Traces and Documents as Medial Transformations, or: How to Access Performance Art History

Barbara Büscher

For several years there has been a growing interest in reviving and revising performative art from the 1960s and '70s, expressed in exhibitions, reenactments, and accompanying publications. This revival indicates a new, more intense interest in performance art's historicality, and has raised the question of how to gain access to this history. Curatorial practices and stagings have managed to rewrite discussions about performance's alleged tracelessness, which for a long time was considered the key characteristic of performance and its subversive qualities. And yet, the same question arises time and again: which documents and statements, traces and media artifacts, can performance art history rely on?

Present investigations on archival processes and performance art combine the call for "fluid access"[1] to past events—and thus also to a newly contextualized appropriation—and questions related to media theory. Documents and traces are considered medial transformations, which, depending on the quality of each respective media, focus on different referential levels. What and how does a filmic recording represent differently than a series of photographs? What do we learn about spatial and temporal structures through notations and scores? These and further questions about the artifacts of a potential archive arise in both current presentations and research on performance history.

The three examples I will address in the following focus on exhibitions, installations, and one of the most classic forms of presentation, the catalog/book. These formats are used to examine different constellations of artifacts ranging from photographs to texts, scores, film, and video. I chose the three following artworks with regard to the diverse nature of the access points and public presence they offer. How they are (re)presented, in turn, sheds light on the stories and history of performance and action art and its presentability.

I.

In 2011–2012, VALIE EXPORT and Yilmaz Dziewior presented an extensive and elaborately staged exhibition titled *VALIE EXPORT – Archive* at the Kunsthaus Bregenz. The exhibition architecture was designed by Büro Kühn

Malvezzi and there was an eponymous catalog that documented and elaborated on the exhibition.

There are several examples of artists who refer to and utilize the framework of an archive or collection in their work,[2] but both the exhibition and catalog of *VALIE EXPORT – Archive* are a remarkable example for the demonstration and presentation of artistic self-archiving. They can be read as implicit reflections on archiving processes in the field of performance and action art. Additionally, they mark a position within the context of a series of exhibitions and reenactments on performance art and its history in the past fifteen years.[3] The exhibition allows us to deal with questions that have fundamentally formed the relationship between performance and action art and its documentations and recordings. The latter term refers to traces, relics, and media artifacts, as well as diagrams, instructions, and concept papers—in other words, to materials that preceded the event. The issues I wish to examine include the status of the artifacts shown or depicted, their characterization as medial transformations, and their specific referential qualities; what insights they allow into past events, how they are (re)presented, and how they are staged.

Exhibitions and catalogs/books are two of the most common and most discussed forms of presenting artworks and/or reproductions thereof.[4] They allow a specific kind of access to collections and archives of art history (and other histories). Photography takes on—or rather, is ascribed the special function of—creating evidence.[5] Questioning how events in time and space, unfolding in their own dramaturgies and dynamics, can be presented in these formats illuminates practices that have only recently become visible at all.

"At her solo exhibition at the Kunsthaus Bregenz, VALIE EXPORT is providing for the first time insights into her comprehensive archive that until now has remained inaccessible to the broad public. In 57 large display cases, materials from her archive have been arranged according to works and themes…. Her most well-known works such as *TAPP und TASTKINO*, *Aktionshose: Genitalpanik* and *Body Sign Action* are not simply presented separately as autonomous pieces, but in conjunction with the reference materials relevant for their making."[6]

While the exhibition *VALIE EXPORT – Archive* presented an entire floor of film and video works in a "film forest" with various projection screens and formats, the catalog centers on the presentation of the 57 display cases, which contained texts, drawings, photographs, printed matter, and objects.[7] The short (one-minute) video clip documenting the body action *Tapp-und Tastkino* is the only other medium presented with the display cases.[8] The other film work presented in the exhibition ranged from "video-poem" and "film-sculpture" to feature-length film and a documentation that she made for the Austrian broadcasting corporation ORF. Only two of the shown works were identified as "recordings" of body actions or performances.[9] While it has become commonly accepted in research and teaching to consider a filmed recording an adequate means to discuss and access a past performance event or action, it becomes quite—if not irritatingly—clear that both artist and curator do

not share this opinion. Perhaps there are a lot more photographs than filmic documents in the early phase of EXPORT's work from the late 1960s; the spatial separation within the exhibition accentuated the distinctive character of medial transformations and firmly placed them in the context of experimental films and media art in VALIE EXPORT's oeuvre. Thus film and media pieces were presented under the primacy of the artist's authorship instead of being categorized in a hierarchical order. Recordings and documentations by other authors either do not exist, or were not considered.

The large-format catalog features all 57 display cases from the exhibition in three different approaches: first, the content of each case is photographed in a two-page spread (the materials are mounted on a black or white background and include a small card noting the name and date of the work). Here we have another instance of medial transformation. The arrangement of the cases is translated into a surface and the spatial allocation is transformed into a linear one on the catalog's pages. The second part of the catalog describes the cases' content in the form of a catalogue raisonné. The photographers of images displayed in the cases are named. The final part features an extensive interview with VALIE EXPORT and Yilmaz Dziewior, including comments on the arrangement and selection of artifacts for each display case.

Strictly speaking, this is not an arrangement of individual art works, but rather a collection illustrating the process involved, including different stages and forms of recording as well as contemporary context material. Case 1, for example, featuring the body action *Hyperbulie* (1973), includes various drafts—two typed and three photo collages with text—and a series of photographs by Hermann Hendrich. Cutting through time and space, they depict different stages of the action and show the artist in various close-ups. The artist's draft text, complemented with a quote from Mircea Eliade's *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*,[10] is not a description of the procedure, but rather explains the attitude that made the action necessary.[11] An eight-minute videotape documenting the action is part of the film program in the exhibition's other section, and is one of the two films explicitly marked as documentation.

Jürgen Thaler who discusses the term "archive" in his essay for the catalog, coined the term "archival constellation" for this type of arrangement. He elaborates:

> *From the interplay of the two different types of materials, a new work, which might be referred to as an archival constellation, emerges from the archive. Archival constellations of this kind are snapshots, as it were, of an almost infinite variety of opportunities that have been tried out by VALIE EXPORT in the context of presentations of her work.*[12]

A further example, cases 15 and 16, both featuring material on the video performance *Raumsehen und Raumhören* (1974), proves how illuminating the combination of sketches, diagrams, and photographs taken from different work perspectives can be. Cases 15 and 16 contain six folios marked as "storyboard, concept, videogram," photographs of the performative process of the closed circuit—live action,

and video stills.[13] The precisely calculated mix of sound and image and the meticulously orchestrated relationship between recording and image manipulation only become clear through the sketches. VALIE EXPORT herself describes the relevance of the sketches as follows:

> *They are scores for the Closed Circuit performance and audio compositions. After being composed on graph paper, the video performance was recorded by a Dutch team and subsequently edited by me. It's the composition for the performance piece and simultaneously an autonomous work. Additionally you can see images serving as documentation, which were shot during the performance by the team or myself. The scores were done before the performance, before the staging. They are compositional notes for individual procedures in the performance—like musical or theatrical notation.[14]*

The exact status of these sketches—whether they are instructions or an individual artwork—remains unclear.[15]

The base for this constellatory approach is formed by the extensive, meticulously cultivated collection of artifacts that the artist began compiling as documentation of her work early on in her career. It is this collection that enables the communication of a work and, thanks to the abundance and variety of materials, gives us what we call "fluid access" to a past event.[16] While the collection has a physical site, it is simultaneously in constant flux, because the artist-archivist reorders her inventory or changes the status of artifacts. The latter oscillate between individual work and explanatory document.[17] At the same time, self-archiving and the presentation of "archival constellations" is an assertive gesture of retaining interpretative authority and control over one's own history.[18]

"The archive is to be understood as a gesture by which the artistic nature of VALIE EXPORT's work is emphasized, and its transmission, secured. […] In this context, but also from a phenomenological point of view, the material archive is immediately different from, and directly competing with, the museum and any other institutionalized forms of perception and exhibition."[19]

However, displaying artifacts and materials in display cases as a classic form of exhibition presentation of individual items that may not be touched and are difficult to decipher poses an obstacle to "fluid access" for viewers. Here the idea of the archive collides with exhibition practices.[20]

VALIE EXPORT is one of very few artists from the fields of performance/action art and media/film art who has meticulously documented and archived her artistic processes and works. The fact that the city of Linz bought her artist archive and, as part of the Lentos museum's collection, will make it the nucleus of a new research center for media and performance art, is a rare instance of cultural-political support.[21]

Artifacts and other materials on performance and action art and post-dramatic theater are neither physically accessible, nor present in a digital network of artist archives.[22] Today,

knowledge on this aspect of art and theater history is predominantly generated, presented, and conveyed in exhibitions.

One of the projects that served as a case study for our research project *Records and Representations: media and constitutive systems in archiving performance-based arts*[23], was *re.act.feminism (#1 performance art of the 1960s and '70s today* and *# 2: a performing archive)*[24]. An artwork by Ulrike Rosenbach shown at *re.act.feminism #1* at the Academy of Arts in Berlin in 2008–2009, will serve as my second example.

II.

Ulrike Rosenbach's video performance *Meine Macht is meine Ohnmacht* (*To Have No Power is to Have Power)* (1978), first shown in 1978 at the Kunstmuseum Düsseldorf, was presented at *re.act.feminism #1.* The artist staged the piece as an installation of objects and devices used in the performance, as well as other artifacts. The installation, openly displayed in the exhibition space, included a circle of salt, three wooden boxes (25x28x110 cm, 43x49x49 cm, 44x55x56 cm) with contents (rolls of photo film, net, monitor), a mirror (Ø 85 cm), two framed photographs (110x105 cm), and another photograph (90x80 cm). A negative video of *Meine Macht is meine Ohnmacht* was played on the monitor. The photographs were taken during the performance by photographer Erika Kiffl. There were also video stills. The video, recorded in closed-circuit during the performance, was underscored with the performance's original sound and featured a text insert of a Marcuse quote, from which Rosenbach drew the work's title. The wooden boxes, not fully unpacked, were a reference to something that has been in storage, but is no longer used. The net, mirror, and monitor were essential props during the performance, while the photographs form a connection to the action itself, to the artist suspended in the net above the ring of salt. The ring of salt—a spatial marker Rosenbach has repeatedly used—marks a different kind of materiality that becomes directly tangible in the exhibition space.[25]

Fig 1. Erika Kiffl, *Performance - Ulrike Rosenbach*, 1978–1978, Courtesy of Erika Kiffl.

Due to the physical presence of the installation objects, viewers can find access to the history of this performance. They can walk around the installation and can thus experience it within a specific space and in relation to the photographs displayed on the wall. The referential qualities of objectified testimonies have barely been investigated by scholars in the context of performance historiography. As far as I know, only few are accessible at all. A newly awakened interest in different aspects of material culture along with discussions on "material agency," as they are led in the context of exhibition practices in history and ethnographic museums, could offer new insight on the issue.[26]

Rosenbach's installation neither gives the audience access to the dynamics and procedural aspects of the performance, nor to the complexity of the installation in which the performance took place, nor to the most central relationship between the physical body of the artist and the closed-circuit video of her body. The artist herself has published a description of her installation and action:
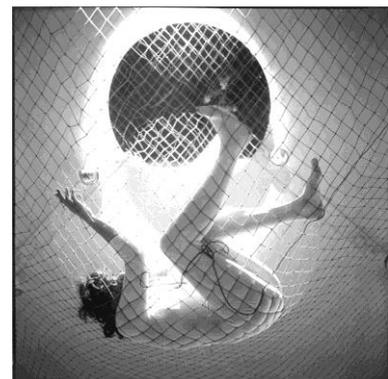
Action Elements:

The space is divided into three parts and has four windows. The windows are covered with large negatives of "women of all cultures." In the middle section, the windows are incorporated to the semi-circular structure of the room. The floor of this section is covered with salt, also following the circular architecture. Beneath the ceiling a large (6x3 m) net is stretched. I lay in the net, a round mirror above me, capturing the light and reflecting—transporting my shadow onto the salt on the ground.

I will lay there for three hours, my only movement will be my breath, audible in the entire space through speakers, breath sound: woman—woman. The camera records the image of my shadow from above and replays it in reverse (negative) on the monitor: my shadow will appear light on dark on screen. The text will run through the image in irregular intervals. At the end of the action I will cut myself free with a pair of scissors and will let myself fall onto the salt-covered ground.[27]

There is a need for descriptions—from as many different perspectives as possible. The one quoted above, from the artist herself, seems like an installation instruction for the space. A further description can be found in a small publication from 1978 by the museum in Düsseldorf. In it, curator Stephen von Wiese published a text on Rosenbach's (video) performances.[28] There is also a brief, very detailed description on *re.act.feminism*'s website, which is still accessible online.[29]

There is also a need for further visual artifacts, such as complementary photographs, or perhaps even a series of images documenting the procedure of the performance. This is where catalogs become important, as well as a co-authoring photographer.

Six black-and-white photographs of the action are published in a catalog that serves as a sort of catalogue raisonné, self-published by Rosenbach in 1982. The images are "action photos" (as the artist herself call them) described as "windows in the video environment," "installation," and "video stills." Different photographic depictions present different aspects of the performance, thus medially transforming the installation-like order into two-dimensionality. Most of all, the images give us access to a view of the space where the action took place. Here, photography (unlike film) makes it possible to capture and focus on the performance space in temporal cuts. Photographer, filmmaker, and camerawoman Babette Mangolte pointed out this difference, which she experienced while documenting numerous dance and performance events in the United States during the 1970s.[30] Apart from surveying the space photographically, there is one image that stands out, thanks to its striking composition. The artist's body, suspended in the net, is photographed at a lateral angle from below, making the mirror above seem like a darkened sun. The photograph, taken by Kiffl, reveals nothing about the space or the installation; there is only this frame that does not allow any sort of localization. It could be read as a visual impression of the atmosphere the situation produced in the photographer. It bears reference to the fact

that every photograph is marked by the specific relationship that exists between the event to be photographed and—using the terms by Vilem Flusser—the apparatus and operator.[31] Both the mode of recording and the processing methods of the negative must be examined in terms of technical conditions and the operator's conceptual attitude and artistic practice.[32]

The photograph is part of a series of images Kiffl took of Rosenbach's video action. Six prints are archived at the Archive of Artistic Photography of Rhineland's Art Scene (AFORK) in Düsseldorf.[33] Seen in sequence, the prints reveal that, for some images, the photographer chose a different framing and thus showed the performance in clear relation to a part of the space. For the publication, however, Rosenbach only chose the image described above. This, in turn, leads to several further questions. How does the single image relate to the series of images? What criteria influence the selection of one image over the other, and what role do publication practices play? The repeated reproduction of singular images in catalogs, magazines, and historical presentations give them an emblematic function, which oftentimes reduces the complexity of spatial arrangements and the dynamics of an action in time and space.

Another issue that calls for examination is that almost all photographs of performances are in a black-and-white format. How much has this influenced our image of performance? Abstraction reduces the full impression and expression of the photograph to a more graphic level, while texture is replaced with lines.[34] How much of the subversive, even aggressive, elements in each image are erased by the black-and-white format? I will further elaborate on these questions in the third section of my text.

The observations I made on the installation and photographs of Rosenbach's *Meine Macht is meine Ohnmacht* expand the scope of investigation on the relationship between performance and its documentation: the authorship of the image after the action shared by performer and photographer; the relationship between medial transformation and the specific reading of the event through the eyes of the photographer. Which body of work forms the referential framework for the presentation of a specific image? Whether an image is seen as part of a performance's documentation or as part of a photographer's oeuvre oscillates and depends on the respective presentational context. In regard to fluid access to artifacts pertaining to performance history, we can also ask how much sense a separation of media according to medium makes. Would it not be more insightful to juxtapose medially different artifacts?

Fig. 2 Ulrike Rosenbach, *Meine Macht ist meine Ohnmacht*, 1978 / 2008. Photograph: Andreas Süß.

III.

During the 1980s, a subversive art scene for performance and action art developed in the German Democratic Republic—below the radar of the state-organized and controlled art establishment. The most prominent group from this scene are the *Autoperforationsartisten.* They are well-known because they were able to exhibit their work in a solo exhibition (Kunsthalle Nürnberg, 1991) and in the Parisian

show *Allemagne hors les murs* in La Villette (1990) around the time the Wall came down. Michael Brendel, Else Gabriel, Rainer Görß, and Via Lewandowsky first met as students for stage design at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste Dresden, and worked together from 1985 to 1991. Christoph Tanner, a curator from East Berlin, helped the group gain public attention through texts and curatorial work. He drew attention to the specific social, mental, atmospheric, and cultural-political situation of the changes taking place in the 1980s. A tight network in a relatively small scene of visual artists, free jazz musicians, punks, and writers was essential for these changes.[35]

The *Autoperforationsartisten* bases my third example on actions and performance events and two catalogs published fifteen years apart. These two publications, or "archival constellations," allow us to examine the differences between black-and-white and color images. I also question the relationship between photography and film as two different forms of medial presentation.

In 1991, Kunsthalle Nürnberg presented an exhibition on the *Autoperforationsartisten*'s work and published two accompanying books. One, sharing the exhibition's title, *Bemerke den Unterschied*, includes artists' texts and interviews from 1990–1991, and thus already looks back on action art in the GDR. The second publication is titled *Autoperforationsartistik* and mostly includes, besides a chronology of events, documentation of black-and-white photographs and contemporary texts on performances, such as opening speeches, or reflections and reviews by people who had witnessed the actions. This slim volume can be seen as a first attempt to capture in images and contextual texts the specific social and cultural atmosphere in which the works were produced. One of the texts, for example, is a later, often quoted text by Durs Grünbein, which describes performances by the *Autoperforationsartisten* as "Prostestant rituals."[36] I will take a closer look at the performance *Herz Horn Haut Schrein* (1987). Peter Böthig, a literary scholar from East Berlin, discusses the piece and individual scenes from the performance. Drawing from shared experiences, he pinpoints something that goes beyond the artistically (auto-) aggressive character of the performance. It is the existential relation between language and body: "In the wordlessness of the image and all important actions, from sleep to scream to love to death to laughter, the fragmentation of all languages of usurpation took place."[37]

The five black-and-white photographs included in the volume capture specific scenes, even though three are rather portraits of the participating artists. Some of the frames give us a glimpse of the audience. The images give an idea of the expressive and exalted physicality of the performers' movements. We also get an impression of how the space was used, how it was so small that there was hardly any distance to the audience, and how the performers had designed very special costumes to depict the three figures, Herz (heart), Horn (horn), and Haut (skin). A chapter titled "Ereignisgeschichte" (chronology of events) briefly describes the performance:

> *Complex, intensively prepared spectacle with theatrical structure using own and foreign texts (Manfred Wiemer, Dieter Rot, Neues Deutschland), strictly choreographed. Initial spark for actionist activities linking language, gesture, sound / music, installation for the artists themselves as well as beyond Dresden […] Performance as thesis defense. Not graded by professors due to 'lack of criteria for this art form'. As a final scene hanging upside down in a mounting frame, singing Happy Safari ("NO vocalize").[38]*

This description sheds light on the importance of sound and text in the performance. However, neither in this publication, nor in the second catalog I will examine, nor in any of the more or less summarizing descriptions of art in the GDR does the full scope of this performance's procedure or dynamics become fully tangible.[39] *Ordnung durch Störung. Auto-Perforations-Artistik* was the title of an exhibition held in 2006 at Oktogon, the exhibition space associated with the HfBK Dresden.[40] The publication accompanying the show had the same title. Once again, the performance is represented in eight black-and-white photographs selected from series photographed by Karin Wieckhorst and Werner Lieberknecht.[41] Moreover, only single shots and not complete series are published, even though they may well make it possible to reconstruct the procedure of the action. A new feature of this catalog is the included DVD featuring fourteen short films on the *Autoperforationsartisten*'s actions and performances from 1987 to 1991. One of the films is a digitalized version of a Super 8 film, *Herz Horn Haut Schrein*, which was cut in 2002 from material recorded in 1987 by Else Gabriel and Via Lewandowsky.[42]

The fact that the film is in color grants new insights into the materials and textures used for the masks, costumes, and props that structured the performance. Since no original sound was recorded, the rhythmically cut sequence of images is underscored with new sound emphasizing the dynamics of the film, but not of the original performance. The associative montage, including many close-ups of the artists, highlights the physical aspects while virtually rendering the space invisible. The audience is never visible. The special quality of Super 8 film gives the digital film an additional aesthetic appeal.

The film is both a medial transformation of the performance *and* an individual artwork that should also be considered in the context of the small gauge film scene in the GDR. Many visual artists played a role in this scene.[43] The film does not become legible as part of an "archival constellation" until it is considered in relation to different materials and artifacts, ranging from conceptual design to series of photographs, to descriptive recordings from different perspectives.

Many of the artworks later produced by the participating artists included bodily fluids, raw meat, dead animals, blood, and other organic matter, sometimes presented in stages of decomposition. Here it becomes particularly obvious—thanks to the films and small number of color photographs published in the catalog—how black-and-white images altered the specific textures of bodies and organic matter

into graphic abstractions. Thus the effect of revulsion and disgust intended and provoked is completely erased.[44]

Conclusion

The aspects and questions raised and explained with the three examples above show in what ways mediality and the status of artifacts and documents can influence how a performance is read and presented. Not until they are visible in their diversity, complementarity, and reciprocal commentary can we gain knowledge of the history of performance art. Artifacts and documents can be newly arranged and sorted as "archival constellations," but only if access to them remains fluid.

The three cited examples make it clear that archiving processes of this kind require more than the attention of individual artists and those documenting their work. What is needed is a broad initiative for a sustained preservation of this part of cultural heritage on the part of respective institutions such as collections, museums, and political bodies.

Barbara Büscher is Professor of Media Studies/Intermediality at the Academy of Music and Theatre Leipzig. She has published numerous essays on postdramatic live art, performance theory and media art, and art and technology. Since 2009, her research has focused on questions of historiography of performance and media art, and on performance/performing archives. She is the co-publisher of the online journal MAP (media/archive/performance).

In collaboration with Dr. Franz Anton Cramer (University of the Arts Berlin), she has been leading the research project "Records and Representations. Media and Constitutive Systems in Archiving Performance-based Arts" since 2013.

1. See the first edition of online journal *MAP media archiv performance*: Fluid Access (2009), http://www.perfomap.de/map1/editorial1engl.
2. See Beatrice von Bismarck, ed., *Interarchive. Archival Practices and Sites in the Contemporary Art Field* (Cologne: König, 2002); Hal Foster, "An Archival Impulse," *October* 110 (2004): 3–22; Helen Adkins and Akademie der Künste Berlin, eds., *Künstler. Archiv (Artist.Archive)* (Cologne: König, 2005); Judy Vaknin and Karyn Stuckey, eds., *All This Stuff. Archiving the Artist* (Faringdon: Libri, 2013).
3. See Barbara Büscher, "Lost & Found. Archiving Performance," in *MAP media – archive – performance # 1 Fluid Access* (2009), http://www.perfomap.de/map1/ii.-archiv-praxis/lost-found-archiving-performance, accessed August 25, 2015, and Barbara Büscher, "Bewegung als Zugang: Performance – Geschichte(n) – Ausstellen," in *MAP #4 Archive / Processes 1* (2013), http://www.perfomap.de/map4/ausstellen-und-auffuehren, accessed August 25, 2015. See also the artworks and publications cited.
4. Repeatedly referenced on this point is André Malraux *Le Musée Imaginaire* (1947), for example by Peter Geimer, "The Art of Resurrection. Malraux's Musée imaginaire," in *Fotografie als Instrument und Medium der Kunstgeschichte* , ed. Constanze Caraffa (Berlin: Dt. Kunstverlag, 2009), 77–89, and

Walter Grasskamp, *André Malraux und das imaginäre Museum. Die Weltkunst im Salon* (Munich: Beck, 2014).

5. This touches on a fundamental discussion on the relationship between photography and evidence. It either bases the relationship on the term indexicality, or refutes this characterization of photography. For a brief insight into the extensive literature on the subject, see Büscher (2009).

6. Yilmaz Dziewior, "VALIE EXPORT Archive," in *VALIE EXPORT – ARCHIVE*, exh. cat., VALIE EXPORT and Dziewior, eds. (Bregenz: Kunsthaus, 2012), 21–22.

7. Dziewior (2012), 22.

8. This becomes evident in a list printed in the catalog/book: VALIE EXPORT and Yilmaz Dziewior eds., *VALIE EXPORT – ARCHIVE*, exh.cat. (Bregenz: Kunsthaus, 2012).

9. VALIE EXPORT and Dziewior, eds. (2012), 315–316.

10. Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

11. VALIE EXPORT and Dziewior, eds. (2012), 98–99, 216–217.

12. Jürgen Thaler, "Archival Constellations: Valie Export," in VALIE EXPORT and Dziewior, eds. (2012), 37.

13. VALIE EXPORT and Dziewior, eds. (2012), 241.

14. Ibid., 91. Various diagrams and drawings on *Raumsehen und Raumhören* can be found on the platform *media art net* (http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/works/raumsehen/, accessed August 21, 2015) and in the collection of the Generali Foundation (http://foundation.generali.at/sammlung.html#artist=35, accessed August 21, 2015).

15. Thaler pointed out: "The task is rather to renegotiate the status of archival items and works of art from case to case" (Thaler in VALIE EXPORT and Dziewior, eds. [2012], 37). In exhibitions the ambivalence of displayed objects often becomes visible. See Büscher (2013).

16. See the first edition of online journal *MAP media archiv performance*: Fluid Access (2009), http://www.perfomap.de/map1/editorial1engl.

17. Yilmaz Dziewior, "Die erweiterte Geschichte der Dinge. Zum Archiv von VALIE EXPORT / The Extended Story of Things. On the Archive of VALIE EXPORT," in *VALIE EXPORT – Zeit und Gegenzeit / Time and Countertime*, exh.cat., Agnes Husslein-Arco, Angelika Nollert and Stella Rollig, eds. (Linz: Lentos Museum, 2010), 90–91.

18. Von Bismarck (2002), 114 f.

19. Thaler in VALIE EXPORT and Dziewior, eds. (2012), 34

20. The curators of the exhibition *Allan Kaprow – Art is Life,* Eva Meyer-Herrmann and Stephanie Rosenthal, solved this problem by reproducing artifacts, drawings, and concept papers in simple copies that visitors could touch, leaf through, read, and take home. Scores of different happenings were reprinted and also made available to visitors.

21. See the press release published by Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz: http://www.lentos.at/images/Ausstellungen/VALIE_EXPORT_Archiv_Presseunterlage.pdf, accessed August 21, 2015.

22. See Hans-Thies Lehmann, *Postdramatisches Theater* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag der Autoren, 1999).

23. See http://www.hmt-leipzig.de/en/home/fachrichtungen/dramaturgie/forschung/forschungsprojekte, accessed August 21, 2015.

24. For details on the case study, see Barbara Büscher, "Archiv Werden," in *MAP #5 Archive Processes 2* (2014), http://www.perfomap.de/map5/instabile-ordnung-en/archiv-werden, accessed August 25, 2015. Further information on both projects can be found at http://www.reactfeminism.org/ http://www.reactfeminism.org/nr1/index_en.html, accessed August 22, 2015.

25. Meike Rotermund, *Metamorphosen in inneren Räumen. Video- und Performancearbeiten der Künstlerin Ulrike Rosenbach* (Göttingen: Universitätsverlag, 2012) and Annette Jael Lehmann, "Videorebels: Actions and Interventions of the German Video-Avant-Garde" in *After the Avant-Garde:*

Contemporary German and Austrian Experimental Film, Randall Halle and Reinhild Steingröver, eds. (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2008).

26. See Hans Peter Hahn, ed., *Vom Eigensinn der Dinge. Für eine neue Perspektive auf die Welt des Materiellen* (Berlin: Neofelis, 2015). A further (of many) examples is Carl Knappett and Lambros Malafouris, eds., *Material Agency. Towards a Non-Anthropocentric Approach* (Berlin: Springer, 2008), as well as the writings of Bruno Latour and their extensive reception history.

27. Ulrike Rosenbach, *Ulrike Rosenbach – Videokunst, Foto, Aktion, Performance, feministische Kunst* (Cologne: self-published, 1982), 67.

28. Stephan von Wiese, "Ulrike Rosenbach," in *Ausstellungsblätter der Modernen Abteilung* 5, Kunstmuseum Düsseldorf, ed. (1978).

29. See: http://www.reactfeminism.org/nr1/artists/rosenbach_en.html, accessed August 22, 2015.

30. See, for example, Babette Mangolte, "Balancing act between instinct and reason," in *MAP #1 Fluid Acess* (2009), http://www.perfomap.de/map1/i.-bewegung-plus-archiv/balancing-act-between-instinct-and-reason, accessed August 25, 2015.

31. Vilem Flusser, *Kommunikologie*, eds. Stefan Bollmann and Edith Flusser (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch, 1998), 151.

32. Another woman photographer who is best known for documenting Joseph Beuys's actions is Ute Klophaus. She has shared information on her process of selection: Ute Klophaus, "Wie kommt man als Photograph dazu, sich auf Aktionskunst zu spezialisieren," in *Fluxus – Aspekte eines Phänomens*, exh.cat., Ursula Peters and Georg G. Schwarzbauer, eds. (Wuppertal: Von der Heydt-Museum, 1981), 226–231.

33. This archive is interesting in regard to the historiography of action and performance art. It was founded by curator Stephan von Wiese and initiated by photographers Benjamin Katz, Erika Kiffl, and Manfred Leve in 2003. The archive has a regional focus in its collection, but it is mainly a goldmine for all kinds of documentations of performance art. This is due to the fact that numerous international artists have been working or presenting their art there since the 1950s.

34. See both publications by AFORK, published on the occasion of collection exhibitions: Renate Buschman and Stephan von Wiese, eds., *Fotos schreiben Kunstgeschichte*, exh.cat. (Düsseldorf: Museum Kunst Palast, 2007), and Kay Heymer and Anne Rodler, eds., *Faszinierende Dokumente / Fascinating Documents*, exh.cat. (Düsseldorf and Moscow: Museum Kunst Palast and House of Photography, 2011).

35. See Monika Wagner and Helmut Lethen, eds., *Schwarz-Weiß als Evidenz: "With black and white you can keep more of a distance"* (Frankfurt am Main and New York: Campus, 2015).

36. I would like to mention a few examples: Eugen Blume and Christoph Tannert, eds., *Permanente Kunstkonferenz* (Berlin: 1989); Wulf Herzogenrath, Joachim Sartorius, and Christoph Tannert, eds., *Die Endlichkeit der Freiheit. Ein Ausstellungsprojekt* (Berlin: Ed. Hentrich, 1990); Frank Eckardt and Paul Kaiser, eds., *Ohne uns! Kunst und alternative Kultur in Dresden vor und nach '89*, exh.cat (Dresden: Kulturverein Riesa, 2010); Barbara Büscher, "Intermedia DDR 1985 – Ereignis und Netzwerk," in *MAP # 2 Decision and Appearance* (2010), http://www.perfomap.de/map2/geschichte/intermedia-ddr, accessed August 25, 2015; Britt Schlehahn, "Prozessorientierte Kunstformen in der DDR," in *MAP # 2 Decision and Appearance* (2010), http://www.perfomap.de/map2/kart/pkf, accessed August 25, 2015.

37. Durs Grünbein, "Protestantische Rituale," in *Autoperforationsartistik*, Christoph Tannert, ed. (Nuremburg: Verlag für moderne Kunst, 1991), 67–70.

38.   Peter Böthig (p.v.poltrie), "Herz Horn Haut Schrein. Erinnerungen an ein Spiel mit den Grenzen," in Tannert, ed. (1991), 59.

39.   "Ereignisgeschichte," in Tannert, ed. (1991), 9. The first performance took place on July 3, 1987, in the basement of HfBK as the diploma defense for Michael Brendel, Else Gabriel, and Volker Lewandowsky.

40.   Christian Hussel gave a detailed description of the action's procedure drawn from recollection and notes in his unpublished master thesis *Aktionskunst in der DDR bei spezieller Betrachtung der autonomen Kunstszene,* written 1996 at the Institut für Theaterwissenschaft der Universität Leipzig and supervised by me. Among other details, he recollected that the performance lasted approximately 45 minutes.

41.   Constanze von Marlin, ed., *Ordnung durch Störung. Auto-Perforations-Artistik*, exh.cat (Dresden: Hochschule für Bildende Künste, 2006).

42.   Next to Karin Wieckhorst and Werner Lieberknecht, other photographers including Jochen Wermann, Andreas Rost, and Ernst Goldberg captured the independent art scene in the GDR during the 1980s. Unfortunately, their archives are not developed and accessible.

43.   There are evidently different filmic transformations of *Herz Horn Haut Schrein*: the digital one cited here is approximately 14 minutes, while one in Via Lewandowsky's catalogue raisonné is noted as 30 minutes (1987) and with the addendum of "Ton: Die Strafe" ("Sound: Die Strafe"). There is also an eight-minute version called "Werbefassung" (commercial version) (1988) with the addendum "Ton: Zimmergeräusche" ("Sound: Room Sounds"), see: http://www.galeriekarinsachs.de/kuenstler/lewandowsky/lewandowsky.html, accessed August 24, 2015.

44.   See Karin Fritzsche and Claus Löser, eds., *Gegenbilder. Filmische Subversion in der DDR 1976–1989* (Berlin: Janus Press, 1996), and Dieter Daniels and Jeannette Stoschek, eds., *Grauzone 8 mm – Materialien zum autonomen Künstlerfilm in der DDR* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2007).

45.   On revulsion in art reception in this context, see Holger Birkholz, "Ekel – Hervorhebung eines Aspekts," in Von Marlin, ed. (2006), 89–96.