

KÜNSTLERHAUS BETHANIEN

Ya-Wen Fu

So Absurd!

08.04. – 30.04.2023

In collaboration with sound artist Gregor Pfeffer and performers Jan Möllmer and Daniel Eduardo / Dani Candela.

In *So Absurd!* I look at what we are afraid of from different perspectives. What triggers our fears? A lack of identity? The loss of state protection? Displacement? The disruption of a state of balance? In times of political instability, these things come under threat or exist merely as vague hopes. The vulnerability of the human spirit clearly manifests itself under conditions of paralysing fear.

My work combines a spatial installation with live videos of human bodies. The setting materialises an intangible fear. The absurd and uncontrollable nature of the interplay between the installation and the videos is deliberately emphasised.

In a corner of a room covered with torn wallpaper, a performer is playing with a snow globe. His emotions change as real-time images of a second scenario appear on the globe. The recorded images depict staged events aimed at causing anxiety. The time delay between the two scenarios – the actual one and the one transmitted via video technology – forces viewers to relate them to each other. They are thus prompted to question or even critically redefine their point of view. Will they use this opportunity? Were they prejudiced?

The performers of this artistic live event explore the unknown space of the exhibition venue. In the process, unforeseen events can happen to them, generating fears and a sense of being lost. The real danger for them, however, is that they tacitly accept the repetitive process, accept its contradictions and their own disorientation, and finally take the absurdity of the situation for granted.

If we are unable to put ourselves in somebody else's position and have no understanding of their social context, can we criticise them for how they deal with crisis situations? Do the images that we see on hysterical news programmes really reproduce reality? What happened to us in the past cannot easily be depicted, let alone reproduced or represented. Against this background, *So Absurd!* uses the technique of video synchronisation to establish and rearrange connections between different events. The experience made possible by this approach draws viewers' attention to how everyday social problems unfold and different points of view emerge. This awareness can enable them to read 'between' and beyond the video images they are shown.

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