

<p><u>Dogs of</u> <u>Love</u> - <u>A Queer</u> <u>Quantum</u> <u>Love Story</u></p>	<p>ONCE WE WERE ISLANDS</p>	<p>#283</p>
		<p>23. 25. 26. Januar 2020</p> <p>jeweils 20.00 Uhr</p>

To live without history is to live like an infant, constantly amazed and challenged by a strange and unnamed world. Joan Nestle, »A Restricted Country« (1988)

Aslan: Instead of copy-pasting the press release, or reproducing some of the text for the show (which you can read in full in the accompanying book, published by Circadian, or on our website) we wanted to discuss what was important to us right now, four days before premiere. What's on your mind?

Chris: I received an email from my father last week, I forgot to tell you. He sent me an update of his family tree and now you're a part of it too. I don't know if he would have ever expected that, but I think it's logical for him since we got married a couple of months ago. It's interesting that his genealogical work parallels the work we've been doing at the same time fantasising around our non-biological family tree.

Aslan: I can understand the parallel - your dad has been mapping blood and genes, while we've been uncovering a queer lineage. One that's always being erased. We find ourselves asking these same questions, again and again: Who are our queer family? What is the nature of our connection? Who are our queer grandmothers? And, if time is queer too, are they to be found in the past or the future? Or both? If it's not blood that connects us, perhaps it's another kind of fluid altogether ...

Chris: What do you think has been gained from searching in the past and the future simultaneously? What do you think has happened to our bodies, as a result?

Aslan: I think there's been a blurring. *Dogs of Love* is a fantastical queer 'history' that blurs fact with speculation and invention ... but then, *all* histories combine these elements - it's just that the dominant narratives are bolstered by a system that lends them legitimacy. There's also been a blurring around the edges of self, and, by extension, of our bodies. My story has blurred with yours through telling your memories, and my self has blurred with all the other selves whose stories I am telling. Our sweat has also mingled with the dust on the floor and the oil on the machines. How about you?

Chris: I find the physical act of running through all of the memories - especially yours, and those gleaned from the biographies we've read and the fictional hybrids that we've conjured - produces a

strange embodied proximity, a being intimately near, inside, and through all those other bodies. This is something I recognise now as being a much queerer action than I had anticipated. There are powerful heteronormative forces that we had to find strategies to deal with in this work. First, notions of long-term romantic commitment, and secondly, the chronological organising principle of time. How do you feel we resisted being sucked into these dominant paradigms?

Aslan: We had to reject the binaries they're set up on. For example, there are narratives out there that say that commitment and seriousness 'belong' to hetero couples, while queers only bond through transience and hedonism. If we allow that to become a through-line in the work, we just strengthen it. Resistance is an act of constant un-hooking. Why can't queer people be committed? Or romantic? And if they are, why do they have to give up openness and sex-positivity to do so? Why can't all these things be unhooked from one another and just be what they are? Combined and recombined at will? When it came to dealing with time, while we couldn't (or didn't want to) discard the Arrow of Time altogether, we folded and pleated it, creating combinations and juxtapositions that subverted the chronological principle. Do you feel like *Dogs of Love* is a journey?

Chris: Yes. Or, maybe more specifically, it's a ritual. I think the piece is a transformative act, and I notice that each time we run, it does things to us, and changes us. Our initial proposal was to attempt to run to opposite ends of the universe, and while this is, of course, impossible, trying to do so during this hour definitely takes us somewhere.

Conversation from 12 May 2019.

The text from *Dogs of Love* samples works including *The Power of Love* - Frankie Goes to Hollywood, *The Motion of Light in Water: Sex and Science Fiction Writing in the East Village* - Samuel R. Delany, *A Litany for Survival* - Audre Lorde, *The Grapes of Wrath* - John Steinbeck, *Hijra Fantastik* - Claudia Reiche, *Hounds of Love* - Kate Bush, *Before Night Falls* - Reinaldo Arenas, *The Shoop Shoop Song (It's in his Kiss)* - Rudy Clark.

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A Project by ONCE WE WERE ISLANDS

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