



**Technische Leitung**  
Andreas Bögli

**Stellvertretender  
Technischer Leiter**  
Peter Meier

**Beleuchtung/Video**  
Karl Gärtner, Ueli  
Kappeler, Sina Knecht,  
Robert Meyer, Martin  
Wigger

**Ton**  
Rolf Laureijs,  
Fritz Rickenbacher,  
Susanne Affolter

**Bühne**  
Silvan Ammon,  
Michel Schaltenbrand

**Schlosserei**  
Cristiano Remo

**Schreinerei**  
Luca Brühwiler,  
Sybille Eigenmann,  
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**Maisaal**  
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**Requisite**  
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Irina Maffi, Hans Manz

**Leitung Schneiderei**  
Ruth Schölzel

**Schneiderei**  
Noëlle Brühwiler,  
Eva Geiser,  
Rahel Zweifel

**Auszubildende  
Schneiderei**  
Sophie Gehrke,  
Lena Egger

**Garderobe**  
Anna Selina Tholl

**Maske**  
Denise Christen,  
Diane Buthia,  
Corinne Gujer

**Impressum**  
Neumarkt  
Neumarkt 5  
8001 Zürich

**Kontakt**  
+41 (0)44 267 64 64  
theaterneumarkt.ch

**Textauswahl**  
Tine Milz

**Redaktion**  
Tine Milz  
Michel Rebosura

**Gestaltung**  
Ahjin Kim

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Mit  
Challenge Gumbodete,  
Benjamin Abel  
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Chor  
schmaz – schwuler  
männerchor zürich

Regie  
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Komposition & Musik  
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(Tania Gallagher und  
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Regiehospitantz  
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Bild / Sujet  
«Schuldkammer»  
von Anne-Mie van  
Kerckhoven

Produktion  
Theater Neumarkt

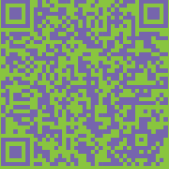
Koproduktion  
Opera Ballet Vlaanderen

Präsentiert im  
Rahmen des  
Zürcher Theater  
Spektakel

In deutscher, englischer  
& französischer Sprache

Premiere  
31. August 2022

Deutsche Übersetzung



white flag

on freedom & surrender  
three songs  
of  
care & defeat\*

«I’ve been out walking  
I don’t do too much talking these days  
These days  
These days I seem to think a lot  
About the things that I forgot to do  
And all the times I had  
A chance to»

nico: these days

i. act: drug fugue

«There are a lot of stories about why people take drugs.  
Some of these stories have to do with freedom. As in:  
people take drugs because they feel unfree, and drugs make  
them feel freer. Or, people take drugs because they  
want to escape their heavy and painful conditions, but sadly  
find themselves reburdened and enslaved by addiction  
(addictus = «to give over, to surrender; also, to be made a  
slave»). Or, people take drugs because freedom is hard to  
bear, and addiction offers a counterweight to the unbearable  
lightness of being. Or, people take drugs to free their minds,  
not just from suffering, but also from conventional perception,  
from doxa. Or, people take drugs because, by using a substance  
that has been prohibited, they feel they are freeing themselves  
from the confines of the law. Or, [...] people take drugs  
because they (by which I mean we) have a legitimate desire  
to feel high. And part of the desire to feel high is the desire to  
feel free, however briefly, from the burdens of agency,  
subjectivity, sovereignty, autonomy, relationality, even humanity  
for which we generally presume people yearn to be people.»

maggie nelson: on freedom.  
four songs of care & constraint (127)

intermezzo

«Do not fireflies sexualize the night? Let us recall the  
folkloric idea that fireflies twinkle on and off so as to have  
sex, although people prefer to say «mate,» thus evoking  
Darwin. Animals mate. Humans have sex. Be not deterred.  
Fireflies sexualize the night, rendering it turgid with flashes  
and sprinkles of light like confetti flickering with the  
rapid eye movements of dreams.  
Like solar panels, fireflies store up the sun’s light during  
the day, then release it into the night in a saucier form.  
[...] Like the unconscious of both body and mind fireflies  
store solar memories so as to release them in whorls  
and wraiths of dancing light disappearing into darkness.  
These tiny creatures not only befriend the dark but  
tease it in free-floating ecstasy, pixilating forest and field  
in the arcs and intricacies of mastery, the mastery  
of non-mastery.»

michael taussig: mastery  
of non-mastery in the age  
of meltdown (94/95)

ii. act: the ballade  
of sexual optimism

«Eroticism opens the way to death. Death opens the way  
to the denial of our individual lives, without doing  
violence to our inner selves, are we able to bear a negation  
that carries us to the farthest bounds of possibility? [...] We  
all feel what poetry is. Poetry is one of our foundation  
stones, but we cannot talk about it. I am not going to  
talk about it now, but I think I can make my ideas on  
continuity more readily felt, ideas not to be fully identified  
with the theologians concept of God, by reminding you  
of these lines by one of the most violent of poets, Rimbaud.  
Elle est retrouvée.  
Quoi? L’éternité.  
C’est la mer allée  
Avec le soleil.

Poetry leads to the same place as all forms of eroticism –  
to the blending and fusion of separate objects. It leads us to  
eternity, it leads us to death, and through death to continuity.  
Poetry is eternity; the sun matched with the sea.»

georges bataille: erotism -  
death and sensuality (24/25)

intermezzo

«le monde se fait et se défait»  
«Rêve angle merveilles»  
«il me faut découvrir  
l’énergie des angoisses moites  
et la profondeur de l’ombre»

eric hurtado:  
l’unité hermétique

iii. act: art song

«When I think of art I think of beauty. Beauty is the  
mystery of life. It is not in the eye it is in the mind. In our  
minds there is awareness of perfection.  
We respond to beauty with emotion. Beauty speaks  
a message to us. We are confused about this message  
because of distractions. [...] It is not in the role of an artist to worry about life – to feel  
responsible for creating a better world. This is a very serious  
distraction. All of your conditioning has been directed  
toward intellectual living. This is useless in art work. All  
human knowledge is useless in art work. Concepts, relation-  
ships, categories, classifications, deductions are distractions  
of mind that we wish to hold free for inspiration. [...] The way of an artist is an entirely different way. It is a way of  
surrender. He must surrender to his own mind.»

agnes martin:  
beauty is the mystery of life

epilogue

«How does it feel,  
how does it feel?  
To be on your own, with no  
direction home  
Like a complete unknown,  
like a rolling stone»

bob dylan:  
like a rolling stone

schmaz – schwuler männerchor zürich  
Directed by Ernst Buscagne

A homage to the queer history of Neumarkt, where between  
1948 and 1960 the gay organization DER KREIS celebrated  
their balls in the theater of the former restaurant «Eintracht»  
at Neumarkt 5.

Eine Hommage an die queere Geschichte des Neumarkt,  
wo zwischen 1948 bis 1960 die Schwulenorganisation  
DER KREIS im Theatersaal des ehemaligen Restaurants  
«Eintracht» am Neumarkt 5 ihre Bälle gefeiert hat.

\*Inspired by Maggie Nelson: On Freedom.  
Four Songs of Care & Constraint