

«THAT'S IT!» (+3 FREE minutes)

An Opera-Lecture in 14 + 1 scenes, 33 acts and 3 to 5 interludes

... a kind of unique language halfway between gesture and thought

Antonin Artaud

the exhibition, the real as displaced from its unique original to its multiple double

Joëlle Tuerlinckx

«THAT'S IT!» (+3 Free minutes) can be seen and understood as an exploration; primarily as a curious, critical and amused exploration of a recently discovered medium "a parcel of air that I have yet to unpack," said Joëlle Tuerlinckx about the exhibition at the time of her first solo *Pas d'histoire Pas d'histoire (No Story No History)* in 1994 (Witte de With – Rotterdam). Known since then for her *œuvres-exhibition*, Tuerlinckx now considers the stage as the site for action, a move that is as unprecedented and unusual for herself as it is for her audience. By 'action' we understand 'gestures of humanity, of work, of survival, of pleasure...' It is in these terms that she defines the medium itself of the exhibition. By 'actor,' 'a person or character who has at some point been asked to do something.' By this 'something,' 'the action, as minimal or banal as it may be: to walk, to descend a staircase, to put this rope on that table,...

With the presentation «THAT'S IT!» (+3 Free minutes), Joëlle Tuerlinckx plunges fully into the theatre medium for the first time and the spectacle will be total! Bear in mind that everything in the work was leading to that: the materials of this total theatre, which has been announced as 'a lecture on a work,' will be those of her gigantic archive. A fraction of it was presented at a recent retrospective exhibition in Belgium at Wiels, in Germany at the Haus der Kunst (Munich), and at Arnolfini in Bristol. Those images already put in practice the dramatisation of the economic and political world, as it emerges from those pixelised patterns found in news archive images: the *Stain men*, the *Freehand-line women*, the *Tie men*, *Depressed politicians*, *First generation blurs of Theory of walking*, *Mikes*, *Footballer legs*, *Lady-politician legs* the *Groups: Points*, *Computer lines*. The world of art and business display their cohabitation. Amongst them, the category of monstrations (the act of showing) is exemplary in itself: *Pointed monstration*, *Group monstration* and *Number monstration*.

It is in this sense that we can talk about a true theatre-laboratory, we can evoke the curiosity of its author. «THAT'S IT!» displaces the world, the worlds of art and its customs, its actors, its locations (museum and guardians, atelier and assistants, gallery and gallerists, all together). It takes it literally off site and on stage. In the style of a chemist, of a chapter act, with «THAT'S IT!» Tuerlinckx will provoke, and observe the ensuing responses.

But the Tuerlinckx universe is not a simple one; as the title of another of her shows indicated (Argos, 2001), it is a daily journal (*Audio and Visual Days*). The theatre and its exploration questioned (a) reality, whether it could be double, following one of her publications where she collaborated with her artist friend Willem Oorebeek, *BILD oder... (IMAGE or)*. Image or...? – 'Sound!' says Christoph Fink, with whom she has accumulated through the years a huge sound archive. From field recordings of marching bands to birds on a field, the *fanfares* of West Flanders, and also the recently recorded readings of her own texts: aphorisms, exhibition notes, press releases, real and fictional interviews.

The third pillar of this presentation is made up of texts with associative thoughts, aphorisms and a glossary that Joëlle Tuerlinckx often uses to paraphrase her oeuvre, re-grouping it into the most diverse categories, across disparate families, classifying it as 'subject' within an order that always needs readapting; here in the theatre. Not devoid of humour, with intrusions and parentheses added in, *(my love), what then is an exhibition?* In this sense they make even more extensive use of the multiplicity of meanings.

Alongside the image, sound and space too make up the usual elements of her works *Audio and Visual Days* of a work... *I love simple things, the simpler they are the more interesting they become to me, for instance, walking from one point to another, a or b, it might be a brick, or a pile of bricks...* art is her way of thinking the world, her way of resisting global political economic structures. And so, «THAT'S IT!» will dramatise the American factory, the Russian, European factory of the pixel or of the German Din A4, A5. In the face of these social and ideological structures, Tuerlinckx uses her own system, a system that reinvents itself every time and *what do you do? I pass through spaces, [...]* *I watch the sun set, on other days I have seen nothing, [...]* *the farther I go, the less study serves as proof of reality, it is therefore normal that I continue in this direction*. Hence, as she once said in an interview, «THAT'S IT!» is still that: that which *won't stop starting*. The curtain won't stop rising, the room lighting up, the instrument tuning, the band attuning.

A project is not an illusion – they (projects, images) involve utopia in the sense that they are presently imaginary – they do not involve utopia in that they correspond to a political, social, aesthetic viewpoint that takes reality into account. These exhibitions are therefore true spatial inscriptions. Sometimes with a multitude of found, appropriated, enhanced objects... papers from the street or from institutions... Sometimes, however, creating a total, radical vacuum. Here in the theatre, with voices, curtains, lamps, leaving the stage simultaneously empty and full of layers of interferences, *the stage is said to be primitive, made up of layers of regrets, of wisdoms, constructed in the style of a primitive Flemish painting, green on rosy skin in a Vanderweyden, red beneath the green of the prairie in Jan van Eyck's 'Adoration of the lamb'...* we hear a voice say.

(A) Reality in «THAT'S IT!» will consequently be that of the stage exacerbated in its theatrical illusion. A scene which, for the benefit of the oeuvre and its basic tenets, leaves space for the imaginary. 'That's it,' the stage tells us. Yes 'it's that' thinks the viewer. In this new context of dramatisation, Tuerlinckx transforms her visual work and the world of fine art into a spectacle that has assimilated theatrical formats as an active part of its work process. For instance, by using the method of the *monstration* (the act of showing the public), the artist invites the audience into the heart of the thought-process. Her computer desk, on display in the room, is the central instrument for this task. Files are opened, examined, browsed and closed again. Tuerlinckx guides the spectator into a labyrinthine journey through her image archive. She communicates to the audience these structures of rhizomatic thoughts, her discoveries, observations and temporisations. She takes them along

'half way to language' (Antonin Artaud), pushes them into a black hole 'what is your favourite Magritte painting?' into a memory lapse. In this way she traces her progress, using the intentionally didactic technique of *monstration*, borrowed from the mode of conference lecture that she is resorting to.

One can say that she will try to apply to the theatre all the art of *monstration*. The cursor of her mouse will be the most appropriate tool. But hands too, as well as actors, beams of light and free-hand lines direct the movement of this theatre piece, propelled –decided or hesitantly– and resonating through Christoph Fink's marching soundtrack. In the tradition of silent film, Fink accompanies the Tuerlinckx image. In the tradition of the horror genre, he sustains its action. And much like in soap operas, one note alone will sometimes suffice. We can say that they 'open' together and then, leaving behind them a blazing trail, they engage in a dialogue. It's a synchronised or dissonant to-and-fro, where images and sounds collide, suitcases are filled with soundscapes and sound recordings, compositions blend and compare their substance. When the 'theatrical present' requires it, Fink or Tuerlinckx flood the space with sounds, music or live commentary. Alongside these elements, translations of the action are provided in real time, the living part of the soundtrack to «THAT'S IT!». All of which still leaves the texts written by the artist, recited by 'occasional actors' in Italian, German and Dutch, English French, even Russian.

In this true theatrical laboratory, live and pre-recorded, where the present of the action (*the present perfect-ly*) of theatrical reality is confronted with the *already there* of a number of 'exposed cultures and histories' (that which 'was' constitutes this *all there already* that the Tuerlinckx's oeuvre is always pointing at, in the words of philosopher Frank Vande Veire). In «THAT'S IT!» everything intertwines, assembles itself into inextricable sonic and visual epics where scenes from the most extreme genres constantly operate their fusion: folk bands march hand in hand with conceptual and minimal art. And in one gesture, in one appearance, of three notes here on a circle, a line, a hand-drawn square, the universe of the circus is suddenly ushered in. Circles, points, forms, figures, the 'theatre of geometry' –to quote the title of an older series of premonitory watercolours–, in their continuous renewal, they unfurl their various hypotheses for narration.

«THAT'S IT!» (+3 Free minutes) is, in other words, the theatre of geometry, the theatre of Joëlle Tuerlinckx's archive. The circus of the oeuvre in the actuality of its own receptivity.

Everything is displayed, over-displayed, disassembled, covered, rediscovered. Everything is acted. The computer cases open, close, the mouse lingers, advances, the glove-clad finger points, *I envisage this exhibition as a slow progression through my own brain, maybe here it's 1200 square metres of brain* (1994). On Tate Modern's red stage, later on the black stage of Amsterdam's Het Veem Theater (with If I Can't Dance), or on yet another one at STUK in Leuven, the image encounters a note, the note explodes on *the image, changing its colour. Chance? Above this, a suitcase is closed, a door opens, closes. Above this, the screen and its story are repositioned, chance? the image shifts, it turns from colour to negative, the screen flies, a skirt, a scene is shortened, the image is unveiled! sound effect? Magical! chapter acts, the play concludes.* 'It never stops starting,' says a voice, nonetheless, in between journeys.

That's it!

Joëlle Tuerlinckx, March 2014

Credits

«THAT'S IT!» + 3 free minutes

A staged lecture on a work

by Joëlle Tuerlinckx on a live soundtrack by Christoph Fink accompanied by Valentijn Goethals

Interpreted by Francesca Chiacchio, Juliette Thomas, Sofie Van Loo, Christian Nagel, Saskia Draxler

Voice-overs by Celia Archer, Lucy Badrocke, Alexandra Dietz, Richard Kerkhofs, Sarah Knight, Chloe Mills, Snoozie, Ive Stevenheydens, Eva Wittocx, Tom Trevor, Axel Wieder,

Local Translator: Catherine Wood

Stage Set by Annelies Bruneel

Editing by Anne Sofie Guillaume, Valentin Fayet

Graphic support by Bieke Criel, Valentijn Goethals

Technician: Johannes Vochten

Production Manager: Ilse Van Essche

Audio and visual supervision: Eduardo Dominicci and Adam Asnan

Tuning: Judith Bowdler

Technical Stand by: Johan Vandermaelen

Genie Operator: Fred Jones

First spectator STUK: Paul Willemsen

First spectator Tate Modern: Ilse Van Essche

Tate Modern, Starr Auditorium

Friday 4 April and Saturday 5 April 2014

19.30

Commissioned and produced as part of Corpus, new collaborative network for commissioning performance-related work co-founded by If I Can't Dance, Amsterdam, Playground (STUK & M), Leuven and Tate Modern, London. With the support of the Culture Programme of the European Union.



Culture

BMW Tate Live is curated by Catherine Wood, Curator, Contemporary Art and Performance, Tate and Capucine Perrot, Assistant Curator, Tate Modern.

BMW Tate Live is a partnership between BMW and Tate, which focuses on performance, interdisciplinary art and curating digital space.



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