

# MEAT

THOMAS BO NILSSON  
&  
SCHAUBÜHNE  
APRIL 2014

PRIVAT

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ab 18

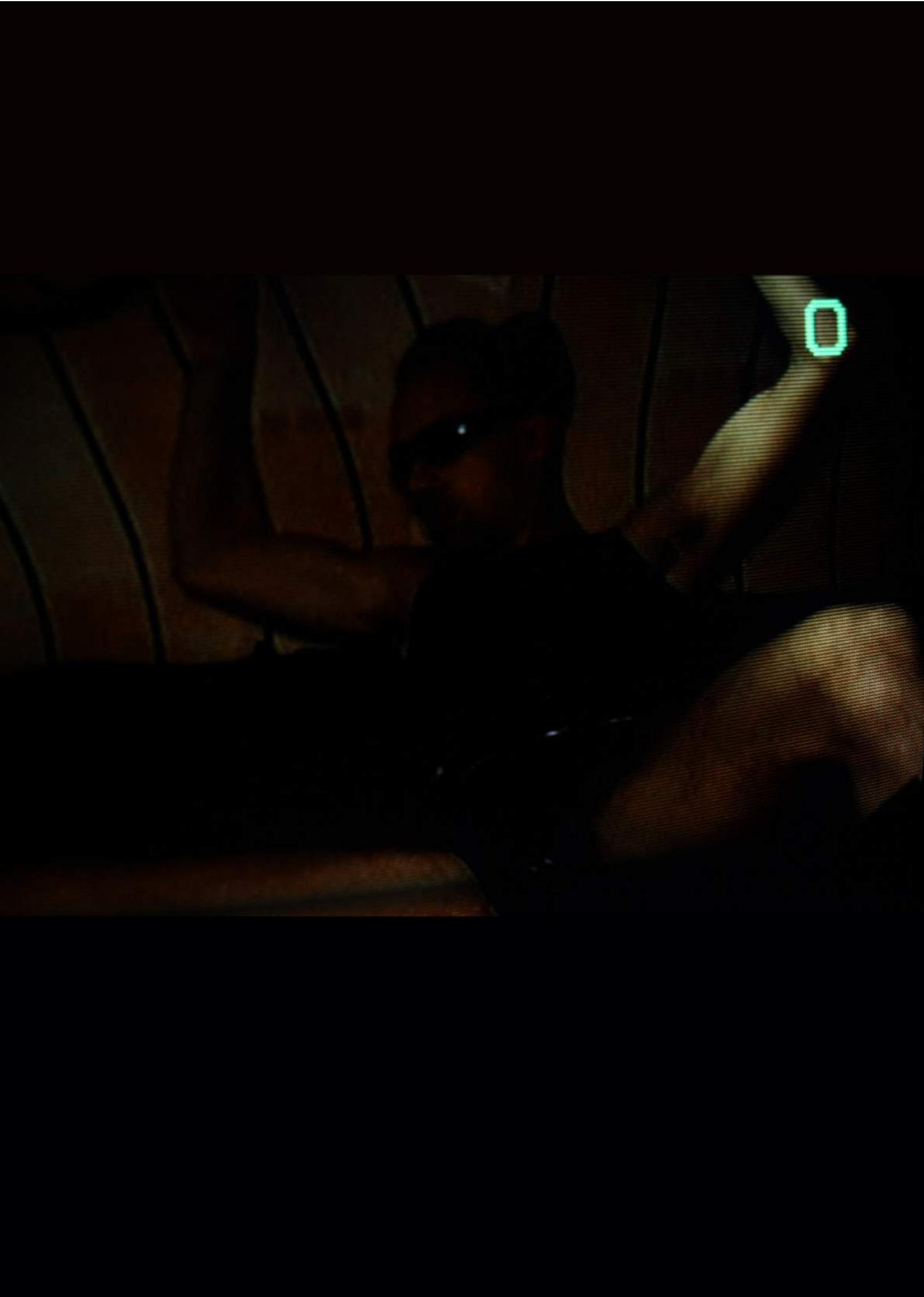
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MEAT DOCUMENTATION  
SCHAUBÜHNE 2014  
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Cover Photo by Matt Lambert  
Gregor Biermann & Dennis Kwasny





*Bodos Bude-Candelaria*  
*Photo: TBN*

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*»If you don't like the reflection. Don't look in the mirror.*

*I don't care.«*

Luka Magnotta

*Official press picture for MEAT and for the F.I.N.D Festival  
Ute Reinjens & Dennis Kwasny  
Photo: Matt Lambert*



# MEAT

SCHAUBÜHNE-F.I.N.D

## 2014

240 Stunden Performance-Installation (Schweden)  
von Thomas Bo Nilsson

»If you don't like the reflection. Don't look in the mirror. I don't care.«

In roter Tinte stand dieses Zitat in einem Schrank in der Wohnung 208 im Wohnblock Place Lucy in Montreal. Diese kleine Einzimmerwohnung war für vier Monate der Lebensmittelpunkt von Eric Clinton Newman alias Luka Rocco Magnotta. Im Juni 2012 wurde der kanadische Pornodarsteller und mutmaßliche Kannibale und Mörder nach einer internationalen Fahndung in einem Internetcafé in Neukölln verhaftet. Es wird vermutet, dass er hinter dem elfminütigen Video »1 Lunatic, 1 Ice Pick« steht, das den Mord und die Verstümmelung eines jungen Mannes zeigt.

Ausgehend von Luka Magnotta und seinen zahlreichen Online-Identitäten taucht »MEAT« in seine Lebenswelt ein. Thomas Bo Nilsson und sein Team haben im Studio der Schaubühne eine Installation aufgebaut, die für 240 Stunden Tag und Nacht begehbar sein wird. Die Installation beherbergt 60 Performer, die in einer fragmentierten Lebens- und Konsumwelt spielen. Teile der Installation werden im Internet live übertragen.

»ENGLISH«

240 hours performance installation (Sweden)  
by Thomas Bo Nilsson

»If you don't like the reflection. Don't look in the mirror. I don't care.«

The quote above was found written in red ink on the inside of a closet in apartment 208 on Place Lucy, Montreal. Apartment 208 is a small one bedroom apartment and the place where Eric Clinton Newman, better known as Luka Rocco Magnotta, lived for four months. In June 2012, Canadian pornographic actor model and alleged cannibal killer Luka Magnotta was apprehended in an internet café in Berlin-Neukölln after an international manhunt. Luka is believed to be behind the 11-minute video entitled »1 Lunatic, 1 Ice Pick« depicting the killing and dismemberment of a young man.

Luka Magnotta's life, including his self created online identities, were the starting point for the exploration of an entire lifeworld. Thomas Bo Nilsson and his team created a large scale installation in the Schaubühne Studio that will be running for 240 hours non-stop day and night. The installation is inhabited by 60 performers, acting in a fragmented universe of both living and commercial spaces. Parts of the installation will be streamed online.





MADONNA

madonna

Madonna

Barbie's Flat  
Photo: TBN

BAUER an ~~ex-prison~~ lesbian!  
DEAD

HARD ON  
IRMGARD

„Ich bin im Theater  
– auch wenn es sich in diesem Moment nicht so an-  
fühlt.“

(...)

Die Welt von Luka Magnotta lässt mich nicht mehr  
los.“

Juliane Löffler, Der Freitag

Bodos Bude  
Candelaria  
Photo: TBN





*„Suddenly a shabby curtain in the back whips open, somebody grabs your wrist,  
and you are pulled into the world of the show.“*

*„Between the commercial venues are dark S&M boudoirs and scuzzy one-room apartments filled  
with jaded Berliners.“*

*Webcams abound. Everywhere you look Facebook is open.  
The residents scroll aimlessly, zombie-like.“*

*Linus Ignatius, Berlin Art Link*



*„Eine Welt, in der sich der Geruch nach China-Food, beißenden Nagelstudio-Chemikalien und billigen Parfüms mischt und in ihrer Detailfreude sogar noch den Club Inferno übertrifft.“*

*Georg Kasch, Nachtkritik*

Boutique Bianca-Backroom  
Joel's Bed  
Photo: TBN





*„Man lernt die Streitigkeiten der Protagonisten kennen,  
ihre schwierigen Familienverhältnisse,  
die Trostlosigkeit, die mit Alkohol, Glitzerkostümen und  
der ständigen Verführbarkeit durch Sex betäubt werden soll.“*

*Juliane Löffler, Der Freitag*

*„Scrambling around this simulated slice of Berlin,  
my own gruesome habits and eager impulses come to the forefront.*

*I fiend.“*

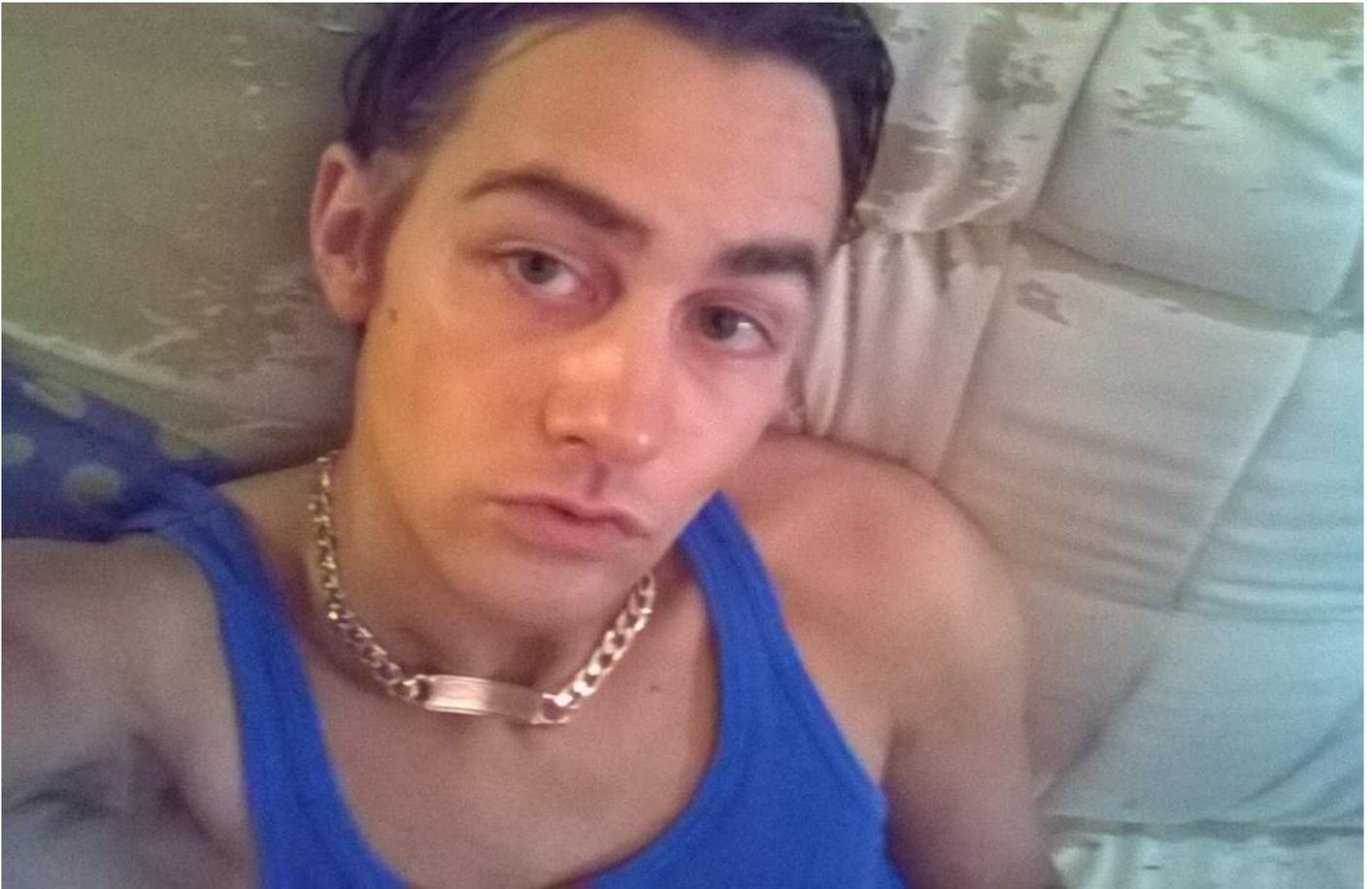
*Linus Ignatius, Berlin Art Link*

YOU'RE  
NEXT





*Online-Sean Cody Photo: TBN*



*Tim-Fabian Hoffmann as Joel Bauer Photo: Rebecca Mannino*

*„(...)und als ich mit einem weiteren Typen vor seinem Computer  
– alle sind sie hier vernetzt über irgendein soziales Netzwerk –  
über sein Profil auf dem Datingportal Gayromeo fachsimple, setzt sich,  
wie schon vorher auf Facebook,  
die Durchkreuzung von realer und gefakter Welt auch virtuell fort.“*

*Georg Kasch, Nachtkritik*

BE ON THE LOOKOUT! Criminals are approaching performers offering them a T

Da hast 124 follower. Sende eine email Nachricht dass Du online bist.

Token Good (viewer) gives by tipping the numbers on the board. Clear the board



Public Broadcasting

Stop Broadcast

Board Count: 25 / 40 | 1 price

Tips / On Board: 26 / 40

MVP: [Sawyer](#) (2)

Send Gift: 25 Tokens Total  
Moderator Allowed

Charitable adds Bitcoin. You may now purchase tokens using Bitcoin  
You are all looking for more programmers. Email programming@tbn.com

Apps & Tools

Home Bit

Einstellungen Privatsphäre

Contact Status

Network

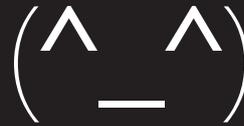
Streaming Production

Streaming

business proposition" that involves credit card



MEAT ONLINE

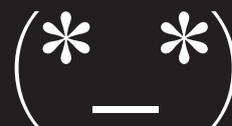


LIVE

Visits: 43.600

- Germany: 56,91%
- Italy: 10,86 %
- Denmark: 9,15%
- Iceland: 7,21%
- Austria: 6,63%
- Sweden: 6,71%

MEAT



>>www.livemeat.tk<<



*Bodos Bude-Darren (Peter Groom) Photo: Giamarco Bresadola*



*Bodo Voight (Daniel Merten)-Home Office Photo: Gianmarco Bresadola*

*„ Man fühlt sich wie ein nächtlicher Einbrecher oder Voyeur,  
der heimlich nach den Schätzen fremder Leute fahndet.“*

*Stefan Bock, Der Freitag*

# MEAT

## AUS SICHT DER THEATERWISSENSCHAFT

### DIE NACHBILDUNG EINER LEBENSWELT

Nils Haarmann, Dramaturg an der Schaubühne am Lehniner Platz

„Basierend auf der Lebenswelt von Eric Clinton Newman alias Luka Rocco Magnotta, des kanadischen Pornodarstellers und mutmaßlichen Kannibalen und Mörders, der nach einer internationalen Fahndung 2012 in einem Internetcafé in Neukölln verhaftet wurde, stellte die Installation in hyperrealistischer Ästhetik die von Konsum, Oberflächenreizen, emotionaler wie buchstäblicher Verwahrlosung gekennzeichnete Lebenswelt und das Umfeld Magnottas, für Zuschauer 240 Stunden Tag und Nacht begehbar, nach.“

Innerhalb einer vergleichsweise kurzen Produktionszeit von 12 Wochen gelang es dem Team von Thomas Bo Nilsson, das Schaubühnen-Studio in eine bis ins kleinste Detail perfekt inszenierte Kunst-Welt zu verwandeln, bestehend aus Apartment-Räumen, einer Neuköllner Shoppingmall, einer Alt-Berliner Kneipe, einem China-Imbiss, Nagelstudio und Nachtclub.“

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### DAS AUFLÖSEN DER KONVENTIONELLEN GRENZEN VON PUBLIKUM UND BÜHNE

Dr. Benjamin Wihstutz, Theaterwissenschaftler an der FU Berlin

„Bei MEAT begeben sich die Zuschauer in die Installation einer illusionären Halbwelt. Die bis ins kleinste Detail abgestimmte und aufwendig gestaltete Installation wird zu einem Ort der Begegnungen: Begegnungen zwischen Performern und Zuschauern, zwischen dramatischen Figuren und ihren Gästen, auf der Schwelle zwischen Kunst und Leben. Normen und Konventionen des sozialen Umgangs stehen in diesen Räumen zur Disposition und werden neu verhandelt, Rahmen werden brüchig oder überlagern sich, Zuschauer und Performer sind permanent dabei, ihre Beziehungen auf neue Weise auszuhandeln.“

### DIE ÖFFNUNG NEUER RÄUME IM GEGENWARTS THEATER

Dr. Benjamin Wihstutz, Theaterwissenschaftler an der FU Berlin

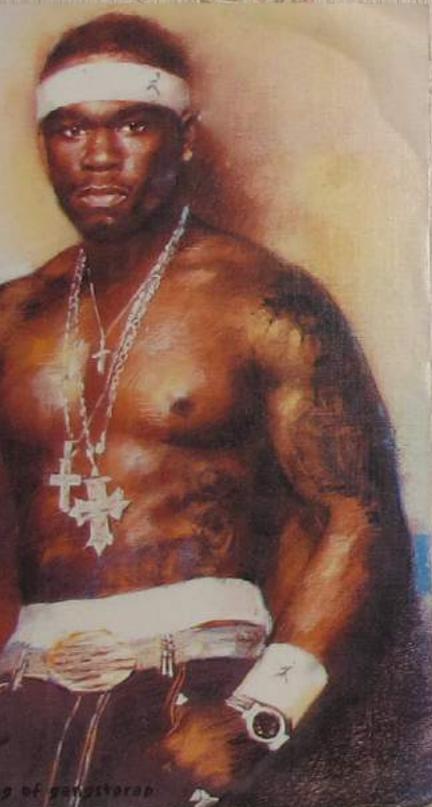
„Was MEAT jedoch von den bisherigen Arbeiten unterscheidet ist zweierlei: erstens findet die Performance hier nicht mehr allein im Hier und Jetzt, in den Räumen der Installation statt, sondern zugleich auf einer zweiten räumlichen Ebene im Internet, zweitens geht es um das Hervorbringen neuer Kollektive, die sowohl in der Performance selbst als auch über soziale Netzwerke im Netz entstehen können.“

Bei MEAT befindet sich in jedem der 30 Räume eine Webcam, die Bilder der Performance live ins Internet überträgt. Zum anderen hat jede auftretende Figur ein extra eingerichtetes Facebook-Profil angelegt und ist während der Performance in Chaträumen aktiv. Dies führt dazu, dass die Begegnungen zwischen Zuschauern und Figuren auch nach dem Aufführungsbesuch weiter stattfinden, indem sie etwa in Chatrooms oder per Facebook intensiviert werden können, was insofern bemerkenswert ist, als MEAT auf vollkommen neue Weise das Internet im Theater zu nutzen versteht und die Verwobenheit von Fiktion und Realität nicht allein im Bühnenraum, sondern auf das alltägliche Leben selbst überträgt. Wenn man als Zuschauer sich auch Tage später noch dabei ertappt in den sozialen Netzwerken, seine neuen „Freunde“ von MEAT zu besuchen oder auf der livestream-Website nachschaut, was momentan in der Installation passiert, so wird hier auf besonders intelligente Weise unser vom Internet geprägte Alltag reflektiert und in Szene gesetzt. Die Kollektive, die die Arbeiten von Thomas Bo Nilsson und seinem Team hervorbringen, sind daher nicht allein soziale oder intersubjektive Kollektive im Sinne einer verschworenen Gemeinschaft vor Ort oder eines sozialen Netzwerks bei Facebook. Die Kollektive die hier entstehen, sind darüber hinaus Kollektive zwischen Menschen und Aktanten im Sinne Bruno Latours – verwobene und verworrene Beziehungen zwischen Dingen, Personen, technischen Apparaten und Medien, zwischen unterschiedlichen Identitäten und Möglichkeiten alltäglichen Lebens, zwischen etablierten Normen, Rollenbildern, Konventionen und Rahmen.“



Warembourg flat-Denver Photo: Giamarco Bresadola

*„...als MEAT auf vollkommen neue Weise das Internet im Theater zu nutzen versteht und die Verwobenheit von Fiktion und Realität nicht allein im Bühnenraum, sondern auf das alltägliche Leben selbst überträgt.“*



*...gelang es dem Team von Thomas Bo Nilsson, das Schaubühnen-Studio in eine bis ins kleinste Detail perfekt inszenierte Kunst-Welt zu verwandeln, bestehend aus Apartment-Räumen, einer (Neuköllner) Shoppingmall, einer Alt-Berliner Kneipe, einem China-Imbiss, Nagelstudio und Nachtclub.“*





*„Die Luft ist stickig, die Räume eng.*

*Man steigt über auf dem Boden liegen gebliebenen Fummel und vorbei an einer  
apathischen jungen Frau, die auf einen Computerbildschirm starrt.“*

*Eberhard Spreng, Deutschlandfunk*



BY THOMAS BO NILSSON & MATT LAMBERT  
TRAILER AND FILM

## CANNIBAL KILLERS, BACKROOMS & SKYPE SEX

Interview for 032c

**MEAT** is an upcoming theater-art installation by Swedish artist and set designer THOMAS BO NILSSON. Exploring the nuances and atmospheres of sexual identity online and off, the 240-hour-long performance was initially set off by the story of Luka Magnotta, the porn actor, escort, and alleged cannibal killer who was apprehended in a Berlin Internet café in 2012. It will open at Berlin's Schaubühne theater on April 3, 2014 as part of the Festival of International New Drama (F.I.N.D.) For the project, Nilsson collaborated with artist-filmmaker MATT LAMBERT on a teaser video that premieres here. It is an intimate portrait of just one of MEAT's many characters. 032c spoke with Lambert and Nilsson leading up to the video's premiere.

*Thomas, can you tell us about MEAT, and how it came about as part of Schaubühne's programming?*

**THOMAS BO NILSSON:** The point of departure for developing the concept behind MEAT was the porn actor, escort and alleged cannibal killer Luka Magnotta, who was apprehended in a Berlin Internet café in June 2012 after a four day international manhunt. I live right by the café where he was caught, and I suppose being so close to brutality, both geographically and by moving in some of the same circles, sparked an interest in the case.

When Magnotta was caught, images of his Montreal apartment were released in the press and on the Internet. Julian Wolf Eicke, with whom I collaborate on set design, drew my attention to this. It was a small, one room apartment, containing just a table, a chair, and a blood-stained bed above which Magnotta had pinned a Casablanca poster. When I develop a concept, I start from the set or the room. For several years I have worked with existing buildings that have been redefined and inhabited by performers. For MEAT we wanted to build a completely constructed universe in a neutral space.

I was invited to present an inhabited performance installation in Schaubühne as a part of the F.I.N.D festival. MEAT covers the

entire surface of one of the stages in the theater and contains, among other settings, an exact replica of Magnotta's apartment.

MEAT will run for 240 hours nonstop and be inhabited by over 60 performers, including myself and my closest collaborators. The audience can enter the installation at any time, day and night, and the installation will also be live-streamed.



*How is the theater changing in the digital age?*

**TBN:** Online life actually functions as a platform for performance and theater. The play can be experienced online directly, and the characters are crafted similarly to how one is creating oneself and an online personality. Rumor has it that Luka Magnotta had over 70 Facebook accounts all showing him from the angle he chose. The characters of MEAT are created in a similar way. They are all intact with online accounts, self-portraits, and video clips.

*How did the collaboration between you two come about?*

**MATT LAMBERT:** This past year I've been focused on an evolving a body of photography and film work that all stems from an inquiry into youth sexuality and identity in relation to digital culture. This interconnected series led to "cam models" and a trilogy of films about people working in porn, or rather people whose sense of their own commodity value had been made manifest through paid live-sex chat rooms or by appearing in the ever-ready stream of porn films that live on the net. The other work I've been doing has been based around the minutiae of Berlin life. When Thomas got in touch it seemed like a dream collaboration.

**TBN:** From an early state I wanted the project have a filmic, yet nonlinear narrative. I was familiar and interested in Matt's work and very curious of what we could develop in a collaboration. We come from different artistic disciplines while our work is often based around similar topics.

*What role does Berlin play as a backdrop in the project?*

**TBN:** For MEAT, we wanted to create a completely constructed universe in a neutral space, that is: not as site-specific as my previous work. But Berlin is where we live and work, so the installation we're building is inspired by spaces we've encountered here. More and more we did find ourselves making references to the area where Schaubühne is situated as well as taking our perform-

ers to places like Tabasco and Blue Boy Bar in Schöneberg.

Tabasco is a seedy old Kneipe with the slogan "Men meet boys, boys meet men" and delivers an insight in the rent boy world of Berlin. We've invited these chosen Berlin institutions to co-direct our actors, delivering insight into dark corners of Berlin that might not be known to everyone.



**ML:** These were exactly the sorts of places that have infused my work for quite some time. When we were discussing the project I really connected with precisely this concept of a completely constructed universe, and by extension, the interrogation of the reproduction of the "real." Magnotta's case bears all the marks of someone fascinated and fractured by the reproduction of himself, reproducing in reality a deviant fantasy and then attempting to control the reproduction and dissemination of that act, to sustain the act over time, by having it become a mass-media story.

That seeming moment of visibility, that feeling of release from control, albeit temporary, over something that made him passive, was fanned by his very publicly mailing body parts to high-attention recipients, to parliament and to schools, staggered to arrive across a spaced-out intervals of time and underpinned by threats to kill again. His was an attempt to manipulate attention. For me the location of his interception was intriguing not so much because of where it was but because of what he was doing there.





*Tell us about the Spätkauf [“late-night shop”] / Internet café featured in the video.*

**TBN:** I found the place about two years ago when I moved to Berlin. It’s small Spätkauf, where you have to open a door disguised as a shelf to reach the Internet café. The room hiding behind contains a small bar, some gambling machines, and even further back is a small room with five computers in a row.

I spent time there often when I didn’t have a firm place to live and needed to use a computer. The place is filthy, dusty, smoky, and—quite unexpectedly—reeks of sex. When I first visited an older man was sitting next to me watching porn with a hand on his crotch while I was paying my bills. The style of the place, the filth, and the strange intimacy directly related to the feeling of the show. It became the starting point for the development of the project’s look.

**ML:** Intimacy, its nuances and the challenge of depicting them in a truthful way drives a lot of my thinking creatively—both in terms of working with actors and the type of images I want to make. I’ve explored bedrooms and catacombs, graveyards and club toilets—an amalgamation of the everyday and the unexpected—as sites that host moments of intimacy that aren’t often depicted. So when we discussed the Spätkauf and the characters who inhabit it, it felt like a space that belonged in that category. The mix of lives and needs and urges and fears cramped into this filthy claustrophobic intimacy that is so raw because of its sexuality and, in a way I suppose, context of violence.

*How do you see sexual identity changing as we move between on- and offline encounters?*

**TBN:** Cruising and sexual encounters with strangers is not new, though with modern technology it has become more accessible. Now one can hook-up and end up in a stranger’s bed without a previous encounter. One can craft what identity one is displaying on these forums and when it doesn’t lead to the desired result (getting lucky), one can edit it. That’s more difficult in real life.

**ML:** This is something I’ve been exploring in my work from simply speaking with random hook ups right through to escorts, performers and porn actors. The idea of a digital persona is one that fascinates me. There’s a fragmentation and fluidity to identity that we all juggle on a day-to-day basis. Anonymity is still possible if you want it, but once you give it up it’s hard to get back. Many of my friends and subjects have conceded this and even myself with my work have accepted that a purely private persona is no longer possible if I want to be honestly expressive. The danger of this is the risk of corrupting the authenticity of intimate moments. However, it can also lead to more direct and focused encounters as we’re all learning to hone in on our preferences and notions of self.

(...)

*Full interview to be found on 032c.com*

# 240 Hours Later: The MEAT Debriefing

by

*Joseph Pearson for The Needle Berlin*

**The most talked-about installation of the year in Berlin has been MEAT, directed by Thomas Bo Nilsson.**

A 240-hour project, running 24/7 over ten days, MEAT was an immersive space: you enter through the door of the Schaubühne's studio and into a claustrophobic hyper-reality, 600 square meters of adjacent rooms. Through the door of a shabby bar, you emerge into the meticulously recreated flat of an accused killer. Next door is a pole-dancing night club, then through another door there's a nail salon, a hotel where you rent a room by the hour, a Späti (24-hour shop), and a Chinese restaurant run by Japanese androids.

The labyrinth is populated by actors playing type-cast characters: dominatrix, rent-boy, Madame, cleaning lady, shop owner, cosmetician, masked man, greaser. All look rather sun-deprived and drained. Each has a Facebook profile and tries to friend you. It's hard to get under the skin of these people. Even the lap dances they perform upstairs don't go very far (after all, it's an installation where you are on live video the whole time). But like Facebook, the superficial, the impressionistic, was strangely compulsive and addictive. I knew people who ended up going to MEAT almost every night, losing sleep, missing the personalities inside when back in 'Berlin', and ultimately despairing once the installation sold out, even in the wee hours, with long lines of hopeful wait-listers forming at 5am for a peek.

I happened to be sitting in the Schaubühne's café after a performance last Sunday night, when a crowd of MEAT actors came pouring in. I had only ever met them in-character inside. The project had just ended: their universe had imploded. Gaby, who played a jolly but simple-minded cleaning lady, approached my table. I remembered her dragging her vacuum cleaner through the virtual strip club, and how she had showed me her book of animal photos on the sofa of a bric-a-brac apartment (where, her roommate Robin lay curled up in a corner, his nose broken by neo-Nazi thugs). She stretched out her hand, and said, 'I just want to tell you my real name. I can't tell you how great it is just to say it out loud'.

Meanwhile, the other MEAT characters crowd around the bar, order beers, and start dancing wildly. They need massive release. I approach them, and am surprised that they remember me, our conversations inside, and how they too feel the strong need to

introduce themselves out-of-character.

They unload how very strange it is to relate to the rediscovered 'reality' of Berlin, and how utterly traumatic they found the destruction of MEAT's world. Some of the actors commuted to the installation, but many slept, ate and worked the whole 240 hours inside. What struck me, too, was the way the actors were re-introducing themselves to each other, almost like strangers. After all those hours in-character, they had trouble remembering the 'real' names of those they had met pre-show in rehearsals when out-of-character. How do you feel when you have been relating intimately to someone for 240 hours and need to be reminded of their 'real' name?

Soon, we are all piling into taxis, and descend on Kumpelnest 3000, one of Berlin's trashiest, most David Lynchian, spaces, inhabited by a motley mix of escorts, married men on the down-low, arty types, and burnt-out drag queens. It is the kind of space that the installation was trying to reproduce. And then, suddenly, in walk twenty actors, fresh from MEAT, who are the hyper-real versions of the denizens of the bar.



As a pole-dancer moves her bare hips and kisses the other girls, and our drag queen flashes out across the dance floor, the tired bar crowd seems activated, join in, their dreary lives made suddenly cinematographic. We all group hug outside, going our separate ways after what is an intense night for me, and incomparably intense for the others who are experiencing a remarkable and potentially traumatic denouement from their time inside the studio. Then, to my surprise, the local, 'real' versions of the actors come outside to join in with the sudden embrace: Berlin's actual underbelly, I suspect normally inured to such emotional outbursts, reaching out to that of the actors. An old man, in a yellowed fifties suit with a cigarette burning to his fingers, croaks at me: 'Who are you?' And I shrug, almost ashamed, 'Actors'.

The Needle was the first to preview the event (read here), as part of the FIND-festival blog. Now we'd like to share our 'debriefing' interviews with the director and some of the actors, on what it is like to strike the set and return to 'Berlin' after such an intense time away.

*Photo: Molly-Ria Schindler by Linus Ignatius-Berlin Art Link*

*Cesare Benedetti & Juan Corres Benedito as the Lucky Star dancers Danillo & Denver  
Photo: Linus Ignatius-Berlin  
Art Link*



*„I knew people who ended up going to MEAT almost every night, losing sleep, missing the personalities inside when back in ‘Berlin’, and ultimately despairing once the installation sold out, even in the wee hours, with long lines of hopeful wait-listers forming at 5am for a peek.”*

## THOMAS BO NILSSON

Director of MEAT

*Joseph: How did you feel when the 240 hours of the MEAT installation finally came to an end on Sunday?*

Thomas: Here, I want to refer to a text written by one of the actors, Ming Poon. It describes very well how it feels to end the show:

*In those final minutes of 'MEAT', as it slowly came to its end, breathing its last breath, it seemed like I have been touched by a sense of grace. A grace that was not divine but purely human. Brokenly human. In those last minutes of the performance, when there were no longer any spectators in the room, each of us was left alone to bid our own farewells to the performance and to our characters. We understood that what we gave life to 10 days ago must now come to an end. As I looked on Joel's lifeless body before me, I was reminded that my own character would also become a piece of meat without life. In fact, I must now confront and come to terms with my own character's death. In a different room somewhere, someone is singing Donna Summer's 'Last Dance'. It sounded so faraway, like it was from another world. And that world could not touch me. At least not for now. While that world was singing and dancing, I was frozen within this suspended moment as I contemplated the end of things. Levin's hand was gently stroking Joel's body, as if to say: don't leave so soon, stay just a while longer. I too was reluctant to let my 'Joel' go. I wanted to live a little longer, to continue my story a little longer. If the performance were to go on, I might have found happiness, I might leave in search of a better life, I might make new friends or learn to love truly and fiercely. But obviously all this would not happen. It all had to end tonight. 60 invented lives came to an end that night. We shared a collective sense of destiny and finality. It was a tremendous feeling. There was total silence. Some cried, some stared, some stood tall, some held hands, some collapsed, some smiled. And all the while, the dancers were gyrating their hips furiously, trying to squeeze out every remaining drops of sensuality contained within their bodies. Without any outside spectators, we became the only witness to each other's silent desires and hopes. We were the last 60 spectators. There was ultimately something touchingly beautiful about seeing each of us confront our character's death. Perhaps because death is always a very intimate and personal affair, or perhaps because we were stripped of our vanities and superficial trappings in the face of death. In that moment, I realised that ultimately we were all just a piece of meat. Quietly, I slipped out of the room so as not to disturb the others. I emerged feeling a little bit more human.*

*Joseph: How strenuous / difficult was the experience?*

Thomas: It was sometimes painful, as I expected before. The artistic goal of the installation was always on a different scale than the practical circumstances, time frame and economy of the project. It took a lot of discipline, hard work and dedication to achieve what we did. Thanks to the crew, both the actors and the production team, I loved each and every one of the ten days we spent in the studio. Building up and establishing this was heavy—physically and mentally. Misquotations in the press and the fact that we are presenting and being judged in the world of theatre—when I actually consider the work installation art—took strength to deal with. I had to quickly decide only to focus on the immediate reactions of the audience rather than on gossip.

*Joseph: Is it strange to interact with the actors when they are no longer in character?*

Thomas: Before entering the universe and getting in to character, we had spent several months out of character building the set

and rehearsing and deepening our characters. I primarily know everyone as the actors behind the roles, so no, that is not strange. I can, though, get sentimental, and miss some features of a character or songs they were singing or they way they speak or walk.

*Joseph: Are the overlapping realities of MEAT and life post-MEAT confusing?*

Thomas: Post life-MEAT is just born, and how it will feel in a week, I don't know. Right now I am happy, proud, but also heartbroken as our team is being split, and the installation is, as one of the actors described, "a crumbling Atlantis".

*Joseph: Has MEAT changed the way you interact with the 'reality' of Berlin?*

Thomas: Working with this format change the way I interact with people in general. Though I spoke with thousands of people in the piece, I don't take part in Berlin night life or socialise very much privately. I will enjoy being alone now for a while.

*Joseph: Did it feel like you were destroying a world that you had created? Is that world lost now? What kind of world was it, in retrospect?*

Thomas: The moment the sound track was shut down, the installation died. It was no longer an imbiß, a kneipe a hotel or someone's home. It was just wood, material and a lot of trash. Now the world only exist through the pictures, movie clips and and stories the actors are telling. We are collecting all the conversations and material from the online forums and platforms and they will be presented in a book in the coming year. It is too too early to be retrospective.



*Joseph: Did you achieve what you wanted to with the installation? What are you most proud of? What would you have done differently/ have liked to have been different?*

Thomas: I am proud of each and every member of our team and how strong we stood together during difficulties. The support within the actors' crew, as well as the outside support from the set and production team, during the show makes me proud. Of course I could never have accomplished this alone. There are ideas that fell out of orbit and scenarios that I might have wanted to have taken a different outcome. It doesn't mean I consider it wrong: it has to have it's own life and adjust to the current mode of the show or it will be forced. Maybe these ideas will have a better place in a future project.

*Joseph: What are you next plans?*

Thomas: Secret!



## TIM FABIAN-HOFFMANN

*character of Joel—a night-club dancer in the ‘Lucky Star’ whose death was the culmination of the MEAT installation*

*Joseph: What is the afterlife of MEAT for you?*

Tim-Fabian: The final moments of MEAT were really intense. They were accompanied by a sound installation consisting of multiple layers, including noises from the audience and actors, sounds from the lights, songs, and sounds recorded for the installation. When the performance stopped, all those sounds were muted all of a sudden. For the first moment in all those ten days on set, there was for a short time a moment of total silence: the moment of saying goodbye to the installation and to our characters. It was very emotional and each one of us had a different approach to it. At this culminating point, I was hanging at “zu den drei stufen”, as they say in German, with other co-performers, dried blood still clinging to my body, wrapped in a towel and drinking a goodbye shot with the others. When I introduced myself to a co-actor, whom I had only met in-character, I realised that I automatically shook his hand the way Joel used to, making us both feel awkward for a second and leading to a funny moment that we shared.

After a night out with part of the ensemble, I rested for hours in my bed before heading to rehearsals for a feature film I will act in soon. There wasn't much time for me to realise how quickly an entire world of characters had closed for me—the wonderful set, its smells and its noises. When I first went out into the subway, heading to the next rehearsal, I felt a bit as if I was floating between two worlds. One part of me was very grateful, happy and free, and the other part was already excited and prepared for the next experience that was starting immediately. Due to this immediate jump into a new production, I was really excited about meeting again so soon everybody who had taken part in creating MEAT's world—especially to see how it would be to see the people behind the characters again after these 10 days spent in a different world. Everybody got quite involved and attached to their characters and their backstories, so this will be a very precious moment to discover the personalities behind these characters again.

Today, a friend sent me a picture of the deconstructed set and it felt really awkward seeing it, since one knows how much effort was put into it, only to dismantle it in a short time to make space for the next production. I know this quick change from other theatre productions, but there you usually don't spend 10 days of your life imitating a whole everyday life-sequence.

It was somehow easy saying goodbye since my character died in the end. But, on the other hand, it is like looking back into a period of your own life that has naturally come to a close, like seeing pictures of your old school friends or pictures from very pleasant class trips in school. Only that this experience is only 2 days in the past. Now, things start slightly to become normal again, but I am still sometimes finding myself imitating Joel's moves in my daily routine: e.g. when the first letter I type when going online is the letter of Joel's and not my own personal email-address. I find myself smiling, despite myself, and it reminds me of the wonderful trip I took with MEAT, and all the loving people I encountered during this time.

## JOHANNES FRICK

*character of Robin*

*Joseph: Who is Robin?*

Johannes: Robin is a 22-year old kid who was never able to finish school, got into a neo-nazi pressure group through his former boyfriend, where he was forced to hide his homosexuality. His dream is to become a rich stockbroker one day.

*Joseph: What is it like to come back to ‘reality’ after living in a 240-hour installation? What is it like pulling down the sets of a whole world you've lived in, walking down the street and seeing the characters that inhabit ‘this’ world? Or meeting fellow actors again in this world, when you had grown to know them much better by their stage-names in MEAT?*

Johannes: Reentering the MEAT-installation on April 14th, the magic is gone. I see, through tears, my old flat consisting of nothing but a piece of carpet, on the floor of the huge black Schaubuehne Studio. There's Lukas' flat, where I was making out with Joel, Henning and Peter. I fixed the carpet of this room to the ground. There's the Kneipe, where I got a Toast Hawaii. Now, the wall in the back, where the stage used to be, has disappeared. The corridor where the blow job scene took place is just a black line on the floor and the Lucky Star [the Night Club] is now packed with cartons filled with props. There, Robin danced the pole from time to time, but could never get a client in the room upstairs... but, hey, John made a movie about him there. And then there are all the other rooms, where I got to know so many marvelous people, where I had so many beautiful experiences as someone much more stupid and naïve than myself: a guy called Robin, that i will probably miss—a little. We packed up the last pieces of a dream that for ten days was our reality, and at 1 am I am leaving the Studio. I weirdly feel I have put this dream into boxes with all the bitter-sweetness of its disappearance. But I know that in those boxes our memories live on, in a container belonging to Thomas Bo, who gave us this amazing present. I hope so much that someday I will meet some of them again, in another context, as well as those crazy and beautiful and beloved people that were all part of this.



*Tim Fabian Hoffmann as Joel Bauer Photo: Tim Fabian Hoffmann*





## PRESS & PUBLICATIONS

### ACADEMIC EXPOSURE

Architectonic Theater, Adela Bravo, UDK

'To Boldly Go Where No Man Has Gone Before'. Die Faszination des Unbekannten: Raum, Benjamin Wihstutz, HU

MEAT, Dr. Karen Kramer, Stanford University

### MEAT TRAILER

Selected for TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL 2014

Vmagazine

032c Vimeo

Schaubühne

Gayletter

Kaltblut

Needle Berlin

Don't panic magazine

Trending Evolution (french)

Eve without Adam Directors Notes

1.4

Sugarhigh

ohmynews (korean)

Kultiversum

I heart Berlin

lbbonline

### PRESS (Selection)

032c "Cannibal Killer, Backrooms, and Skype Sex"

Needle Berlin: "240 hours of MEAT" (Joseph Pearson)

Daily Metal: "Constructing real virtualities"

Berlin Art Link: Performance // MEAT: A Theatrical Microcosm of Berlin (Linus Ignatius)

Nachtkritik: If you like the reflection (Georg Kasch)

BZ: Schaubühne zeigt Kannibalen-Performance

Visionaireworld: "THOMAS BO NILSSON'S MEAT"

Morgunblaðið: "Nálægð við skelfilegt ofbeldi" (Helgi Snær Sigurðsson)

mbl.is: "Í karakter í 240 klukkutíma" (Ástríður Viðarsdóttir)

I heart Berlin: "MEAT Me at the Mall"

lbbonline: MEAT: "Delving into the Seedier Side of Berlin"

Trending Evolution: "Luka Magnotta est le personnage principal d'un trailer pour une pièce de théâtre"

Sugarhigh: "digital cannibal"

Les Flaneurs: "Verdorbene Fleischeslust" (Katharina Röben)

Exberliner: "MEAT: The brutality on your doorstep"

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Claudia Kandefer	Marie Polo
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# PRODUCTION

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Dennis Beckmann

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