

Summaries

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Neither fascism nor democracy. Contre-Attaque redux

By Mikkel Bolt Rasmussen

The article presents and discusses André Breton and Georges Bataille's *Contre-Attaque* project in the mid-1930s where the two Surrealists sought to find a position that was both critical towards the emerging fascist movements, a Stalinized Communist Party and a crisis-ridden liberal democracy. The brief experiment will be used in an analysis of the new contemporary fascist tendencies that have been appearing during the last ten years in the West.

Conspiracy hippies and Holocaust denial: The exposure of some contemporary faces of fascism by Center for Political Beauty and Frankfurter Hauptschule

By Laura Luise Schultz

While the artists collective Center for Political Beauty address contemporary politicians' open or tacit denial of Holocaust and the political betrayals of the 1930s in their social interventions, the artists collective Frankfurter Hauptschule expose the intricate entanglements of fascism with hippie-inspired esotericism and a new interest in German Romanticism and Nordic mysticism among young German artists today. The article will analyze the activist practice of the two collectives and discuss what role artistic interventions into politics may play in the fight against the fascist aestheticization of the political in Benjamin's sense.

Activist theatre and the agitprop legacy

By Matthias Warstat

Political theatre today seems to be dominated once again by activist approaches that want to have a direct impact on political conflicts with a clear agenda. When it comes to interpreting this new liaison of theatre and activism, it seems nearly unavoidable to look back at the historical avant-gardes around 1930. With the contemporary situation as a starting point, this article analyses the agitprop tradition focusing on the German example. It discusses to what extent one can speak of an agitprop legacy in Germany despite the dissolution of the agitprop groups under the Nazi regime; when and in what this legacy becomes recognisable and how today's activist theatre groups refer to the models, problems and crises of the historical agitprop troupes.

Staying with the trouble. Collective forms and methods in performing arts in the 1920s and today

By Konstanze Schmitt

Who owns Lauratibor? is the result of a collaboration between several long-standing protest movements in Reichenberger Kiez. The collectively driven opera project is a different form of activism; an opera created in self-defence, sprung from the ongoing struggle against evictions of residents and workers of all guilds in the surrounding neighbourhood of *Reichenbergerstraße* in Berlin-Kreuzberg.

Forming a circle – the practice of Forsøgsscenen (the experimental stage) in the self-organised political-artistic milieu of the 1930s Denmark

By Cecilie Ullerup Schmidt

Forsøgsscenen (The Experimental Stage, 1929-31) is examined as a historically early example of community-organising artistic practice. By analysing Forsøgsscenen based on cultural objects such as their production of a little magazine, their distribution policy and their infrastructural performance, the scholarly inquiry is shifted from the reception of the artwork in theatre history, towards approaching a materialist understanding of Forsøgsscenen's production aesthetic contribution in avant-garde history. Historiographically, a comparativist perspective is employed, which finds kinship both between collective organisations in the 1930s and kinship with contemporary concepts of self-institutionalisation as counterculture: redistributive, political and institution-forming practices that unfold as a response to the common art institutions in late capitalism.

New World remakes, Cold-War politics, and the legacy of the Bauhaus

By Isabel Wünsche

This essay explores the ways in which Cold War cultural politics have shaped the legacy, reception, and discourse on the historic Bauhaus art school, focusing on American-German relations after 1945 and the role played by former Bauhäuslers, who had emigrated to the United States in the 1930s, in recording and then reinstating the historical narrative of this art school. A closer look at the narratives and omissions concerning the Bauhaus' ideas, ideals, and practices will help to shed more light onto the question, why, up to this day, the focus remains on the Bauhaus under Walter Gropius between 1919 and 1928, neglecting the later Dessau years under Hannes Meyer and Mies van de Rohe.

Sites and sights of tension: cultural memory of gender and colonial power in East Asia

By Gunhild Borggreen

Taking the sculpture entitled *Statue of Peace* (2011) by South Korean artists Kim Seo-kyung and Kim Eun-sung as a focus point, the article explores issues of gender and colonial power in the East

Asian region related to the cultural memory of “comfort women” of Korean origin. Analyses of the sculpture and its context show how geographical locations and visual representation are related to atrocities and colonial violence. It shows how the sculpture becomes both a weapon and object of violence in global solidarity.

Work Bitch – a contemporary Lehrstück or how to get from I to we

By Tania Ørum

The play *Work Bitch* by Ida Marie Hede staged by Niels Erling at the Sort/Hvid Theatre in Copenhagen in January-February 2022 can be seen as a contemporary Lehrstück or learning play, a genre invented by Bertolt Brecht in the 1920s and 1930s. Through a series of exemplary situations, the play discusses the possibilities of liberation in today's capitalist society.

From sensation to fluent identity – Lili Elbe's life narrative between historical case and contemporary re-enactment

By Marianne Ølholm /Article

From Man into Woman: Lili Elbe's Confessions (1931) describes the Danish painter Einar Wegener's transformation into Lili Elbe and is the first (auto)biographical narrative of a subject who undergoes gender transformation surgery. It was published in parallel versions in Danish in 1931, in German in 1932, and in English in Britain and the U.S. in 1933. In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in Lili Elbe's life story, and the historical case has become the subject of artistic re-interpretations in several media. The novel *The Danish Girl* by David Ebershoff was published in the U.S. in 2000, and the Hollywood movie by the same title, directed by Tom Hooper, appeared in 2015. In 2021, a dance performance, also by the same title and choreographed by Tim Rushton, was produced by the Holstebro Dance Company. Through the different historical representations, shifts can be traced in the perception of Lili's transition from one gender to another, from the emphasis on the surgical transformation in the original narrative to the perspective of gender-confirmation of the most recent adaptation. Furthermore, the interpretations all relate to the question of authorship and access to artistic production.