

CALL AND CONCEPT

DEBATE! Performing antagonisms

Debates are often cited as proud witnesses to our democratic order: parliamentary and political debates, classic scientific debates right up to debates in television and on talk shows, online panels and in chat rooms... Debates exist within the context of politics and media, but you can already find them in kindergarten, as a means of learning self expression and fair decision making.

We hold debates, we don't perform them. However, the debate itself as well as those engaged in them are always performing, even putting on a show. Which means: debates are performative tryouts, marking shifts within a culture of speech acts, for all persons involved. These acts stand for the enactment of certain positions, for making a show of arguments and for the show-casing of eligibilities.

What relationship exist between enactment, engagement and show, between the act as such and the art and techniques of debating? These are the research objects of the thealit Lab 2016/17. Debate! asks: Is there even an ounce of reason in debates with their projection point of rational judgements, or are they just a cover for antagonisms? Haven't debaters always been actors in an impossible game of democracy between the present and its representation? How can we engage in debates today – or not?

We are looking for the rules, violations, parodies and interventions that determine contemporary forms of debate. We question the rules and performance acts of debates, we are interested in experiments within a new culture of debate, with its never-ending scenarios of debate workshops, reenactments, most fairly held competitions, radio debates, documentary theatre and installations.

Debate! invites you to a series of experiments in our public working space, an empty store room, **from October 2016 to January 2017**, and to a festival with shows in the theatre and other spaces in the city, as well as lectures in **February 2017**.

We are looking forward to many different **propositions** for the programme of Debate! (concept and CV) until **20.01.2016** to projekte@thealit.de

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