

Johannes Lothar Schroeder (Hamburg)

Schauwerk –BLACK BOX as a Platform for Activities

The interdisciplinary project *Schauwerk - Black Box* (<http://www.schauwerk-blackbox.ch/>) is a growing collection of envelopes, cases, boxes, suitcases and other containers, in which 140 artists handed their relics of performances over to the project's initiator, René Schmalz. The boxes contain sketches, scripts, references, photographic prints, movies, clothes, models, lens-based and acoustic media, but not normally artwork, and are hosted in the Cantonal Library of Appenzell Unterrhoden (Switzerland). At PSi 14 a selection of boxes will be presented in the form of a mobile unit, emphasising the transient situation of these relics. Audiences are invited to become participants in an ongoing process, which does not aim to reconstruct the performances in a scholarly sense, but use and re-use the remains to create a growing memory system that re-forms continuously in space and time, and in the participants' bodies and minds.

This paper will introduce the project and propose that the particular archival practice of Schauwerk - BLACK BOX activates the body as a tool and as a container for memory within different kinds of knowledge transfer. This stands in opposition to the traditional archival organisation of knowledge in Western cultures, in which institutions compile knowledge as externalized from the body. It is more akin to the manner in which rituals transfer knowledge from body to body using matter not as memory but as a catalyst. The presentation will ask if this manner of transfer can be actualised as a supplementary tool for storing the memory of live acts such as performances by referring to the presentations of Schauwerk - BLACK BOX in Copenhagen and elsewhere.