

SCREWS (working title)

Alexander Vantournhout

A series of in situ micro-performances

choreography, circography, movement



INTRODUCTION

Screws (2019) is a reference to the album of Nils Frahm. In 2011, Nils Frahm broke several fingers and could not play piano anymore. In this period, a studio session of the new album was planned in. however, Frahm decided to continue, and composed for every finger a dedicated piano piece.

Screws is a collection of micro-performances, that occur between and around the audience. The presentation explores the different possibilities in the choreography, and searches for ways to support or to transform existing movement. The use of contemporary utensils such as ice hiking shoes; a bowling ball or bicycle helmets are a part of this artistic process.

According to the set-up of in-situ, the presentation guides all spectators through the space and introduces them to the various micro-performances.

Screws installs an informal framework and gives every spectator the opportunity to go close to the micro-performance, consciously or by chance. Everyone is free to move, walk or choose a specific angle to see the performance. This approach also entails more drama as responsibility.

The latest production by Alexander Vantournhout (BE, 1989) is an in-situ trail of ten miniature composition or scenes, each of which questions the relationship between the body and object from a different perspective. A group of a maximum of 180 spectators (depending on the location) moves along a cyclical path in a single building, hangar or architectural site.

With *Screws*, Alexander continues in his artistic research for what it is exactly that relationship between a body and an object. This theme characterizes Alexander's earlier creations. In this interrelation between body and object (for example the bowling ball or ice hiking shoes) the body is always subject to the movements of the object and as a result this confrontation provides an objectification of the body of the performer.

Just as Nils Frahm composed his album and dedicated it to his broken fingers, Alexander Vantournhout wants to devote his performance to all physical capacities. An injured body simply has strong limitations. When it is not injured, we seldom and less intensely appreciate the increase in mobility, strength and coordination. Further on you will find a description of how the body relates to the object in the various micro performances. We aim to perform in art-oriented festivals, as well as theaters, museums and even vacant sites or abandoned buildings. This will enable spectators to experience different perspectives of the particular place and its architecture while watching the performance.

MICRO-PERFORMANCES

Object as projectile (10 min) (Alexander)

Just as ancient Greek athletes used weights to enable them to jump further, a bowling ball will be used to influence the performed movement's trace. Object as Projectile will also explore how the object can be used as a weapon rather than a tool or instrument.

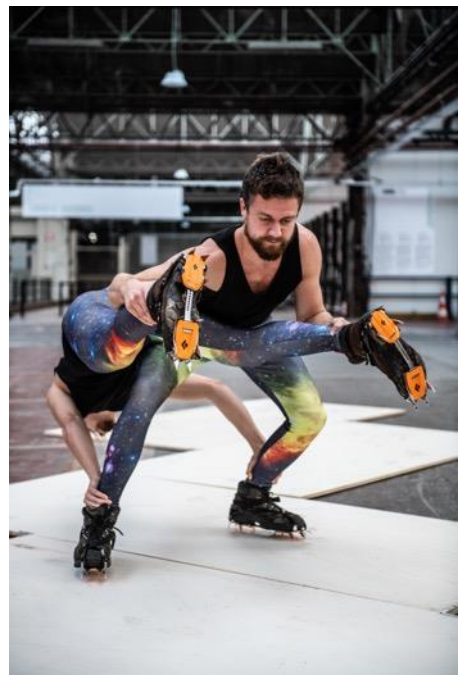
The research in movement looks at how the 7 kg heavy bowling ball propels, bends and controls the body instead of the opposite. The movement is investigated in the direction of the object. It is the object that determines the movement and therefore becomes the subject of the performance.



Iceshoes /Crampons (15 min) (Emmi-Petra, Josse-Felix)

In order to increase their grip on the ground the performers use ice walking shoes, which are metal spikes used to climb glaciers or frozen waterfalls. On grass or other surfaces these crampons help the wearer not to slip, while at the same time creating danger through their sharpness.

This duet focuses on counterbalancing between the two performers. This action creates a bridge-like structure which can move both spatially and dynamically.



Snakearms (10 min.) (Alexander-Emmi)

If man had the wrists of a monkey, would we look like a gibbon?

You undoubtedly know the animal from the zoo, a monkey that impresses by swinging from branch to branch. In the hanging position, his wrist functions like a shoulder and can rotate 360 degrees. Thousands of years ago the gibbon could have been the strongest opponent of the Neanderthal.

By increasing flexions and torsions in the wrist and shoulder joint, the two performers explore ways to interact with each other through biomechanical gestures. This leads to an original partner duo.

In development

- Anti-Gravity Boots
- Wingsuit-Parachute

PARCOURS

(Every location asks for a rearrangement of the trail)

Screws starts with Snakelegs, an introduction that later will be developed as a motif in the Snakearms section. As soon as the micro-performance ends, the audience will hear music from Nils Frahm who accompanies the Solo with the Bowling Ball. This solo is set in a different constellation. Due to the real danger of the centrifugal force of the bowling ball, the public naturally organizes itself in a semi-circular configuration.



The sound of the ice hoes or crampons lures the spectators to the second room.

Two duos move simultaneously on ice hiking shoes: light weights Emmi vs. Petra and heavyweights Felix vs. Josse. The audience naturally divides into two groups and are invited to take a close look at the performance.



Each location introduces a new actor or object that is used as a partner, and which is then taken to the next location. Every miniature composition leaves 'a trace', which might lead to an accumulation of 'skills, competences and objects (helmet and parachute) and increases in a way the possibilities of the body.

RULES IN THE STUDIO / creation

1. Each microperformance will take the length of time it needs.: the miniature compositions can vary between 5 seconds and 20 minutes
2. The performance will question the usual affordance of the objects involved. For example, the usual affordances of a ball would be to throw or roll it, a less obvious affordance would be to balance while standing on it. The movement research will emerge from the object. It is the object that dictates the movement by its affordance, and not vice versa. The object thus becomes both the composer of the movement and the subject of the performance.

PERFORMANCE INFO

The building needs to be big enough to make a trail with large spaces possible. The performance possibly takes place twice a day in an interesting site-specific location, preferably a large building. The company wish to visit the site beforehand. Depending on the location, the performance will consist of a series of 7-10 micro-performances

The team on tour consists of 7 or 8 people:

- 6 performers
- 1 technician
- 1 producer (depending on the tour)
- dramaturge (depending on the tour)

Build up: on the day of the performance

Suitable age range: 12 years old and above

Capacity: max 150-180 (depending on space, and discussion with company)

Duration of performance: 50-70 min.

The performance could be performed twice a day.

LINK TEASER

TEASER, Work in progress, Working Title Festival, Kanal (Centre Pompidou), Brussels
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uHgtRlvrKH4>

TEAM

Alexander Vantournhout

Alexander Vantournhout (Brussels-based, 1989) studied single wheel, juggling and dance acrobatics at ESAC (Ecole Supérieure des Arts du Cirque, Brussel). From 2010 to 2012 he studied contemporary dance at P.A.R.T.S. (Performing Arts and Research Training Studios, Brussels), the school founded by Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker. In 2013 he worked as an actor for Rolf Alme (NO), the founder of the Norwegian Theatre Academy, Frederickstadt (NO).

Alexander has created several solos including *CAPRICES* (2014), a choreographic solo to the music of Sciarrino. *ANECKXANDER* (2015), co-created with Bauke Lievens, won Circus Next award in 2014, the Public and Young Theatre Prize at Theater Aan Zee (Ostend, 2015), was selected for the Aerowaves Network, and in 2016 was selected for 'Het Theater Festival Belgium', the prize for the most remarkable Belgian performance.

For the creation *Raphaël* (2017), Alexander and Bauke became artists-in-residence at Kc Nona, Mechelen (BE). In addition Alexander is a Cultural Ambassador of the city Roeselare (BE), an associated artist at PERPLX, Marke (BE) (2017-2019) and a residency-artist at Vooruit, Ghent (BE) (2017-2021).

Since 2018 Alexander created THE CERAMIC ROSE in co-creation with Scali Delpeyrat and RED HAIRE MEN. The Ceramic Rose was shown at the Festival of Avignon in 2018 in Sujets à Vif.

Alexander has taught regularly at ESAC and ACAPA (Academy for Circus and Performance Art, Tilburg, NL). As a guest lecturer, Alexander has taught at P.A.R.T.S (Brussels, BE), CODARTS (Rotterdam, NE) and, Conservatoire de Mons (BE), Concorde-Montreal (CA), Hong Kong Circus (CHN), Académie Fratellini, Parijs (FR) Deltebre Danza (SP).

After graduating from P.A.R.T.S., Alexander continued his studies, travelling to Vermont (US) to study (contact) improvisation with Steve Paxton and Lisa Nelson. Recently Alexander has become connected has exchanged information with, and studied under, Martin Kilvady, Ido Portal and Fighting Monkey.

Alexander's movement language is influenced by different pedagogical processes and by working across several fields within the arts. Two constants within his artist pursuits are a search for creative and kinetic potential in physicality and an investigation into many aspects of the relationship between performer and object.

PERFORMERS/COLLABORATORS

Emmi Väisänen (Pieksamaki, (FI)) is a contemporary dance artist currently based in Brussels, Belgium. She studied dance at Turku Conservatory and S.E.A.D. (Salzburg Experimental Academy of Dance). Since graduating, she has worked with Etienne Guilloteau, Willi Dorner, Julia Schwarzbach, Alexandra Waierstall, ECCE/Claire Croizé & Etienne Guilloteau, and Rakesh Sukesh. She danced in the performance EVOL (ECCE) that was selected for The Theaterfestival 2017.

Petra Steindl, (Vienna (AU)), started circus at the age of 15. After almost five years of higher education in circus, she graduated in 2017 from ACaPA (Academy for Circus and Performance Art, Tilburg, NL). Over the last four years she has been working with Felix, Hendrik and Josse in the Partner Acrobatic collective called Familiar Faces. In 2018 they were selected for Circus Next.

Josse De Broeck (Mechelen (BE)). He started circus at a young age and went on to graduate from ACaPA (Academy for Circus and Performance Art, Tilburg, NL), where he began a collaboration with three other Partner Acrobats, making their own performances under the name Familiar Faces. The compagnie presented their work at international festivals such as Festival Circolo (NL), Cirkel (BE), Rotterdam Circusstad (NL) and Smells Like Circus (BE). They were nominated for the Prijs Jacques De Leeuw, the Prix Entrée du Festival Boulevard, the private-selection of CircusNext and the Prix BNG for circus.

Felix Zech (Dresden (DE)) where he first came into contact with circus through his friends. Alongside circus he performed with several different choirs and with his band as a drummer and singer. After graduating secondary school he completed three years of training as a carpenter and spent a year in Canada to work and travel. In that year Felix also went to New Zealand and worked in a youth circus which inspired him to start a new career and apply to the circus school Die Etage, (Berlin, DE). There he met his partner Petra Steindl and together they went to Tilburg to get their Bachelors in Circus and Performance Art from ACaPA (Academy for Circus and Performance Art) alongside other members of the group Familiar Faces.

Hendrik van Mael (Leuven (BE)) took his first circus classes at Cirkus in Beweging. He then went on to study at ACaPA (Academy for Circus and Performance Art, Tilburg, NL), where collective Familiar Faces was born. As collective (Josse, Hendrik, Felix, Petra) they have performed at various international festivals such as Festival Circolo (NL), Cirkel (BE), Rotterdam Circusstad (NL) and Smells Like Circus (BE). They have also been nominated for the Jacques De Leeuw Prize, the Entreprijs Festival Boulevard, pre-selection for Circusnext and the BNG Prize for Circus. For Hendrik circus was his way of discovering and relating to life. Now he is passionate about exploring the boundaries that surround circus. This road sometimes leads him far away from circus, only to find his way back to it.

UNDERSTUDIES

Maria Madeira (understudy) (Lisbon (PT)) studies at ACaPA (Academy for Circus and Performance Art, Tilburg, NL).

Axel Guérin was born in Mechelen (BE) in 1992. He studied Duo Acro-dance with Winston Reynolds in Circomedia (UK) and ACAPA (NE). Axel Guerin collaborated with several choreographers including Florentina Holzinger, Mor Shani and Marc Van Loon. They have also worked closely with various projects with NofitState Circus.

Axel performs in the creation of Red Haired Men (2018) of Alexander Vantournhout.

CREDITS

Choreography/ circography:

Alexander Vantournhout

Creation and performance: Petra Steindl, Josse De Broeck, Felix Zech, Hendrik van Maele, Emmi Väisänen, Alexander Vantournhout/ Axel Guérin

Dramaturgy: Sébastien Hendrickx

Intellectual in residence: Rudi Laermans

Choreographic help: Anneleen Keppens, Martin Kilvady

Costumes: Anne-catherine Kunz

Technique: Rinus Samyn

Light design: Tim Oelbrandt

Technique design: Bert Van Dijk, Rinus Samyn, Tom Reynaerts, Tom Daniels

Constructor: Willy Cauwelier

Photos: Bart Grietens

Company manager: Esther Maas



International première: 28-29/05/2019 Rencontres Chorégraphiques, Seine-Saint-Denis (FR)

Dutch première: 14-23/06/2019 Oerol, Terschelling (NL)

Belgian première: 29-30/06/2019 PERPLX, Marke (BE)

Coproductions: Vooruit, Gent (BE), MA, Montbeliard (FR), PERPLX, Marke (BE), Circa, Auch (FR)

Residencies: Vooruit, Gent (BE), Plateforme 2 Pôles Cirque en Normandie/La Brèche à Cherbourg-Cirque-Théâtre d'Elbeuf (FR), Cultuurcentrum, Brugge (BE) Wood Cube, Roeselare (BE), Workspace, Brussels (BE), MA, Montbeliard (FR), Circa, Auch (FR)

Thanks to: Lore Missine, Veerle Mans, Bauke Lievens, Maria Madeira, Lien Vanbossele, Monuments Nationaux de France et Simon Pons-Rotbardt

With the support of: Flemish Government

Production: NOT STANDING vzw/ adres: Beversesteenweg 78, 8800 Roeselare (BE) / Number of enterprise 0849019917

Tour management: Frans Brood Productions

Alexander Vantournhout is residency-artist at Vooruit, Gent (BE) (2017-2021) and associated artist at PERPLX, Marke (BE) (2016-2018).



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