



UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

The Finnegans Wake Reading Group as a Model for “Stealth Activities” Between Art and the University

Lerm Hayes, C.-M.

DOI

[10.2357/FMTh-2021-0025](https://doi.org/10.2357/FMTh-2021-0025)

Publication date

2021

Document Version

Final published version

Published in

Forum Modernes Theater

License

Article 25fa Dutch Copyright Act

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Lerm Hayes, C.-M. (2021). The *Finnegans Wake* Reading Group as a Model for “Stealth Activities” Between Art and the University. *Forum Modernes Theater*, 32(2), 278-287. <https://doi.org/10.2357/FMTh-2021-0025>

General rights

It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations

If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: <https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact>, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

UvA-DARE is a service provided by the library of the University of Amsterdam (<https://dare.uva.nl>)

Heft 2/2021

Band 32

Forum Modernes Theater



enthält das Themenheft:
Text, Image, Performance

herausgegeben von Jan Lazardzig

narr\|f
ranck
e\|atte
mpto

Inhalt

Aufsätze

Peter W. Marx (Köln)	
„Turtles all the way down“. Zu methodischen Fragen der Theaterhistoriographie ..	141
Steff Nellis (Ghent)	
All rise! Jurisdiction as Performance/Performative Language	159
Christopher Balme (Munich)	
Covid, Crisis and Prognosis: Prospecting the Future of Theatre	178

Themenheft: Text, Image, Performance

Jan Lazardzig (Berlin)	
Editorial	195

Aufsätze

Claudia Daiber (Groningen) / Elke Huwiler (Amsterdam)	
Text, Performance, and the Production of Religious Knowledge: The Protestant Passion Play and the Catholic Saint Play	198
François Lecerle (Paris)	
Rewriting the Unwritten: On the History of Theatrophobia	215
Clotilde Thouret (Nancy)	
In Light of the Controversies: Spectatorship Reconsidered	228
Kati Röttger (Amsterdam)	
Techno-Logics and Techno-Magics: Phantasmagoria in the Age of Electricity	238
Isa Wortelkamp (Leipzig)	
Scratches, Holes, and Spots: Decay and Disappearance of Early Dance Photography	254
Tancredi Gusman (Lucerne)	
Exhibited, Recorded, Collected: Performance Art and Documentation in <i>documenta</i> 5 and 6	264
Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes (Amsterdam)	
The <i>Finnegans Wake</i> Reading Group as a Model for “Stealth Activities” between Art and the University	278
Gabriele Brandstetter (Berlin)	
The Effect of the Real: How Do Performing Artists Affect Historiography?	288

Rezensionen

Evelyn Annuß. <i>Volksschule des Theaters. Nationalsozialistische Massenspiele</i> (Maren Möhring)	303
Katarina Kleinschmidt. <i>Artistic Research als Wissensgefüge. Eine Praxeologie des Probens im zeitgenössischen Tanz</i> (Katja Schneider)	304
Henning Fülle. <i>Freies Theater. Die Modernisierung der deutschen Theaterlandschaft (1960–2010)</i> (Anna Volkland)	306
Lore Knapp. <i>Formen des Kunstreligiösen. Peter Handke—Christoph Schlingensief</i> (Sarah Pogoda)	308
Autorinnen und Autoren	311

Umschlagabbildung: Gina Pane, Performance "A hot afternoon" / "Ein heißer Nachmittag" (Detail), documenta 6 (1977). © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2021
Foto: Ingrid Fingerling. © documenta archiv / Ingrid Fingerling.

© 2021 · Narr Francke Attempto Verlag GmbH + Co. KG
Dischingerweg 5 · 72070 Tübingen

Die in der Zeitschrift veröffentlichten Beiträge sind urheberrechtlich geschützt. Alle Rechte, insbesondere das der Übersetzung in fremde Sprachen, vorbehalten. Kein Teil dieser Zeitschrift darf ohne schriftliche Genehmigung des Verlages in irgendeiner Form – durch Fotokopie, Mikrofilm oder andere Verfahren – reproduziert oder in eine von Maschinen, insbesondere von Datenverarbeitungsanlagen, verwendbare Sprache übertragen werden.

Auch die Rechte der Wiedergabe durch Vortrag, Funk- und Fernsehendung, im Magnettonverfahren oder ähnlichem Weg bleiben vorbehalten. Fotokopien für den persönlichen und sonstigen eigenen Gebrauch dürfen nur von einzelnen Beiträgen oder Teilen daraus als Einzelkopien hergestellt werden. Jede im Bereich eines gewerblichen Unternehmens hergestellte oder benützte Kopie dient gewerblichen Zwecken gem. § 54 (2) UrhG und verpflichtet zur Gebührenzahlung an die VG WORT, Abteilung Wissenschaft, Goethestraße 49, 80336 München, von der die einzelnen Zahlungsmodalitäten zu erfragen sind.

Internet: www.narr.de
eMail: info@narr.de

Satz: typoscript GmbH, Walddorfhäslach
CPI books GmbH, Leck

ISSN 0930-5874

The *Finnegans Wake* Reading Group as a Model for “Stealth Activities” between Art and the University

Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes (Amsterdam)

James Joyce’s late work, *Finnegans Wake* (1939), necessitates shared reading like few others: its phonetic focus requires it to be read aloud, and the multiplicity of languages and fields of knowledge used makes the presence of others indispensable. Since Joyce’s canonization, reading groups of his works have often been led by English Literature scholars, but they do not usually take place in university departments, rather in cafes, book shops and art spaces. What does this mean for the kinds of knowledge referenced and conjured? In 2013, Dora García filmed *The Joycean Society*. The curator Maria Lind has called both *The Joycean Society* and the Zurich *Finnegans Wake* reading group that it documents “stealth activities”. Her essay is entitled “The Triumph of the Nerds”. What modes of knowledge (and, therefore, which politics) does this communal reading practice then entail?

The curator Maria Lind has called the documentary artwork *The Joycean Society* and its subject, the Zurich James Joyce Foundation’s reading group devoted to the writer’s late, cryptic work *Finnegans Wake* “stealth activities”.¹ Lind’s 2014 review of Dora García’s work from the previous year is entitled “The Triumph of the Nerds”. Here, I would like to explore how one may understand this praise in the contexts of Joyce and of art that has responded to him in both the West and in Central/Eastern Europe. I close with a call to arms, or rather: to books for communal reading.

Umberto Eco’s book *Opera Aperta* (*The Open Work*) from 1962 consists of two parts, a general one that visual artists of the time on the European continent read with great interest, and a second part entitled “The Poetics of Joyce”.² James Joyce became the main example for theorising openness as the basis of both artworks and their active interpretation. Reading and viewing were no longer passive pursuits but themselves creative endeavours, empowering anyone to perceive and thus also to construct their personally inflected meaning, even to tell

their own story in and through the interpretation of cultural artefacts while going further and further into an ever-changing depth. While it is still possible to make (factual) mistakes in an interpretation of an open artwork, the task of the author is no longer seen as clearly communicating one thing in only one way and the reader receiving it in the same manner. The recipients are instead assumed to have the intelligence to think and feel for themselves and the desire to take on responsibility for the future life of the artwork. Responsibility is an important word here. It does not imply that the viewer or reader is more perfect than the mistake-making characters in the book, but the trust that active reception will happen to the best of our abilities is considered to be a compliment, as an enriching, important task for a diverse group of people who will accept it.³

Joyce’s later work, *Finnegans Wake*, 1939, e. g. by employing over 40 languages, specifically calls for being read in a group that should be composed of as many differently educated and acculturated members. Joyce is canonical modernist literature,⁴ yet there is

an uneasy connection that Joyce’s (late) work seems to have with both that usually status-quo preserving canonicity and a performance of dissident knowing, of marginal, counter-hegemonic community-formation. Thus, in this paper I am not so much addressing the historical knowledge of the volume’s title, but I am interested in the performance of reading *Finnegans Wake* in groups of like-minded but diverse people over a long period of time. I consider this activity as a production of knowledge that is located between the heights of academic endeavour (if *Finnegans Wake* could be considered the humanities’ equivalent of rocket science) and the kind of knowledge that we now associate with artistic research (better: art research).

The Joyce industry in Western countries grew from the 1960s and became important as a rigorous, theory-forming community. In the 1970s, the writer had become too apolitical for many in that circle, until the 1980s saw a partial re-assessment on post-colonial grounds.⁵ Joyce was from Ireland after all and a life-long (however voluntary) migrant. Thus, when socio-politically committed visual art practices were developed in the late 1960s and 1970s, one might imagine that Joyce was far from artists’ minds. The opposite is the case: artists did not follow literary scholars in their assessment of the supposedly apolitical nature of the writer. Martha Rosler, who came to prominence with her *House Beautiful: Bringing the War Home* (1967–1972) collages against the Vietnam War, had published an article on Joyce’s *Ulysses* as an undergraduate. She was to pursue her interest in his writing, in language, images and their relation through work such as *The Bowery in Two Inadequate Descriptive Systems* (1974/75) where it is obvious that neither the photographs of empty bottles in doorways, nor the many words for ‘drunk’ listed, capture the lives of homeless alcoholics.⁶ Joyce’s project is char-

acterized by compassionate but unsentimental attention for those less than privileged, by an experimental attitude to language and all aspects of the book, and by a belief in recurrence with a difference, history’s impermanence that most people in power would view as threatening. Martha Nussbaum has asserted the importance of a Joycean love and acceptance of a messy world in helping to enable democracy.⁷

I included Martha Rosler’s *Bowery* work in my curated *Joyce in Art* exhibition for the centenary of Bloomsday, the day on which *Ulysses* is set in 1904 in Dublin. Accompanying the exhibition, Rosler also held one of her *Monumental Garage Sales* in Dublin, ensuring that art would reach into the modern city’s life, even economically – and Joyce would not be seen so much as just a canonical figure, but rather as someone who, for example, had the difficulties of procuring funds in the forefront of his mind for most of his life. In terms of the exhibition’s reception, I had a sense that, for some visitors (and critics), the inclusion of Rosler, Joseph Beuys, and many other politically thinking artists of that era was not enough to counterbalance the Celtic Tiger economy’s interest in the pure, i.e. ‘meaning-free’ canonicity of Joyce that made reading appear almost unnecessary. The name Joyce was deceptively well ‘illustrated’ and ‘celebrated’ by means of a lovely-looking exhibition with further big names.⁸ An envisaged performance of reading *Finnegans Wake* by Noel Sheridan could not happen due to copyright restrictions imposed by the copyright-holder, the grandson of the cash-strapped writer. This further evidences the entanglement of exhibitions in their socio-political and financial context, but as an absence, it also further excluded performative elements that could point the visitors to the present.

In reflecting on the exhibition and further current artwork in the *Blackwell Companion to Joyce* (2007), I considered communal

reading of *Finnegans Wake*, which I had experienced during a nine-month research period at the Zurich Joyce Foundation, as something akin to the formats that artists were choosing for their works in the 2000s.⁹ Since then, in Amsterdam, Mariana Lanari has organized a *Finnegans Wake* reading group at the gallery Rong Wrong.¹⁰ This is work, a way of thinking and doing that no longer seems strange and apparently attracted the interest of artists and a gallerist. Such practice is arguably steadily moving into prominence in the art world.

The artist Dora García, mentioned at the outset, created *The Joycean Society*, her documentary film of the *Finnegans Wake* reading group in Zurich in 2013, and showed this work at the Venice Biennial.¹¹ At the previous Biennial (2011), she had presented *The Inadequate*, a project focused on the inadequacy of representation (of a country by an artist and vice versa) that consisted mainly of performances, interviews, and discussions, held on a large platform: discussions of Joyce's works by and with Joyce scholars. These were complemented by *Instant Narrative*, another work, written there and then, with and about the visitors: a proliferating word/text production machine came into existence, where Joyce was central to the aim of countering national and other certainties. Also, in *The Joycean Society*, García cannot remain outside the work. The crew filming and doing the sound are clearly present and become members of an always slightly shifting group. Its core members have now read through *Wake* three times in approximately 30 years. García returned to both Joyce and the Venice Biennial in 2015 with *The Sinthome Score*. She re-published Jacques Lacan's twenty-third seminar on Joyce with accompanying (modern dance) poses: a compendium of Joyce scholarship to be read aloud and (re-)performed. Meaning is communally produced in the moment.

A pattern emerges where artists and others occupy themselves and their audiences with Joyce in order to advance from positivist knowledge to a more (social) constructionist episteme. Their focus, therefore, cannot be just to present something, but to create a potentially open situation for experiences, or epiphanies (a term secularized by Joyce in his early career).

It was not just artists such as Rosler and Joseph Beuys who considered Joyce far from apolitical and canonical in a disabling way. In 1970, Maurice Stein and Larry Miller from CAL Arts, Los Angeles, published their *Blueprint for Counter Education*. This contains three wall charts that, graffiti-like, create an environment for democratic discourses and horizontal forms of interpreting the world, sharing, and learning. Joyce interestingly has a place in all three wall charts. If he doesn't appear as the conceptual anchor point of the layout it is because Marshall McLuhan, an avowed Joyce enthusiast, has displaced the writer. The *Blueprint for Counter Education* with its wall charts was republished in 2017 and serves as an exhibit itself and a take-home version of the exhibition *Learning Laboratories* at BAK, Utrecht, conceived by Tom Holert.¹² Holert is a writer who has theorized artistic research in important ways: as something that answers to an impetus coming from both the artistic and the academic side.¹³ The thematic focus at BAK (Basis voor actuele kunst), of which this project is part, is entitled *Future Vocabularies / Instituting Otherwise*. It is, from what has been outlined, clear that Joyce developed a new language or new (future) vocabularies and, I am arguing, that – with his late work making the horizontally organized but knowledge-generating reading group at a high academic level indispensable – he has in this sense 'instituted otherwise'. I argue this to have been the case at least indirectly, through those concretely envi-

sioning alternative educational models who reference his name in this context, but also more directly through reading groups as affordance or necessity spawned by his books.

We can here consider Joyce as standing for a larger frame, a worldview, where artists and educators find themselves empowered and wish their audiences or students to be the same. Joseph Beuys in the 1950s already considered the right response to Joyce to be a sequel – and, importantly, not an illustration: his work *Ulysses Extension* (1958–1962), is a compendium of drawings. It is properly entitled *Joseph Beuys Extends at James Joyce’s Request Ulysses by Two Chapters*. Subsequently, in an even freer, more independent or indirect response (nearly a stealth activity, one could say), Beuys called his teaching at the Dusseldorf Academy his “greatest work of art”. He (co-)founded the Free International University (FIU) for Interdisciplinary Research through travels around Joyce’s home country Ireland in 1974 and then gave it a temporary home in large exhibition format for documenta 6 in Kassel, in 1977. There, discussions were held, migration workshops with Irish and other guests, where art and politics were intertwined in ways that the visitors themselves could steer.¹⁴

John Cage’s path developed somewhat similarly: following on from a formative encounter with *Finnegans Wake* in his youth, he set out to create a ‘reading aid’, a scheme of finding the letters of Joyce’s name and arranging text passages underneath each other to reveal them in the middle of the lines vertically (as mesostics). Cage practiced this activity over many years, calling it *Writing Through Finnegans Wake and Writing for the Second Time Through Finnegans Wake* (1977). His *Roaratorio: An Irish Circus on Finnegans Wake*, on the other hand, involved contacting people from all the places mentioned in the book, gathering

sound recordings from them, and thus forging a community that was activated and led not to see the *Wake* as an impenetrable thing for professors, but as a reason for fun (albeit educational and institutional).

Cage’s New York circle included William Anastasi, whose response to Joyce, Alfred Jarry, and Marcel Duchamp amounts to hypertrophic research notes, produced, one can imagine, by reading group members; but the title, *me inner man monophone: Jarry in Joyce* (1993), reveals that the reader and researcher into this triangulation of creative practices is Anastasi alone. His artistic research is so detailed that it borders on an obsession and appears no longer academically viable: it belongs on the gallery wall (as an installation entirely surrounding the viewer), not in an academic article. Cage and Anastasi came together daily for years (partly in order for Cage to spend his time in ways other than drinking alcohol). Their conversations often spun around Joyce, but their activity was (however slightly) different from being a *Wake* reading group: they played chess.

Dora García’s *Inadequate* was not unlike an FIU session, the widening ripples of Cage’s Joyce projects, or Anastasi’s notes creating a community of three intertwined creators/researchers and their exegete. This is also how I understand the (otherwise strange) equivalence of formats: a formative, personal reading is, over the years, expanded into group work, conjured by *Finnegans Wake*, as performances, as well as performative acts, not just self-actualizing, but – as I will further explore – also instituting.

Joyce apparently constructed through his late book not just the occurrence of personal epiphanies in some creative people but presented a tool kit for how others could construct epistemic advancement in the various contexts in which they found themselves. These are contexts judged as too positivist, even oppressive and in need of

democratization. The tool may then appear as paradoxical: it is a book that programmatically makes everybody feel inadequate. When one then gets together with other necessarily inadequate people and engages with a canonical work that few read even at the highest levels of academic achievement, one is not interested in fixed knowledge and yet creates what no one person could: irreducibly complex and ambiguous meanings. What Umberto Eco was quoted as saying now resonates more fully: embracing imperfections as part of receiving an open artwork can provide a counter-weight to the destructive certainties of power, of oppressive regimes, wherever they are.¹⁵ Taking such humbling reading experiences, first made in private, to the largest art events available (the Venice Biennial, documenta etc.) may, one can hope (but never predict), reach further individuals and change their understanding and practices of knowledge.

To attempt to tackle this topic and remain with Western examples would obviously be flawed. Zbigniew Gostomski, a Polish artist born in 1932, in *Pascal's Triangle* (1973), shows an international conceptual aesthetic but does what would have been atypical in the West: he quotes James Joyce's *Ulysses* in the work. The book was passed around clandestinely in artistic circles in the Eastern Bloc. Artists like Gostomski recognized liberating literature and aimed to produce their own.¹⁶ The message here is, interestingly, to point to 'normal' (and dirty) Eastern Bloc industry (the slack heap from mining), but (through Pascal's triangle from mathematics and the *Ulysses* quote) to insist on networks. We are "neither the first, nor last nor only or alone", it says in the work, echoing Joyce in a clear Central/Eastern European voice. Some canonical texts were clearly identified as having a potentially liberating effect in a part of the world that felt isolated. Canonical status, far from being used to retain the dictatorial

status quo, ensured a trans-culturally relevant discourse and could also function as critical, i. e. uncomfortable to the regime and (thus) liberating, but a relatively safe source due to its canonicity.¹⁷ Gostomski's work compares well to how Joseph Kosuth later used quotations of Beckett, Freud, and others, but it also has a sense of what Boris Groys was to term Romantic Conceptualism: one did not wish to cut all ties and instead claimed tradition for one's own new – often dissident – interpretations. What artists read and wrote, in order to avoid hegemonic epistemology, understandably had to be indirect and poetic, i. e. allegorical in nature. Otherwise one would have left incriminating evidence. Citing the literary canon rather than non-fiction gave one more capacity to relate it to real experiences. To give another example for Joyce's importance for theory-formation: Hélène Cixous considered the writer as having developed an *écriture féminine*. Such characterization of (some of) Joyce's prose renders what I have called faithfully unfaithful responses more viable than illustrations or such serving relationships.¹⁸ Joyce – or his alter ego Stephen Dedalus – famously wished not to serve.

The networks (historically and geographically) that Gostomski's work invokes are important for performance art. Behind the Iron Curtain, performance audiences were and are the bearers of the experience and the legacy of the artwork. They could – where allowed – travel, describe, and sometimes show photographs to broaden the circle of audience members, i. e. networks functioned as (or instead of) museums, or as stealth art venues.¹⁹

Reading and interpreting together has been the hallmark of revolutionary, counter-hegemonic movements from early Christianity onwards. The Irish hedge schools that didn't just retain the Irish language illegally but ensured the survival of European classical learning (canonical Greek and Latin

texts) during British colonization’s Penal Laws are a relevant example, as Joyce can be considered an heir to that educational model. And Beuys’ FIU has also been interpreted within that legacy.²⁰

To remain in Central Europe with another artistic case study, Kwiekulik (a couple whose surnames combine to read KwieKulik) chose as part of their practice deceptively familiar formats: letters of complaint²¹ to officialdom and slogans such as *Think Communism*. KwieKulik’s steadfast protestation of socialism and appropriation of the red flag (without the hammer and sickle) were clearly what one would now call an over-identification strategy²² – with reformist, democratic, i.e. oppositional intentions. The proclamations of being official, socialist, etc. had another purpose, too: making Western critics repeat them at face value.²³ Thus, the artists, embattled and isolated as they were, enjoyed relative safety in a system that could not easily denounce false loyalty.

In KwieKulik’s performances, much attention is given to group activities, students, and teaching methods. KwieKulik’s stance led them to seek collaborations with other artists, exhibitions in their home (a room officially named Studio for Activities, Documentation and Propagation, PDDiU), where successive exhibitions accumulated as a ‘horizontal archive’.²⁴ This functioned like a palimpsest, or akin to Schwitters’ *Merzbau*: amassing work and evidence, but occluding what the current political situation may no longer allow, or only enable differently. Domestic exhibition and archiving projects, and especially teaching activities and performance in groups, have fluid boundaries. There is safety in numbers (and, as previously shown, in the canonicity of one’s points of reference): a known format that mixes actor and audience, single and co-creation can, indeed, become a stealth practice, depending on who is observing.

How I understand stealth practice shares much with a more clearly developed theoretical tradition, the concept of minor literature, developed by Deleuze and Guattari around the work of Kafka:²⁵ de-territorialized as German-speaking literature in Prague, having political immediacy, and forging community. Joyce, Beckett, and other post-colonial Irish writers, of course, qualify for this also. KwieKulik’s, but also Beuys’, García’s and other artists’ oeuvres, while not being literary, share a certain strategy of using large exhibitions, and known formats for subversive or minor ends.²⁶ What also has to play into any understanding of stealth is relative invisibility. Beuys called his drawings “ultravisible”: one has to work hard to see anything at all. Lowering the level of spectacle is part and parcel of much of that kind of practice.²⁷

The manner in which the Iron Curtain fell and the only very partial valorization, or indeed infantilization,²⁸ of those who made the peaceful revolution happen has left many artists and their first audiences disenchanted, as well as relatively uninformed about the potential (art-historical and/or social) importance of what they created or witnessed. Much work that once had to be ephemeral (work as stealth practice), and as such won the fight against having to remain silent, is in danger of being lost. When we look at what there still is in the memories and belatedly growing archives, and apply what we have already found in the context of other artists, it is hard not to see a certain shared sensibility (often a group connection, too) between Joyce, his readers, and those who changed history, who were so extraordinarily far-reaching in the constituencies they brought together, humble and disciplined enough to manage to conduct a peaceful revolution in Europe.²⁹

If I may be permitted one last example: in 2014 I curated a small exhibition by a friend of Beuys, Royden Rabinowitch, whose

Greased Cone (1965/2014), literally a rolled steel cone covered in industrial grease, I showed in Belfast, Northern Ireland, for the benefit of politicians there. The discussion was meaningful. It focused on local knowledge of working with rolled steel in shipbuilding, materiality, and social warmth, the abject and the role of accepting disgust as not just characteristic of the other, and the cone as a symbol of hierarchy.³⁰ I cannot know the outcome of my small effort at mediating art to politicians. What I can know, however is that the work, in Rabinowitch's thinking is founded on Joyce's literature. *The Greased Cone*, first conceived in 1965, is a sculptural address to Brancusi's *Portrait J. Joyce*, 1928. The exhibition's subtitle was: *Artists' Solidarity at Times of Historical Change*. I thus included (in a vitrine) a number of items pointing to instances of what I meant by that formulation. These ranged from the 18th century to 1989, 1974 and the present day and were what in the present context could be called a 'diachronic reading group': Friedrich Schiller's *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man* from 1794 (the context of the French Revolution), but also evidence of Beuys' interest in Northern Ireland, where he has had a strong legacy since visits in 1974. Beuys and Rabinowitch made a joint donation to the Muzeum Sztuki, Lodz, during Martial Law in Poland in 1981, a gesture of solidarity. That gift (represented by a catalogue) was exhibited prominently in Warsaw, in 1988/89, just at the moment when demonstrations were happening, when the semi-academic reading groups that had gathered in professors' living rooms for years, now went out into the streets. The Iron Curtain crumbled and fell. Did the presence of many Joycean works (Beuys had gathered much Irish material for Lodz) do anything to help? We cannot know, but we also cannot disprove it. In Belfast, I led a weekly reading and discussion group for students, artists, and colleagues, but not in

the university with its need for security passes and module numbers, but in an art space's café.³¹ Rabinowitch's *Greased Cone* from Belfast has since found a permanent home in the Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, where it awaits what might happen in the future. Further imaginable instances of artistic solidarity at times of historical change (similarly to the ones presented) depend on networks. Chantal Pontbriand asserts in relation to Dora García:

perhaps it is only situations of being-in-relation ('networking' on the basis of affinities), like that shown in *The Joycean Society*, that allow for the emergence, the laying bare of the ethical dimension. The micro-communities [...] open a path toward other existences, toward other ways of thinking and seeing, too often ignored or even prevented by the powers in place.³²

At a moment in time when, in the US the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts (the latter once co-directed by the Joyce-reader, artist, writer, perception scientist, art theorist, and institutional critic Brian O'Doherty)³³ are officially called 'waste' and are due to be closed; when in the UK and the Netherlands, art and humanities funding is shrinking by the minute; at this time, it is becoming apparent that the models not just for thinking differently but 'instituting otherwise' that have been developed by Joyce and those who have used him as their stepping stone are valuable. Unfortunately, but not surprisingly, this is also when they are considered suspect. BAK have investigated models for 'non-Fascist living' and launched their *Former West* publication, initiated in tandem with the Van Abbemuseum in 2006, to look more closely at how the West has changed in the last 30 years. Arising from what has been said, my contribution to extend such a project (together with that of, for instance, Ines Weizman in architec-

tural history)³⁴ is to highlight the strategies developed by dissidents before 1989 – and suggest that what they did should be done now: engaging in the stealth activity of reading together, even reading Joyce together.³⁵ As the state of affairs behind the Iron Curtain has shown us, when something is feared and derided, it is also likely (and indirectly acknowledged) to be more effective than those in power wish to admit. Reading, discussing, practising, and thinking *Finnegans Wake* in art and education may yet lead to the victory of the nerds.³⁶

Notes

- 1 Maria Lind, “The Triumph of the Nerds”, in: *Art Review* (September 2014), http://artreview.com/opinion/september_2014_opinion_maria_lind/ [accessed 14 May 2021].
- 2 Umberto Eco, *Opera Aperta*, without place 1962.
- 3 I have expanded these remarks on Eco and mistakes in Joyce, since the conference from which this publication arose in: Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, “His errors are volitional and are the portals of discovery”: Towards an Indirect Social Efficacy of Joyce’s Attitude to Mistakes – through (Beuys’) Art Responding to Joyce”, in: Emma-Louise Silva, Sam Slote and Dirk Van Hulle (eds), *James Joyce and the Arts*, Leiden 2020, pp. 40–54.
- 4 A sure sign of this – apart from Joyce’s works featuring in various hit lists of world literature – was the celebration in 2004 of the centenary of the day on which *Ulysses*, 1922, is set in Dublin, 16 June 1904. For the ReJoyce 100 festival, I curated the exhibition *Joyce in Art* at the Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin. It was accompanied by: Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, *Joyce in Art: Visual Art Inspired by James Joyce*, Dublin 2004 (downloadable at <http://synergeticalab.com/archive.html> [accessed 14 May 2021]).
- 5 See: *ibid.*, p. 94. An exception was: Helmut Bonheim, *Joyce’s Benefactions*. Berkeley/ Los Angeles 1964. A milestone in the re-appraisal of the politics of Joyce’s work was: Vincent J. Cheng, *Joyce, Race, and Empire*, Cambridge 1995.
- 6 Lerm Hayes, *Joyce in Art*, p. 90.
- 7 Martha C. Nussbaum, *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*, Princeton/Oxford 2010.
- 8 Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, “Literary Art Exhibitions and Artists’ and Curators’ Solidarity in Times of Historical Change”, in: *Zeszyty Artystyczne* 35 (2020), pp. 205–216; Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, “Re-inventing the Literary Exhibition: Exhibiting (Dialogical and Subversive) Art on (James Joyce’s) Literature”, in: Grace Lees-Maffei (ed.), *Working Papers on Design* 2, www.herts.ac.uk/artdes1/research/papers/wpdesign/wpdvol2/vol2.html [accessed June 2006].
- 9 Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, *James Joyce als Inspirationsquelle für Joseph Beuys*, Hildesheim/Zurich/New York 2001; Lerm Hayes, *Joyce in Art*; Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, “The Joyce Effect: Joyce in the Visual Arts”, in: Richard Hayes (ed.), *A Companion to James Joyce*, Malden/Oxford 2007, pp. 318–340; Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, “‘I will re-create *Finnegans Wake* Anyway’, Beuys Reads Joyce”, in: *Nordic Journal of English Studies* 10/1 (2018), issue: *Visual Poetics*, pp. 152–180, <http://ojs.uib.no/ojs/index.php/njes/index> [accessed May 2021].
- 10 For conceptual art’s part in reading performances: Nick Thurston, “Publishing as a Praxis of Conceptualist Reading Performances,” in: *Journal of Writing in Creative Practice* 6/3 (2013), pp. 421–429, <http://www.rongwrong.org/RWFY> [accessed 14 May 2021].
- 11 For a consideration of García’s work with regard to artistic research, see: Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, “Mad, Marginal, Minor (Artistic) Research”, in: Chantal Pontbriand (ed), *Dora García, Mad Marginal: Cahier #4*, Berlin 2015, pp. 120–133.
- 12 Tom Holert (curator), *Learning Laboratories*, BAK, Utrecht, December 2016–February 2017, <https://archive.bakonline.org/en/Research/Itineraries/FutureVocabularies/Themes/InstitutingOtherwise/Exhibitions/>

- LearningLaboratories [accessed 14 May 2021].
- 13 Tom Holert, "Artistic Research: Anatomy of an Ascent", in: *Texte zur Kunst* 82 (2011), pp. 38–63. See also: Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, "Minor Literature in and of Artistic Research", in: Corina Caduff and Tan Wälchli (eds.), *Artistic Research and Literature*, Munich 2019, pp. 49–62, <https://doi.org/10.30965/9783846763339> [accessed 14 May 2021].
 - 14 See Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, "Beuys's Legacy in Artist-led University Projects", in: *Tate Papers* 31 (2019), <https://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/31/beuys-legacy-artist-led-university-projects> [accessed 14 May 2021].
 - 15 I originally wrote the essay on mistakes already referred to for the 2016 Association of Global Art Historians' conference in Beijing, China, 18 September 2016.
 - 16 See Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, "Living Archives: The Paradoxes of Art as Incriminating Evidence Behind the Iron Curtain", in: *Simulacrum – Tijdschrift voor Kunst en Cultuur: Het Archief*, 26/3 (2018), pp. 40–44. See also Lerm Hayes, *Joyce in Art*, p. 290.
 - 17 But even quoting the Socialist greats, such as Karl Marx or Rosa Luxemburg, was not entirely safe: fictionality provided an additional, necessary safeguard to canonicity.
 - 18 Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, "'The Joyce Effect': Joyce in the Visual Arts", in: Richard Brown (ed.), *A Companion to James Joyce*, Malden/Oxford 2007, pp. 318–340.
 - 19 See: Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, "Notes on Activist Practices Behind the Iron Curtain: Liberation Theologies, Experimental Institutionalism, Expanded Art and Minor Literature", in: Nick Aikens, Susan Pui San Lok and Sophie Orlando (eds), *Conceptualism – Intersectional Readings, International Framings: Situating 'Black Artists & Modernism' in Europe*, Eindhoven 2020, pp. 332–351; <https://vanabbemuseum.nl/en/research-resources/articles/conceptualism-intersectional-readings-international-framings/> [accessed 14 May 2021]. In this essay, I elaborate on the political aspects of reading canonical literature like Joyce's behind the Iron Curtain: thoughts that I first developed here.
 - 20 Ullrich Kockel, "The Celtic Quest: Beuys as Hero and Hedge School Master", in: David Thistlewood (ed.), *Joseph Beuys: Diverging Critiques*, Liverpool 1995, pp.129–147.
 - 21 Petition – complaint to the Ministry of Culture and Art, 1973, p. 437. It contains comments about the "swindling" PSP. Such an attitude of strength and claim gives way to explanations (or the Eagle Affair), in 1977, where allegations about having created something for specifically foreign consumption have to be refuted. Later, protestations of disinterestedness in fitting into Western art history and refutations of the naivety of thinking that Socialist Realism was still compulsory are added. Problems of making a living abound throughout. On page 439 it says: "We want to pursue our academic careers – obtain PhDs". Research as an attitude was viable to artists working in a discursive manner anyway. That was not possible in all Eastern European countries or at all times. In East Germany, one had to prove allegiance with Marxist/Leninist principles as part of a PhD exam.
 - 22 BAVO (ed.), *The Art of Over-Identification*, Rotterdam 2007.
 - 23 I thank Marga van Mechelen for sharing her experiences in visiting KwieKulik from the 1970s onwards.
 - 24 Lukasz Rondula and Georg Schoellhammer, *KwieKulik: Zofia Kulik, Przemyslaw Kwiek*, 2012, p. 523.
 - 25 Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (1975), translated by Dana Polan, Minneapolis 2006.
 - 26 The state of affairs with regard to transferring a concept such as the 'minor' to visual art is more complex: Mieke Bleyen, *Minor Photography: Connecting Deleuze and Guattari to Photography Theory*, Leuven 2012.
 - 27 I have elaborated on this in relation to Northern Irish performance art and its politics elsewhere – using Joyce and Beckett, of course: Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, "Accepting Love and the Paradoxes of (Political) Art in Northern Ireland: Sandra Johnston", in: *ZivotUmjetnosti: Ljubav/Love* 100 (2017),

- pp.28–43, also at http://www.ipu.hr/content/zivot-umjetnosti/ZU_100-2017_028-043_Lerm-Hayes.pdf [accessed 14 May 2021] and: Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, “‘Sometimes you need help from other people’s ghosts’: Alastair MacLennan’s multi-disciplinary and ‘instituting’ practice as civil action”, in: Sandra Johnston, Paula Blair and Cherie Driver (eds.), *Actional Poetics – ASH SHE HE: The Performance Actuations of Alastair MacLennan, 1971–2018*, Belfast/Bristol 2021 (forthcoming).
- 28 See Ines Weizman, *Architecture and the Paradox of Dissidence*, London/New York 2014.
- 29 The Amsterdam conference that led to this publication provided a valuable incentive to develop these thoughts further in some of the recent essays already quoted, but specifically in: Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, “Notes on Activist Practices”. I thank the organizers and editor for this very fruitful exchange.
- 30 E.g. in the passage: *Ulysses*’ “sexual explicitness and its insistent sexual focus can now be seen to have political significance. For, first of all, they are a linchpin on the project of restoring the reader to acceptance and love of the body, with all its surprises [...] a focus on the body’s universal needs is an essential step on the way to the repudiation of localism, therefore of ethnic hatred. [...] The novel suggests [...] that the root of hatred is not erotic need [...], rather, the refusal to accept erotic neediness and unpredictability as a fact of human life. Saying yes to sexuality is saying yes to all in life that defies control – to passivity and surprise, to being one part of a very chancy world. [...] This yes to humanity, Joyce suggests, is the essential basis for a sane political life, a life democratic.” Martha C. Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions*, Cambridge 2008, p. 709.
- 31 For further detail and the context, see: Lerm Hayes, “‘Sometimes you need help from other people’s ghosts’”.
- 32 Chantal Pontbriand, “An Arena for Liberating Politics”, in: García, *The Joycean Society*, pp. 156–165.
- 33 Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, *Brian O’Doherty/Patrick Ireland: Word, Image and Institutional Critique*, Amsterdam 2017.
- 34 Weizman, *Architecture and Dissidence*.
- 35 Maria Hlavajova and Simon Sheikh, *Former West: Art and the Contemporary After 1989*, Cambridge 2016. For the essay with which I responded to the publication when it came out and “extended” its remit somewhat and took a slightly different turn, see my “Notes on Activist Practices Behind the Iron Curtain” already referred to.
- 36 When making this suggestion at the conference from which this book has emerged, Knowles also had not as yet drawn a straight line from the literature of Joyce to the efforts of countering the malaise of universities under authoritarian capitalism. Sebastian D.G. Knowles, *At Fault: Joyce and the Crisis of the Modern University*, Gainesville et. al. 2018. I also found it rewarding to consider in this context the essay: “Stephen/Joyce, Joyce/Haacke: Modernism and the Social Function of Art” by Mark A. Wollaeger, in: *ELH* 62/3 (1995), pp. 691–707. Wollaeger writes: “An accurate assessment of avant-garde potential requires that one step outside the Joycean labyrinth in order to undertake historically-conceived interdisciplinary work [...] Does the increasingly visual nature of culture and society (‘Ineluctable modality of the visible’) render literature more subversive yet less effective? Or *more* effective by virtue of its marginality? Second, if one’s concern is social value, the most important locus for these issues is the classroom, [...] the ways in which Joyce solicits modes of social reading that submit autonomy to a sense of inevitable embeddedness can only be a good thing, even if those readings remain bound by Joyce’s own logic. But if perspectives external to Joyce are to be opened, interdisciplinarity is invaluable in the classroom as well. [...] More broadly, encouraging students to understand texts as forms of cultural activity capable of performing cultural work rather than as isolated objects can help decompose the aesthetic enclosure so powerfully theorized by Kant in his *Critique of Judgment*, pp. 702 f.”

Inhalt

Aufsätze:

Peter W. Marx (Köln)	
„Turtles all the way down“. Zu methodischen Fragen der Theaterhistoriographie	141
Steff Nellis (Ghent)	
All rise! Jurisdiction as Performance/Performative Language	159
Christopher Balme (Munich)	
Covid, Crisis and Prognosis: Prospecting the Future of Theatre	178

Themenheft: Text, Image, Performance

Jan Lazardzig (Berlin)	
Editorial	195

Aufsätze:

Claudia Daiber (Groningen) / Elke Huwiler (Amsterdam)	
Text, Performance, and the Production of Religious Knowledge: The Protestant Passion Play and the Catholic Saint Play	198
François Lecercle (Paris)	
Rewriting the Unwritten: On the History of Theatrophobia	215
Clotilde Thouret (Nancy)	
In Light of the Controversies: Spectatorship Reconsidered	228
Kati Röttger (Amsterdam)	
Techno-Logics and Techno-Magics: Phantasmagoria in the Age of Electricity	238
Isa Wortelkamp (Leipzig)	
Scratches, Holes, and Spots: Decay and Disappearance of Early Dance Photography	254
Tancredi Gusman (Lucerne)	
Exhibited, Recorded, Collected: Performance Art and Documentation in <i>documenta 5</i> and <i>6</i>	264
Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes (Amsterdam)	
The <i>Finnegans Wake</i> Reading Group as a Model for “Stealth Activities” between Art and the University	278
Gabriele Brandstetter (Berlin)	
The Effect of the Real: How Do Performing Artists Affect Historiography?	288