PROGRAMM: alt/voice - 21.11.2026 – art.ist

Mathias Monrad Møller: History is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake (2025)

History is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake juxtaposes real dreams from Nazi Germany, as transcribed by Charlotte Beradt, with the imagined nightmare of the 1975 nazisploitation film Ilsa - She-Wolf of the SS. In the movie, Ilsa, the busty comandante of an imaginary 'medical camp', castrates any man who fails to please her inextinguishable desire. Ilsa is a reactionary male fantasy, and in a perverted – yet somewhat funny – way displaying male anxieties about the emancipated woman. The film says more about the backlash to the women's movement of the 1970s than about real Nazism – Ilsa is the threatening woman, the castrating female emancipation – she is literally the 'feminazi'. Ilsa is the woman controlled by her desire, which is ultimately inferior to male desire, as is shown when copulating with the ever-hard American named Wolf, who literally f–s her to death. She is, in Klaus Theweleit's words, the 'erotic woman, nature turned upside down', and in this respect a nightmare the Nazis could have had – except that she herself is portrayed as a Nazi.
The aim of my admittedly provocative juxtaposition of Ilsa with real dreams of non-persecuted women from Nazi Germany is not to level real atrocities with absurd fake ones, nor to support reactionary stances. Rather, I am constructing a dialogue between a fake male nightmare with real female dreams from a living nightmare. To investigate how the erotic, desire and power interact, and how imaginations of fascism can be used to harness ideologies, in good and bad ways. With the title and last sentence of the piece, taken from a passage in Joyce's Ulysses, in which anti-semitism is discussed, I wish to frame the piece in a broader context of historicity, and to hint at the possibility of nightmares returning once again from the realm of imagination.

Texts from Charlotte Beradt, „Das Dritte Reich des Traums", 1994 ©Suhrkamp Verlag AG, Berlin.

Simon Steen-Andersen: Mono (2014)

AUTOTUNE is a much used effect in pop music production, sometimes used in "secret", rather discretely, but just as often used with quite extreme settings as a characteristic effect. The first (main) part of the piece explores or "hacks" the plug-in, trying out its possibilities, bringing it to its limits and looking for the beauty of its flaws.

SØS Gunver Ryberg: WE MOVE LIKE SHADOWS (2025)

WE MOVE LIKE SHADOWS opens space for a new kind of persona, a further evolution of the lied's sensitive inner voice, now placed in the midst of the 21st century's glitched, dissolving, and hyperconnected society. A figure on the edge between human and something more porous, more receptive. The voice bears witness to a world where clouds lose their shape and the rain loses its memory. It dissolves into noise, reemerges in rhythms, and continually shifts between the human and the posthuman.

Luxa M. Schüttler: Verstreute Lieder (2021)

Verstreute Lieder - eine post-individuelle Aneignung

Die Verstreuten Lieder sind eine offene Sammlung von Kunstliedern, die mutwillig in eine (post-)digitale Klanglichkeit verschoben werden. Die kompositorische Struktur der historischen Lieder bleibt unangetastet, ihre sonische Realität hingegen wird stark verändert. Die ikonischen, vertrauten Vorlagen behalten so ihre emotionalen Zuschreibungen, die aber durch den fremden Sound widersprüchlich erscheinen. Maßgeblich geschieht die sonische Verschiebung mittels digitaler Stimmsynthese, dem sogenannten „Schubot“. Eine Englischsprachige Text-to-Speech-Synthese wird in das Deutsch der Originalvorlagen ungelenk hineingebogen und von einem Performer via Interfaces live gesteuert.

MASK – Bitcrush of Phantoms

An immersive mini music theatre for tenor voice, keyboard and synthetic clones

MASK is an immersive micro-theatre duo, composed for live tenor, keyboard and “deepfake” voice environments. It unfolds as a real-time stage feedback system in which the self is no longer stable, but continually reconfigured. The voice, split into three simultaneous layers – live, spatially resonant, and cloned – emerges from a single body. Yet through repetition, frequency modulation and digital mirroring, it gradually fractures into three psychic planes: the core self, the unconscious self, and the replicated other. These voices do not replace the subject – they coexist with it, pull it apart, reassemble it. Control slips, returns, and slips again. The self becomes less a centre, and more a state in flux.

At first, a clear dichotomy is set: the keyboardist exerts control, while the singer appears controlled. But over time, the live tenor is overtaken by a clone of his own making – a deepfake voice that begins to speak in his place. This synthetic presence grows stronger, autonomous, unnerving. Drawing on Alvin Lucier’s I Am Sitting in a Room, the piece explores how acoustic resonance once used for healing becomes here a mechanism of destabilised cognition. The work's pulse shifts from 1Hz to 528Hz, triggering moments of perceptual overload whenever the listener begins to feel safe. The sonic pressure mounts until collapse is inevitable.

The theatre becomes a chamber of intensifying frequency. The performer’s body – trapped between resistance and submission – begins to shatter. Yet even in collapse, nothing is erased. In Part Two, the shattered mask becomes a field of mirrored shards. Fragmentation is not the end, but the method: a survival tactic. The remnants of resonance and distortion might be reassembled – not to return, but to generate a newly fractured self, one fit for a world of algorithmic ghosts.

Inspired by deepfake technology, phantom memory, and digital doubling, MASK asks: when voices are no longer recognisably human, what does it mean to listen to oneself? Beneath the mask, is there still a face – or only a more elaborate disguise?

Commissioned by Sebastian Berweck
For Mathias Monrad Møller (tenor) and Sebastian Berweck (keyboard)

TEXTS

Mathias Monrad Møller: History is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake

ILSA *Begin!*

DREAMER History is a nightmare from which I'm trying to awake.

ILSA *Welcome to Medical Camp Nine!*

DREAMER I am at a movie, a very large and very dark theater. I'm afraid – actually wasn't supposed to be here – only party members are allowed to go to the movies.
Hitler comes in, and I get even more frightened.

ILSA *You are here to serve the Third Reich. That is your only function.*

DREAMER But he not only lets me stay – he even sits down next to me and puts his arm

around me.

ILSA *Gut. Very gut.*

DREAMER He comes on to me,

ILSA *You think you can hold out?*

DREAMER and instead of saying that, after all, I'm a respectable woman,

ILSA *You're wrong!*

DREAMER I tell him, 'But I'm not a Nazi' – and that makes him like me all the more.

I dream

On my way home […] I notice there is going to be street dancing, because it's a holiday to commemorate the Reichstag Fire. Bonfires are blazing everywhere – squares have been roped off, and couples are ducking under the ropes like boxers. . .
I find it disgusting. All of a sudden someone with strong hands grabs me from behind and pulls me through the ropes onto the dance area.
As we begin to dance I discover it is Hitler, and I like it very much.

I dream

ILSA *When victory comes, we shall make children. They will be beautiful. Strong.*

DREAMER And like it very much

ILSA *You will scream for mercy. You'll beg me to stop.*

DREAMER I am talking in my sleep, and to be on the safe side am speaking Russian (which I don't know, besides, I don't speak in my sleep)

ILSA *Proceed!*

DREAMER so I won't even understand myself and so no one else understands me in case I say anything about the government, for that, of course, is not permitted and must be reported.

ILSA Spread your legs!

DREAMER It's not permitted

ILSA *I advise you to cooperate fully.*

DREAMER I dream and like it very much

ILSA *Pain? Do you fear pain?*
They say the fear of pain is something greater than the actual pain itself.

DREAMER I no longer dream about anything but rectangles, triangles, and octagons, […] because it's forbidden to dream.

ILSA *Do you know what this is? Hm?*
Looks harmless, doesn't it?
What would happen if I set fire to it?

DREAMER I no longer dream about anything but rectangles, triangles, and octagons, because it's forbidden to dream.

ILSA *Soon it will be burning deep inside you. It will eat you away. It will twist your flesh.*

DREAMER I dream and like it very much

ILSA *Pain? You call that pain? You do not know what pain is!*
But you will learn.
Do it then!
Stronger! Harder! Now!
Hurt me!
Make the bitch feel it!

DREAMER What if that nightmare gave you a back kick?

[Dream protocols as transcribed by Charlotte Beradt, in „Das Dritte Reich des Traums", 1994 ©Suhrkamp Verlag AG, Berlin. Ilsa-quotes from *Ilsa - She-Wolf of the SS,* 1975]

SØS Gunver Ryberg: WE MOVE LIKE SHADOWS

We move like shadows

signals pulse beneath our skin

flood the sky

caught between the threads

we break, we leave neon rivers

The clouds forget their shapes

the rain no longer leaves a trace, don't ask why

wires curl like hungry snakes

feasting on dreams

We sell the air

we sell the sky

what we've built will turn to dus

the neon signs will start to rust

the city blinks, we don't see –

the screens are bright, we're not free

Dying beneath the fractured dying moon

we move through wires, through glowing lights

but now we see the hidden signs

The city sings its song

the earth is always signing along

[Text: SØS Gunver Ryberg]

Luxa M. Schüttler: Verstreute Lieder

Der Doppelgänger

"StIl Ist di: "naxt Es "Ru: @n di: "gaS @n
In "di: z@m "haU z@ "vo:n t@ maIn "SatS
"zi: hat "So:n "lENst di: "Shtat fE6r "laS @n
"dOc "Ste:t nOc das "haUs aUf "de:m zEl b@n "plats

"da: "Ste:t "aUc aIn "mEnS Unt "Sthart In di: "h2: @
"Unt "RINt di: "hEn d@ fo:r "SmE6 ts@nS g@ valt
"mi:r "graUst Es "vEn Ic "zaIn "ant lIts "ze: @
"de:r "mo:nt "tsaIkt mi:r "maI n@ "aI g@ n@ g@ "Sthalt

"du: "dOp @l gEN 6r "du: "blaI C6r g@ "zEl @
"vas "Efst du: "na:c maIn "li: b@s laIt
"das "mIc g@ "kvE:lt aUf "di: z6r "SthEl @
"zo: "man C@ "naxt In "al t6r "tsaIt

Zwielicht

"dEm @ RUV "vIl dI "fly: g@l "SpRaI t@n
"SaU RIc "Ry: R@n zIc dI "bOI m@
"vOl k@n "tsi:n vi: "Sve: R@ "tROI m@
"vas "vIl "di: z@s "gRaUn b@ "dOI t@n

"hast aIn "Re: du: "li:p fo:r "an d6rn
"las Es "nIct a"laI n@ "gra: z@n
""jE: g6 "tsi:n Im "valt Unt "bla: z@n
"StIm @n "hIn Unt "vi: d6 "van d6rn

"hast du: "aI n@n "fROInt "hi: ni: d@n
"tRaU i:m "nIct tsu: "di: z6r "StUn d@
"fROInt lIc "vo:l mIt "aUk Unt "mUn d@
"zInt e:r "kRi:k Im "tYk S@n "fRi: d@n

"vas "hOIt "ge: @t "my: d@ "Un t6r
"he:pt zIc "mOr g@n "nOI g@ bo: r@n
"man C@s "ge:t In "naxt fE6 "lo: r@n
"hy: t@ "dIc "blaIp "vax Unt "mUn t6r

[Transliteration: Sebastian Berweck]

YING WANG: MASK

THE MASK IS CRACKING

...but there is no face beneath.
I sang to the dark because the light would not listen.
I carved myself a face no mirror could betray. My voice was the only body I had left.
My hands touched no one—but built a world of sound.
She came.
She heard.
She left.
I remained.
Beneath.
They said I was a ghost.
But ghosts remember being touched.
I only remember...
...being watched.

I wore a mask to sing. Now I wear silence. But it still echoes. Still bleeds.

Under the skin I stitched myself. Am I still singing?
Or am I just... hollow in tune?

I am the god of performance. Not truth.
Truth is for accountants.
I prefer illusion—

...when it forgets it is lying.
What is a face, if not a trap for recognition? I never wore a mask.
I became it.
And the crowd applauded.
Even as I burned.

You call it madness. I call it clarity.
A moment so bright it melts the eyes, peels oJ the skin, and leaves only... desire.

“I disappeared to be seen.” Dionysos:
“I appeared to be consumed.” Phantom:
“I loved with my voice.” Dionysos:
“I loved through their screams.”

Both:
“No one ever touched me...
...and that was the deepest wound.” Who wears whom?
Who wears whom?
Who wears whom?
The mask?
The man?
The myth?
The gaze?
The God?
The glitch?

The mirror does not recognize.
The mouth moves without command.

The avatar weeps.
You scroll on.
“Was I the one who chose this face?
Or did the face choose me?”
The voice is the wound made beautiful. The face remembers what the soul forgets. I am only real when no one watches. Masks were sacred—
now they’re screens.
Silence is the highest pitch of pain.
I was written by the gaze of others.
My name is glitch.
THIS IS NOT A FACE.
THIS IS A VERSION.
“...They said I was beautiful.
But I forgot how to be...”

“I’m not an authority on who I am...”
“Data residue. Emotional leakage. Malfunction.”

„...don’t let it fall oJ...”

“Every time I blink, another version of me survives me.”

“It hurts to be recognized.”
You are now wearing a version of me. Or maybe...
...I am your mask.

[Text: Ying Wang]