"Where is the cat? and who is Schrödinger?"—the question came out of the guts of the Zoom contraption as Mette Edvardsen and I initiated our session #8 conversation in the ARW webinar. How do we know whether our inter-locutors are alive/dead as we interact with their boxed in video-stream?

A variant of the Türing-test really. How do we know whether the entity we interact with is a human being or a machine? But how do we know that these questions—fun as they may be—may be inadequate? That the real question is about the relation between intra- and interlocutor…

…speaking to ourselves and each other. Is it possible to contain disagree-ment in the video-conferencing format, or does it fall apart? Do we shield ourselves cognitively by dismissing disagreement as a *media disunderstan-ding*? Is 3rd party readability a (V) *sum* between intra- and interlocution?

The notion of *the 6th wall* dawned on me, in the wake of ARW 21 (the Artistic Research Week at KHiO), cohosting a panel with Bojana Cvejic—featuring Petrine Vinje, Linda Gathu, Bjørn Blikstad and Mette Edvardsen—prompted by a pitch developed by Bojana Cvejic mainly, and seconded by myself.

Or, the panel discussion was the seed. And then it germinated during an interaction with Mette Edvardsen the day after—this was January 26th and 27th at 13:00 hours—when we played Schrödinger and the cat, from each our video-boxes appearing on the zoom webinar, as we talked about books.

Evidently, the notion of the 6th wall feeds on the *4th* and the *5th wall* in theatre. Crudely: the 4th wall is the audience—as an active material for the actor to act with/on—while the 5th wall entails a similar relationship between the *actual* and the *virtual*. Featuring pervasively f.ex. in Tore Vagn Lid's work.

My realisation is that—if we want to integrate Zoom (or, video-conferencing) on our repertoire—we need something more, or something else, than the actual/virtual dialectics: it obviously applies, because I am sitting here and appearing on Zoom, and have sort out this in some way. But it is insufficent.

The webinar format invites a reflection on 3rd party readability, simply because the audience is absent: the hosts and participants are boxed in each their video-frame, knowing that there is an audience—say 80 and 52 as it was in the above mentioned sessions (#15 and #8)—on broadcast.

They are *invisible*. And towards the end we answered questions from them coming in through the messenger feature of the Zoom software. So, structurally the webinar (capacity 500) is really a different contraption than the lower capacity video-conferencing tool (capacity 100). It's like TV.

So, the presence and interest of the audience becomes different. The numbers take over for the individuals in the attending crowd. And so, deciding whether an ongoing session works/not rests on a different set of premises. And it hinges on how we conceive work under such conditions.

Discussions, for instance, are unpredictable, wayward and emergent by nature. Yet, they are by no means unprepared at the *editorial* level. If this charge is to some degree shared within the group—as I think it was in sessions #15 and #8—it hinges on rehearsal: developing materials.

We did prepare in this sense. And, in the broader scope of performance these days, rehearsing and the sense of developing materials is quite common. The difference with a discussion or conference, on webinar broadcast, is that some of this development is taking place on stage.

In Tore Vagn Lid's work—especially his work on terrorist attack of July 22nd —the Frankfurt-Fjaler axis of rehearsal was recorded, as a preview of the development of materials, and then continued on stage (Vega). One of the hubs in this work, and in sessions #15 and #8 is the production of theory.

KHiO   [*attempt*]   theodor.barth@khio.no