

PORTFOLIO

OLIVER BULAS

(SELECTED WORKS)

My works come into being at the moment they are received. The viewers become participants in temporary zones where prototypes of what has not yet come into existence can be tested. My mediums include site-specific immersive performance, guided tours, workshops, publications, audio composition, and installation. As an artist and a citizen with a migration background, I consider the creation of experiences to be inherently political. Recurring themes include collectivity, gestures of hospitality, and trauma, which often come into conflict with the rules of the specific location. Through the use of radical hospitality, I aim to make these lines of conflict visible. In the spontaneous social dynamics I initiate, social norms become my artistic material. Most of the works take place in public spaces. I draw influences from performance art, dance, psychology, somatics, Nordic LARP, landscape design, and methods of transformative organizing.

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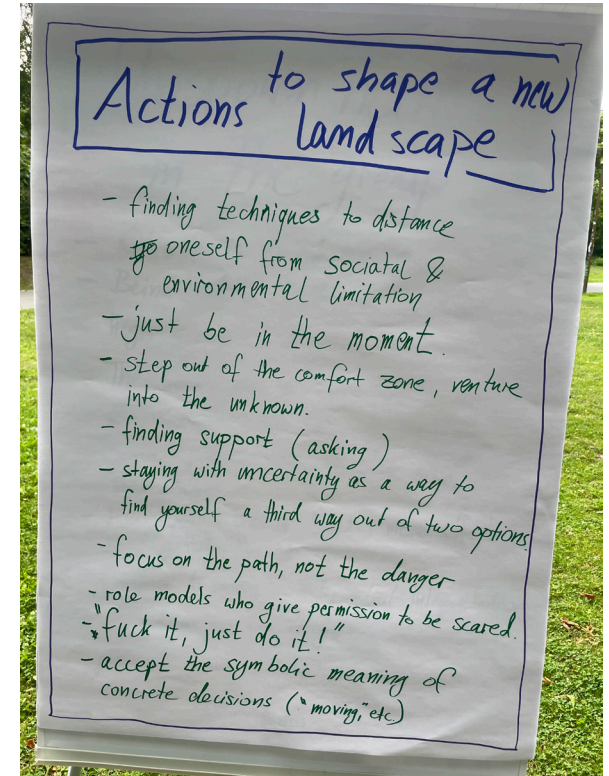
ACTION AS A LANDSCAPE, 2024



„Action as Landscape“ is an immersive workshop inviting participants to re-think how we use public space. Over two events, it blends theory and practice, focusing on creating „utopian social landscapes.“ The first session is a collective brainstorming where diverse perspectives and methods, like transformative organizing and Nordic LARP, are exchanged. The second event transforms these ideas into performative acts in public space, inviting audiences to experience new ways of interaction.



Participants co-create, exploring the boundaries between public and private life, questioning how social roles and colonial histories shape urban environments. The process is playful, emphasizing curiosity and spontaneous interaction. By disrupting the familiar, the workshop seeks to inspire reflection on how public spaces can foster different, more inclusive ways of living. The project is about collective learning, using performance to challenge everyday norms and open up new possibilities for public life.



Hopscotch Reading Room, Berlin

BRUNO & MICHEL ARE SMILING WITH SKIPPERRR, 2023



Zubar, Tokyo

Bruno and Michel... use a combination of expressive vocalization, experimental mash-ups, and musical citations in stage performances. Their sound work employs collage techniques to critically reflect on social conditions, merging complex structures and diverse influences. Their live performances, characterized by energetic presence and a play on contrasts between real-time composition and pre-prepared samples, challenge existing societal norms. Bruno and Michel are Smiling With Skipperrr create a performance situation that, much like a ritual, leaves the audience transformed together. The duo views their performance as a reflective experience, encouraging listeners to confront their own contradictions.

Performance and Composition: Charlotte Arnhold, Oliver Bulas

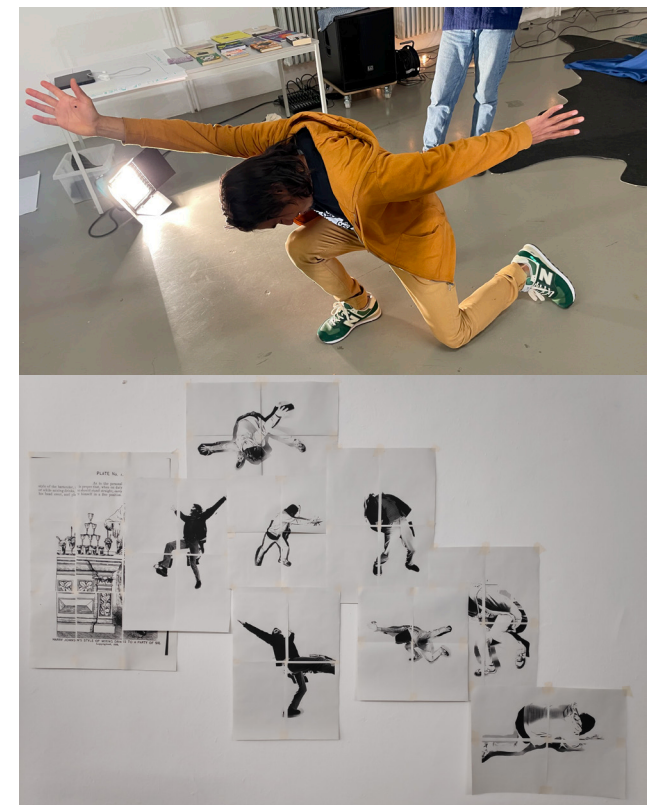
WHAT IS YOUR IMAGE OF WELCOMING?, 2022



The workshop „What Is Your Image of Welcoming“ invites participants to explore and reimagine hospitality in its various forms. Participants discuss and create new approaches to hospitality in different contexts, from private circles to professional environments. Through practical exercises, including the creation of their own cocktails, participants become the source of knowledges, and



traditional views of „good taste“ and care are challenged. The exchange of diverse experiences promotes collective learning and offers new insights into hospitality practices. The workshop culminates in a public evening event organized by the participants, where the lessons learned are put into practice and celebrated.



Gesellschaft für
Aktuelle Kunst
(GAK) Bremen

Facilitators: Oliver Bulas, Felix Luna, Production: Sarah Maria Kaiser

O JARDIM SECRETO - THE SECRET GARDEN, 2016



Lídice, State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

At the beginning was the question of whether the exotic projections of Europeans onto the tropical rainforest could be dismantled through critical reflection aided by scientific understanding on-site. At the same time, physical presence in the location offers unexpected sensory experiences that help to break down colonial clichés while also reaching beyond Western patterns of experience. In the context of collective activities such as shared meals, this situation seeks to redefine the role of participants in relation to non-human systems.

In the workshop/performance *‘O Jardim Secreto’*, participants explore the Atlantic rainforest through direct on-site experiences. Guided tours combine scientific insights with physical sensory experiences, aiming for a new kind of collective aesthetic experience.

AND SO IF AGAIN I WOULD PLAY THE BORÉ; WHAT SOURCE
FROM STEEP ROCK IS SPRINGING, THAT GOES SEETHING,
QUIVERING AND WHINING, WHICH THE RAGE IS ER-
ASING, ALL THIS IS NOT, AS THEY TRICKLE DOWN, TO THE
SOUNDS OF THE BORÉ, 2019



Rio de Janeiro
(Centro), on the
street and art spa-
ce Despina das
Artes

New York (Lower
Eastside), on the
street and
Y Gallery

Berlin, on the
street and Theater
Kreuzberg

The performance begins with an invitation, guiding the participant from the exhibition into a more personal journey. Noe leads them through the streets, creating distance from the ordinary. At a secluded spot, they meet Johnny Rotten, seated on cardboard. Removing shoes becomes a gesture of vulnerability, signaling entry into a shared, intimate space. Johnny's whispered greeting deepens the sense of connection. He pours coffee slowly, the act serving as both a ritual and a grounding moment. Their conversation focuses on exploring the invisible ties between strangers, while the coffee's steam adds a layer of theatricality. The participant, now subtly changed, returns to the gallery, the experience having transformed their perception of the familiar.

Director: Oliver Bulas, **Performance:** Arthur Manhães, Natasha Pasquini, Luiz Antônio de Freitas Silva, Helena La Rota López, Max Alexander Singer

A SENSITIVE MESSAGE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE EXHIBITION WILL ASK VISITORS TO BOTH ENJOY AND RESPECT THE OBJECTS ON DISPLAY, 2019



Galerie Weisser
Ellefant and on the
street, Berlin

Alster river,
Hamburg as part of
the project “Hidden
Lines of Space -
Our House”

Vimeo-Link:

How can we break down the limitations we face in our everyday use of urban spaces? This immersive performance aims to foster creativity and address fears. Together with the visitors, the performers embark on a search for familiar boundaries and challenge them through playful experiences. The performance *A Sensitive Message...* engages each guest in the form of individual guided tours through the urban space, inviting them to participate personally and rediscover their surroundings. Physical and mental transformations are

sought, while the stability of the urban environment begins to crumble. Personal attention during a series of different encounters creates intimacy and leads to unique experiences. Performers use everyday objects (found randomly) and whispered, playful elements to enchant guests, temporarily pushing the everyday aside and reclaiming the streets through alternative uses.

Director: Oliver Bulas, **Performance:** Guido Bayer, Yannick Maria Reimers, Cornerlius Feindt, Quirijn van Westendorp, **Choreography:** Oliver Bulas, Lisa Kranig

WE COULD DANCE IN CIRCLES AROUND THE CAMPFIRE BY NIGHT, DISAPPEARING AS FUME INTO A DISTANT DAY, 2016



What possibilities exist to involve viewers in the creation of an artistic event while also addressing the desire for withdrawal? The performance title uses the image of dancing around a fire to represent the act of circling around a central, unattainable desire. Dancing around campfires at night in Ethiopia or Nigeria serves as a cross-reference to the performance site in New Orleans. Materials like posters and social media communicate the promise of a transformative experience. *Dancing in Circles...* intentionally places an empty space at the center and shifts the production to the gesture of invitation. Instead of the promised exhibition, visitors encoun-

ter a closed exhibition space, which becomes the starting point for a walk to a nearby café. The café becomes the venue for an open-ended conversation. During the performance, the possibility of failure becomes tangible and an integral part of the process. The performance extends beyond the live event and serves as an invitation to dialogue. *Dancing in Circles...* is presented as a living process, where participants are encouraged to explore their responsibility within the artistic process and its urban contexts.

PARSE project space,
New Orleans

Director: Oliver Bulas, Proofreading: Joris Lindhout, Orlando Maaiké Gouwenberg, Production: Maggie McWilliams

SPOOKY ACTION AT A DISTANCE AND HOW TO ESCAPE THIS DANGEROUS AGE, 2015



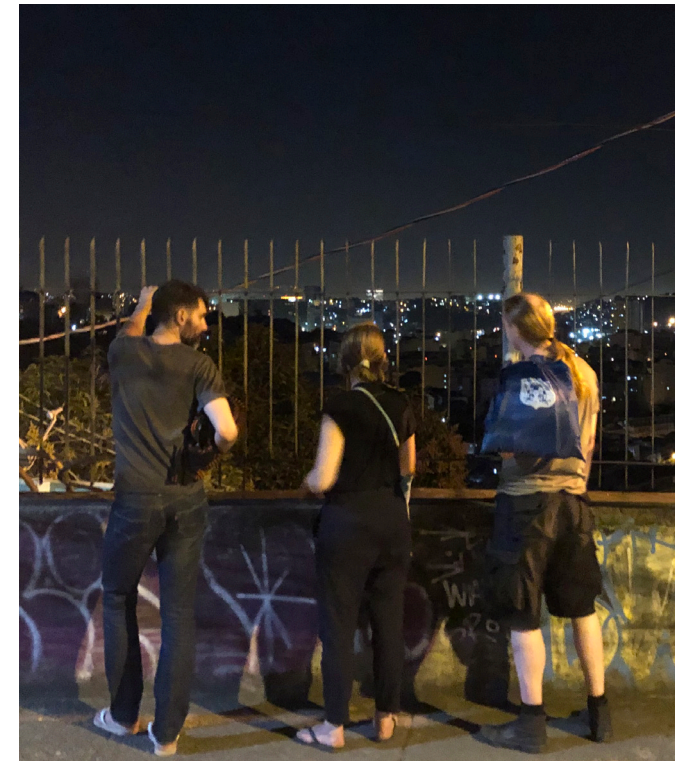
When I visited the Y Gallery, the artist Oliver Bulas, who moves between Brazil and Germany, was presenting a piece called “Spooky Action at a Distance and How to Escape This Dangerous Age. A Filmset.” I entered the gallery; he greeted me with a scripted but personable introduction, led me through a series of verbal adventures, then out of the gallery and onto the street. I won’t say more except to note that Lower East Side streets are still vital, lived-in, anything-can-happen terrain, as those in the Chelsea art mall are not. (Holland Cotter, The New York Times, 2015)

Director: Oliver Bulas, **Performance:** Guido Bayer, Oliver Bulas,
Production: Nadine Droste, Meyken Barreto

Kunstverein Hamburg

Y Gallery, New York

WORKSHOP FOR A BRINCADEIRA PERCEPTION IN PUBLIC SPACE, 2019



Capacete,
Rio de Janeiro on
the street

In the Workshop for a Brincadeira Perception, participants discover new ways to interact with urban space through „Brincadeira” —Portuguese for play and jest. They learn to speculate about social boundaries through spontaneity and keen observation. The goal is to promote heightened attentiveness and creativity in public spaces, to lower the threshold for interaction, and to sharpen one's own perception. The workshop motivates participants to seek humorous and creative behavior in everyday situations, thereby expanding their scope of action in the urban context.

TEATRO DE SEDUÇÃO - ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES THROUGH EMOTIONAL APPEAL, 2016



The event was a two-day conference, which was an interdisciplinary exploration of how emotional appeal, seduction, and deception play roles in economic and social interactions of agents from Favelas and on the street, particularly within Brazilian culture. By combining theoretical discussions with practical workshops, the event sought to provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of these complex dynamics. It brings together scholars, artists, and professionals to examine how charm and persuasion can be both cultural artifacts and tools for navigating modern society. Teatro de Sedução offered a lens through which to view Brazilian social norms and behaviors, highlighting the blend of historical influences and contemporary practices. It's an opportunity to engage with cultural concepts that shape everyday interactions and to reflect on the ethical implications of using emotional appeal in various contexts.



Capacete,
Rio de Janeiro on
the street