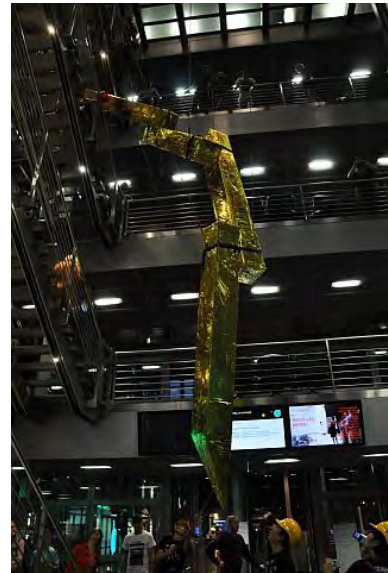


## „youseitachi no muchinroudo“

On the importance of taking things for granted

September, 7th 2012 in a small town in Switzerland, home of the *Kappeler Brücke*, the oldest wooden bridge in Europe, home of Mt. Pilatus and of lake Lucerne. September, the 7th in the centre of Lucerne, inside the *KKL* landmark building designed by Jean Nouvel. It's 7.30 pm, people are gathering in the foyer on the ground floor, waiting to enter the *Hall of Lucerne* to attend a symphonic concert of the festival orchestra, conducted by Pierre Boulez. September, the 7th in right this foyer, 7.38 pm, all of a sudden a huge, golden object - shiny and shimmery – appears in the sky, right beneath the ceiling of the massive lobby. It's carried out of the *Kunstmuseum*, located on the fifth floor of the building by a group of people. With the help of ropes they start to lower it down to the ground floor. A mixture of Japanese, German, Swiss-German, English and French is floating through the air. For a moment the object seems to get out of control and fall down. But in a combined and concerted effort Akuma No Shirushi, the students of the Architectural department of the university and the audience attending are stabilizing the huge sculpture and carry it out the front doors towards the sunset over the lake.



Akumanoshirushi "Carry-In-Project #10"

As Shintoist traditions of procession and worship, traditional construction technologies and a utopian approach of an equal society, where everyone has to carry her part, intermingle in Akuma No Shirushi's work, history and yet to come utopias are arbitrarily linked worldwide in our contemporary society. In consequence Singaporean born filmmaker and theoretist Ho Tzu Nyen questions the concept of contemporaneity by calling it „Ancient Futurism“, emphasizing this direct connection between tradition and futurism, the short cut between yesterday and the day after tomorrow.

„Carry-In-Project #10“ or literally said „Carry-Out-Project“ was part of the 2012/2013 season opening of Südpol „As long as we keep remembering the future“. I met Noriyuki Kiguchi, director and head of Akuma No Shirushi, for the first time in November 2010, during a programmers visit to Japan, organised by the Japan Foundation, when our group of four was heading for „Festival on the farm“ in Nasu, organised by Tokyo based cultural producers and promoters precoq. Imagine: Four german and swiss programmers are standing a bit displaced in front of a high school building somewhere two hours drive up north from Tokyo. Suddenly one cannot take his eyes of a huge pink-plush object, that is moved through the staircase inside. Is it really moving or is it just imagination? Is this part of the festival's programme or some students project manufactured in art class? Is this guy with the megaphone the head of the group and what does he say? How do they organize this massive movement?

Followed later on by questions like: Do I get you right, that you are a collective, but you are the head of this project but your goal is to be the leadsinger of a Hard Rock Band? Didn't you just say you are working at a construction site?



Two years later we are having a beer together on the rooftop terrace of KKL, super happy about the final golden and shiny moment of a six weeks and three city tour of the Carry-In-Project through Switzerland. Zurich's Theaterspektakel, the recently founded Theaterfestival Basel and Südpol Luzern presented three different versions of the moving sculpture, all more or less in collaboration with the local architectural departments of the universities, all with different obstacles, all with the same wonderful effect for the audience in the end, we had when we experienced it in Nasu. A powerful project in public space, organised, seen and carried by more than 1000 people.

But how did all this fall into place? How does it work, that hours and hours of meetings, complete misunderstandings, differences not only in a cultural, but also in an organizational and structural sense, end up in a moment of pure beauty? The answer seems simple: hard work! And all my admiration goes to Noriyuki Kiguchi and his team! But there is one more reason: Hard Work! Again? Yes! But a different kind of work: „youseitachi no muchinroudo“

This expression was stolen from Niwagekidan Penino's „Your room, nobody knows“, directed by Tanino Kuro, another project presented in the framework of this year's opening. A surreal, extravagant and extraordinary piece dealing with the necessity of art, its role in times of crisis and its relation to nature and reality as such. In a hyperrealistic living room, where each and every object is of phallic shape, a sheep, a swine and two brothers are trying to deal with the preparations for a birthday party, while at the same time they are busy reflecting about political and career ambitions or mathematical problems as well as again and again on the permanent state of sexual desire. The show culminates in a tableau vivant, quoting a classical family scenery with mother, father and two children gathered in a christmas-picture-like-pose to perform a tragicomical version of Johann Pachelbels well-know classic „Canon in D“ on recorders. A heart-opening scene of pure poetry except for the fact, that the father is a swine, the mother is a pig and the two brothers seem to be a bit too close to each other. Not to forget to mention a little detail: the recorders are of course phallus shaped.

Everything here even the most constructed and formal expression is driven by unexplainable desires but at the same moment seems to be done out of pure necessity: Movements, text, lightning, etc. We get a blow in the face, confronted with the gnosis, that art is one of our bottom-line concerns and as normal and important as eating, defecating or housing but at the same time it's the first luxury, the first taste of a spiritual state of a being, that appears more visible in such things as emotions, feelings or something you might call a soul.



Niwagekidan Penino "The Room, Nobody Knows"  
photo:Shinsuke Sugino

The term „Youseitachi“ translates to „Fabel-Wesen“ in German. Its first part „Fabel“ historically means story, but is nowadays only used in two very specific ways: Either in a narrowed sense, meaning „fairy tale“ or in a technical sense for „a dramatic plot“. The second word „Wesen“ describes a „being“ as such, as much as this being's specific or unique qualities and characteristics. As a paradox example this term makes it possible to say: the wind has no „Wesen“ and its „Wesen“ is to blow. Following this distinction, who are these „Youseitachi“? Who are these characters, these theatrical undeads, who populate Kuro Tanino's „Room, nobody knows“? The answer seems simple again: The personas.

Speaking about the artistic field today, especially about performing arts, one gets the impression we are in a permanent state of excessive demands, that lead not only to oversaturation and hastening, but even worse to a permanent atmosphere of complaining. Everybody is complaining all the time: actors about precarious work situations, directors about changing conditions, producers about shrinking budgets, audiences about a loss of quality or high ticket prices, just to name a few. But there is only one essential group, who did not join this cacophony and maybe one of the most important of the whole artistic field: The personas.

If Prometheus would have gone on strike, how could Ridley Scott have shot his recent 'documentary', if Romeo and Juliet would sleep long in the morning rather than continuing their stupid fight with their parents, what pictures would mankind have of romantic love? If Ödipus would not have been curious about the real identity of his parents and instead staid in the cozyness of his adoptive father's house, whom would Sigmund Freud and generations of psychiatrists following him have had to blame as the role modell for all children in puberty? It seems to be time to valorize this often forgotten and in recent times marginalized group of cultural workers in a little text like this.



Kyohei Sakaguchi "mobile house"

„Why do we have to pay rent to the landlord but not to earth“ asks Kyohei Sakaguchi, conceptional architect in a lecture about his research on homeless people and their twisted, but often very sustainable ways of housing and making a living. A question, he says, he asked himself for the first time as a child and ever since. A question, that I think gets us to the point of a „youseitachi no muchinroudo“ perspective on the artistic process: There is a lot of things we take for granted when working in arts, but we should not forget to ask from time to time why they are there? Isn't there tons of lucky circumstances and plenty of scrap throughs, isn't there plenty of money spent by each tax-payer, isn't there thousands of sources to steal from and not to forget:

There are innumerable people working and dealing with art, you never find on any credit list or advertising poster. People busy on telephones, in front of computers or involved in a conversation at a table, working for foundations, in boards or as volunteers. People sending their best friend to see the show they saw the night before or spreading the word between colleaugues. People unified by one thought: Investing time, money and energy in arts is important. „Youseitachi“, not complaining about what they are doing, but deliberately willing to do it for the necessity of it. This text is dedicated to them, because they are all essential collaborators of the big minority of us cultural workers. And only the combined effort of all of us– from characters to volunteers, from directors to audiences – and our combined emotions – from pure delight to massive complaint - brought together under the vision of a strong artistic personality will make a project happen. A thought, that brings us back to an idea mentioned at the beginning of this text: The short cut. The direct link between a and z, that leads to a moment full of energy and to a lot of beautiful sparkles.

„As long as we keep remembering the future“ was the try to produce as many of these direct moments and confrontations as possible and was at the same time the try to ad a human layer to the concept of „Ancient Futurism“: The short-cut not only between times and places, but between people. Stories and memories from different times, Artefacts and bodies from different places and beings and languages from different backgrounds and cultures were confronted in the most imminent way. Of course sometimes some were on stage and others in the black pit, some were building in the workshops and some were sitting in offices, some were carrying a huge golden object and some were just watching, but they all met at the same time and the same place and we all met face to face.



Gotannndan "Suteru Tabi"  
KUNSTENFESTIVALDESARTS 2009  
Photo:Miwa Monden

In November this year Shiro Maeda and his company are presenting their powerful, sad and at the same time full of joie de vivre production „Suteru Tabi“ about a boy loosing his father, but finding his true own way after this crisis at SÜDPOL. It perfectly connects to the despicted atmosphere created by the three artists and their companies mentioned before. They all speak about things everybody can connect to and they do it in the most adequate and elaborated way. None of them speas about the so called actual situation or a specific Japaneseness neither in terms of content nor aesthetics. But everybody knows the longing for community and the inner conflict with ones identity and individuality. Carrying around 300 Kilos - shapped like a huge golden thunderbolt - together with a group of people makes this conflict tangible. Everybody has desires and sexuals needs he keeps in his „Room, nobody knows“ and has sometimes thoughts to just drop out of society completely. And everybody knows the loss of a loved one. It's these universal topics, that open up a way for real togetherness in international collaborations: For direct conversations during or after the show, in the supermarket next to the theatre or in Akuma No Shirushis case in the workshops of the university. And it's these conversations, that make it possible to talk about cultural differences, about rumours in one's own head after seeing pictures of exploding buildings somewhere far away or about a small but important difference in Japanese and Swiss building law. And it's last not least the artists choosing these topics and willing to share their uniquely utopic perspective on them, who made us all feel like „Youseitachi“ for a few days in September. Thank you all, very much!

Max-Philip Aschenbrenner

Born in Deggendorf, Germany in 1981.

Aschenbrenner has working experiences as an artistic director (Luzern, SÜDPOL) and a dramaturg. He studied media studies, interaction and process designs, and thereafter earned a master's degree in dramturgy.

He took the position of the dramaturg for HAU (Hebbel Theater, Berlin) in 2008, „Loan Shark“ directed by Chris Kondek at Rotterdamse Schouwburg, and „King Lear“ directed by Barbara Weber at Wiener Festwochen (Vienna Festival) and HAU.

Aschenbrenner worked with Frie Leysen as the artistic collaborator for „Theater der Welt 2010“ from 2009 to 2010, and as the artistic coordinator for an art project supported by Deutsche Bank „A Globe for Frankfurt and the World“. He was invited to Japan by the Japan Foundation in November 2011. Aschenbrenner visited Japan again in 2011 as the visiting fellow of the Saison Foundation. He is currently directing SèDPOL Luzern and will be moving on to Vienna Festwochen from 2013 on.



[http://www.saison.or.jp/english/r\\_morishita/index.html](http://www.saison.or.jp/english/r_morishita/index.html)

<http://air-j.info/resource/article/air04/>

<http://www.sudpol.ch/>