create for ourselves - from another angle. Clay Pots is pure speculation, everything happens in the head, we are talking about something that does not exist and will never exist. In this sense the work is political theory more than anything else. Even if there is a debate going on, the politics we are talking about are fictional. So I wanted to try to create a situation in which something really is at stake, where people are actually debating about something that exists and that is much less negotiable. Because you are in it and you cannot reflect, you cannot take a distance. If something is burning on the fire and nobody does something about it, we will all have lost something. Food is a very concrete thing, it's like air, it is something we need to live. If people grow hungry their behaviour changes, and you can feel this. Questions of waste, ethics, religion, all of these are inherent to food, to the meal. It is one of the few things that are truly universal. All traditions, religions, all customs and habits find their meeting point there. So in terms of politics it can act as a good catalyst.

There is a strong theoretical basis behind this, which is anarchy. Rethinking the relationship of the individual to the group and re-centring the interests of a group around those of the individuals. That of course can also be understood as a very neo-liberal way of thinking, if you just conceive it from the perspective of the individual. But here the exercise is to see the collective as a component of the individual's desires rather than as their limitation. It's not about the group collectively setting rules and individuals then having to conform their longings accordingly. It is about each individual integrating the group into the genesis of his own desires. It is about desiring the collective. If you love something, you are more likely to care about it aren't you?

I need to understand the work a bit more before drawing too many conclusions, but in the performance many people seem to easily just go down the paved way of social democracy without much questioning on this basis. There seems to be a kind of general agreement about what is good for the community or not. That is what I'd love to challenge. So far it has happened each time that a group of women between forty and sixty would stand up and invade the stage, sacrificing themselves, in a way, to make sure there will be enough food and that this food will also be a 'proper one'. I love that kind of engagement but at the same time it is disturbing. Their willingness to do what is best for everybody, going on stage and taking over, also shows how little they trust others, by which I mean the collective, to be able to find a way to a good end. The performance is an exercise in



trust. What seems to be the hardest thing to do in the performance is to make space for others so that they can all contribute, and then have enough trust to sit through the whole thing and see where it all leads to. It's not about making something forcefully nice; it is about experiencing a meal that will taste of the community which has produced it, as it were, for better or worse. And to do this, it is required that everyone, to a certain extent, resists one's own automatisms, one's own habits and preconceptions and dares to try other paths. I see the theatre as the ideal place for such attempts.

**DT: What did you want to do with this piece? What is your role in it? What is your relationship to what is going on in it?**

CM: My ideal scenario would be to once arrive at the end of the show and to have produced something clearly uneatable but still having the audience sitting around it and giving it a try, just out of curiosity. Eating here is a pretext, it is the carrier for a reflection that I hope can transcend the meal itself and makes use of it as a tool to experience community differently. In the premiere something happened which was exactly what I had in mind when making this piece. At one point a guy went on stage with the instruction to 'brown something'. He put a lot of chopped onions on the griddle, turned it on at full power and went back to his seat. Then the next person came on stage and had to do something else. During that time the onions were still going on and someone in the audience yelled: "it's burning!" So after having done her thing, the person on stage fumbled a bit with the onions before going back to sit, so that they wouldn't get burned. You contribute something and you trust the others to cope with it. It's not about my onions, it's about everybody's onions. It's an attitude of full involvement, on the one hand, and of detachment, on the other, a kind of 'let's see', 'let's leave space for others to act'. That's what the work is looking for. And even though the piece had its premiere and touring has started, I am still missing some clarity about this aim. I don't know how I will formulate it exactly... I need to find a way; the work will still evolve a lot in the coming months. Something else which fires up the piece are acts of trespassing. People do it to different extents. In the premiere for instance, someone covered a whole lamb with cocoa powder in order to change its colour - which was what the recipe instructed him to do - and that shocked some people. It was completely 'legal', in the sense that he totally respected the recipe, but it was also obviously very performative and a bit weird. It transcended the cooking act and pushed it to another level, both in terms of cooking - we had sweet lamb that evening - and of reflection on community.

**DT: So then your own role in the show is that of challenging? Where do you stand between manipulation and really letting the community do what they decide? Also, in connection to this, what is the function of the different 'acts' projected on wall?**

CM: I went through different phases of thinking whether I should be present in the work or not. In some shows I was there at the beginning to give an introduction, even serving at the bar at one point. And this was a problem because then I became a reference. People were actually asking me if it was ok to do something, etc. Now the agreement with the technical team is that we don't intervene unless someone gets hurt or the building is seriously endangered. I think this is more correct. As for the text, originally the idea was to have no text at all. But then it became clear that many things were not explicit enough. Only the recipe is not able to hold everything together because people's pre-existing relations to food are much stronger. So now we have added some text moments to help out. The acts are there to give an orientation so that people know better where they are in the process and also to reinforce the theatrical character of the situation – it's crazy how fast people forget that they have come to a theatre show!. The different phases of the process needed to become more explicit: the shopping, the preparation of the ingredients, then the cooking,

the serving, etc. But we also fell into the other extreme at one point, making the instructions too explicit or precise. It became a kind of work colony where people were just struggling to execute their tasks as well as they could. It kind of became more about efficiency than anything else. The cookbook took the role of some abstract authority rather than that of an anarchist agitator, which is obviously the one it should have if the whole thing is about people taking decisions and carrying responsibility. The cookbook should not impose social order, it should challenge the relations between individuals and an existing social order as well as the understanding of what social order could mean. To me that is a very important issue, how some kind of overarching moral prevails in terms of what is supposed to be good for the community. At present, we are predominantly trained - we train ourselves - to be as successful as possible as individualists.

Yet, we also know that we 'need' the community, we need to think about that level of things too, but I think that this happens too often through the lens of a moral obligation. Community is a kind of duty rather than a beauty to long for. And if community is seen as a restriction of the individual, it is obvious that sooner or later we'll start to dislike it because it is understood as something which stands in the way of our self-realisation. Look at politics in Belgium now, for example, the government considers any state expense as a waste that should rather be fixed. It is as if, in their eyes, state expenses are ugly. But fuck: public services are quite an achievement, aren't they? This line of thought more and more results in not thinking of the community but submitting to it - because it is indispensable, right? Really putting the individual in the centre and at the same time conceiving him as a fundamentally social being, that's a different thing, though.

**DT: How easily can we apply observations of a theatrical experiment on society? There are fundamental differences between the two. The social groups we are part of involve specific decisions, aims and something that is really at stake. When I cook with my friends, for example, I have chosen that community. I was also thinking of Claire Bishop who refers to artworks which in the USA are called 'social practices'. She criticizes them because they consider artistic choices and the alternatives they offer less significant but, most importantly, because she finds them dangerous to democracy. They imply distrust towards democracy itself suggesting that it is unable to do its job, therefore art should take its place. In your case, what is the role of the investment involved in social contexts in the semi- random community of Verein zur Aufhebung des Notwendigen?**

CM: I see an artistic framework as a place where you put things between brackets. You can suspend something - that's where 'Aufhebung' comes in again -, in this case hunger, to be able to see beyond it. With *Some Use For Your Broken Clay Pots* it was about suspending your scepticism towards the possibility of changing our given constitutional basis, so that you actually look into it. You suspend reality to some extent, which means you don't apply anything to reality, but to a suspended framework, which is part of reality as such. The idea is to create conditions that are slightly different, where you might look at things differently. If you don't have this suspension anymore, then you do creative social work and you don't create the brackets or the conditions that create a different reality.

**DT: In what way does the piece create brackets for you?**

CM: In the sense that outside of the piece you would not forcefully approach your extremely intimate relations to food from a different angle. I think the relations of the individual to the community become extremely strong in the piece because of the theatre, because of the people looking at you with a specific gaze. My responsibility as an artist is to create those brackets. Then whatever happens in it is fair to me. I create brackets for one evening only. I think it is useful to limit things so that people can actually take risks. I want people to break through and try some stuff that

might be wrong. I agree, the whole thing exists only within a very limited framework. But what does this mean in relationship to society? Politics start in the household, in the way you relate to dishwashing with the person you live with. It is very futile but if you are not able to deal with that, how can you pretend dealing with bigger issues? If you think about social justice but are not able to deal with the dishes at home, I think there is a problem. In the piece, you have this chain of 100 people taking over responsibility from each other. Some will do something very 'correct', or 'mainstream' which is also ok. I don't suggest that everybody has to go crazy. But the idea is to consider all the different options one has. Only then can a free choice be free. I am not sure that our female commandos over forty running on stage to invade the kitchen make such a free choice, but who does, really? I just imagine that the theatrical bracket allows you to reconsider your options even though you are emotionally involved in what is taking place. This is where its complexity lies. As for the randomness: people coming to a show like this are not so random at all, although the cooking may attract people who would otherwise not come to the theatre. You said earlier that when you invite people to cook at home you choose them. That's your little niche, but you don't choose who you live with in your building or in your city and it's up to you to deal with that. This is where politics actually start.