Drag yourselves out! Vol. 3

From storytelling to solidarity

Do we want to enter a conversation again? To create, for the third time, a jumble of words, questions and feelings that will become a common murmur, a sounding together, our stories? Why not, right? Because there is opulence in our stories: questions, criticism, reproaches, challenges, insecurities, violence, pain, dismay, rethinking, connectedness and, above all, change. Change of ourselves, of others, change of structures. And they include a shout out, "Slay the Oppression and stay, or sashay away!"

Universitätsstraße 7, Stiege III, Hörsaal 3D, 1010 Vienna. (Pleas register via mail to verDragtEuch.philo@univie.ac.at, the space is limited.) It—the document—and we, Paul*A Ntinomia—for this evening *again* Mistress of Ceremony—respectively NARZSISSY—as part of the storytelling—, invite to create a space in which we can reverse together all rejection, all exhaustion and present all stories not told and not accepted in institutions & structures in order to expand our ideas of a for each other by sharing them together. So, once again, this evening is meant to invade the usual of the university, confront it with another ordinariness, and completely unabashedly whistle about what is proper and what is not in such a place. No lecture or workshop! It should be powerful and glamorous, from the night into the day the sheer myriad of experiences and stories should bubble and flood.

Guiding us through this evening with stories, tales, poems and a satanic mass are Jupiter "Lady Nutjob" Braun, JG Danso and Alice "Eric Big Clit" Moe, as well as NARZISSY, the remnants of all self-confidence. They show us all the perversities imaginable; be it the desires to treat each other with respect, to live outside suffocating gender norms, to fight racism, or the utterly criminal idea that we could live together, in a bouquet of colors, joy, complicity, and without beating ourselves to death. We are the ones they call perverted and criminal because we want to live. And if their norm is death, let them keep it.

This evening, inspired by the strength, beauty, and grace of what is presented, is about how to reclaim *grace*, how to reclaim our lives, knowledge and especially our stories. It is a matter of snatching them from the dead claws of institutions; with all the power and grace that lives within our communities against assimilation and forced oblivion.

The purpose of this event is therefore not to listen to a lecture or the reproduction of academic knowledge and then ask questions towards the few who have already spoken. No. The difference between audience and actors is to blur, to dissolve, to reshape again and again. Together, strength is to be drawn from shared and new narratives, and thus, together, what it means for us to live together. That is what this evening is meant to be: Getting caught up in each other's stories and our own. That is, the focus of this event is on the nature of the narratives themselves and looks away from the institutionalized and hegemonic narratives that attempt to fence in and contain the queers. For we are often enough already at the mercy of our storylessness. It is about a ceremony of storytelling, a ball on which the stories relate to each other, revolve and swirl around each other, interacting to shape the space, to change it through their appearance.

For me, this idea finds a model, or perhaps better some queerstory — and perhaps you could already guess it — in drag, in the ballroom scene spawned by Black and Latinx people, the Trans Liberation movement, the drag children's book readings, and especially in the words of Leslie Feinberg. It's about letting stories arise from the insults; stories that don't leave others as alone as it happened to those who carried these stories on to this day. Catching up with each other.

So, this is an invitation and a call to join in this evening, to join the fight: "Look for us - transgender warriors - in the leadership of the struggle to usher in the dawn of liberation." ¹

Yours – for another evening – Mistress of Ceremony Paul*A Ntinomia



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¹ Leslie Feinberg, Transgender Warriors. Making History From Joan of Arc to Marsha P. Johnson and Beyond, Boston: Beacon Press 2021, p. 128.