

Unacknowledged Loss

(Texts of the artists accompanying the videos)

Unacknowledged Loss II – A Project on Mourning and Loss by Barbara Raes & HAU Hebbel am Ufer.

After the highly positive reactions to “Unacknowledged Loss” in June 2017, which was somewhere between an artistic residency and a research project and focused on the themes of mourning and loss, HAU planned a second edition with new artists for June 2020 together with the curator Barbara Raes. The project couldn't take place in the form it was originally planned due to the coronavirus. However, the topics it addresses are even more present in our current lives and so during June, nine Berlin artists worked on the topic of mourning and farewell rituals, and how future forms might emerge at the interface of art, care-giving and ritual. During the process, several materials like photos, texts and films were generated that are now shared with the public as part of the programme of #HAUonline. The videos filmed and created by the artist Liz Rosenfeld can be seen here on the Youtube channel of HAU.

Ania Nowak “DOM”

This ritual consists of a walk, an act of destruction and a song. I am accompanied by three healers I chose for the occasion. We walk from the Botanical Garden Blankenfelde-Pankow in the north of Berlin towards the south, HAU3 in Kreuzberg, each of us carrying a slice of wood. I destroy mine with an axe together with old furniture belonging to HAU theatre, just before sunset. Then I listen to Addio! from “La Traviata” sang to me over and over again. Dom means home in Polish, cathedral in German and a person who exercises dominance in English. I walk, destroy and listen to build roots and let go of the pain of eviction. It is a discipline for sustaining a home. Against fear and homelessness.

Colin Self “Untitled”

dear portal, it has been revealed to me over time, through time, and in time- that you will exist and appear in multiplicity, and that the time i've been with you and with loved ones, the nurturing of your transformative space has made me resilient in your absence, although i may miss you dearly. i perform this action to evoke you again. perhaps what i hope can be conceived from this act is both an anchoring across space/time that strengthens the relationships and intentions connected through your presence. wherever we go in this world, you shall unite us and strengthen your presence and physical material locations for generations to come, nurturing the chronology of transcestors and queer elders who have survived. when i die, please be the avenue by which i am able to enter and exit the world of the living and communicate with loved ones. let others know this is how to reach me.

Dragana Bulut “The Ritual for Silenced Grief”

This video made by Liz Rosenfeld is a trace of one part of “The Ritual for Silenced Grief” I developed in the frame of the project “Unacknowledged Loss” by Barbara Raes.

“The Ritual for Silenced Grief” became an opportunity to reflect on my own relation to grief as well as its socially variable nature. Don't mourn; survive and organize! was the motto in the working class environment affected by wars I grew up in, where the grief was a luxury one could not afford. What were the everyday rituals I created to cope with loss in a culture forced to silence grief? What are the coping mechanisms of the less privileged? This ritual became a space to say goodbye to silence by sharing stories while cleaning: a personalized ritual that I developed to connect my past to the present in which I mourn the loss of being able to gather in the theater and experience the collective spirit of the ritual itself.

Enis Turan “Extinct”

Whilst on Earth in 2019, 750 billion tons of ice melted, 13 million hectares of land burned down in bushfires, 400 million hectares of land degraded and 28 million hectares of forest got cut down...

...On stage within 3 hours, 75 ice cubes melt away, 130 candles burn down. 1:11 trillion of the degraded earth becomes the new soil for a tree that is build out of 280 wooden sticks. A farewell ritual, to all resources and our cohabitants we lost on earth within the past year due to human activity.

Falk Röbler “für niemanden”

Smaller losses and larger ones - and no one to see them, no one to mend them. But how then to encounter the ghosts - alone? Nothing is ever really over. And if I'm not mistaken, it's no one's fault. So, here's something for no one. First write, then read. First perform, then listen. First me, then the others, then all at once. For no one. For nothing.

www.fuerniemanden.de

Joana Tischkau “Twin Tours / A Farewell to Individuality”

Twin Tours is a performative ritual joining me and my fraternal Twin brother back together. We synchronize our bodies by pedaling together on a tandem bike, taking a biographical ride through Berlins suburbia.

Liz Rosenfeld “Letter to the Artists of Unacknowledged Loss”

Dear (Artist),

I am so excited to film your ritual this week and make a beautiful experimental portrait of our experience together.

I have decided to unfold the final part of this residency to you now.

On June 29th, I will be filming my own “closing” ritual, honouring and holding space for you. I ask, that after or before your ritual, however you like, you create a symbol/sigil/small image, the size of a 2 euro coin, that I will be getting tattooed on my body on Monday. This can really be very simple, and clean. It can be a number, a letter, a word or something abstract. Whatever you like.

I consider my body to carry many people with me. An archive of experiences, emotions, moments. An archive of loss, memories, love and desire. Having had the beautiful experience of sharing space with you over the last month, this is how I would like to ritualized my period of the Unacknowledged Loss residency. It is key that you don't worry or think too intensely about what this symbol is. Think of it as a marking that I will carry for you, representing this time.

I also do not want to discuss what the tattoo will be. I just want you to send it to me. It has been such a beautiful experience being with you, and I am so excited to be filming and creating your portrait over the next few weeks.

x Liz

Mmakgosi Kgabi “a-Wake-ning – The Living Room”

Can I be honest? I am scared. Be that as it may, this is how grief operates, and I will not allow myself to be asleep anymore. To float in between then and now. To play dead.

For the longest time I thought I was the only one it had ever happened to, the only one to have ever lost and behaved badly. This is an invitation to the a-Wake-ning of my room of the sleeping, into a room of the living, The Living Room. I would like to ask you to come and share my grief and joy, to mend broken pieces, both mine and yours through a ritual of Transformation – a Wake.

Let us collectively cleanse life of its cruelty, through the exchange of story, music and care.

Nuray Demir “Kollektive Melancholie”

“hüzun” works against the instilment of positive thinking in all areas of life. “hüzun” does not refer to the melancholy of an individual, but instead to collective melancholy. For many centuries, the meyhanes served as the primary location for pastimes and collective melancholy was a welcome guest. Nuray Demir invites nine people to visit a meyhane island in HAU3. Melancholy music will fill the room, rakı will flow like water and an ample amount of meze to enjoy will be ensured. A painful evening full of beauty.

Olympia Bukkakis “A Farewell to Melancholy Futures”

A ritual (in drag) using mirroring, arbitrary restriction, intimacy, and acknowledged fictional realities to loosen our melancholic attachments to impossible futures and provoke a redirection of our desires to that which still lies before us.