

IDEA OF COMMUNISM. PHILOSOPHY AND ART.

is a scientific/artistic conference aimed at considering the concept of "Communism" from a new perspective and including its multiple significations. For three days, all rooms in the Volksbühne will be devoted to this event. "Since the labour movements in the 19th century and their interpretation by great minds of the times, the word "Communism" has been at the intersection between politics and philosophy. Therefore, nowadays it must be considered on the basis of both its ideal content and the actual experiences to which it has been associated and in which it has been seriously compromised." (Alain Badiou) The conference will focus on a review of the socialist States that embodied the motive of a "dictatorship of the proletariat" in the 20th century. With this in mind, it will host a significant number of participants from Eastern European countries. The main events are four philosophical panels on the subject "The word *Communism*: between philosophical criticism and an actual review of the socialist States" led by Alain Badiou (Paris) and Slavoj Žižek (Ljubljana). The aesthetical approach to the subject is an art program including performances, installations, films and concerts.

PHILOSOPHY

CONFERENCE.

THE WORD COMMUNISM BETWEEN PHILOSOPHICAL CRITICISM AND AN ACTUAL REVIEW OF THE SOCIALIST STATES

In 2010 the fall of socialist regimes turns 20 years old and the future of Capitalism – free from the threat of an alternative – seems to be yet to come. Our lives develop under the sign of individual freedoms, democratic opinions and globalised trade, which Marx had already called "the world market". But is a society organised above all around the rules of competition and maximum profit-making really the only option left now days? Are episodes of crisis only the result of actions by irresponsible players in the global business game? Should we not approach the issue from a different perspective to say that all social dynamics based on the interests, desires and needs of individuals are always pathological?

One thing is clear today: socialist regimes have failed. All alternative forms of a state suitable for those wishing to orient their lives by something other than globalised Capitalism have disappeared. Twenty years after the fall of such alternative attempts, the time has come to look for new alternatives. They will not be founded on a nostalgic, melancholic longing for the vanished systems. However, in order to create new alternatives, the failure of past alternatives must be scrutinised. That is the aim and challenge of the conference. Firstly, it is guided by the need to analyse the socialist states from an emancipating perspective. Secondly, it will focus on the possibility of achieving a new orientation out of the analysis: an orientation that may be again called "communist". Therefore, the idea is to state again, but under new conditions, the question of what could be today a positive meaning of the word "Communism". Such a new communist orientation cannot forget the experiences made by the vanished states; it will rather have to review all previous attempts, while not giving up the idea of an emancipating approach. The Berlin conference should mark the beginning of such processes of analysis and reflection, review and criticism, aiming at a process of working on and with the communist hypothesis.

FRIDAY 25.06.10

2–6pm
Vorbühne

PANEL 1 in German and English with simultaneous translation

ALAIN BADIOU: INTRODUCTION

FRANK RUDA/JAN VÖLKER: THESEN ZU EINER KOMMUNISTISCHEN MORALE PROVISOIRE (THESES ON A COMMUNIST MORALE PROVISOIRE) | Frank Ruda and Jan Völker are researchers with the Collaborative Research Centre 626 at the FU Berlin. Editors of the series "morale provisoire" at Merle-Verlag and organisers of a continuous series of debates with international guests under the same name. Titles published in the series so far include: *Badiou's Ist Politik denkbar?* (2010) and *Die kommunistische Hypothese* (2010). Other joint publications: *Was heißt es, ein Marxist in der Philosophie zu sein* (2010) and *Verhältnisslos. Zur Kompossibilität von Politik und Kunst* (2009).

GERNOT KAMECKE/HENNING TESCHKE: WAS ZÄHLT? 1. GEMEINSCHAFT 2. GLEICHHEIT (WHAT MATTERS? 1. COMMUNITY 2. EQUALITY) | Gernot Kamecke is an expert in Romance languages and literature, philosopher, translator. Academic coordinator of the Collaborative Research Centre Transzendenz und Gemeininn at the TU Dresden. Publications: (Edited with H. Teschke) *Ereignis und Institution. Anknüpfungen an Alain Badiou* (2008); (Edited with J. Müller/B. Klein), *Antike als Konzept* (2009). Translation of Alain Badiou's book: *Das Sein und das Ereignis* (2005). Henning Teschke teaches Romance languages and literature at the Universität Augsburg. Publications: *Proust und Benjamin – unwillkürliche Erinnerung und dialektisches Bild* (2000); *Sprünge der Differenz – Literatur und Philosophie bei Deleuze* (2008); (Edited with Gernot Kamecke) *Ereignis und Institution – Anknüpfungen an Alain Badiou* (2008)

CÉCILE WINTER: WIEDERBELEBUNG DES KOMMUNISMUS (THE RESURRECTION OF COMMUNISM) | Cécile Winter is a former activist at UCFML in Paris, she worked as a doctor in Africa, in the fight against Colonialism and Aids. Publications: in addition to numerous flyers, an essay appeared in Alain Badiou's *Circonstances 3* called *Signifiant maître des nouveaux aryens, ce qui a fait que le nom juif est devenu imprononçable*.

SATURDAY 26.06.10

10am–1pm
Vorbühne

PANEL 2 in German and English with simultaneous translation

GLYN DALY: A THIRST FOR THE REAL: AVATARS OF COMMUNISM | Glyn Daly teaches at the Department of International Studies, Leeds University. He has published a range of articles on Political Theory, Marxism and Post-Marxism and the Politics of Ideology and Fantasy, and is currently writing a book on Slavoj Žižek.

JANNE KURKI: COMMUNISM OF TRUTH – KANT WITH ARISTOTLE | Janne Kurki teaches Aesthetics at the Institute of Art Research, University of Helsinki. His research focuses on continental thought and he works mainly on Lacan, Badiou, Žižek and Blanchot. Recent publications: *Heidegger and Lacan – Their Most Important Difference* (2008); *First to Fight! – Playing Your Identity, Hooking Your Desire and Body* (2010).

SAROJ GIRI: COMMUNISM, THE REAL MOVEMENT | Saroj Giri teaches at the Department for Political Science, University of Delhi. Publications: *Globalization: The Predicament of Myths* (1998); *The Classical Marxist Conception of Man's Relation to Nature* (2005); *Maoists and the Poor: Against Democracy* (2009)

3–7 pm
Vorbühne

PANEL 3 in German and English with simultaneous translation

BÜLENT SOMAY: REPEATING MARX: A COURSE WE HAVE FAILED | Bülent Somay teaches Comparative Literature at the Bilgi University in Istanbul. Publications: *Geriye Kalan Devrimdir* [What remains is the revolution] (1997); *Sarki Okuma Kitabı* [Song reader] (2000); *Tarihin Bilinçdisi* [The unconscious of history] (2004); and a chapter in *The New Utopian Politics of Ursula K. Le Guin's The Dispossessed* (2005).

SLAVOJ ŽIŽEK: TO BEGIN FROM THE BEGINNING, OR, HOW TO GET RID OF GHOSTS OF THE XXTH CENTURY | Slavoj Žižek is a dialectical materialistic philosopher and psychoanalyst, lecturer at the Birkbeck College, University of London, and director of a research group at the Philosophy School, University of Ljubljana. Recent publications: *The Monstrosity of Christ* (with John Milbank, 2008); *First as Tragedy, Then as Farce* (2009); *Living in the End Times* (2010).

ARTEMY MAGUN: COMMUNISM THAT IS AND COMMUNISM TO BE | Artemy Magun lectures at the European University in St. Petersburg and at Smolny Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences. He is also the Director of Smolny College. Member of Chto delat', a group of leftist artists, intellectuals and activist from St. Petersburg and Moscow. Recent publication: *La révolution négative* (2009). There will be also other members of Chto delat' present at the conference: Oxana Timofeeva (Moscow/Maastricht), Alexei Penzin (Moscow), Natalya Pershina (St. Petersburg).

SUNDAY 27.06.10

10 am–1 pm
Vorbühne

PANEL 4 in German, English and French with simultaneous translation

GOLDEX POLDEX COLLECTIVE: EVENT IN THE ICEBOX. THE CARNIVAL OF SOLIDARITY (1980–81) AS AN OUTBURST OF POLITICAL IMAGINATION | Goldex Poldex, from Krakow, Poland, is a voluntaristic association of an indefinite number of members, a hybrid community, a hobby art project space and a grassroots think-tank, mixing art, theory and practice with no support from the State or the private sector. Goldex Poldex will be represented by Kuba Majmurek (political thinker), Kuba Mikurda (psychoanalyst), Janek Simon (visual artist) and Janek Sowa (sociologist).

G.M. TAMÁS: COMMUNISM ON THE RUINS OF SOCIALISM | G. M. Tamás is a dissident, leader of the green left in Hungary, philosopher with the Institute of Sociology and Social Anthropology at the Central European University Budapest, and president of the Philosophical Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. His publications include: *Les Idoles de la tribu* (1989); *What is Post-fascism?* (2001); *Ein ganz normaler Kapitalismus* (2007).

ALAIN BADIOU: LE SOCIALISME EST-IL LE REEL DONT LE COMMUNISME EST L'IDEE? | Alain Badiou is a philosopher, mathematician, writer of plays and novels, professor emeritus of philosophy at the ENS and the Collège International de Philosophie (both in Paris). Recent publications in German: *Logiken der Welten* (2010); *Ist Politik denkbar?* (2010); *Die kommunistische Hypothese* (2010).

ART

FILM

NACHRICHTEN AUS DER IDEOLOGISCHEN ANTIKE. MARX - EISENSTEIN - DAS KAPITAL by Alexander Kluge (D 2008), 570 Min

In 1927 Sergej Eisenstein wrote: "The decision has been made to film Das Kapital according to the scenario by K. Marx." Eisenstein believed that this challenge would completely change the art of film. He was considering the use of totally new forms derived from James Joyce's Ulysses: "faits divers", "emotional bundles" and series of "dialectical images". Eisenstein never made this film. Eighty-one years later, Alexander Kluge pays homage to the megalomaniac plan with a nine-hour film epic, composing a many-voiced approach to Marx's major work and Eisenstein's failed project. With the support of Dietmar Dath, Hans-Magnus Enzensberger, Durs Grünbein, Hannelore Hoger, Oskar Negt, Sophie Rois, Helge Schneider, Peter Sloterdijk, Joseph Vogl, Tom Tykwer and many others. | in German

FRIDAY 7 pm

SATURDAY 7 pm

Rangfoyer left

2+2 PRACTICING GODARD by Chto delat' (RUS 2009), 38'

Jean-Luc Godard's Film *One Plus One* (F 1968) mixes documentary footage of the Rolling Stones recording *Sympathy for the Devil* with scenes on Marxism, repression and militant agitation. The group of artists Chto delat' uses this classic film as departure point for an artistic research work in which the original scenes are reproduced under the new political circumstances. The resulting video is much more than an instance of practicing Godard techniques; it is rather an act of remembrance and remake, a filmperformance against police arbitrariness with a subversive logic and great utopian potential. | in Russian with English subtitles

FRIDAY 25.06.10

7 pm
Roter Salon

8 pm
Roter Salon

SEMLJA/EARTH by Alexander Dowschenko (Rus 1930) and **DIE GEBURT DER NATION** by Klaus Wyborny (D 1973) Double Screen Film Concert

Alexander Dovzhenko's film classic *Semlja/Earth* (RUS 1930) tells about the transformation of Soviet Ukraine, the contrast between the old world of great land owners or kulaks and the new communist youth. Young tractor driver Wassili dares to use the new tractor for which the village had long waited to plough away the border stones of a kulak estate. A second film, *Die Geburt der Nation* (D 1973) by Klaus Wyborny, will be screened simultaneously and edited live. Just like in *Semlja/Earth*, people gather in a wide landscape under a dark sky. Utopia becomes the object of materialistic filmmaking. For both films a new soundtrack will be added live by Michael Busch of LUXUSBERLIN and friends.

LE TOMBEAU D'ALEXANDRE/THE LAST BOLSHIEVİK by Chris Marker (F 1993), 119 Min

The Film-Trains of filmmaker Alexander Medvedkin portray the communist mood of departure during the first phase of collectivization of the Soviet farming sector. The trains left towards farming land, to the farmers, to shoot how they lived and worked. The footage was developed and cut on site, and screened at the end of the day before they travelled on. That was how the people living in the land got a picture of themselves, as Chris Marker questions his own leftist utopias in his film on the phenomenon. This essay-film stumbles between a historical document and an autobiography, discussing the history and present times (in the early 90's of the last century) of the communistic idea. | in French with English subtitles

9.30 pm
Roter Salon

THE LEAGUE OF TIME

A PERFORMANCE BY BADco. | *The League of Time* is an archaeology of utopian projects. Based on Franz Kafka's *Amerika*, Mayakovsky's futuristic vision of *The Flying Proletarian*, and Soviet engineers of progress like Alexei Gastev and Konstantin Melnikov, BADco. asks: What happens to all future times whose time has run out? What happens when the founding social narratives no longer offer the key to understanding reality? Members of *The League of Time* are an ufologist, a pilot, a man-machine and a cosmonaut, who meticulously fill the stage with autistic systems from other times, while Joe Meek's songs tell about new worlds. | in English

FRIDAY 25.06.10

7pm
Hinterbühne

THE IDEA OF COMMUNISM AND ITS POTENTIAL FOR ART PRODUCTION TODAY

PANEL DISCUSSION WITH FELIX ENSSLIN, BOJANA KUNST AND JAN RITSEMA | The panel will discuss the question of how the idea of Communism impacts the organisation of art production today and how it can currently become the object of art work. Which potential have core concepts of the communist idea, such as Materialism or Collectivity, for artists and art theoreticians nowadays? Is there a possible future for the "communist hypothesis" (A. Badiou) in the arts? | Felix Ensslin is a philosopher, curator and theatre director. He lives in Berlin and Stuttgart, where he lectures in the Academy of Arts.

Bojana Kunst is a philosopher and dramaturg based in Ljubljana; currently she is guest professor at Centre for Performance Studies in Hamburg. Jan Ritsema, theatre director, performer and author, founded and directs the Performing Arts Forum (PAF) in St. Erme (France), an informal institution that describes itself as user-created. | in English

BADco. – a performance group formed by four dancers, two dramaturgs and a philosopher – was founded in 2000 in Zagreb (Croatia) around theatre director Goran Sergej Pristaš, who is also president of Centre for Drama Art in Zagreb and founder/editor of art magazine *Frakcija*.

9.30pm
Sternfoyer

1 POOR AND ONE 0

A PERFORMANCE BY BADco. | In *1 poor and one 0* BADco. returns to the scene of the first film ever shot, *Workers Leaving The Lumiere Factory*: the factory gates. The place where art stops. With this background, they develop a performance about (post-)industrial labour and its representation in art and set about exploring the multiple ways of leaving the work behind. What happens when you get tired? When is the work we devote ourselves to exhausted? What comes after work? More work? What happens when there is no more work? What is the complicity between the history of contemporary dance and the history of post-industrialization? | in English

10pm
Hinterbühne

PUPILJA, PAPA PUPILO AND THE PUPILCEKS - RECONSTRUCTION

PERFORMANCE BY JANEZ JANŠA | *Pupilja, Papa Pupilo and the Pupilceks – Reconstruction* by Janez Janša is the re-enactment of a neo-avantgarde performance by Dušan Jovanović which took place in 1969 in the then socialist Slovenia. Janša conducts, on the one side, a meticulous reconstruction of the historical performance, reviving the regime-critical energy of the time, and, on the other side, exposes the distance toward that time, as well as the procedures of reconstruction. The performance explores memory and retrospective construction of history as a condition for historical analysis, offering a technique to find orientation in past situations: reproducing a fact as precisely as possible while being aware of the historical distance. | Janez Janša is an author and director of interdisciplinary performances based in Ljubljana (Slovenia). Since 1999 he is director of MASKA Ljubljana, a non-profit organisation for art production and education, and until 2006 he was chief-editor of the MASKA. | in English

SATURDAY 26.06.10

8pm
Hinterbühne

COMMUNIST BLACKBOARD - UNRELIABLE TOUR

GUIDED TOUR BY NICK CURRIE AKA MOMUS | The blackboard is an important piece of the didactic architecture of communism: Brecht had one in his studio and used it to map out for Dudow and Eisler his ideas for the film *Kuhle Wampe*. Godard, in *La Chinoise*, used a blackboard to erase every writer in the Western canon except for Brecht. And Beuys made blackboard performances in which he mapped out the social processes of transformation in illegible handwriting and spidery diagrams. Inspired by these blackboard masters, Momus will be present at various places in the Volksbuehne building, delivering an unreliable history of communism using a blackboard propped on an easel, a pointer and an eraser. | Nick Currie alias Momus is a freelance artist, musician, author and journalist based in Berlin. His *unreliable tours* are clever, informative, carefully researched and mostly untrue – totally unreliable. That is why they open new, unexpected perspectives to consider their object. | in English

8pm
Tour, different places
meeting point Sternfoyer

REPETITION
9.30pm

THE BADEN-BADEN LESSON ON CONSENT

BY BERTOLT BRECHT. MUSIC: PAUL HINDEMITH (1929) STAGING: FRANK CASTORF | In Germany, Bertolt Brecht's teaching-play or *Lehrstück*, which was supposed to educate the participants "through acting" so that they could develop a Marxist awareness, is the origin of materialistic dialectics and leftist political agitation on stage. That is where Frank Castorf is aiming with his staging of this shrill work on modernity's potential for catastrophe. An airplane at the service of progress crashes and the crew forgets "the aim of their departure". A chorus asks whether technical progress is useful at all and whether humans help their kind. Should humans learn to die and to accept their own finite nature as the smallest dimension? | Frank Castorf is a theatre director and since 1992 artistic director of the Volksbühne am Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz in Berlin. | in German

8pm
3. Stock

SCHUTT (INGEMÜLLERMONOLOG)

A SCENIC READING BY THOMAS MARTIN | Turning weakness into art was Inge Müller's way of surviving. In the 13 years she lived and worked with Heiner Müller, she brought this strategy to perfection in her poetry. The trauma of a double defeat – as a woman amidst the city's ruins in the aftermath of World War II and as an author in the shadow of her husband's work – marked her short life and belated fame. She died on June 1st, 1966 after several suicide attempts. "Writing, living for the third thing/The new thing and the new man / But he will not change. He must/Be ruined, once and again." The idea of Communism as the utopia of a love and work relationship which burns up the individual. | Thomas Martin is a freelance author based in Berlin. | in German

9.30pm
3. Stock

INSTALLATION.

GIOCANDO AGLI SPETTRI/PLAYING SPECTRES

INSTALLATION BY ANNE KUHN WITH THE COOPERATION OF ANDREAS MIHAN | What happens when you reduce the Manifesto of the Communist Party to its substantives? All of the agitation rhetoric disappears and what is left are the major words, the ideas of Communism. *Giocando Agli Spettri/Playing Spectres* does not discuss the politics, will not ask for social relevance and does not polish the matt glow of Utopia, but it is an invitation for the audience to look at the core concepts in Marx and Engels in a new way. To forget the often heard and remembered, and silently shared phrase "a spectre is haunting Europe". | Anne Kuhn and Andreas Mihan studied at the Institute for Applied Theatre Studies in Giessen, Germany, and have since then worked in different constellations doing performances, scenography and installations.

FRIDAY 6pm
SATURDAY 7pm
right Parkettfoyer

SONGSPIEL-TRIPTYCH

VIDEOINSTALLATION BY CHTO DELAT' | *Songspiel* is an art genre created by the group Chto delat' with its political video films: historical situations are reproduced by actors, interrupted by tableaux vivants in which a chorus comments on the events. *Perestroika Songspiel* (2008) portrays the events and protagonists involved in what happened on August 21, 1991 – when Perestroika leaders defeated the restorative rebels – in the manner of a Greek tragedy. *Partisan Songspiel. Belgrade Story* (2009) deals with the issue of political repression based on the example of an eviction of a Roma-settlement by the city of Belgrade during a sports event. The *Choir of Dead Partisans* comments the dialogue between repressors and repressed through its songs. Finally, the most recent and wrathful *Songspiel – The Tower* – focuses on the political situation in Russia today, completing the triptych. | The platform Chto delat' (What is to be done?) was founded in St. Petersburg in 2003 by a group of artists, critics, philosophers and authors with the aim of merging political theory, art and activism. Their activities, including videos, installations, public actions and radio programs, aim at triggering collective initiatives in a form of "Temporary Artistic Soviets". | In Russian with English subtitles

FRIDAY 6pm
SATURDAY 7pm
left Parkettfoyer

MUSIC.

VERTOV VS. WEISER: ENTUZIAZM 2010

BY MARC WEISER AKA RECHENZENTRUM, FILMCONCERT | In *Vertov vs. Weiser: Entuziazm 2010*, Marc Weiser aka Rechenzentrum performs live the dubbing of Dsiga Vertov's film classic *Entuziazm* (RUS 1929); the electronic composition is based on the soundmaterial in Vertov's first sound motion picture. While the Soviet filmmaker used the new medium to provoke clearly defined chains of associations through montage effects, Weiser uses computer technology to break into the sedimented content layers of the original film. His approach to montage follows an anti-logic impetus leaving behind linear causality. | Marc Weiser aka Rechenzentrum is a musician, media artist and music curator based in Berlin. He co-founded the *Club Transmediale* in 1999, which he co-curated until 2007. Recently his radio drama *Ekstatische Konfessionen* was released (Deutschlandradio Kultur/Klangkunst 2009).

SATURDAY 26.06.10

9.30pm
Roter Salon

SCHWABINGGRAD BALLETT

CONCERTPERFORMANCE | Schwabinggrad Ballett is an agitprop group based in Hamburg active in the wide field of political action, performance and music. Founded in 2000 at the NoBorder-Camp, the group was initially conceived for subversive political action at demos, economic summits and grenzcamps. But part of the group decided to work more with music. Nowadays the group includes 20 artists and activists, such as Ted Gaier (Goldene Zitronen), Silvy Kretzschmar, Peter Ott and Christoph Twickel. The musical sources of Schwabinggrad Ballett are as heterogeneous as its range of members: they go from free jazz and musique concrete, through military marches and chanson, to live electro and krautrock ritual music. In the Berlin concert-performance, Schwabinggrad Ballett will also include scenes from its street play *Business Punk City*, which was produced within the framework of the *Recht auf Stadt*-movement, a successful attempt to question the property situation and balance of power in the city of Hamburg.

11pm
Vorbühne

PARTY WITH DJ MONOKID (THE GOLDMUNDS)

11pm Roter Salon

The philosophical panels are curated by Gernot Kamecke, Frank Ruda, Henning Teschke and Jan Völker.

The artistic program is curated by Michael Busch, Alexandra Engel, Maximilian Haas, Sebastian Kaiser and Christian Morin.

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