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Forum Neues Musiktheater der Staatsoper Stuttgart

In the benefit of the Viva Afro Brasil festival in the Roemerkastell, the premiere was postponed from Saturday, July 9 to Sunday, July 10, 2005.

Following performances: July 14, 15, 16 and 17, 2005, 8 p.m.
Introduction at 19.15 p.m.
Discussion with the production team after each performance.
Open rehearsals: July 4 and 6 2005, 7 p.m.

Concept, Composition, Texts Yannis Kyriakides **Stage Direction** Paul Koek **Light Installation and Video** Joost Rekveld **Voices, Acting** Stephanie Büttrich, Rick Elstgeest, Bo Koek **Synthesizer and Laptops:** Anne Wellmer, Marko Ciciliani

What can we really know about things we cannot perceive?

A magician and his alter ego come on stage to perform the famous hat-and-pea trick, but things don't work quite the way they are supposed to. His assistant is obsessed with quantum physics, in particular with Schrödinger's cat, the famous thought experiment by the Austrian physicist. The idea is that quantum theory would mean a cat would be at once dead and alive if it were subjected to a specific experimental setup. While the stage is gradually turned into a place of transition in which Newton's laws break down, the magicians become more and more frustrated with their futile attempts to demonstrate the arts of magic. They withdraw into the dressing room, where they are then subjected completely to the bizarre effects of quantum logic.

The actors experience the same physical patterns of appearance and disappearance that the balls under the magician's cups do. All of this unfolds in a strange way: time does not flow in the normal direction; the magician's failure is constantly repeated, returning into time fields that have changed. Just like the cat in Schrödinger's thought experiment, the actors too are caught in an indeterminate state.

escamotage is "electronic music theater" that explores the ideas of quantum physics with the aid of the world of illusion. Cheap magic tricks become metaphors for all the things we do not understand, and quantum physics finds such things in spades. The magician's tricks are contrary to logic, and they do not even cease to be surprising when their mysteries are revealed. For at the moment the trick is repeated, we forget everything and are lost in the theater of it again. We can never understand the mysteries of the quanta, because our thinking is shaped by the linearity of space and time. Magicians, by contrast, confuse our logical perception by providing a momentary insight into phenomena that seem to contradict reality. They show us what our everyday reality is based on: a bizarre world of subatomic particles with properties that distort space and time.

This world of possibilities finds its form in an electronic music theater that plays with our perception of what we hear and see. What is real, what is imagined, and what is simple swindling.

The play was conceived and composed by Yannis Kyriakides. It was produced as a collaboration between the Forum Neues Musiktheater of the Staatsoper Stuttgart and the VeenFabriek under the direction of Paul Koek. The artist and filmmaker Joost Rekveld has developed a complex light installation of sand and LEDs. The musicians Anne Wellmer and Marko Ciciliani both work with analog electronics and digital voice manipulation.

The project was realized with the kind support of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Fund for Amateur Art and Performing Arts, the Netherlands.

Yannis Kyriakides

Born in Limassol, Cyprus in 1969. Emigrated to England with his family in 1975. He studied musicology at York University and then at the Hague Conservatory in the Netherlands with Louis Andriessen. At this time he also worked on three projects with the independent electronic music composer and director Dick Raijmakers. He currently lives and works in Amsterdam as a composer and electronic musician.

Kyriakides works with ensembles such as ASKO, the Marten Altena Ensemble, and Icebreaker as well as with theater and dance companies, including Hollandia and Leine & Roebana. His own group, CIRCADIAN, performs regularly in Europe, and he is an active member of the electronic music scene as a specialist in live processing and an improviser. In 2005, escamotage at the Forum Neues Musiktheater.

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