



# EXCHANGE RADICAL MOMENTS!

Live Art Festival

**29.9.2011 – Markus Zett | theaternyx – 11 familiengeschichten**

**<http://11moments.org/familien>**

## **Exchange Radical Moments! Live Art Festival**

INTERVIEW #18: Today we would like to introduce you to Markus Zett, member of the group theaternyx from Linz, Austria. theaternyx will present their work „11 familiengeschichten“ in Linz as part of the Exchange Radical Moments! Live Art Festival. Hi Markus, where are you at the moment?

### **Markus Zett**

Hi Silvia, I'm in my flat in Vienna, where I currently reside. I write »reside« instead of »live« because I'm travelling a lot for work and am sometimes only here for sleeping and washing clothes...

## **Exchange Radical Moments! Live Art Festival**

What can visitors expect on 11/11/11? Can you explain us your work shortly?

### **Markus Zett**

theaternyx will interlink 11 families living in Linz by one hour car-rides. While driving through town we will talk to the respective family member and visit a spot that is somehow important or meaningful for this family. At the end of the hour we deliver the person from the one family as a temporary new member to the next family and pick up a new co-driver from them.

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At the moment you are looking for 11 families. Who can participate? And how do they have to apply? Will there be a casting with them?

### **Markus Zett**

Yes, there is a casting process going on. We are searching for families in Linz and try to work with a very open definition of this not so simple concept of »family«. So, we would like to include core families, patchwork families, single parents, gay couples with kids, older couples whose kids aren't living at home anymore, families with different cultural backgrounds and so on.

Families can apply via mail: [auto@theaternyx.at](mailto:auto@theaternyx.at)

The first step should be just a short description of themselves as a family. Then we try to get to know them better in a personal meeting.



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## **Exchange Radical Moments! Live Art Festival**

Will it be possible for the public to participate as well? If yes, how?

### **Markus Zett**

We will have a live internet stream of the talks we conduct in the car. The families and their friends and anyone interested can listen to whatever is going on during the day. Maybe there will be also a possibility for interaction via SMS – we are still working on that ... Family Radio, in the best sense... 11 hours!

## **Exchange Radical Moments! Live Art Festival**

In your work you like to abandon the typical fields of theater work. Your stage can be a part of the city, a car, a bus or anything else. What was your trigger to explore other fields of encounter?

### **Markus Zett**

We like the idea to intervene in settings that people think they know. There is always an aspect of opening up new ways of perceiving in our works. When people are seated in front of a stage, they have a certain knowledge of what to expect and how to deal with what they see. When we take them out into the public space, suddenly different rules apply and consciousness tends to be more alert.

There is another aspect as well: It's very difficult these days to find proper representations for our contemporary society on the theatre stage. Going out »into the field« for us is as much research as it is the work in itself.

## **Exchange Radical Moments! Live Art Festival**

How do people react when they are not only spectators of the show, but also participants? When they have to improvise and to respond to your input?

### **Markus Zett**

There are all kinds of reactions: Some people get defensive and try to protect themselves; some endure the encounter in silence; others try to be funny, because they think something is expected of them. But what we saw during the last few years is that a lot of people are really willing to be challenged by the encounter. They feel addressed and they react very truly to what they sense at that particular moment. Then they are very present and lively.

## **Exchange Radical Moments! Live Art Festival**

How are your experiences with mobile settings? Does the fact that you restrict the number of



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participants to a small group, arise a special connection?

### **Markus Zett**

Yes, definitely! For instance the inner space of a car is such an intimate bubble. When you share such a confined space with strangers, connections, tensions and the whole web of relations get's very dense very quickly. Moving this space through town - as we do with the car - eases that density a little, because you can always orientate outwards and get new impulses from what is going on outside of the car.

### **Exchange Radical Moments! Live Art Festival**

Do people react different when they know that their conversation will be published online, or do they forget this fact after a while?

### **Markus Zett**

That's one of the big questions for us too! :-) We hope that the situation in the car and the way we conduct the talks will be welcoming enough to make people forget about other listeners. But then of course it's a public situation and I guess people will reveal as much about themselves through talking about certain things as they will through avoiding to talk about others.

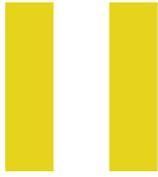
### **Exchange Radical Moments! Live Art Festival**

You integrate everyday situations in your work. Is it still theater if it feels like regular life?

### **Markus Zett**

Our projects tend to become less and less about controlling the definition of situations. In classical theatre a lot of things are predefined when you enter a performance. That presupposes a weak subject as the spectator. If we want strong subjects (and there are many reasons to want these, but that would be an entirely different interview), we need to put control and responsibility into the hands of the spectator - who then becomes less a spectator than a participant or partner. So, we try to provide frames for experiences without fully defining the experience.

Before we talked about the reactions of people: The foremost thing is, that in this kind of work they suddenly get aware of the fact, that they HAVE reactions. And that brings them to a point, where they feel, they can decide. Or where they understand that not deciding is also a decision.



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## **Exchange Radical Moments! Live Art Festival**

Do you think you produce radical moments for your spectators? How do you define radical for yourself by the way?

### **Markus Zett**

We can only deduce from the reactions of people who take part in our performances that for some of them very unexpected things happen – which have to do with the structured openness I described above. Is it radical? That's real tricky to tell. It's probably radically personal. Maybe we could say, it's radical if it transcends everyday reality. To be honest, that doesn't happen very often – but it does happen.

## **Exchange Radical Moments! Live Art Festival**

Where can we find your work online?

### **Markus Zett**

Please visit us at [www.theaternyx.at](http://www.theaternyx.at). Our archive is still not very consistent unfortunately, but we are working on that...

## **Exchange Radical Moments! Live Art Festival**

Thank you for the interview and I hope that you can rest a little bit in Vienna and enjoy the beautiful weather...

### **Markus Zett**

Thanks for your great questions! It was a pleasure thinking with you about what we try to do... All the best for your festival preparations, and take care!