



THE TRANSFORMATIVE IMPACT OF FUTURE MIND TOURS

MINDSET-SHIFTING OPERATION: 'FUTURE MIND TOURS' IS THE PERFORMANCE UNIVERSE THAT FRAMED THE FOUR IN100Y-SEMINARS IN 2011 AND 2012. ARTISTIC INTERVENTION CAN HAVE A TRANSFORMATIVE IMPACT, IF WE ARE WILLING TO OPEN UP TO A MORE HOLISTIC WAY OF BEING IN THE EVENT. THE REASON IS SIMPLY THAT IT ACTIVATES NOT ONLY OUR MENTAL CAPACITIES, BUT ALSO ALL OUR SENSES. READ ABOUT WHY HOUSE OF FUTURES DECIDED TO LET PERFORMANCE ART BE A CENTRAL PART OF DISCUSSING AND REWORKING SUSTAINABILITY AND GROWTH TOGETHER WITH 150+ VISIONARIES.

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To allow a series of seminars about sustainability and growth in the long term to be framed by a performance universe is an experiment. In the House of Futures we wanted to create unusual and memorable seminars by involving participants in a more personal, holistic and playful way. We wanted to create an explorative framework to underscore the fact that the transformational period of our era is basically about mindsets and mindshifts – about the software of human nature and the way we relate to ourselves and each other. Our aim is to create new opportunities for transformative moments, facilitate new interdisciplinary meetings and hopefully break new ground together.

We, the Performance Agency 'Fiction Pimps', have several years of experience in planning and executing performance installations and a strong academic background in theories related to theatre, rituals, performance design, visual communication, ethnography and action research. The experimental element of framing the In100Y-seminars in a performance universe by means of inventing Future Mind Tours as a fictional framework, is about mixing Futures Studies and Performance Art (read the article "Experimental Futures Studies" on p. 107) and about playing with a more activist intervention in the capital system as we know it today (see box on the opposite page).

There is a global need for companies to manage the capitalist market system in a way that will not kill us all – and we, the people, are responsible. Over the past year we have used a metaphor for how we in House of Futures,

as employees and consumers, engage in reproducing our economic and consumer-oriented system, namely that we all put the consumer capital system on like clothes or spectacles every morning before we go out into the world. Out there, some people and organizations want to do good, but most are simply satisfied by doing less harm. We believe that there is a need to promise each other more than survival during the next 100 years. As we said on the Imaginary Tour around the canals of Copenhagen 2112, where Future Mind Tours initiated the journey of the seminar project 'In100Years', "We have been told that the world suffers from an alarming lack of visions [...] Come on, baby, take a chance with us!"

OUR BURNING QUESTIONS

As stated, we want to challenge the traditional mode of being in our capitalist and consumer oriented society as well as the way of being in a seminar – our basic and habitual mindsets – by asking ourselves two research questions:

1. How can a ritual potentially facilitate a mindset-shift?
2. How can we use performance art to turn an event like 'In 100 Years – Starting Now' into a ritual that emphasizes the importance of intersecting disciplines in new experimental modes of knowledge production, thereby activating the mind and the body in the process?

The performance art and universe of 'In100Years' is designed to be used. It is for participants to plunge into a different mode of being, a parallel universe, in order to explore other dimensions of themselves and more per-



FUTURE MIND TOURS, A BÜRO REISENDE

'Future Mind Tours' is a travel agency specializing in guided tours in travelers' inner landscapes. They describe themselves as a 'Büro Reisende' traveling within the human body and mind in order to plunge into the conscious and subconscious world of the Reisende.

Future Mind Tours has facilitated the journey towards 2112 and been of personal assistance to all Reisende at the four In100Y-seminars. The most sublime outcome of this journey is a mindshift in the specific Reisende resulting in a potential shift in paradigms in the external social landscape.

INTERVENTION INTO THE ART - AND CAPITAL SYSTEM

According to a series of social theoreticians, the economic system's terms such as efficiency, duty and discipline have dominated Western society since industrialization. These terms seem to be in direct contrast to the premises of aesthetic systems such as the sensory, desire and the emotions. According to Dr. phil. Professor Kirsten Drotner (2001), the aesthetic experience potential is isolated from the working and daily lives of 'ordinary people' in the modern art system, because it is located in an inaccessible system where 'special people' - artists - can provide special cognitive insights. Today, however, we can see tendencies towards relational, dialectic and interventionist art, which open up the isolation and exclusivity of artists at the same time as shifts are taking place within the system of capital. In the direction of arts'in'business and cultural economy, art or the aesthetic experience space is a tool to shift the capital system in a more sustainable direction in order ultimately to transform it from within.

Read the whole article about the modern capital - and art systems by Gry Worre Hallberg at www.in100y.dk

THREE PHASES OF A RITUAL

In the House of Futures, we have decided to work with 'In100Years' as a ritual, and see what would happen if we incorporated the liminal potential and aesthetic dimension

of performance art into the seminars and our Future Studies. When designing rituals, we work with a classical anthropological process oriented model of a ritual and the three phases to create liminality, the 'Rite of passage' (the term invented by Arnold Van Gennep in 1909 as a description of this experience). Liminality describes a mode of being in which a physical, mental and spiritual transformation has the potential to take place. It is a powerful and dangerous place to be, because it will sometimes involve a sacrifice of the old persona in order to give birth to a new one.

Every ritual has three phases: *The pre-liminal* signifies the phase of a ritual, where the participants are prepared for immersion into the liminal state of the ritual. This could be done through instructions, monumental passages or various psychosomatic exercises. In *the liminal phase* of a traditional ritual, a drama or a game may be played, intensifying the participants' personal connection with the mythological tale or choreography performed. In some of these performances you will be able to see the features of the root metaphors that guide the basic values and mindset of a group, a system – or society as a whole. In *the post-liminal phase*, when the ritual ends, the participants are brought out of the liminal state and are reintegrated into daily life, with potentially transformed selves related to a reaffirmed perception of a given reality.

FICTION PIMPS AND 'FICTION PIMPING'

The Performance Agency, Fiction Pimps, manifests 'Cracks' in everyday life – Sensory fictive parallel universes which aim at activating the aesthetic dimension of an experience to enrich the given situation and the persons involved in it. The term 'fiction pimping' refers to a fictionalization of a given situation, thereby tailoring a story, a myth, a ritual for a specific site or concept. While 'fiction pimping', we manifest and thus point to the dormant images, stories and parallel universes, which we consider to be latent in all situations; be that a conference, a political meeting, a debate, a factory, a nightclub or on the street.



sonal visions for the future. Our art works have a purpose beyond the aesthetic and sensory. The exchange between the performers and the participants is the artwork and is co-creative by nature. There is no backstage and front stage – just one stage, where new meetings can take place.

THE POTENTIAL OF RITUALS

In times of crisis, such as the one the world is in today, the rituals of societies become particularly important, because of their ability to reestablish the sense of community and belief in a system. But the breach in the symbolic order might be too deep and too wide to shut with traditional rituals and so, new ones may have to be invented in order to bring society from one stage in history to another. Which rituals in contemporary society do we have which could be used to create the necessary new mindsets? In the artistic and activist work of Fiction Pimps, we embrace this era as an opportunity to use our knowledge of the potential of rituals to open up a site, in which we co-create new root-metaphors as vessels to carry us into the unknown.

Now let us look into the rituals of the Future Mind Tours. On the first seminar, we prepared the participants in the pre-liminal phase (see box on previous page) for a different kind of seminar experience, by making them travel to an unknown part of the industrial docks of the city, and taking them sailing through the canals of Copenhagen in 2112. We thus introduced the long term aspect of the project 'In100Years' and from the beginning, we pointed in the direction of the seminar not only being a place to discuss change, but that the seminar itself should be a site of transformation.

On the second seminar, we moved the participants and the seminar process deeper into the liminal phase. We did this by transforming the two sketches of preferred future scenarios, "Man Made World" and "Power of Nature", into two performance installations titled "Two Sensed Futures". With these installation we introduced a new mode of knowledge production in a Future Studies process; by making the scenarios three-dimensional and bringing the whole body into the process of relating to - and developing the future. In other words, we manifested the notion that the future must be sensed and heartfelt.

In seminar three we created a mystery – the universe of Acorn Falls. By surrounding and immersing the whole seminar in a parallel universe, we insisted that the aesthetic experience and its poetic language should be intersected in the knowledge production at all times during the process of discussing and visualizing the future. In one of the lectures on the third seminar, biologist Carsten Rahbek stated that a key skill in the future will be the ability to move into and maneuver within the unknown. The metaphor of this particular ability was embodied by the participants as they walked deeper into the red forest of Acorn Falls.

In seminar four, we invited the participants into the HQ of Future Mind Tours – the heart of our research of mindsets and mindshifts. In the HQ we had prepared spaces in which the participants could see their visions of the future developed and expressed in different kinds of art and rituals. They were invited to co-create the archetypes of the new mindset, to shape their consciousness by giving it form through encounters with performers and to uphold the level of poetry by not touching the floor but rather walk on floating books. This performance installation was opened with the following words: "Now, go inspire and help us co-create new journeys into the future. The Time is Now!"

These are examples of how the participants became part of a performance aimed at signifying the necessary mindset for creating the future now. We ended the second day of each seminar with a closing ritual. These rituals will always be about emphasizing the significance of the post-liminal phase. In different poetic ways, we asked the participants to reflect upon the process of the seminar, and what they wanted to take with them and integrate into their everyday lives. In the first seminar, we ended at the canal with a floating ensemble of visions for the future written on small paper boats. In the second, we planted a tree, 'The first ring of In100Y', in the third we blew our visions into the air encapsulated in 'soap bubbles' and in the fourth seminar, each participant lit a fire and stated their visions for a better future.

Looking through ISSUES you will see many of these images created in the rites of 'In 100 Years'. Some of these might serve as images that will inspire the mindset, which could be sustained through continuous participation in the rituals of the future.