

“

Veem

House

for

Performance

”

# EXERCISES TO EMBODY

## THE



## TRouble

We are anticipating the next performance: the third blackout, otherwise known as Veem House for Performance. The turning-off of the lights will take place at midnight on 31 December, and so – after a hundred days of open doors, public programs and a vibrantly busy house – will begin a 265-day period of darkness. We could call it a period of no public programs, a period of non-work, a problem made visible, a house disappearing for two-thirds of the year, a countdown, a silence, a form of resistance, you name it.

“ **It is a situation that disorients your senses and demands that you do things differently.** ”

# DARKNESS

**You might prepare for it and still it's sudden.** So, in anticipation, we are exploring how to approach this period of time, how to be, and stay, in the dark. How can we work with the materiality of darkness? How can we be a spectator of darkness? How can we discuss with the dark? How can we read (in) the dark? How can we make propositions with it? Collaborate with it? In this third and last issue of our newspaper, we speculate on the potential practices that can be used to face or to relate to this upcoming performance of the blackout – practices that, however, still need to be explored and developed further

“ (in due course). ”

*XOXO, Team Veem, 31 December 2018* ”



Exercise to embody  
the ~~performance~~ darkness

Enter onto the stage: the same stage upon which the ~~performance~~ darkness just took place.

Walk through the space and gently bring your focus towards yourself and that which surrounds you.

Just wander around, and let the space become a memory for the ~~performance~~ darkness you just experienced.  
Do you still remember how it started?  
Do you remember the beginning of the ~~performance~~ darkness?  
And do you remember the middle of it?

While asking yourself these questions, try to become closely connected to what you’ve just experienced.

Feel free to remember the ~~performance~~ darkness in a linear order, from beginning to end, or you can choose to let the space guide you through the different elements of the ~~performance~~ darkness.

This is just about noticing all the movements, forms and faces in the ~~performance~~ darkness; you don’t have to form an opinion about it. You don’t have to reflect on it, yet.

While you’re wandering around, ask yourself the following questions...

Can you choose a position in the space that represents a part of the ~~performance~~ darkness you remember the best?  
Can you describe this specific part?

Can you find a position in the space that represents a part of the ~~performance~~ darkness that brought you the clearest associations?  
And can you share something about these associations? What were they and which elements in the ~~performance~~ darkness triggered them?

Was there a part of the ~~performance~~ darkness that made you feel safe?

Was there a part of the ~~performance~~ darkness that moved you?  
How did it move you?

And was there a part of the ~~performance~~ darkness that raised questions for you?  
Can you try to describe this part?  
What questions arose?

Is there a place in the space that reflects something you missed in the ~~performance~~ darkness?

If you were asked to position yourself in the ~~performance~~ darkness, where in the space would you like to be?

And if you were asked to act in this ~~performance~~ darkness, what movements would you choose?  
Would you act?

Suze

Note:  
*This text is a written exercise that is normally used at the beginning of a Les Spectateurs session. Within this exercise we focus on the embodiment of the ~~performance~~ darkness before we start to analyze, reflect or form opinions about the ~~performance~~ darkness.*

“The darkness  
needs to be  
protected  
and reserved.”

How to dive into the darkness:  
some suggestions.

- Keep inspired**  
*Buy a ticket for a performance without knowing who the performers are.*

**Keep it fair**  
*Fair practice means more than just fair payment.  
Don't lose trust. Take care of it.  
Do not overproduce.  
Make art. Don't waste energy on trying to measure it.*

**Keep connected**  
*Follow us on social media.  
Organize dinners.  
Stay authentic.  
Look up the TED talk, 'Brené Brown – power of vulnerability'.*

**Stay tuned**  
*Darkness provides a space for imagination and inspiration; it goes beyond the hashtag.*

Marga
- Keep inspiring**  
*Buy a ticket for a performance without knowing who the performers are.*

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**Stay tuned**  
*Darkness provides a space for imagination and inspiration; it goes beyond the hashtag.*

Marga
- Keep producing**  
*Our friends at BAU are now able to think long-term with respect to the rehearsal space.  
Writing a grant application clears your mind.  
Sharing is caring.  
Find content-driven partners to collaborate with.*

**Keep inspired**  
*Buy a ticket for a performance without knowing who the performers are.*

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Marga

“Just wander around  
the space  
~~performance~~ darkness

How to read  
(in) the dark?

- Some instructions for a (different kind of) reading, that still has to be embodied in any possible way.*
- \* Activate darkness.  
*A – gone.  
B – gone.  
going from B to A is gone.<sup>i</sup>*
  - \* Do not try to decipher letters.  
You won’t be able to.  
*Darkness is not a lack of vision, but a different kind of vision.<sup>ii</sup>*
  - \* Touch the paper – feel the texture, of the pages, of the solid cover – it sounds: tap - tap - tap!  
The jacket wrapped around, so delicate  
Notice where the flap marks the page that (is gone), run your fingertips over the edges of the pages – teach your skin how to read.  
Do not open the book.
  - \* There is no book.  
There is what is learned by heart  
the fragments of stories remembered.<sup>iii</sup>  
Make some wind, cool your face. Wet your lips.  
How does darkness taste?
  - \* Keep your eyes open.  
Do not try to invent something.  
Don’t try too hard in any way.  
Just listen.  
Practice patience.



## The beginning of a manual for the public: How to Stay with the ~~Trouble~~ Darkness and Other Kinds of Instructions.

### 1. Imagine the ~~end~~ darkness as a new beginning, the unknown that still needs to burst in your eyes

You are reading the introduction of a manual that doesn't exist yet.

Now that Veem House is closed and you are in the darkness together with us, think about and imagine new possible realities and future utopias yet to be realized.

Turn off the lights wherever you are, and imagine what there might be beyond this darkness while you are staring into it: you'll only see the next light, far away, slowly fading on again.

We hope you will be over there together with us!

### 2. 'Be (Act) like a firefly'.

*Read 'Survivance des lucioles' by Georges Didi-Huberman.*

If you came to visit us during the 100 Days, even just once, then you are acting like a firefly: The only creature still capable of generating some dimmed light, in such a discreet way. An act of fragile resistance: fast, small and almost impossible to see.

At Veem House, we turn off the lights in order to see the fireflies: when we are fully immersed in the deepest darkness, we can still see you and your gleams of light; you remain fully visible to us.

The second step is, after turning off the lights, to keep moving in the darkness, producing images of fugitive light. Our task will be to notice you!

### 3. 'Do you see that speck of light in the furthest corner? Follow that light with your tired eyes. It's been a long day, I know, but keep looking at this glimpse of light.'

*Read 'Let Them Eat Chaos' by Kate Tempest.*

The 100 Days may seem to go too quickly; but don't worry if you feel that you are too late. While we are closed, keep looking at the 'furthest corner', and you will still see the 'glimpse of light'.

It will slowly become bigger and bigger, like an echo slowly reaching you.

Turn your head back and forth within this dark landscape. You will recognize how far we have all come in terms of what we've been able to generate together, but also what still needs to be envisioned:

An absence that is needed in order to recognize the fleeting present.

A co-presence that is essential in order to realize the existence of both absence and presence.

The temporary existence of a theater that wants to highlight the political presence of what is invisible. The darkness needs to be protected and reserved.

### 4. 'In dreams begin responsibilities'

*Watch the film 'I Know I Said' by Andrea Geyer, 2003.*

As an artist, as a partner, as a supporting fund, as a public member, as a neighbor outside or inside the Veem building, you have been responsible for this ~~dream~~ 100 Day House #2: searching for a sustainability for us and for the artistic surrounding. It is not a model, not a solution for us or for the field: an alternative that brings certain responsibilities.

While you move as a firefly within this deep darkness, never stop feeling responsible for your ~~dream~~ darkness and for the ~~dreams~~ darkness of others.

Dare to resist.

Hold your neighbor's hand when it becomes too dark.

Keep in mind that you've taken a responsibility in deciding to be part of this 100 Days. Precarity must stop being synonymous with ~~trouble~~ darkness.

*'The way we think about the future impacts how we relate to the present. Our responsibility lies in the present. Not in endlessly postponing that responsibility and having faith that it will "resolve on its own".'*

Silke and Hannes stay with the ~~trouble~~ darkness (like you!).

### 5. 'What if ... the imaginary is the real': use some fiction over there!

*Read 'The Imaginary is the Real' by Cornelius Castoriadis and*

*'The Imaginary Reader' by Volt*

Within this darkness you'll probably ask yourself: What's next?

Use fiction to fantasize, to portray something that you don't know yet.

Keep on imagining 'what if'.

While you are in the darkness, we give you the space to re-think and re-imagine yourself anew and we also allow ourselves to refocus our eyes on something still unknown.

### 6. Be feminine, be polyphonic, be political, be revolutionary: stay with the ~~Trouble~~ Extraordinary.

Never stop accepting new ideas and visions.

Whispers of change that guide you somewhere else, far from your knowledge.

Taste and acknowledge differences as your friends.

Listen to all these voices in a continuous tension between the present and the future.

### 7. Have the courage to make decisions that respect your ~~values~~ darkness; have the courage to check your motivations; otherwise, walk away if ~~needed~~ too dark.

*(From the 'Curators working group' within the Bâtard Festival Amsterdam 2018)*

### 8. Enter a dark theater alone, take your seat and enjoy the silence before you see what you can't know yet. Fully enjoy the suspended darkness as a hole in the real: you know that the lights on the stage will come back on again!

Dear public,

Thank you again, and enjoy the darkness wherever you are right now.

~~Dreams~~ Darkness brings us the responsibility to support a shelter for thinking.

It's for us to render, once again, the visible, invisible.

P.S.:

### 9. Imagining something already means the start of a ~~process~~ darkness, the initiating of a ~~change~~ darkness, whose direction we still don't know.

Andrea

round, and let  
ce become a memory for the  
ness you just experienced."

\*

...

\*

You look – out and outside  
it's night –  
only your own reflection in the  
train window.  
After a while you will be able  
to look beyond  
at the dark landscape that  
(dis)forms itself –  
by the speed of the train.  
If you fall asleep don't fight it –  
dreaming might well be  
the way.

\*

Reading means guessing,  
and also, giving advice.  
*While in pitch darkness, darkness is  
all that we see at least!*<sup>iv</sup>  
giving advice about how to read  
it I am just guessing –  
guessing is traversing, carefully  
or daringly going about  
listening to, listening to,  
listening to

voices from distant times  
travelling too<sup>v</sup>

\*

In the end, just when  
you think you know how (!)  
even darkness will escape  
from itself – resists being fixed  
as such –  
its performance ends.

*Illusion is gone*

*There is only outside.*

*Outside is gone*

*Darkness – gone!*<sup>vi</sup>

Niente

i Mette Edvartsen, *No Title*,

2014.

ii Roy A Sorensen, *Seeing Dark*

*Things: the Philosophy of*

*Shadows*, 2008.

iii Reference to Clara Amaral's

*Do You Remember the Time we*

*were Together and Danced this*

*or that Dance?*, 2017.

iv Roy A Sorensen, *ibidem*.

v Michiel Vandeveldt's *Human*

*Landscapes #1*, 2018.

vi Mette Edvartsen, *ibidem*.



# Veem House Diner – Before the Darkness

## Veem Huis Diner – Vóór het donker

Het mooiste ingrediënt is het bonte gezelschap dat Suze telkens bij elkaar weet te brengen. De mengeling van kunstenaars, buurtbewoners, hongerig publiek en natuurlijk de dames van Veem House zelf, maken samen een bont en bijzonder gezelschap.

Ik ben verdrietig want de gebouw volgende jaar dicht. dit is slecht nieuws.

Het ingrediënt dat ik zal missen zijn de interessante mensen om te ontmoeten.

Het andere mooiste ingrediënt is de opdracht om samen te koken. Door een gezamenlijk doel te hebben in het bereiden van het diner wordt het normale ongemak van een gesprek met een vreemde weggenomen en vervangen door een op smaak, tradities en voorliefdes gebaseerde conversatie. Echt wonderlijk hoe goed dit werkt!

ik vond dat gezellig met veel mensen om met hun te praten om Nederlandse taal te verbeteren en ik leerde ook hoe maak ik iets lekker bijvoorbeeld de loempia .dat was heel lekker dat was de eerste keer maak ik het

Ik heb zo genoten van de diners, van het gezellige samenzijn, van de mooie gesprekken...

mijn kinderen waren heel blij met gezellig mensen en lekker eten .alles mensen waren aardig samen met elkaar helpen en praten en eten .alle mensen nodig van elkaar om samen iets doen

Het is bevrijdend om iets te doen te hebben. Je hebt ineens genoeg om over te praten, vertrekt vanuit een luchtig soort interesse en vooral: bij het oppeuzelen van het resultaat heb je geen last zo’n typisch ongemakkelijk dankbare beleefdheid.

### Colophon

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Veem House for Performance has the cultural ANBI status. This means that Veem has been recognized as a charity. Contributions to the organization are fiscally attractive for businesses and individuals. The Dutch tax authority imposes clear conditions on ANBI institutions, such as publishing certain data on the Internet. Data from Veem House for Performance can be found on our website, <http://veem.house>

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Stay with the trouble 2018 team

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