

## **GET INVOLVED!**

Strategies and Practices of Political Action in Documentary Theatre.

How do we realise our projects in the field of political-documentary theatre in meaningful and promising ways? What do we need to consider when working with non, semi and professional actors and how does engagement become art? Tips, tools and impulses from protagonists of political theatre, the COSTA COMPAGNIE.

In 2011, in his book of the same name, the diplomat Stéphane Hessel called to “Get involved!” Since then, crisis has followed crisis in the environment, economy and society. Parallel to this, a real ‘activist turn’ has taken place in the performing arts: ‘relevance’ has become an increasingly important criterion of artistic work and diverse forms of political theatre have been further developed: The spectrum of forms of performance ranges from documentary-based arts to the ‘theatre of engagement’ to intervention and ‘artivism’.

Against this backdrop, many artists are faced with the question of their own attitude and positioning, what art can and must mean and what art can and must move in these times.

“Above all, we need one thing: the belief that our [...] commitment can change the world”, writes Ullstein Verlag about Hessel's book. With this faith in our hearts, we are going on a three-day retreat to Wolfenbüttel. Together with Felix Meyer-Christian, the founder of COSTA COMPAGNIE from Berlin, we will get to know the group's concepts, strategies and practices in the field of political-documentary work. Through engaging with examples of their work, we will be inspired for our own work.

COSTA COMPAGNIE is an open collaboration of interdisciplinary artists. Works from recent years combine documentary, performative, filmic and choreographic methods with an essayistic and multi-perspective narrative. The group focuses on war and crisis regions, political upheavals and the question of the humanity within us.

In the workshop, we discuss and test ways and means to engage artistically with our own groups and projects. We will deal with researching topics, with technical and dramaturgical aspects of interviews as well as their artistic application in documentary theatre. We test models of participation and collaboration and go on forays into the city in search of the exciting protagonists and stories that life writes. We research, organise, film, take notes, collage and assemble the material, try out small scenic moments and give each other feedback. This is how spontaneous, illustrative mini-projects of artistic engagement are created, which we finally present to each other.