

REPORT: IMAGINARY FUTURES

8 September 2020

A project by Marcus Neustetter
in collaboration with

Aja Marneweck / Ciara Struwig / Elrico Plaatjies / Heslin Fortuin / Herman Witbooi / Jeandre Jambo / Johannes Deetlefs / Manzikazi Scota / Mark Edwards / Mariette Erwee / Miné Kleynhans / Nataniël Pokwas / Ofentse Letebele / Paul Setate / Perseverance Mavuso / Reginald Milanzi / Reitumetse Lebatla / Selanvor Platjies / Sifiso Teddy Mhlambi / Sylvia Kalane / Thulisile Princess Binda / Violet Isaacs / Wayne Reddiar / Wendy Menong / Xolisile Bongwana / Zanda Nosenga

Developed in partnership with the Programme for Innovation in Artform Development (PIAD), an initiative of the University of the Free State and the Vrystaat Art Festival, generously supported by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

with the participation of The Trinity Session, Net vir Pret in Barrydale and the Centre for Humanities Research at the University of the Western Cape

Project website:
imaginaryfuture.org

Introduction

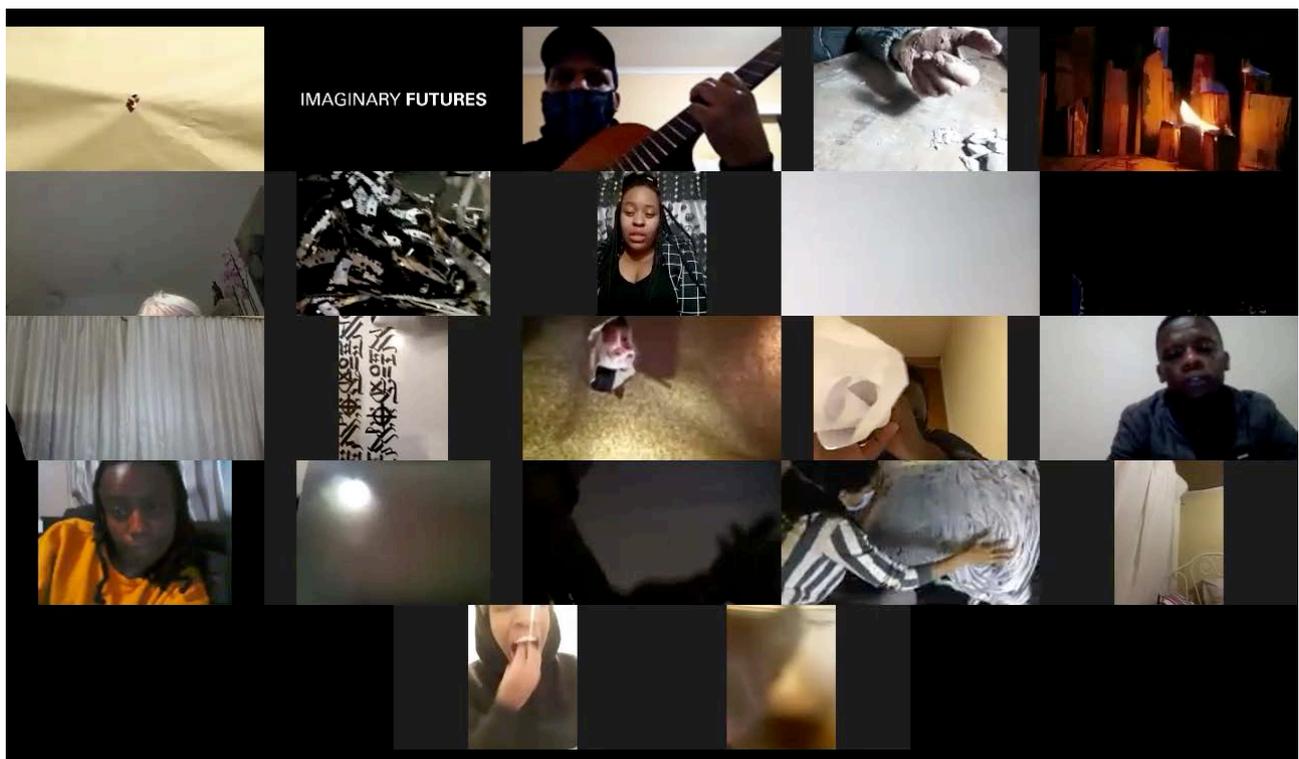
As a continuation of the award-winning participatory film and performance events in 2018 Sig/Sight and 2019 The Vertical Journey, Marcus Neustetter returns with a third reimagined experimental performance in 2020. This time in virtual space and on participating devices across Bloemfontein, South Africa and beyond.

Performative films evoking journeys of discovery and wonder were initially shown at Naval Hill Planetarium and are now brought into the digital domain. A series of free public online events and exhibitions layer these journeys through space and time with a playful series of acts that sit in the tension between art and science, the urban and the rural, the mythical and the embodied, the past and the future.

The first phase of the project, June to mid July, saw the activation of the network of collaborators in experimental creative sessions online. Working collectively on shared screens the participants from the past years and new contributors in 2020 explored new ways of collaborating, alternative forms of expression and new approaches to audiences. From July the activities went live to the public with a focus on programmed activities around a pilot exploration: SOLO SOLIDARITY FUTURE <https://solosolidarity.imaginaryfutures.org>

Acknowledging today's complexities, the 2020's iteration involves a digital mediation of a diversity of participants and their intersecting journeys into imaginary futures while exploring media platforms and tools. As tradition with the last two year projects, the performative interventions is accompanied by an exhibition of processes and by-products. This time not in the foyer of the planetarium, but online at www.imaginaryfutures.org and disseminated through social media #imaginaryfutures.

In August, a series of live public performative interventions hosted on Zoom made use of over 20 live linked activities and immersions, live sound and film mixing, live drawing, animation, puppetry and performance. 9 public events from open studio sessions, reflection discussions to live participatory performances created a layered experience of participation and reflection.



The exploration workshops

In response to the lockdown restrictions the project has been strategic to engage participants through a series of workshops and collective co-production sessions over Zoom.

Experimental exercises and explorations of what the medium, can do led to concept and ideas for collective performance experiences.

These sessions were also a personal reflection of what participants were going through during these times and in this way creating emotional involvement in the process.

The sessions were run on regular intervals in smaller groups, one-on-one and as a full group for 3 months intensifying in late June and July.

The interim testing project

As an interim testing project SOLO SOLIDARITY FUTURE explored the different ideas and processes. This resulted in a program of national and international participation to collectively build solidarity in difficult times. This month long program and activation brought together people from Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Johannesburg, Soweto, and Vienna to not only meet online, but also manifest a physical activity on Nelson Mandela Day as a symbolic gesture of connectivity.

More under: <https://solosolidarity.imaginaryfutures.org>

The format

While many activities took place, the final format entered around 9 key activities that were public.

LIVE PERFORMANCES

witness and participate in virtual performance production

#1 - Saturday 22 Aug 18:30

#2 - Tuesday 25 Aug 18:30

#3 - Thursday 27 Aug 18:30

OPEN STUDIOS

join in on playful experiments with the virtual performers

#4 - Thursday 20 Aug 14:00

#5 - Monday 24 Aug 14:00

#6 - Wednesday 26 Aug 14:00

PROCESS REFLECTION

join conversations between the performers and special guests

#7 - Monday 24 Aug 15:30

#8 - Wednesday 26 Aug 15:30

#9 - Friday 28 Aug 10:00

Zoom meetings was chosen as the platform of choice given the extensive research into different options and various tests for the relevance of the functionalities. The Zoom webinar format was not chosen due to the need for audiences to participate and interact more effectively in the platform.

The content

As an extension of the last two performance planetarium projects, Imaginary Futures explored ideas further drawing heavily on our current experiences of isolation and uncertainty. A 9-part journey held the basic conceptual script in place with partially rehearsed, partially improvised performative activities happening live in over 20 homes or spaces interconnected by the Zoom platform.

A pre-recorded prologue set the scene and title images flashed to announce a change in the script. Marcus Neustetter spoke instructions to the participating audience when needed and guided the process while also highlighting and spotlighting in Zoom the different live audio and camera activities in order to create a journey and consolidated experience. Short prerecorded clips assisted in transitions, connection challenges and prompting improvisation when needed during the performance also raising question of what was live and what not.

The 9 parts to the performance were:

PROLOGUE / CONSUMPTION / CONSEQUENCE / COLLAPSE / SEARCH / VOICE / LANDSCAPE / COCOON / LIGHT

The seemingly abstract narrative focused on a journey that positioned itself in a city that is desperately trying to survive its own demise as the prologue presents:

“The population of the world tripled. This explosion meant catastrophic loads of green-house gases entering the atmosphere and wreaking havoc on the ecosystem down below. Every human born needed a place to live, food to eat, a school to learn and space and resources to develop. All of this was taken from the natural world. The earth's conditions and environments changed far faster than most imagined possible. Irreversible damage to the natural world meant the collapse of societies and the man-made world as it was known. We have run out of time and are living the catastrophe. Armed with our technology, an enormous imagination and an unshakable habit to prospect and claim we are settling into the new world. Set in the hereafter, we imagine what is not known, we journey with ourselves and consider the state of the earth in art.”

Over-consumption disregarding the natural resources leads to consequence and eventual collapse. This is manifested both in the physical and the emotional. Reflecting on the current personal challenges during the Covid pandemic, participants articulate their personal struggles and loss of expression during this time. Hopeful there is a search and a finding of a new voice in an attempt to build a new future. The new found expression and exploration in relation to the landscape and the natural environment forces us to look at ourselves and our relationship to the world around. We cocoon ourselves in an attempt to reflect, protect and cradle. In that space of safety we play with new visions, new life, new light.

During this journey participants were directed and prompted to improvise with performances, dance, music, song, sculpting, drawing, set building, animating, photography, scientific experiments, video, puppetry, shadow and light play, etc. The result is a performance that strings together individual reflections and articulations of the basic script into a myriad of possibilities.

Viewed via Zoom, each performance is vulnerable due to connectivity and electricity issues, disruptions, improvised differences, changing sequences and selections etc. As is each participant vulnerable in presenting themselves in their home or personal space and engaging with what they have and to the best of their ability, most of them not performers and most not that versed in the streaming medium. This vulnerability and likely failure or disruption of the technology formed an integral part to the experience and is intentionally reflected in the content as it reflects the current state of our world and our minds.

The studio sessions were focused on some of the activities and feedback to the different public experiences and used as a participatory way of exposure some of the experimentation and play that was happening in shaping the project.

The reflection sessions were a sharing and feedback platform for discussing ideas and challenges and exploring new possibilities.

The participants

Given the long history of working with teams for the 2018 and 2019 planetarium performances the invitation was opened to anyone that has been part of the project to date. This meant that the participants brought their project knowledge and collective experience to the mix. The project was then opened up to other participants that showed interest and evolved out of the activities from SOLO SOLIDARITY FUTURE. With the discussion of creating a partnership for further exploration of including puppetry and collaborations with Net vir Pret in Barrydale and the Centre for Humanities Research at the University of the Western Cape opened up further participation.

The team that joined from previous years:

- Elrico Plaatjies (Bloemfontein)
- Manzikazi Scota (Bloemfontein)
- Mark Edwards (Durban)
- Mariette Erwee (Bloemfontein)
- Ofentse Letebele (Cape Town)
- Perseverance Mavuso (Bloemfontein)
- Reginald Milanzi (Bloemfontein)
- Reitumetse Lebatla (Bloemfontein)
- Sifiso Teddy Mhlambi (Bloemfontein)
- Sylvia Kalane (Bloemfontein)
- Violet Isaacs (Bloemfontein)
- Wayne Reddiar (Pietermaritzburg)
- Wendy Menong (Bloemfontein)
- Xolisile Bongwana (Johannesburg)
- Zanda Nosenga (Bloemfontein)

New participants through 2020 participation activities:

- Miné Kleynhans (Bloemfontein)
- Ciara Struwig (Johannesburg)
- Paul Setate (Johannesburg)
- Johannes Deetlefs (Bloemfontein)
- Thulisile Princess Binda (Johannesburg)

New participants through the partnership with Net vir Pret in Barrydale and the Centre for Humanities Research at the University of the Western Cape:

- Aja Marneweck (Cape Town)
- Heslin Fortuin (Barrydale)
- Herman Witbooi (Barrydale)
- Jeandre Jambo (Barrydale)
- Nataniël Pokwas (Barrydale)
- Selanvor Platjies (Barrydale)

In addition select people were invited to participate, view and reflect on their experience:

- Stephen Hobbs (Artist and curator in Johannesburg)
- Oulimata Gueye (curator based in Paris)
- Jane Taylor (writer and theatre practitioner in Cape Town, LoKO, Centre for Humanities Research UWC)

Volunteers observers and respondents:

- Marion Louisgrand (curator and media art institute director, Senegal)
- Nina Czegledy (curator and media artist, Toronto)
- Jenni Lewin-Tuner (Director of Urbanflow creative, UK)
- Miche Fabre Lewin and Flora Gathorne-Hardy of Touchstones Earth (artist and researchers, UK)
- Pauline Borton (artist and project manager for The Trinity Session, Johannesburg)

The participating audience

The involvement of audiences was an interesting process as audiences were asked to become participants. The intention was to make the project as participatory and inclusive as possible and reach beyond the screen into the experience of peoples homes and alter their own space and physical engagement. Different activities were planned during the performance and the open studio sessions that asked audiences to physically participate and actively change the conditions of their physic surrounds and not just the screen or technology around them.

For this purpose audiences were sent the following information:

Thank you for joining the
IMAGINARY FUTURES
participatory virtual experiences

We will be sending you an invitation Zoom link for your requested session.

Requests:

- try using Zoom before the scheduled event on the device you will be using.
- join 5 minutes before the scheduled session.
- test sound and video as we will ask you to participate if you feel like it.
- keep video off and microphone on mute in Zoom unless otherwise requested.
- adjust the viewing settings where possible. Under video settings, check the box: "Hide non video Participants"
- familiarise yourself with the gallery and speaker view function.
- listening with headphones and watching full-screen will amplify the experience.

As we will ask you to participate in parts of the live sessions we ask that you have the following at hand if possible:

For the Performances #1/2/3:

- be in a space that you can darken if possible

Please bring

- a handheld light source (torch/ phone light/ lighter/ candle)
- a loose A4 sheet of paper available.
- a face mask
- a cloth, scarf or blanket wrap yourself in.
- an empty glass.

For the Open Studio #4/5/6 and Process Reflection #7/8/9

Bring pen and paper and you will be asked to source materials from your space if needed during the sessions.

Please note participation is voluntary and these sessions will be recorded. Participation gives consent for the reuse of this material for publication.

This led to most audience members participating and following instructions, momentarily breaking the exiting barrier between the performers and the audience and having the full experience. Select audiences chose to only watch the process.

Audiences were brought from various networks and media lists of PIAD, The Trinity Session, Marcus Neustetter, the participants and their networks.

Aligning the performance program with PACE and the Vrystaat Art Festival meant that there the program could draw form those audiences.

As a result in a time of Zoom fatigue, load shedding and lockdown release chaos, the performances were still well visited with on average 20 people from Southern Africa, East and West Africa, Europe and North America. Several people also connected with groups watching in their household and many have asked to see the resulting documentation.

The challenges

COVID19 - while the project was result of the rethinking due to the pandemic and its implications and many of the participants used the project to reflect on their current processes and lives, the impact of the pandemic was felt in various challenging ways. Participants falling ill, materials not being easily attainable, smaller groups not being able to work together, emotional stresses, disrupted routines, etc. all became the conditions conditions that would however influence the resulting format and content of the experience and process.

Technology and connectivity - Temperamental internet connections, load shedding, hardware and software compatibility issues, Zoom limitations and restrictions and some experience and tech-knowledge limitations all contributed to the anxieties and slow progress of the project in times. However it also gave rise to innovations in approach and learnings and growth in the participants and the project development and adaptability.

Zoom fatigue and everyday distractions - the excessive Zoom and virtual encounters that came out of the lockdown condition affected many participants. A fatigue, tardy responsiveness, screen saturation and depression becomes factors that we had t work through and overcome in the development of the project. Luckily the creative exercises and personal reflections in the development sessions did also create a respite form the less exciting and impersonal encounters.

Challenges to harmonise and connect with each other - Several performers at first expresses a frustration of not being able to harmonise, respond or draw fro the energy of their collaborators. This developed into a challenge and a critical question around the sustainability of this mediated production process.

Budget and time - While the support and budget was generous in believing in the process based and experimental nature of tis work, it was underestimated how much time it would take to develop the dynamic relationships and engage with the participants to deliver. The commitment of everyone was commendable and there were no complaints about the budget allocation, but in reflecting back on the amount of coordination, management and development time was involved due to the mediated format, the assumption that it would be more cost effective was wrong. The project was also adapted to be able to fit into the time and budget availability and, like the format of the project become a fit and valuable learning for this type of practice.

The next step

Online publishing and further experiments

The process of online publication of the documentation continues. New content is constantly shared and still discussed amongst some of the participants and the website grows with contributions. The hype and interest amongst a large part of the team has presented a few internal opportunity to look at further experimental activities

Invited opportunities

- Performance-lecture with the Post Pandemic Provocateurs, Saturday 26 September
- Performance during the Vrystaat Festival, October 2020
- Brighton Fringe Festival performance presentation October 2020 (TBC)
- Urban Month activation performance, October 2020 (TBC)

Responses

Responses and interests are steadily coming in and we are collecting comments and listing potential future opportunities for the Imaginary Futures development. The responses are published and shared in order to start building different perspectives on the participatory virtual experiences.

Documentation

imaginaryfutures.org holds a full project documentation with constant additions.

#imaginaryfutures as well as on the PIAD and Marcus Neustetter Instagram and Facebook accounts there is shared documentation and short films for quick consumption and promotion.

The playlist of the performances captured in full:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6yZ2jTk2RY&list=PLpU2rn_bV9FjL4y3Q9fKAbIVAL2Yki2Lt



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PIAD IMAGINARY FUTURES

Programme for Innovation
in Artform Development

#imaginaryfutures

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Feedback statementsImaginary futures Collaborator feedback

Marcus and I have been thinking into a collaboration involving puppetry, Net vir Pret (a young people's non-profit organization based in Barrydale in the Klein Karoo, www.netvirpret.org) and the Centre for Humanities Research (www.chrflagship.uwc.ac.za) where I am based, for the third iteration of his award winning planetarium live art video installation project for PIAD, since 2019. We connected with Marcus and the trajectory of his filmic sequences from the PIAD project and began to think about introducing giant puppets and puppetry concepts into possible encounters with publics and city spaces around Bloemfontein, performed by Net vir Pret, for the Vrystaat Festival in 2020. When Covid and the resultant lockdowns advanced, Marcus proposed the potential of continuing these concepts of experimentation online. I jumped at the opportunity to play and explore what might be possible for our medium of puppetry, such a tactile, intimate and communal art form, and how it might sit in an online, multimedia zoom experience. It's a path many artists are having to consider (forced, coerced, loving, despising) and we are only just scratching the surface of what it means, what it destroys and what it makes possible to be connecting and creating primarily through digital space, through media and through public and private digital technologies. The Imaginary Futures process has opened multiple windows on how I might think about interactions between screen, camera, frame, surface, time, space, collaboration, improvisation and creation. Our artistic exchanges with Marcus have facilitated a new way of playing between myself and artists at Net vir Pret being open to not always knowing what the outcome will be but being willing to step into that space together. The explorations we conducted in sessions with the IF group, extended themselves well into our own environments, transforming our own relationship with the objects, puppets and tools in spaces around Barrydale and Cape Town, our own homes and our places of work. These encounters are already contributing to the way we approach and think about new digital and creative approaches to our ongoing artistic projects together.

Aja (Dr Aja Marneweck, LoKO, Centre for Humanities Research UWC)

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"A novel and evocative online interactive experience"

The Imaginary Futures project, which was deliberately produced to be viewed and participated on teleconferencing applications, invites viewers and participants to engage in a uniquely participatory experience. Participants are guided by the many collaborating artists in the virtual collection of sites. These sites are displayed through the thumbnails of the gallery view of the online meeting and pinned display screen from a cacophony of sound and scenes to a dark and soothing cocoon. I highly recommend making use of two screens, to be able to view both the curation of Marcus Neustetter and the hive of movement and interlaced thumbnails of performances by each collaborating artist.

Lyrene Kühn-Botma

-

"...artful heart activism with extraordinary visual power and haunting vocals"

IMAGINARY FUTURES was quite awesome... and evolutionary. Marcus is experimenting between the live, and the recorded and interactive participation which becomes integrated as part of screened performances which are 'scripted' yet the actions and visuals, the soundscapes, the moving bodies, the sculptural architectures are interlayered multisensual sequences serendipitously evolving to create emergent vistas and collective choreographies to inspire and activate new modes of seeing, being, knowing, feeling. This is an orchestration of Zoom with improvising and spotlighting of music, song, performance dance, markmaking and video footage ... Marcus is co-curating and conducting living collages with his fellow South African artists/students... it is artful heart activism with extraordinary visual power and haunting vocals which convey uplifting narratives and mythopoetic realities to guide us into our forward days of the renewed.

Miche and Flora or TOUCHSTONES EARTH

"It takes a brave group of explorers to lead us into the light."

The performance contained beautiful visuals, special iconography, and sound, aside from smell it interacted with all the senses.

Which is interesting considering that it was communicated across a virtual platform. It was moving, and made me want to cry in parts, it also felt like it cut very close to the razor's edge between apocalyptic and survival. Making it in parts an uncomfortable experience. Much like the realities we are all adapting to today. It was interactive, integrated when it needed to be, disconnected when discord was needed. The digital choreography complex.

There are fragments of the performance that will remain in my memory for a long time - the cycle of the dying/living naartjie, the globes of paint, paint rising to the surface and umbrella satellites. The shadows, voices, dancers and holograms looking inward, carefully contrived installations/sculptural maps/counting days/moments in time, talking about narratives of past, present and future - explorers inward looking, outward looking, living now.

2 minutes post performance, my aunt says to me: that was very interesting, I am not sure what it was about - but it was visually interesting. We agree it was layered with a number of hidden meanings, several that were very personal to the collaborators/explorers.

2.5 hours post performance, my aunt says to me: that was amazing, I really enjoyed the journey. I still feel a bit emotionally fragile, as if it revealed a narrative that I see out the corner of my eye everyday on the news. The light fractures of hope were special, we were transported into a new world of light and hope.

I cannot imagine how complex it was to pull off a digital/virtual process such as this - facing the challenges of daily life in South Africa, across the seas and regions. It takes a brave group of explorers to lead us into the light, which is what you did, through creative expression and vulnerability.

Pauline Borton

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"The experience is very moving and thought provoking..."

My immediate responses: The experience is very moving and thought provoking tackling challenging and very relevant themes. It was amazing to see diverse art forms, communities and social perspectives involved and the engagement felt very authentic and consultative. It felt like artists were presenting their own ideas and their talents. I felt inspired by the talent and very proud of the young voices coming through. From a technical perspective I was really aware that these artists couldn't possibly have been together in the same space to discuss/rehearse yet we felt there was a real connection throughout the event. The raw and experimental format really worked and actually reflected the unknown territory we find ourselves in right now.

Jenni Lewin-Turner

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"...brought forth a synthetic collage - combining visual experimentation with fracture, spatial distance and play."

Sitting far away, in the absence of an observatory dome, I 'zoomed' into Marcus and his *Imaginary Futures* collaborators performance. My dining room walls, table and chairs; the location of my office and studio, and for the duration of the performance my auditorium too.

In place of the enveloping atmosphere of an observatory or planetarium, as I experienced some years ago during an immersive audio-visual performance by Marcus in Observatory, Johannesburg, the delivery of *Imaginary Futures* on my computer screen brought forth a synthetic collage - combining visual experimentation with fracture, spatial distance and play. All the while I was conscious of the fact that Marcus was running the performance from his studio in Vienna, with performers situated in Bloemfontein and content streaming from various camera perspectives and hard drives in varying locations in South Africa. These circumstances coupled with the video mixing methods rendered on screen, engendered a complex but compelling process of interpretation and a stitching together of new narratives, unfolding in what presented as real time.

As the performance continued, streamed content shifted from daytime to nighttime, while a typical European summer evening persisted in Vienna, and in Ireland where I was sitting.

The absence of an ocular like standing or seating layout, as one might find in a planetarium, gave way to a fourth wall comprised of multiple, distinct and different spaces, all the while, I couldn't take my eyes off the real time footage (I learned later) of two figures, separated by a domestic security gate. One performer on the outside of an apartment, the other on the inside. This frustrated dance of entanglement and division, reinforced by the square tube grid of the gate, remains for me a succinct and potent expression of our current times.

Over the years I have witnessed and observed numerous durational performances by Marcus, where a combination of found objects, video projection and toy LED lights provide the source and ambient for experimental narrative; as Marcus immerses his body and intuition into an often highly unpredictable performative situation and spectacle.

Imaginary Futures on the other hand had to surrender to the often-one-dimensional world of streaming technology in an effort to connect festival audiences. If anything, this present form of creative content consumption has altogether flattened my psychological and emotional world.

Interestingly though, powerful images remain, and instead of a journey through space, time and potential other worlds as one would come to expect from the promise of discovery in the night sky, Marcus and his team of futurist imagineers offered up a fantastical and perhaps unintentional geography lesson, a survey of place and people, replete with their own distinct atmospheres and forms of expression. A science meets art experiment, where inadvertently I was able to travel, not through the night sky, but through fragments of place, memory, recollection and the spherical space of my mind's eye, composing meaning as the virtual field of the performance stretched out.

Stephen Hobbs

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"...the pleasures of the vulnerability of 'being inside' a working process..."

This past week I had the intriguing and instructive pleasure of being a 'participant observer' in Marcus Neustetter's *Imaginary Futures*.

The Endeavour: to explore the limits and capacities of Zoom as a forum for creative exploration and invention. Over the past seven months or so, there has been a global surge to online *trafficking* of knowledge, opinion, and community through the internet. Neustetter's forum has embraced the opportunity to consider how the regularized, 2-dimensional rectangles of digital space on the Zoom screen might be used to generate playfulness and mutuality.

The Process: I observed an online performance (which had participants from across South Africa, and participating audiences from North America, Europe, East, West and Southern Africa) who became improvisatory peers, trying to work out the meanings inherent in the medium of the split screen. Neustetter has, over the past weeks, drawn together approximately twenty to thirty participants who spend an hour in the darkness in front of a radiant screen (which, by convention, drains energy and animated spontaneity out of the viewer.) With an assembled list of props (suggested in online communications in advance of the session) we all arrived at the portal of our screens, with flashlights, a drinking glass, a sheet of blank paper. Meanwhile Neustetter had over the previous weeks assembled an array of video materials generated by members of the 'playing' cohort – sequences that might be projected in one frame as a kind of projected architecture of the event; another, constructed of worked forms, improvisational dances, miniature landscapes. Over the course of the evening our Host conjured the interplay of various visual fields – working to resist the 'natural habit' of the Zoom technology's selection process that follows a programmed form through which one speaker may succeed another, in Zoom preferences, with bodies and voices in the various frames struggling to create the illusion of interchange.

At times, too, Neustetter conducted us, using various digital prompts and triggers to impel one screen to take over from another; and at certain moments we were enjoined to strike up a choral note, allowing voices to intermingle across vast voids of digital space separating us. There was an unusual sense, for such digital moments, that the 'whole' was more meaningful than the sum of its parts: the screen events flowed and surged, in an organic rhythm, creating a multi-tiled platform, where performers at times followed one another, at times spilled onto the screen simultaneously, like a sound-enriched tapestry, of figure, ground, sound, light and darkness.

The Analysis: On the day after this performance Neustetter hosted a workshop in which he and the participants looked back on what they had experienced through the process of making. There were very thoughtful comments, for example, from one member who has been working with Neustetter, despite having no formal arts education, who described the pleasure of having his constructed matrix digitally activated online as a “virtual set” for this multi-national performance, through the illusionism of camera-work and simultaneous screens. Neustetter reflected on the potential and possibilities of working with pre-recorded sequences, that could be dropped in via Virtual Backgrounds, to create a sense of narrative potentialities inside the live and seemingly random event. There was a discussion of the levels of trust inside this virtual space with various performers commenting on the pleasures of the vulnerability of ‘being inside’ a working process that was genuinely a collective responsibility.

Jane Taylor LoKO (laboratory of Kinetic Object, Centre for Humanities Research, University of the Western Cape)

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