

REST ASSURED. BODI NO BE FAYAWOOD
EDITION 0: A
PREPOSITIONAL
RELATIONSHIP WITH
BREATH
A SPACE OF SOLACE. A
SANCTUARY.

SAVVY CONTEMPORARY X JAZZFEST

ONLINE INVOCATIONS 08.11.2020 13:30-23:00

WITH Jumoke Adeyanju Christian Bakotessa and band Audrey Chen and Hugo Esquinca Dumama and Kechou feat. Nane Kahle Sound Drummers of Joy (Ekow Alabi Kofi Asamoah Akinola Famson Ayo Nelson) Jessica Ekomane Eiliyas Kalaf Epalanga Lamin Fofana Mazen Kerbaj Miya Masaoka Charles Sammons' Way Back Home (Eric Vaughn Natalie Greffel Johan Leijonhufvud Charles Sammons)

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REST ASSURED. BODI NO BE FAYAWOOD is a project by SAVVY Contemporary in cooperation with Jazzfest Berlin

SAVVY CONTEMPORARY
THE LABORATORY OF FORM-IDEAS



Berliner Festspiele
JAZZFEST BERLIN

HANDOUT

01 SYNOPSIS	03
02 SCHEDULE	04
03 CONTRIBUTIONS & CONTRIBUTORS	05
04 CONCEPT BY BONAVENTURE SOH BEJENG NDIKUNG	10

SYNOPSIS

BREATHE. REST. REFUEL.

The last weeks, the last months, the last years have been exhausting. Indeed some existences — especially for Black and Brown people in certain societies — are exacting and debilitating. The struggles seem to be endless. Continuously, we are reminded of the fact that our breaths or the mere act of breathing, for some, is in a permanent state of precarity.

BREATHE. REST. REFUEL.

With all the pressures, and the wish to stand our grounds in the face of adversities, we forget to retreat, to find ways of rejuvenation, to rehabilitate, to recoil. How do we stand our grounds, how do we fight back in the contexts of prolonged adversities?

BREATHE. REST. REFUEL.

REST ASSURED. BODI NO BE
FAYAWOOD is an effort to take a break. To rest. It is a possibility of claiming the right to retreat as a possibility of invigoration. To breathe. In times when being and breathing, when walking, working, playing while Black has become most perilous, we need to create spaces in which we can find solace, we need to create sanctuaries of and for resuscitation. In an unprecedented collaboration with Jazzfest Berlin, the independent art space SAVVY Contemporary sought to create an island of radical care, of being and breathing for and with Black and Brown musicians, artists and theorists. It was planned that after two days of encounters and regeneration, the artists will open up their exchange to the public in an INVOCATION of and on the poetics and precarity of breath with music, performances, lectures, and storytelling.

The current Covid-19 pandemic caused by a severe acute respiratory syndrome makes breathing and gathering together impossible. The INVOCATION will be streamed online, and we will hold each other until we can come together in care and breath.

BREATHE. REST. REFUEL.

SCHEDULE

STREAMING LIVE FROM SAVVY CONTEMPORARY

13:30 SAVVY TEAM

Collective Poetry Reading

13:45 DUMAMA AND KECHOU FEAT.
NANE KAHLE SOUND

Buffering Juju

Sonic Performance

14:10 BREAK

14:30 KALAF EPALANGA

A Good Citizen

Sonic Experience

15:35 MAZEN KERBAJ

*I Will Be Assuming You Are on the Other Side of
the Screen (and That You Are Focused)*

Sonic Performance

16:00 JESSICA EKOMANE

Untitled

Sonic Performance

16:25 BREAK

STREAMING LIVE FROM SILENT GREEN

17:00 CHARLES SAMMONS
COLLECTIVE

Charles Sammons' Way Back Home

Sonic Performance

17:50 BREAK

18:10 DUMAMA AND KECHOU FEAT.
NANE KAHLE SOUND

Buffering Juju

Sonic Performance

18:35 AUDREY CHEN AND HUGO
ESQUINCA

Voice/Process

Sonic Performance

STREAMING LIVE FROM SAVVY CONTEMPORARY

19:00 JUMOKE ADEYANJU

Mo ti ri: Memoirs of a Seer

Poetry and Dance Performance

19:15 LAMIN FOFANA

A Scattering of Spiral and Elliptical

Sonic Performance

19:40 BREAK

20:00 MIYA MASAOKA

An Ultra Moment: Excerpts in Isolation

Sonic Performance

20:35 DRUMMERS OF JOY

A Prelude to a Tribute to Tony Allen

Sonic Performance

21:20 BREAK

21:40 CHRISTIAN BAKOTESSA

Untitled

Sonic Performance

CONTRIBUTIONS & CONTRIBUTORS

DUMAMA AND KECHOU FEAT.
NANE KAHLE SOUND

Buffering Juju
Sonic Performance

Buffering Juju, the title of Dumama and Kechou's debut album, relates to the process of "excavating spiritually charged content from within." Their approach to music is a coalescence of their respective individual journeys into the self and society, making their sound – described as nomadic future folk music – the sonic result of an organic meditative process. *Buffering Juju* plays out as a lush narrative meeting its sonic equivalent; one whose world is self-contained and interwoven. The narrative unravels as a piece of magical realism informed by South African folklore and reality, detailing a woman's liberation story where the characters shift shape and traverse multiple realms, deploying various iterations of their power or lack thereof. "It has an organic, natural, cyber and modern kind of energy – all rooted in African aesthetics of sound and storytelling," says Kechou. All of this sits on a bed of the duo's unique musical language, one that, although applied electronically in the form of looping and soundscaping, is founded on approaches to string, vocal and percussion tones that reflect a merger between northern and southern African heritage. Recorded primarily in Cape Town and Johannesburg over the first quarter of 2019, *Buffering Juju* is a conduit to a past we were not necessarily present for, and a future where threatened indigenous technologies thrive in an increasingly digitised world.

DUMAMA, born Gugulethu Duma, is a South African future folk performing artist, songwriter and cultural researcher. Inspired by issues around inequality and displacement, she experiments with notions of ancient sounds in a new world, with projects concerned with cultural preservation and the tension and harmonies present in intergenerational exchanges. Reimagining folk music of ancestors, living and deceased, Dumama works with the voice, live loops, hand-made bow instruments and distortions. Fascinated by sound's power, the tonal emergence and decay in certain frequencies and emotions evoked within these frequencies, Dumama passionately explores music as a tool for social transformation and healing.

KERIM BECKER aka Kechou is a composer, multi-instrumentalist, writer, producer of Algerian-German descent who was raised in the buzz of Berlin by an Algerian musician and studio owner and a German

feminist and writer. He has been studying African Music for a number of years, and has produced and performed with different jazz-infused hip hop and Afro-Fusion experiments in Germany, and different parts of Africa. He represents a collision and merger of two worlds not easily combined without friction and tension, creating harmony in his expression and innovative creative process. Building live loops, fusing organic acoustic hand-made instruments with electronic sounds, he creates hypnotic healing rhythms and grooves that hit the spot.

KALAFEPALANGA
A Good Citizen
Sonic Experience

Cities are made of people, the legend Zé da Guiné told me – one of those musical beings who are only born from time to time – by pointing out how its citizens moved through spaces that we were not supposed to call home.

KALAFEPALANGA is a musician and writer, born in Angola. He is a member of the award-winning band Buraka Som Sistema. He has written columns for the newspaper *O Public*, *GQ Magazine (Portugal)* and *Rede Angola*. He currently writes for the Brazilian magazine *Quatro Cinco Um*. He published the books *Estórias de Amor para Meninos de Cor / Love Stories for Colored Kids* and *O Angolano que Comprou Lisboa (Por Metade do Preço) / The Angolan who Bought Lisbon (At Half the Price)*. *Também os Brancos Sabem Dançar / Whites Can Dance Too* is his first novel.

EILIYAS
Improvisation
Sonic Performance

Seeking an alternative interface for music creation, a sonic feedback loop is created utilising various sonic processors for manipulating the sound. The initial premise was inspired by Thelonious Monk's piano solos. The sonic output may seem quite different given the obvious fact that Eiliyas is a different person with different experiences and this method of sonic exploration is also noticeably different.

EILIYAS is a Macon born, Atlanta bred, Berlin-based artist working with music, sound design, creative writing and conceptual art. Sound, video, synchronicity, broken technology, idealism, pen, paper, pencil, ink,

song, simplicity, layers, life, environment and other are just some of the tools that Eiliyas uses to execute his artistic endeavours.

M A Z E N K E R B A J

I Will Be Assuming You Are on the Other Side of the Screen (and That You Are Focused)

Sonic Performance

Being an improvising musician means to be constantly in the here and now. Nowadays, in the age of social distancing, the now is still a possible reality, whereas the here is fragmented in as many pieces as there are viewers. This means for the musician that they need to make a big effort in substituting the camera for the audience, and to believe that behind the camera the audience is actually here and now. The audience however needs to make a bigger effort by extracting themselves mentally from their actual physical surroundings, in order to be here, now.

Mazen Kerbaj has been quite reluctant to play live streamed concerts in the past 9 months with the exception of two streaming of performances attended by limited audiences. This will be his first attempt at finding a here and now somewhere between S A V V Y Contemporary's space and the thickness of your screen. For this, he will need your full involvement.

M A Z E N K E R B A J is a Lebanese comic author, visual artist, and musician. He has taught at the American University of Beirut. His visual art is heavily influenced by his musical improvisation practice.

Mazen Kerbaj is widely considered as one of the initiators and key players of the Lebanese free improvisation and experimental music scene. He is co-founder and active member of MILL, the cultural music association behind Irtijal, an annual improvisation music festival held in Beirut since 2001, and co-founder of Al Maslakh, the first label for experimental music in the region operating since 2005.

As a trumpet player, whether in solo performances or with groups like the "A" Trio, Kerbaj pushes the boundaries of the instrument and continues to develop a personal sound and an innovative language. Since 2000, he has played in solo and group performances in the Middle East, Europe, Asia, Latin America, Canada and the USA. He has performed with many musicians, including: Sharif Sehnaoui, Raed Yassin, Franz Hautzinger, AMM, The Necks, Alan Bishop, Mike Cooper, Evan Parker, Bob Ostertag, Pauline Oliveros, Sam Shalabi, The Scrambled Eggs, Michael Zerang, Axel Dörner, The Ex, Joe McPhee, Jean-François Pauvros, John Butcher, Johannes Bauer, Tony Buck, Magda Mayas, Peter Evans, Nate Wooley.

In 2015, Kerbaj was a guest of the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program, he works and lives in Berlin since.

J E S S I C A E K O M A N E

Untitled

Sonic Performance

This performance is a musical play with rhythm perception in space, mostly using sine waves as main sound material. It explores the perception of separate elements as a whole to form meaning, transforming the addition of simple static sound elements into a complex polyrhythmical structure.

J E S S I C A E K O M A N E is a French-born and Berlin-based electronic musician and sound artist. Her practice unfolds around live performances and installations. Her quadraphonic performances, characterized by their physical affect, seek a cathartic effect through the interplay of psychoacoustics, the perception of rhythmic structures and the interchange of noise and melody. Her ever-changing and immersive sonic landscapes are grounded in questions such as the relationship between individual perception and collective dynamics or the investigation of listening expectations and their societal roots. Jessica Ekomané was one of the six composers chosen as collaborators by Natascha Süder Happelman for her installation at the German pavilion of the Venice Biennale 2019. She released her debut album, *Multivocal*, on Important Records in 2019. Her work has been presented in various institutions worldwide such as CTM festival (Berlin), Ars Electronica (Linz), Dommune (Tokyo) or Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts (Omaha).

C H A R L E S S A M M O N S C O L L E C T I V E

Charles Sammons' Way Back Home

Sonic Performance

Charles Sammons' Way Back Home is never the same experience. We disassemble melodies, stories, and our impressions alike to reveal what lies within the music which may evade our intellect and corporeal senses. It is paramount that colonial survivors are afforded the platform to both rejoice and examine; experience revelry and revulsion while we delight in healing ourselves and our brethren. We light a fire amongst ourselves and invite all to come and be warmed – to be nourished as we nourish one another.

E R I C V A U G H N is a modern musical product of Savannah, GA, USA. Vaughn created the sound and brand "Naked Jazz", which he has most recently re-introduced in Europe. In 1995 Eric served as artistic director for the Atlanta Jazz Festival. He produced a CD of original music for the Savoy jazz label in 1996. Between the mid 1990s and 2007 Vaughn led jazz trios aboard the Carnival cruise fleet. As a composer/arranger Vaughn has worked on musical projects for both CNN and Walt Disney.

Vaughn has performed, toured, collaborated or recorded with: James Moody, Cedar Walton, Freddy Cole, Reginald Veal, Cyrus Chestnut, Russel Malone,

Wycliff Gordon, Kurt Rosenwinkel, Nicolas Payton, Maurice Brown, Victor Goines, Ben Tucker Trio, Johnny O`Neal Trio, Pianist Joe Jones, Doug Carne, Freddy Hubbard, Audrey Shakir, Kelvin Sholar, Kofi Burbridge, Eddie Pizant, Teddy Adams Quintet, Life Force feat. Joe Jennings and John Fadis.

NATALIE GREFFEL is a Berlin based vocalist, instrumentalist, composer and arranger. She is known for her work with various projects as well as her stylistic flexibility. Her entry into music began by coincidence, with her musically-untrained father buying her a children's keyboard after winning the lottery. In the beginnings of piano lessons with her sister's friend, the seeds of Natalie's artistic passions were planted.

After moving to Berlin in 2010, Natalie decided to pursue a music career, and since then has worked with several groups such as Radio Citizen, Onom Agemo and the Disco Jumpers, Kelvin Sholar, Karl Hector and the Malcouns and Natedal as both a singer, composer, lyricist and bassist.

JOHAN LEIJONHUFVUD Ever since his several years of collaboration with the German star trumpeter Till Brönner, Johan is considered one of the most promising protagonists of contemporary jazz. He has put his name on the list of first-class jazz guitarists, not only as a sideman of Brönner and Nils Landgren but also as a bandleader of his own projects, and has often been associated with the tradition of greats like Joe Pass, Kenny Burrell, Wes Montgomery or John Scofield.

After three studio albums and a live CD in Sweden, Johan's forthcoming album will be presented by the Berlin-based jazz label Blackbird Music. Together with Christian von der Goltz, Lars Gühlcke and Tobias Backhaus he started his new project Johan Leijonhufvud Mighty Mezz. Their first release is simply called "Vol. 1", a modern jazz album, versatile in style, pluralistic in the best sense.

His creative process begins unintentionally and without specific reason. It is rather a playful search on the guitar, a gathering of fragments that become a song in the end. It all starts with a single chord, a rhythm or a melody.

CHARLES SAMMONS is an American instrumentalist, composer, and instructor world renowned for his innovative techniques and approach. Equally at home behind the double bass, electric bass, and cello, Sammons pushes the outer boundaries of the idiom and the instruments while retaining firm footing in tradition. A consummate collaborator, Sammons has been featured on multitude recordings from jazz through electronica, rock through pop. As a performer and sideman, Sammons has played and toured with a host of the world's most excellent artists.

Currently Sammons resides in Berlin where he contributes his unique voice to this hotbed of creativity. Whether appearing with one of his Jazz-Fusion-Electronica projects, or more traditional fare, his contribution is energetic and electrifying. As a band leader, Sammons' manifest. *_Pocket* is among the most sought out funk bands on the scene. Away from the stage Sammons is a prolific composer enjoying the theatre experience as much as film scoring. And because the community and heritage of this art is so important, Sammons founded the Alt-Materials Comprovisation in order to share and teach the concepts of improvisation and composition he is continually uncovering.

Charles hails from Charlottesville, Virginia and Washington DC. He has made Berlin, Germany his home for the better part of a decade.

AUDREY CHEN AND HUGO ESQUINCA
Voice/Process
Sonic Performance

VOICE / PROCESS simultaneously explores the dynamics between a sonorous body, the processing interaction of a system that responds directly to the particularities of its spectra and the relation these two have with a defined space. In this sense, human-machine relations enter into a mediation through a double articulation. This double articulation emerges from the inherent temporalities of vocalicity and the processual speeds of computational devices which carry within them the capacity to extend the intervening at the same time as they react to the spatial characteristics of a defined architecture.

AUDREY CHEN began her relationship with sound through the cello and voice over 30 years ago and for the past 15 years, her predominant focus has been her solo work, joining together the extended and inherent vocabularies of the cello, voice and analog electronics.

More recently, she has begun to shift back towards the exploration of the voice as a primary instrument, delving even more deeply into her own version of narrative and non-linear storytelling. She derives her sound material in continuous process, championing the "in-between" and overlooked. Regardless of instrument, Chen's mode of experimentation touches both the abstractly beautiful and the aggressively unsettling, creating a kind of curiously imagined architecture, non-prosaic song or ritual that reaches beyond gravity or language.

HUGO ESQUINCA is a Berlin-based sound researcher from Mexico. In his work he investigates the diverse spatial-temporal relations deriving from transductive interactions between indeterminacy, thresholds of instability, micro temporality, digital signal processing and sonorous modulation at various

perceptual, physical and material degrees.

J U M O K E A D E Y A N J U

Mo ti rí: Memoirs of a Seer

Poetry and Dance Performance

An ode to memories of the preverbal "Mo ti rí: Memoirs of a Seer" is a transfigurative rendering of a poetic movement piece, incorporating improvised elements from Hip Hop, House and contemporary freestyle motions. Reconciling with the spatialized body, this movement remedy immerses from a mélange of Alice Coltrane's transfigurative virtuoso sound, Detroit's Omar S and Jumoke's Yorùbá poetry.

J U M O K E A D E Y A N J U is of Yorùbá heritage and was raised in Aachen, Germany. Currently pursuing a MSc in African Politics at SOAS University, Jumoke has worked as a research assistant and undergraduate lecturer (teaching on Necropolitics, Fanon, Charity Politics and Performing Arts in East Africa) at the Humboldt University and Alice Salomon University respectively.

Jumoke Adeyanju is an interdisciplinary writer, curator, dancer and vinyl selector. She has successfully evolved as a host of multiple cultural events and as a multilingual poet. Her work has been shown at various occasions in Germany, Tanzania, Kenya, Nigeria and the US — performing her poems in English, German, Kiswahili and Yorùbá. She is the founder of The Poetry Meets Series and radio host for YAASAA Radio. Jumoke's multidimensional sound, words and movement art has been commissioned by Arthouse Foundation Lagos, African Artists' Foundation Lagos, Galerie Wedding, CUNY NYC, Kölnischer Kunstverein, African Crossroads Mombasa and Deutschlandfunk Kultur.

As an allround artist, Jumoke's approach touches on topics like diaspora nostalgia, memory, performativity and how various elements of expressive art forms interrelate and incorporate the potential to (re-)create moments of reviving other or rather lost selves.

L A M I N F O F A N A

A Scattering of Spiral and Elliptical Galaxies

Sonic Performance

A Scattering of Spiral and Elliptical Galaxies is part of an ongoing project that amplifies notions of connectedness in a nonlinear and multidimensional timescape. The work is around black noise, and music not merely about music, but music as a tool to explore ideas, possibilities, or rather portals to new possibilities and ways of seeing. Through collective listening, we reflect solidarity, the complicated process of understanding ourselves and each other, and the possibility of breaking the constraints of our time and start dreaming up new sets of relationships.

L A M I N F O F A N A is an artist and musician currently located in Berlin. His music contrasts the reality of our world with what's beyond, and explores questions of movement, migration, alienation and belonging. Fofana's overlapping interests in history and the present, and his practice of transmuting text into the affective medium of sound, manifests in multisensory live performances and installations featuring original music compositions, field recordings and archival material. His latest releases include *Black Metamorphosis*, *Darkwater*, and *Blues* (an album trilogy). Recent exhibitions and performances include *BLUES* at Mishkin Gallery at Baruch College, City University of New York (2020); *Fugitive Dreams* at Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart, Germany (2019); *WITNESS* at 57th Venice Biennale, Italy (2017); and Documenta 14, Kassel, Germany and Athens, Greece (2017).

M I Y A M A S A O K A

An Ultra Moment: Excerpts in Isolation

Sonic Performance

Miya Masaoka, an experimental composer and musician, plays the One String Thing, with Electricity and Electronics.

M I Y A M A S A O K A is an American composer and sound artist. Her work explores bodily perception of vibration, movement and time while foregrounding complex timbre relationships. She has created a body of work that encompasses interdisciplinary sound art, hybrid acoustic/electronic performance, operas, choirs, mapping movement of insects, improvisation, research, sound installations, performance art. Her works instigate inquiries into new modes of listening, interactive media, and social and critical writing. *The Wire* calls her work "virtuosic, magnificent... essential."

In the realm of improvisation, she has performed and recorded with Pharoah Sanders, Anthony Braxton, Cecil Taylor, Steve Coleman, Zeena Parkins, Fred Frith, Joelle Leandre and many others.

She has been a Studio Artist for the Park Avenue Armory and a Fulbright Fellowship to Japan. Her work has been presented at the Venice Biennale, MoMA PS1, Kunstmuseum Bonn, and ICA, Philadelphia. She has been commissioned by and collaborated with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, the Glasgow Choir, International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), Bang on a Can, Jack Quartet, Del Sol, the S.E.M. Ensemble, Sonic Innovations for an outdoor installation at the Caramoor, New York, and a New Noh Opera at NOVO Festival in Ostrava, Czech Republic, 2021. She is a 2021 fellow for Civitella Ranieri in Italy, and EPAC Fellow in New York. She is a professor at Columbia University and the Director of the Sound Art Program in the Visual Arts Department.

DRUMMERS OF JOY
A Prelude to a Tribute to Tony Allen
Sonic Performance

DRUMMERS OF JOY are representing the African Roots Music tradition in Berlin and worldwide. A new wave of Afrobeat music is spreading across the globe and they are joining the crusade. Even in an online stream, we make you dance and feel the rhythm of pure drums and vocals. The Drummers Of Joy are Ekow Alabi, Mark Kofi Asamoah, Akinola Famson and Ayo Sonko.

CHRISTIAN BAKOTESSA AND JEFF
CHAPPAH
Untitled
Sonic Performance

Christian Bakotessa and Jeff Chappah are half of the four member band „Extra Nice“ that has been playing together for eight years. They play Afro acoustic and are looking forward to being together through and in music.

REST ASSURED.

BODI NO BE FAYAWOOD

CONCEPT BY BONAVENTURE SOH
BEJENG NDIKUNG

*We all begin life in water
We all begin life because someone breathed for us
Until we breathe for ourselves
Someone breathes for us
Everyone has had someone — a woman — breathe for them
Until that first ga(s)p
For air*

We begin life in a prepositional relationship with breath: someone breathes for us. We continue that prepositional relationship, breathing for ourselves until we can no longer do so, and it appears that this most fundamental of acts is always a contingent one — breathing for, with, instead of, and into. Survival demands that we learn to breathe for ourselves, but the sine qua non of our existence is that first extended act of breathing — a breathing for and being breathed for in utero. We can, perhaps, call it a form of circular breathing or even circle breathing. Are there wider theoretical and possible therapeutic implications to breathing for someone and allowing someone to breathe for you? Further, how do the prepositional modifications change these implications — is breathing for the same as breathing with or instead of? Finally, while “i breathe” is semantically complete, its completion would not be possible without that original, prepositional act of breathing for.

– From “The Ga(s)p” by M. NourbeSe Philip

These last weeks have been tiring. Indeed the last years have been exhausting. Indeed some existences — especially for black and brown peoples in certain societies — are exacting and debilitating. The struggles seem to be endless. Whenever one watches the news these days, one is again exposed to images of yet another black man being executed in broad daylight in the USA, or another case of femicide in South Africa, or another journalist killed in Cameroon, or how the COVID-19 pandemic has ravaged black communities more than all other communities. The news of police brutality against people of colour — be it in France, Brazil, India or Cameroon — increases by the minute, and every now and then we are reminded of the fact that our breaths or the mere act of breathing — for some — is in a permanent state of precarity.

In the past weeks, months and years, we have all wondered what we can do at our various levels

– besides thematizing these injustices, racisms, dehumanizations — in the work we do as artists, curators, theoreticians? Consequently, some of us have heated the streets in protests, written letters to politicians, advocated with forces in power, supported those in difficulties, and tried a plethora of ways to organise ourselves and care for each other. But even this too has been depleting — to say the least.

A while back, when I took the street to protest amongst many others in front of the American embassy in Berlin in solidarity of #BlackLivesMatter, and against the coldblooded murder of George Floyd, the systemic racism of police and other institutions; overwhelmed by the burdens and adversities of our times, I sat down, lost in wondering, watching in contemplation. Resigned. In the middle of my thought, a young black woman walked up to me, started a conversation, asked: “How are you? Where are you from?”

We noticed that there were many common denominators. After that conversation, I felt uplifted, cared for, seen. It felt like a recoil. Someone seemed concerned and felt like sharing the load on my shoulder, despite the fact that she obviously had her own burden to carry. It felt like she had come to say: “It is ok. Please take some rest. You have the right to be tired. Rest. And then carry on.” In the middle of that sea of distress, revindication and dissent, an island of radical care was built, and strength and spirit disseminated for a carry on.

Lately, I have found myself coming back to one particular song by the great South African singer and songwriter Letta Mbulu with the reassuring title “Carry On” from her 1996 album *Not Yet Uhuru*. The song was composed for a specific context and time, but that context and time of 1996, just two years after South Africa’s first real democratic election, echoes with the histories and contemporaries of black and brown people all over the world today. In the song “Carry On,” Letta Mbulu sings: “They will tell their lying stories/ send their dogs to bite our bodies/ they will lock us in their prisons.” This is the present continuous. The past continuous. There is so much familiarity in the imagery she evokes and how that has become the fate of many black and brown people. Then she resists and with her resilience “All their dogs will lie there rotting/ Dintsa tsa bona, di tla shwela naheng/ all their lies will be forgotten/ Mashano a bona, will be forgotten/ all their prison walls will crumble/ chakane tsa bona, will

crumble.” Her singing is a convocation of the spirits, the higher beings to protect and guide. But what I am most interested in is her persistence and prospicience when she sings “If you can't go on any longer/ take the hand held by your brother/ Every victory will bring another.” And in the very beginning of the song she sings “There's a man by my side walking/ There's a voice within me talking/ There's word that needs saying/ Carry on, carry on.” I am interested in the figures of the voice within and that hand that you can cling on. At that moment of despair, and almost resignation, the woman was that voice and hand that came on, in her way saying “Carry on, carry on.”

A few days later, the lady I met at the demonstration came to SAVVY Contemporary. This time with four other black women. As we sat down for a tea, they talked about their art, about the histories of African peoples on the continent and in the diasporas, they talked about spirituality and resilience, about what is in a name and how we carry our names in this world, and most especially about love. Radical love.

With all the pressures, and the wish to stand our grounds in the face of adversities, we forget to retreat, to find ways of rejuvenation, to rehabilitate, to recoil. And especially, how do we stand our grounds, how do we fight back in the contexts of prolonged adversities? REST ASSURED. BODI NO BE FAYAWOOD is an effort to take a break. To rest.

It is an affirmation of the right to retreat as a possibility of invigoration. To breathe. In times when being and breathing, when walking, working, playing while black has become most perilous, we need to create spaces in which we can find solace, we need to create sanctuaries of and for resuscitation.

The proposal is that to be able to “carry on, carry on” as Letta Mbulu so thinly sings, we must be able to afford ourselves time and space to retreat. This is the “rest” in the title REST ASSURED, which must also be understood in the imperativeness of the statement which means “To be certain or confident (about something).” That imperativeness is felt when Letta Mbulu sings “It will be hard we know/ and the road/will be muddy and rough/ We will get there/ we know just how we will get there/ we know we will.”

REST ASSURED. BODI NO BE FAYAWOOD. Edition 0: A Prepositional Relationship With Breath is conceived as a two days session — in collaboration with the Jazzfest Berlin — of being and breathing for and with black and brown artists (as well as all SAVVY members who have tirelessly supported black and brown artists for 10 years and counting) and other art workers, musicians, at SAVVY Contemporary Berlin. The third day is conceived as an open INVOCATION with music

sessions, performances, lectures, and story telling sessions to summarise the collaboration between SAVVY Contemporary and Jazzfest Berlin of and on the poetics and precarity of breath, as Nathaniel Mackey points out in his lecture “Breath and Precarity” that with music, especially jazz, “breath becomes tactical, tactile, textile, and even textual” as “music like speech is made of breath.”

A few years ago, I wrote an essay with the title “DEFIANCE IN/AS RADICAL LOVE — Soliciting Contact Zones and Healing Spaces” in which I suggested:

“Art spaces could become spaces of radical thinking. Of radical love. Of protest. So the issue at stake is how can we create spaces where people and society could show their wounds? The process of turning to each other and acknowledging that we all have some kind of wound is a crucial step. For it is only by acknowledging that vulnerability that we can really see each other, converse with each other and heal each other. Protest is such a possibility of presenting the wounds of our times and then a possibility of individual and collective healings. The healing is in the protest itself as cathartic processes and moments.”¹

With REST ASSURED. BODI NO BE FAYAWOOD, the emphasis will be in sharing space, in seeing each other and getting to know each other, it will be in acknowledging each other's presence. Like the black nod. It will be about listening to each other. Closely. As that possibility of communion. It will be about breathing for, with, instead of, and into each other — even if just symbolically. It is not about performing anything (even while doing performances) or striving for anything. But of creating space to be able to listen to that “voice within me talking” and collectively so. It is about “taking the hand held by your brother/ sister.” We will eat, drink, dance, watch videos and films, read, share our practices, sleep, meditate, laugh, dance. Do nothing else, but be. It will be a simple effort to inquire about each others' wellbeing.

In some parts of the African continent, when you are asked: “How are you?” People answer: “I am fine if you are fine!” In other places, when you say “Good morning” people respond “My morning is good if your night was good.” It is this idea that my wellbeing depends on your wellbeing that guides and frames REST ASSURED. BODI NO BE FAYAWOOD. But most of all, it is a space where we claim the right to rest... especially because truly, BODI NO BE FAYAWOOD.

The hope being that we will be able to carry on after that weekend of retreat.²

1 I am interested in this twist of the contact zone as a conflict zone. I am interested to think of conflicts as frictions. And if my sense of physics doesn't fail me, when there is friction there are two possible outcomes.

- i) The kinetic energy of the friction i.e. work is converted to thermal energy, and
- ii) there could possibly be an effect of wear and tear due to the friction in place.

Both effects of friction are what I am interested in. If there is something art and art spaces should/could do in our complex times, it should/could assume the position of the "friction zone," in which discrepancies in aesthetics, power relations, prejudices, complex issues of identities, notions of nation states, states of refugeeness, challenges of neoliberal economic tendencies, and complexities of socio-political, racial and class disparities can be investigated, negotiated, and challenged. This in the hope that upon the friction, the issues at stake are transformed into some form of useful energy, and at the same time, problems might wear down in intensity. Art spaces could become spaces of radical thinking. Of radical love. Of protest.

So the issue at stake is how can we create spaces where people and society could show their wounds? The process of turning to each other and acknowledging that we all have some kind of wound is a crucial step. For it is only by acknowledging that vulnerability that we can really see each other, converse with each other and heal each other. Protest is such a possibility of presenting the wounds of our times and then a possibility of individual and collective healings. The healing is in the protest itself as cathartic processes and moments.

So how can art and art spaces be spaces of 'Auseinandersetzen', that is to say the possibility of setting apart, engaging with the entities to be able to reshuffle them, but which also means confrontation, debate, quarrel, fight... if just to result in the transformation of negative energies to more conducive ones, and otherwise abrogate through wear and tear? How can art and art spaces become spaces for Social Healing, which one must understand as "an evolving paradigm that seeks to transcend dysfunctional polarities that hold repetitive wounding in place. It views human transgressions not as a battle between the dualities of right and wrong or good and bad, but as an issue of wounding and healing. Thus a key question driving the work of social healing is how do individuals, groups and nations heal from past and present wounds?"

We need to care for each other by engaging in "Auseinandersetzen", by being defiant, by protesting and initiating processes of making and unmaking or becoming sound again – cognitively, emotionally, corporeally, societally and humanly.

2 This project was also inspired by Black Artists Retreat [B.A.R.] in Chicago, IL. Initiated by Theaster Gates and Eliza Myrie in 2013.

MORE INFORMATION

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S A V V Y Contemporary—The laboratory of form-ideas is an art space, discursive platform, place for good talks, foods and drinks—a space for conviviality. S A V V Y Contemporary situates itself at the threshold of notions of the West and non-West, to understand and deconstruct them. S A V V Y Contemporary has realized a kaleidoscope of art exhibitions, performances, film screenings, lectures, concerts, readings, talks, dances. S A V V Y Contemporary has established a participatory archive on German colonial history, a performance arts documentation centre, a library, a residency program, as well as educational projects with schools. The art space engages in its neighborhood's history and socio-political realities which are entangled with the reflections and discourses of the project.

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