

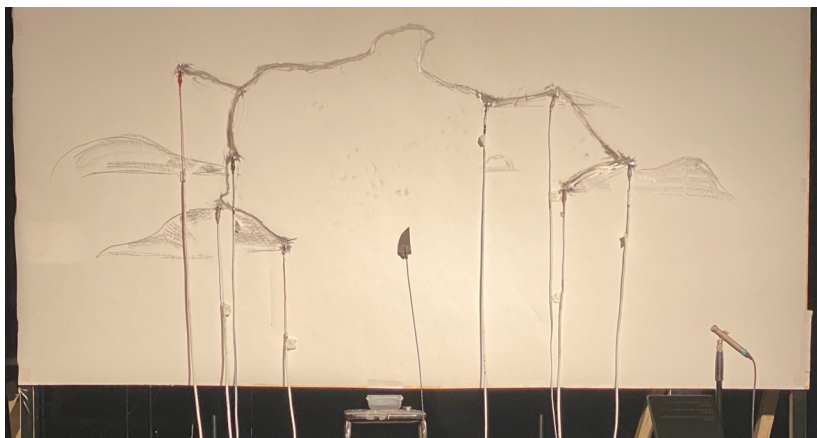


ENSEMBLE STUDIES—Featuring Henrik Hellstenius; Tanja Orning & Ensemble (Helge Myhr, Gry Kipperberg, Camille EEG, Verbaak)

During the Ultima festival in the autumn 2021 I attended the presentation of the artistic results from a 3-year research project, based at [NMH](#), called *Extended Composition*. The 3 pieces that were presented at [Sentralen](#) were: **1) Hands, the double; 2) Ensemble studies; 3) Bly (eng. Lead).**

Seen in isolation the 3 works featured *assemblages*: with elements that could be yanked out of place, plugged in somewhere else and still work. Performed in the thoroughfare of an audience, the pieces rather worked as *lineups*: the passing of the audience determining what is sensed and said.

The Ensemble Study is placed broadly within the QUAD mode [Beckett, Jodorowsky, Latour]: 4 cello players; two similar [*string musicians*], one who begged to differ [*actor*] and one who did something else [*dancer*]. In **1)** and **2)** Ellen Ugelvik joined two deep practices: piano playing and rock climbing.



BLY—Featuring Christian Blom; Ali Djabbari, Cecile Lindemann Steen, Ellen Ugelvik

The QUAD maps and paces the internal journey of the lineup/Aufstellung: that is, it picks up on the *communicative* aspect of the journey, and bridges a *behavioural* approach to the lineup with the *performance* of the lineup, which is what we may be looking for, in the act of [remembering the present](#).

Presence comes from *remembering* as observation comes from *description*. It starts with the situation and position (*context*) and then proceeds by *events* in the environment (*Umgebung*) and then to the fact that I am here, when my mark becomes active in the situation: it is a *signature*.

It is only at this point that the question *where am I?* in the sense that *what am I doing here?* can be posed. So, it is a rather *derived* question. This is important to take into account when responding to Bruno Latour's challenge. He is presupposing that existence comes to us as a *problem*.

However, existence is not a problem: or, before it is conceived as a problem, it is *trouble*. But the trouble, in Latour's approach, has a container: the degree to which he is aware of it, or he considers it partaking of the problem of fragmentation in our time, I am not completely sure. There is the QUAD.

We may be at the crux of the matter here, since the positions in a QUAD—if considered as functions, in the biosemiotic sense—they can be taken on by an individual (different jobs that do not blend) and that, correspondingly, we produce as *discrete* worlds. But if they are distributed in a *group* it changes.

In a QUAD—as a group of 4 roles, rather than functions—the worlds that are functionally conjured, will feature a *performative materials* that do not appear, or only with the work of time, when carried out solo, by an individual. It is the performative material that transits from trouble to presence.

The work is in existence before it is present as a work: the group is trouble *before* it acquires presence, which is the hallmark of the container. That is, when the QUAD group as a tensional whole, leaps into a mode where it becomes interceptive of the context, events and signatures beyond it.

This relates to the topic of 'walls' in theatre: the **4th wall** in regard of to the audience, the **5th wall** relating to the analog-digital interface. And the **6th wall** as the one transiting from production to reception. The walls can be considered as phase shifts where communication moves in the entire system.

They are thresholds at which the proxemics change: that is the specific configuration of the intimate, remote and proxemic/operational. The configuration shifts. At each threshold there is a shift from to an environment disturbed at each "wall" and the emergence of a world (*Umwelt*).

What we here call the *6th wall* is the lineup: it is not the first threshold in the theatre space, but the last one. In design the sequence is reversed from **6th** to **5th** and **4th**. Which is why it is dis/play. However, the lineup (*Aufstellung*) is quite common in artistic research. Which is why design has some purchase.