

coffee & prejudice

- a one to one performance installation by Mercimax (2012)

Which stories about past misdemeanours do you believe is a person capable of? "coffee & prejudice" invites you to test your powers of judgement live in a 1:1 confrontation.

The MERCIMAX collective has been exploring identity parades in its most recent theatre production. This format is used not as a criminalist study of a community but as a theatrical metaphor of a situation where judgement is required. MERCIMAX plays on the question of how much information is needed to make a person appear suspicious and which elements influence the outsider's judgement. "coffee & prejudice" is a performative installation for one spectator and lasts 14 minutes.



Critics

(...) "A young man sits down at the opposite side of the table and a few seconds later I hear his voice over the headphones. I hear him talking, although his mouth isn't moving. He talks to me and tells me his stories, but I cannot react. He looks at me, constantly. Keeping the eye contact becomes very difficult for me. The cup of coffee becomes the perfect object of distraction.

After the show I suddenly wondered what the performers were thinking about me, whilst I was listening to their stories.

The more I think about the piece, the more I become aware of its many different layers and facets; genius and absurd at the same time.

The concept: Somebody tells the truth - or tells a lie. What am I prepared to believe, what not? The answers are mostly given, as the stories are commented on by saying if they are true or not. There are normal stories, bizarre stories, moving stories. ...

"coffee&prejudice" - fantastic, if one takes the time to think about it for a moment after the show." Nachtkritik

"With "coffee & prejudice" Mercimax has brought a wonderful and intimate installation to Oldenburg. The one to one situation develops quickly into a personal interaction between spectator and performer;

An interaction where no words need to be exchanged. ... The confrontation manifests itself as an intense experience, which lays the main focus on the spectator and his immediate reaction, but is far from being "audience participation theatre". Junge Bühne

Space: "coffee & prejudice" may be shown in a gallery, a hall, a "real" living room or kitchen.

Needed: 1 table, 2 chairs, 1 headphone

The participating 'accomplices' may also be casted on the spot.

By Karin Arnold & Jessica Huber / Music, Technic: Mischa Robert /

With: Tom Benke, Eva Gagel -



More information on www.mercimax.ch

Developed in coproduction with the PAZZ Performing Arts Festival in Oldenburg 2012.