BUBBLE JAM
By Daniel Wetzel (Rimini Protokoll)
A piece for people from age 10
A coproduction of the Onassis Cultural Centre (Athens) with Rimini Protokoll and additional partners.

Have you ever wondered if there is somebody at the other end of the internet?
Who or what rules our group - the audience?
How does an algorithm work?
What rules us when we use our smart phone?
Let's find out who thinks what and who belongs in what bubble/sphere.

Photos from our first cloud-based project, "Dreaming Collectives" (Athens/Dresden, 2017)

Backround:
For kids the internet is a resource as readily available as water and electricity. Mobile devices, tablets, laptops, desktop computers, TV screens constitute for some the most dominant components of their environments – considering what their eyes are mostly fixed upon. The society they will soon shape themselves might be digitised to an extent that we cannot even foresee. However, at schools there hardly is a reflection on this, in terms of how the digital world "works".

Description:
At the beginning of the piece everybody gets equipped with a smart phone based device on their wrists. They all constitute a cloud and receive messages from 'outside'. There are no actors, the script is the sequence of questions and tasks the audience is provided with. Gradually the system knows more about every user and uses these data to provide them with more specific, individual questions, tasks and parts in the game-like theatrical play that is the Bubble Jam.

> This piece aims at providing experiences with:
> - Being a responsible member of a growing society of digital natives.
> - Diversity within the audience / group.

- Democratic and technocratic decision-making.
- How algorithms are built and how they apply.
- How algorithms grow progressively more complex.
- Shaping the model of a society.
- Deciding about decision structures.

Bubble Jam invites young audiences to participate in an experiment. They constitute both the spectators and the protagonists. They interact with one another within the flow of a collective dialogue with a system that poses questions, gives instructions, rules the game through the smartphones. And yet everyone takes their individual path through the lanes of questions asked and the options provided.

The participants are arranged and directed into ever-changing groups, formats and sections according to their responses, always exploring who have what replies in common. The system also allocates temporary speakers out of the audience; people chosen through special messages to moderate a specific sequence of questions.

The storyboard of the performance also unfolds in a manner akin to a musical structure as every response coincides with musical bits that combined unfold the specific "sound of this jam".

The piece kicks off with questions related to the participants' everyday usage of and experience with the digital, e.g. games, platforms, social networks.

At the same time, the action of categorizing, rearranging and allocating also opens a door to process-specific themes, as in how this grouping has been processed or in what way it can sustain itself or evolve. For example, the response I have given not only adds me to a group and presents me with a task; it also teaches me how such decisions are made.

Facts:
- Audience: 50-60 people from age 10.
- There is not a moderator or master of ceremonies, rather 1-2 agents who are obviously standby for the case of a technical problem
- The actual performer is the operator: a single, invisible agent running the show from another room connected through CCTV
- All phones/audience members are offline but connected within the same cloud - the cloud is the invisible part of the stage design.
- Microphones are provided on stands for those audience members selected as speakers for specific sections/questions.
- The show is thus highly interactive, immersive, and intended as very dynamic, musical, game-like, at the same time dealing with rather serious issues, such as the future of democracy and urban society, the control over artificial intelligence (and vice-versa) etc.
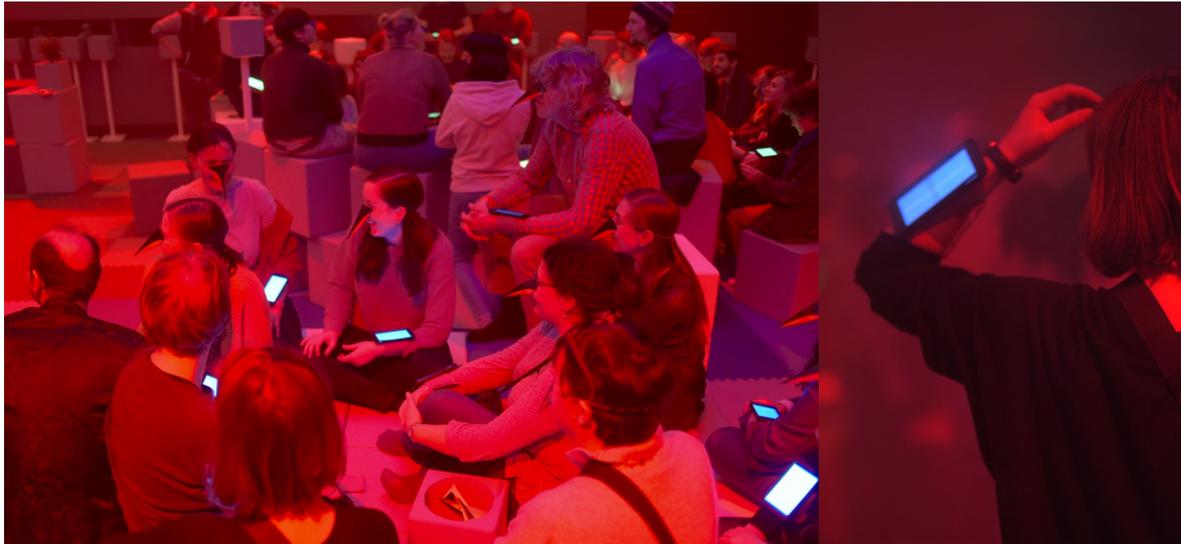
Photos from our first cloud-based project, "Dreaming Collectives" (Athens/Dresden, 2017)

Development:
The project will be based on workshops with school classes, groups of interested pupils and teachers - in Athens and other cities. It intends to be available internationally from scratch.

Work phases:
Research, Scripting, Production of potential video footage, programing, workshops: September-October 2018.
Final phase:
Test workshops / First shows: November 2018 (greek version)

Versions in other languages upon request

Touring / Performances in other cities include:
A minimal set to travel, plus technical equipment (mainly phones and routers)
2 operators traveling (potentially both operators can be replaced).
Local staff: 2 moderators on the position of Front of house
Shows in other languages require a minimal adaptive process and the briefing / rehearsals with local staff (1-2 days in total).