

# urban occupation : ACTION

## experiment : instant occupation



*Image: Photograph by Antonia Pont*

authors / actors / participants:

Performer (Caitlyn Parry), target audience/participants (people/animals that cross over the 'hot spots'.)

**title:** My paved jumping castle

**location:** Rosa Luxemburg Platz , Berlin, Germany

**date:** may 1, 2009

**manifesto:**

I am interested in the idea of the subject and the interactions between 'actors' in public space. Drawing from the memory of the image of a child's toy where one hits the block into a housed plastic balloon that then responds almost like an aneurysm in another area of itself due the pressure shift. I have decided to assign 'pressure hot spots' across the surface area of the Platz which when breached (walked over/ rode over), will appear to have an immediate effect on the performer's body despite the factors of distance and lack of physical lever (connection). For ease of tracking I will have 5 hotspots, each relating to a different effect. The effect are everyday utterances or pedestrian movements, nothing dramatic or explicit since I don't wish to detract from the subtle aspects of the action. I was interested in noticing the extent to which passersby become aware of the effects of their accidental positioning on the performer's body located at the junction lines from each hot spot. I find the idea of crystallising this relationship of everyday causes (walking along street) with socially normal effects (saying for example 'I am tired') important because it is the everyday actions that one does that have created the world we live in. A gross example is perhaps; buying a nice shiny pair of Nikes at your local market so you can run in the morning to keep fit, has the consequence of a 5 year old in Thailand sitting in work shop.

**techniques / performer (me), coloured chalk, cardboard, camera tripod**

**tools:**

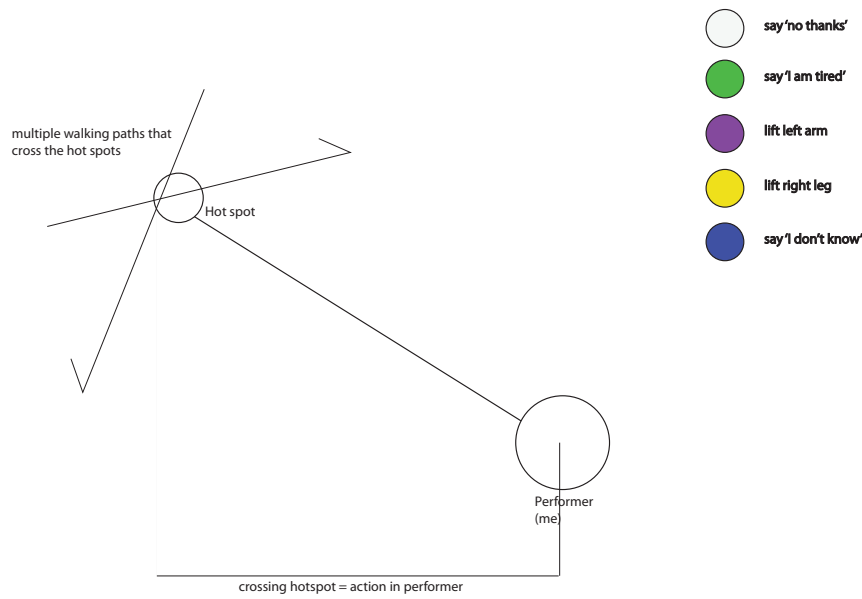
**action:** Draw 5 coloured circles on the pavement/road, where each colour correlates with a specific action that the performer undertakes. When a circle is walked over, for example a green circle; the performer says 'I am tired'. There is a line joining the circles to where the performer is standing so as to precipitate out the lines of cause and effect for the viewer.

**actual outcome:**

This experiment worked on one level, and not on another. Only 2 members of the public read the sign and were curious to investigate what reaction each hot spot elicited. One woman tried only one hotspot which implies that the reaction was not interesting enough to create curiosity for the others. The other man just walked over one and noticed that he had caused something. Most times, the utterance was more noticeable than the physical movement. People noticed the reactions but possibly not in any connection to themselves creating them. It was successful in the way that the reaction induced an 'invisible' reaction in the performer which aligns with my manifesto, however perhaps the manifesto was too passive and it didn't strive to make a bigger impact. The suggestion of a bigger sign or stage for the performer would indeed have made the reactions more potentially obvious to the public, more interesting hot-spots may also have prompted greater intrigue/effect. Chalk is a common material scrawled on the pavement and the public is quite possibly desensitized to its means of communication. A big oversized key (from a keyboard) or a human sized buzzer (like a game show) would perhaps have increased the publics level of interaction (and hence more obvious reactions on the performer)

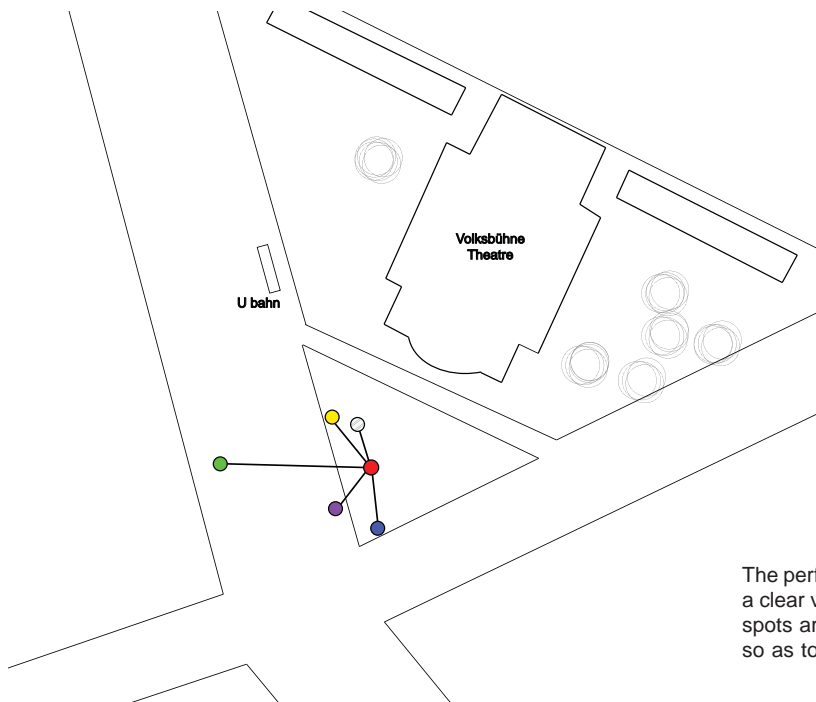
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Parry, Caitlyn, 324473



**sketch:** Diagram indicating how the action works

**Source:** Caitlyn Parry



The performer should be located at a position where a clear view of all the hot spots can be had. The hot spots are located at areas of high pedestrian traffic so as to increase the likelihood of public interaction.

**Image:** Plan showing layout of performer (red) and hot spots.

**Source:** Caitlyn Parry

bibliography:

Inspiration: Social/Political puppetry  
Childs toy as described above.