

What is going to happen next? That's important. We need to have another goal. And our goal is clear: it's to grow out of these roles.

— Virgin Mary

Daniel Hopp stages social circumstances and successively orchestrates his protagonists in precisely edited video works. His artistic practice brings together professional actors, relatives, friends and himself in situational response to a predetermined exploration. Channelled through intense and oftentimes confrontational group dynamics, his performances bring to light the eternal conflict between individual desire and the need for social belonging.

For his video works, Hopp retrospectively condenses footage of these stagings and confronts it with documentary material from his research. His characters' identities are not derived from the protagonists' autobiographies, but amalgamated from scripted acting, self-conscious reflection and unforeseeable interaction; thus mirroring the fictitiousness, respectively the impossibility of being "true" to – or even knowing – oneself.

His new, two-part video installation *Foulplay* evolves around the figure of Robin Hood and the struggle of a group of acquaintances to come to terms with their respective urges to do or be good, while not really trusting the idea of individual heroism.

Initiated by an invitation to perform in Hamburg at the "Summer of Knowledge" festival in June 2019, Hopp consecutively organised a collective seminar, a trip to Pakistan with a camera operator, and a workshop following their return with rehearsal phase and subsequent stage performance at the Town Hall Square (Yayacla (Robin Hood)). Aspects from all three of the project's components comprise this work. Its participants gradually became enmeshed in the project's encompassing queries, and video footage from all three sequences make up the source material for these films.

On their way to figure out a solution that everybody would be happy with, it turns out that foul play is inevitable. Though each participant approaches his or her prescribed role reflexively, positions and beliefs collide, and the one true path is nowhere to be found. All joint efforts to "change the rules" and turn Robin Hood from a classical male role model into a socio-communal principle are doomed to fail.

Which doesn't mean to say that one has to try anyway.

— Ellen Blumenstein

concept and direction Daniel Hopp

artists / performers Wolfgang Kerim Schroeder, Arne Mier, Gaia Gionti, Curtis Kane Mahon,  
Liliana Orsini, Lena Mai Merle, Utz Biesemann, Kenneth Dow, Leo Rottmann, Imran Nafees  
Siddiqui, Emilia Kubacki, Zaib Rehman

camera Leo Rottmann, Rosanna Graf, Arne Mier, Ruben Christiansen

sound Adnan Malik

editing Marko Mijatovi, Ben Paetzold, Daniel Hopp

music Johannes Haas design Caspar Reuss, Paul Voggenreiter

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