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FUNDUS THEATER / Theatre of Research

Folkwang University of the Arts, Heterotopia Graduate Program

PhD Program *Performing Citizenship*

Performing the Right to Research

We are moving from „the world of science to the world of research“ Bruno Latour claimed in 1998 arguing that the traditional gap between researchers and the researched doesn't fit the needs of knowledge production in the 21st century anymore. In 2006 the sociologist Arjun Appadurai went a step further and – from the perspective of Mumbai - claimed the right to research as crucial for the pursuit of citizenship in the era of globalisation: „By this I mean the right to the tools through which any citizen can systematically increase that stock of knowledge which they consider most vital to their claims as citizens.“ He adds: „Research and action in what we would call the arts, humanities, film, media, should not be separate from research on the economy, infrastructure, and planning.“

In 2002 I founded the Theatre of Research in Hamburg, Germany, to find out, how the performing arts can support what I then called *everybody's research*. Ever since we use performance strategies and techniques to bring kids, artists, scientists, citizens and non-citizens together in transdisciplinary research projects. Together we bridged more than only the gap between generations: We learned how to print our own money, how to become friends with somalian pirates, how to engage in destruction for peace or how to foster companionship between species. Meanwhile our theatre became an assembly-space for more and more heterogeneous research groups, which shared their outcomes in the wide spectrum of ways only the stage can offer. In 2011 this practice became the modell for the PHD Programs *Assemblies & Participation* and *Performing Citizenship* (Theatre of Research in cooperation with Hafencity University and K3-Centre for Choreography). In the 20 artistic research projects conducted in this framework no less than 750 people were actively involved as co-researchers.

In my lecture I will discuss several examples from this body of work to show different ways in which the performing arts can enable citizens of all kinds to perform their right to research. How are tasks and responsibilities of professional researchers transformed by this process? Finally, I will argue that performing the right to research is an artistic research strategy in itself, that will help us to find out how institutions of knowledge and of culture have to change.