

KUNSTHALLE GIESSEN GOES UNTERER HARDTHOF EXBODIMENT #5

Live performances by Skip Arnold and Nigel Rolfe
25 October 2022, 7 pm

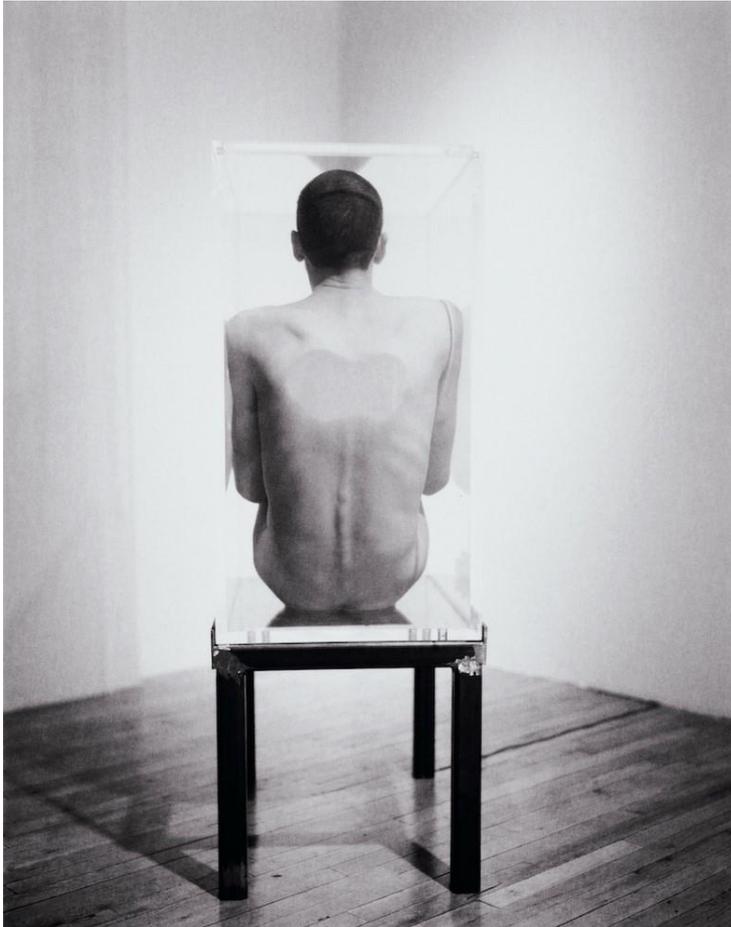


Fig.: Skip Arnold, ON DISPLAY, 1993/1995, Roger Merians Gallery, New York, 1995 © Skip Arnold

**A performance series in collaboration with the Archive for International Performance
Art BLACK KIT | DIE SCHWARZE LADE**

Participating artists:

**Skip Arnold, Rocío Boliver, Kurt Johannessen, Tokio Maruyama, Sinéad O'Donnell,
Morgan O'Hara, Nigel Rolfe, Julie Andrée T.**

While the Kunsthalle Giessen is closed for renovation it will be hosted by Unterer Hardthof. Unable to attend the first date in June 2022 due to illness, the artists Skip Arnold and Nigel Rolfe will now perform live in front of an audience on Tuesday, October 25, 2022 at 7 pm as part of the series EXBODIMENT.

Skip Arnold

The American artist Skip Arnold (* 1957 Binghamton, NY, USA) is internationally known for his body art performances in the context of the American avant-garde West Coast tradition, to which artists such as Chris Burden and Bob Flanagan also belong. Arnold has been using the naked body as the material of his artistic practice since the 1980s. Working in the mediums of live performance, photography, installation, and video, he creates situations in which the fragility of his body and the discomfort associated with it become visible. He helplessly exposed himself to the gaze of those present for his work 'Closet Corner' (1987) while being wedged between two boards, and exhibited his body as a fetish object in a glass showcase. Arnold pointedly succeeded again and again in questioning the (im)morals of the art business with his bare body. For example, he crammed himself into a box and had himself shipped from Austria to Germany as an 'art transport'. In a sensational move, he lay beneath a glass plate that was embedded into the floor at the entrance to the Art Basel art fair in 2002. The artist as both an archaeological relic and a doormat?

Skip Arnold's works are either extremely physically demanding over a short period of time, or longer lasting with minimal, passive gestures. He has been wrapping himself in transparent plastic foil since the 1990s and publicly tying himself to iron girders, street lamps, or lying tied up as a package in a public square. These forms of endurance and self-exposure do not leave passers-by cold: the public interventions arouse curiosity, compassion, mockery, but also aggression and anger.

Performance and person, life and art, the intimate and the public collapse into one another. By exposing himself naked, Arnold is always about more than the role of the artist. The human being itself, in its very existence, comes to the fore. Arnold's body works also tell of human vulnerability and fragility, of humour and ultimately of the threshold, where one becomes a brand or even an object in the media or in the public sphere.

CV

Skip Arnold (* 1957 Binghamton, NY, USA) lives and works in Paris. His performances follow the tradition of extreme body art. Skip Arnold has exhibited in numerous

international solo and group exhibitions, including Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York; Christine König Galerie, Vienna; Greene Exhibitions, Los Angeles; Aeroplastics, Brussels, Ltd Los Angeles, Los Angeles; Sezession, Vienna; Spencer Brownstone Gallery, New York, Galerie Frederic Giroux, Paris, Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Art Unlimited, Art Basel/33.

Nigel Rolfe

The artist Nigel Rolfe (* 1950 on Isle of Wight, UK) is considered one of the pioneering artists of performance art. He began his career in the late 1960s with so-called 'Sculptures in Motion' before the concept of performance became part of the discourse in the 1970s. Using rough-hewn wood and clay, he spent 14 days publicly building a sculpture ('Red Wedge. A 4' Square Stacked and Wedged Tower' (1978)). By doing so, he expanded the understanding of sculpture to include the activity of making itself. Central to this was the body's contact with space, materials, and time. Rolfe broadened his early performative works during the 1980s to include the media of sound, video, and photography. Parallel to this, he began to develop political and activist works: in powerful images and performances, he addressed the Irish Civil War (known as The Troubles), colonial oppression, or his own identity conflict as a British artist in Ireland.

In 1988 Rolfe's video and sound work 'Hand On Face' was presented at Wembley Stadium at a concert calling for the release of Nelson Mandela – broadcast live in over 67 countries with around 600 million viewers. Since the release of his album 'Lament' (1992) on Peter Gabriel's music label 'Real World Records' Rolfe has also become well known in the music scene. Rolling Stones Magazine named 'Lament' "one of the best albums of all-time".

Over the last few decades, the artist has been increasingly illustrating the vulnerability of human beings and the fragility of life itself in works he calls "live images." The works often show Rolfe in contact with raw materials such as paint pigments, milk, or even elements that include earth, water, and fire. Performance art itself always remains central to his multimedia work: the finite, spatially situated body interacting with the textures of the world.

CV

Nigel Rolfe (* 1950 Isle of Wight, UK) lives and works in Dublin. His work addresses socio-political issues of having and not having, as well as conflicts in society. Major

retrospectives of Nigel Rolfe's work have been shown at the Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin and the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. He has been part of the São Paulo, Busan, Venice, and Gwangju Biennials and has been represented in solo and group exhibitions worldwide. Rolfe has been a professor at the Royal Academy of Arts in London and a lecturer at various universities in the United States and Europe, as well as a visiting professor at Yale University.



Fig.: Nigel Rolfe, THE TIME IS NOW, 2018 © Nigel Rolfe

EXBODIMENT

The performance series EXBODIMENT was developed by the Kunsthalle Gießen in collaboration with the performance archive BLACK KIT | DIE SCHWARZE LADE, Cologne. All of the invited artists are distinguished by what are sometimes contradictory understandings of performance. What emerges during the encounter remains open and is only revealed in the moment of the performances.

The title EXBODIMENT comes from the English word 'embodiment' and refers to the knowledge, history and cultural modes of action that are inscribed in our physical bodies. The preposition 'ex' (Latin: 'out of', 'from') marks the movement into the external and refers to what happens in the performance: the knowledge stored in the body is transported to the outside world and made visible in the public sphere. How does a body activate a space? When does a moment in time fracture and become an image of permanence?



Fig.: Boris Nieslony (Archiv-Organisator, Performance-Künstler) mit der Schwarzen Lade im Künstlerhaus Mousonturm, 1991, Frankfurt © BLACK KIT

BLACK KIT | DIE SCHWARZE LADE

The archive for performance art, the only one of its kind in Germany, was founded by artists in 1981, and has since then been run by Boris Nieslony (*1945, Grimma) together with the archive team (Michael Stockhausen, Liane Ditzer, Evamaria Schaller, Esteban Sánchez, Tarika Johar). It contains more than 4,000 dossiers on performance, theatre and sound artists, 10,000 specialist publications, videos and photos in various formats, performance relics and many metres of shelf space on networks from different continents. This vibrant archive sees itself as a source of inspiration for the present by organising performance events, lectures and much more.

You can find the full schedule of events online at:

www.kunsthalle-giessen.de | www.giessen.de

Entrance

Free of charge

Official greeting

Dr. Nadia Ismail

Director Kunsthalle Giessen

Rainer Gläsel

Chairman of the Unterer Hardthof e.V. Association

Introduction

Tarika Johar

Curator

Directions:

Unterer Hardthof 17, 35398 Gießen. Please note: Parking is not permitted in the courtyard. By Car: Parking is available on the street in front of the entrance. Bus: Line 7, stop 'Unterer Hardthof'.

Please note

Your health is important to us. Therefore, we recommend that you wear a face mask during the indoor event.