

# KUNSTHALLE BERN

Park McArthur  
*Kunsthalle\_guests Gaeste.Netz.5456*  
15 August – 4 October 2020

## TRANSCRIPT

5456

Welcome to *Kunsthalle\_guests Gaeste.Netz.5456*, an exhibition by Park McArthur.

My name is UVM. I work at Kunsthalle Bern. One of my jobs involves distributing exhibition invitation cards to locations around the city. At exhibition openings I note how many people come to the Kunsthalle. McArthur asked me to record this exhibition in German and English.

Let us enter Kunsthalle Bern.

### ENTRANCE HALL

Past an outdoor seating area and bar, via a short ramp, two small rooms sit to either side of the Kunsthalle's front double doors. A bookshop on the left, formerly used as a director's office, and a ticket room on the right, formerly used as an administrator's office, open onto a large room with a grey granite floor. This is the building's entrance hall.

To the right of the Entrance Hall is Ostsaal, a windowless gallery that leads to Westsaal, another windowless room slightly larger in size.

To the left of the Entrance Hall is the building's staircase and a long narrow gallery with three windows called Aaresaal. The Aaresaal is named for the Aare river which its windows overlook.

Between Westsaal and Aaresaal is Hauptsaal, the largest of the Kunsthalle's exhibition spaces.

It's easy to mistake one gallery for another looking at pictures taken from inside Kunsthalle Bern. Open doorways pull you forward from one room to another. The Entrance Hall is the only room in Kunsthalle Bern with both windows and a transparent ceiling. All other rooms have either windows or illuminated ceilings but not both.

Below the Entrance Hall, in the building's basement level, is a single stall accessible bathroom, storage, and a group of offices.

Back upstairs, a doorway in the Entrance Hall leads to a room known as Otsaal. Inside Otsaal an object faces the doorway.

## OSTSAAL

Square in shape and rough in texture, the object's frontside is a bas relief sculpture. Its backside and edges are flat. It comes off of the wall with perceptible thickness.

Let's go back out and enter Otsaal gallery again.

## OSTSAAL

An object hangs on the gallery's southern wall.

Square in shape and rough in texture, the object's frontside is a bas relief sculpture. Its backside and edges are flat. It comes off of the wall with perceptible thickness. It weighs more than ninety kilograms or two hundred pounds. You can feel the unevenness and the craginess of the stone it is made of. On some of the object's ridges you can feel where small fragments have fallen out.

A short passageway connects Otsaal gallery to Westsaal gallery. This passageway contains a hidden staircase that reaches the roof. Over time the roof's gutters fill with leaves, bones, and feathers.

Inside of Westsaal gallery a nearly identical square object hangs at the same height as the one in Otsaal: 70 centimeters or 27,5 inches above the floor.

## WESTSAAL

Both of the bas relief sculptures are of lions heads.

Stylized manes of wavy ridges encircle the animals' faces like rays of the sun. Eyes soft, mouths closed, ears relaxed, the lions' faces are at rest.

Lions heads are also found on the exterior walls of Kunsthalle Bern. The sculptures' placement inside Otsaal and Westsaal galleries mirrors the fixed positions of their exterior counterparts. Outside, lions heads face Helvetiaplatz transportation stop, and on the opposite side of the building, they overlook the Aare river.

Layers of paint have turned the building's outside walls silky. Small fissures in the paint's top layer are almost invisible to the fingers.

Inside Westaal gallery, across from where the sculpture hangs, a doorway opens into an adjoining gallery known as Hauptsaal.

## HAUPTSAAL

For such a large room the air inside of Hauptsaal is still.

A “T” would appear if you were to draw straight lines between the room’s three open doorways.

An artwork installed throughout Kunsthalle Bern also appears on the walls of Hauptsaal gallery.

All editions of this artwork begin with a two page printout and expand to include more copies as needed. Copies of the prints are used to fill a space, or to empty a space, or to move between spaces both inside and outside.

Decisions about how the artwork is installed have to be made each time it is presented. This presentation was made by Valérie Knoll, Director of Kunsthalle Bern.

The artwork:

Title: *Form found figuring it out, show, 2020*

Two pages

Installed according to options

Edition 10 of 10

Downloadable here:

[exhibition146.essexstreet.biz/formfoundfiguringitout\\_show.pdf](http://exhibition146.essexstreet.biz/formfoundfiguringitout_show.pdf)

The two pages are oriented vertically side by side with a small margin of space between.

Copies of each page, which measure 28 by 21.6 centimeters or 11 inches by 8 1/2 inches, are adhered directly to the building’s walls.

Each page shows the lines, logos, and printed text found on the two halves of a device called an incentive spirometer. Incentive spirometers attempt to measure the volume of a breath of air and are designed to encourage diaphragmatic movement through slow deep breathing.

The two pages are printed on white paper and the lines, logos, and text are blue. The left page shows a series of numbers arranged in a vertical column

increasing in increments of 250 from the bottom to the top of the column: 250 ml, 500 ml, 750 ml, 1000 ml, 1250 ml, 1500 ml, 1750 ml, 2000 ml, 2250 ml, 2500 ml.

Underneath this column are the words “Inspired Volume”.

Next to this column are the words VOLDYNE, registered trademark, 2500, and HUDSON RCI, with a simple logo of two small abstract lung shapes.

To the right of the logo and text are three stacked boxes containing the words GOOD, BETTER, BEST from top to bottom.

The right page shows an identical column of measurements from 250 ml to 2500 ml with the words “Inspired Volume” at the column’s base. Like the left page, the numbers read 250 ml, 500 ml, 750 ml, 1000 ml, 1250 ml, 1500 ml, 1750 ml, 2000 ml, 2250 ml, and 2500 ml from bottom to top. No other text appears on the right page.

All of the elements on both pages are reversed as if they are being viewed in a mirror.

The object known as an incentive spirometer is made up of a plastic tube and mouthpiece, an indicator, two airway chambers, a bobbin, one lined chart marking volume and another one marking the accuracy of the reading. The text and markings on the object’s surface are clinical and proprietary, but the experience of using one fills its inside with breath and feelings of all kinds.

Assorted temporary benches made for past exhibitions at Kunsthalle Bern have been placed in Hauptsaal gallery and around the building at large.

The room’s expansive transparent ceiling is made of individual panels that partially hide the lofted roof’s clerestory windows directly above Hauptsaal. The panels have been vented upwards and open into the lofted ceiling.

From inside Hauptsaal gallery you can see the adjoining gallery’s windows past an open doorway.

## AARESAAL

Inside Aaresaal gallery close and distant sounds arrive from outside.

Insects fly.

The gallery’s three windows are open.

Each of the windows’ casement sections swings inward. The casements

hold double panes of rolled glass. Looking through rolled glass at a close distance causes slight distortions.

Like the gallery walls around them, the windows' frames and mullions are painted white.

39 of Kunsthalle Bern's 49 windows can partially be opened. Changes in weather typically come from the North.

Let's take the elevator downstairs to the building's basement level.

## ELEVATOR

Leaving Aaresaal through an open doorway we re-enter the Entrance Hall. The elevator rises from the Entrance Hall's grey granite floor like a secret.

Its cab is enclosed on two sides and does not have a front or back door.

In its lowered position the elevator disappears, leaving only the large square outline of its lid in the stone flooring.

An artwork is inside this description of the elevator.

This artwork is an audio recording made while tracing a small room with a power wheelchair.

Reaching the room's edges and turning the corners, the wheelchair's back wheels bump into a clothing rack and metal hangers chime.

The artwork is as follows:

*Untitled*, 2013

Mp3, 6 min 58 sec

Edition AP of 1 + 1 Artist's Proof

<< File plays in its entirety >>

Kunsthalle Bern's elevator was added to the building in 1989. Though it serves as a passenger elevator it was intended primarily to move equipment and artwork. The elevator is a type of lift known in German as "Niederfluraufzug", "low floor elevator."

It locks into place with a low boom.

Downstairs the elevator opens into the building's kitchen.

Through a door next to the kitchen's sink is Info Room gallery.

## INFO ROOM

Three windows face this kitchen entryway into Info Room. The gallery is also reachable via a large wooden staircase located to the left of this door.

Like Aaresaal, the room's three windows also face the Aare River and the expansive Kirchenfeld Bridge.

The windows are open.

Inside the gallery four artworks hang on the wall.

All four artworks are printouts of emails that were sent separately on August 11th, 2020 pamcarthur@gmail.com to knoll.valerie@gmail.com. Each artwork measures 21 by 29.7 centimeters, or 8.27 by 11.69 inches, and is framed in a thin black metal frame.

Each email contains ten different questions.

The first set of ten questions was originally written in 2020. The email's subject line reads as *Involuntary Questions*. This is the artwork's title. The questions are listed in the body of the email.

The artwork reads as follows:

Which height is most comfortable for thinking about what's on the pages

Which patterns create less stress on the imagination

How much space is needed between copies

Can copies be layered and placed on top of one another

How many copies are needed in order to get inside a daydream

Which groupings remind you of where you want to live someday

Which areas hold ideas for next year

Which areas emphasis the end of a day

What kinds of arrangements would you not even have to think about

it at all

What kinds of arrangements cannot be described

The second set of questions was originally written in 2019. Its subject line, which is also the title of the artwork, is ...*synthetic questions*...

The questions read as follows:

Is it familiar to be within reach

Did you choose the music

Or have a part in making your routine

Does a routine bend

(Did I give it a nine out of ten)

Or does it adhere to itself

Is it your posture or weight bearing or is it the way you are lifted that describes how I feel

What should question seven be

Is it the way you handle being photographed that gives me a clue

Or is it the way you take up time that I should pay attention to

A third artwork was originally written in 2017. Its subject line, which is also the artwork's title, is *Some follow up questions*.

The questions read as follows:

How quickly does it dry after getting wet

Was it a raincoat or a life vest that I was reminded of while putting it on

How many tries did it take to learn how to use the leg holes

Was the seat dark green with black edges

What other colors can it be

What size did the frame break down to

How would it feel to be lifted farther than the distance from the couch to the bathroom

Did a metal smell remain on Jason's hands

Would swinging longer be fun

What else is fun

The fourth artwork was originally written in 2013. Its title, which is also the email's subject line, is *These are the questions I would ask*.

The questions read as follows:

Which patient lift is more comfortable in moving a patient

Which patient lift has more head and neck support

Which patient lift has less stress on internal organs

Which patient lift better alleviates the fear of being moved

Which patient lift allows the patient to comfortably stay on lift longer if necessary

How many caregivers does it take to safely move a patient

Does the patient lift have to be assembled before moving a patient

Which patient lift minimizes the loss of dignity and privacy

Which lift allows the patient (if able) to control their posture

Which lift allows you to sit at the table and eat with family

Past these four artworks, at the far end of the Info Room gallery, is an open doorway.

## PROJECT ROOM

Connected to the Info Room by a single doorway is the Project Room gallery. It is one of the building's innermost rooms and is often thought of as the end of the Kunsthalle.

A locked door opposite the gallery entrance connects to the building's library. The library is located directly under Westsaal gallery.

This audio recording is installed in the Project Room. *Kunsthalle\_guests Gaeste.Netz.5456* plays through loudspeakers, alternating between the exhibition's German and English versions. Sound fills and escapes the gallery.

The Project Room's three open windows connect the gallery to a small nearby park.

We leave the building and go outside.

## COURTYARD

Outside Kunsthalle Bern three lions' heads face Helvetiaplatz stop looking out from the side of the building.



The “Helvetiaplatz” transportation stop is located at the intersection of Thunstrasse and Marienstrasse. Bernastrasse and Helvetiaplatz join Thunstrasse and Marienstrasse to become the Kirchenfeld Bridge, connecting Kirchenfeld to the old city center across the Aare river. Kunsthalle Bern sits at the head of this large steel bridge.

Bus number 19 stops at Helvetiaplatz every 10 minutes and continues to Blinzern across the Kirchenfeld Bridge along 18 stops, including stops at Zytglogge, Bundesplatz, Bern Bahnhof, Monbijou, Sulgenau, Wander, Lerbermatt, Steinhölzli, Hohliebe, Spiegel, Steingrubenweg, Weidli and Blinzern.

Bus number 19 stops at Helvetiaplatz every 10 minutes and continues along 11 stops to Aegertenstrasse, Tillierstrasse, Ka-We-De, Tierpark, Thunplatz, Petruskirche, Willadingweg, Luternauweg, Manuelstrasse, and Elfenau.

Tram number 6 stops at Helvetiaplatz every 10 minutes and continues across the Kirchenfeld Bridge to Fischermätteli along 15 stops including stops at Zytglogge, Bärenplatz, Bern Bahnhof, Hirschengraben, Kocherpark, Brunnhof, Cäcilienstrasse, Munzinger, and Fischermätteli.

Tram number 6 stops at Helvetiaplatz every 10 minutes and continues 23 stops in the direction of Worb Dorf, including stops at Brunnadernstrasse, Egghölzli, Muri, Seidenberg, Melchenbühl, Gümligen Bahnhof, Hofgut, Siloah, Scheyenholz, Rüfenacht, Langenloh, and Worb Dorf.

The 7 tram stops at Helvetiaplatz every 10 minutes and continues across the Kirchenfeld Bridge along 23 stops in the order of Zytglogge, Bärenplatz, Bern Bahnhof, Hirschengraben, Kocherpark, Kaufmännischer Verband, Loryplatz, Schlossmatte, Steigerhubel, Europaplatz Bahnhof, Bümpliz Unterführung, Bümpliz Hohe, Bümpliz Post, Bachmätteli, Statthalterstrasse, and finally, Bümpliz.

The 7 tram stops at Helvetiaplatz every 6 minutes and continues 6 stops in the direction of Ostring to Luisenstrasse, Thunplatz, Brunnadernstrasse, Burgernziel, Sonnenhof, and lastly, Ostring.

The 8 tram stops at Helvetiaplatz every 15 minutes and continues 27 stops to Bern Brücken Westside, including stops at Zytglogge, Bärenplatz, Bern Bahnhof, Hirschengraben, Kocherpark, Kaufmännischer Verband, Loryplatz, Schlossmatte, Steigerhubel, Europaplatz Bahnhof, Bümpliz Unterführung, Stöckacker, Bethlehem Säge, Bethlehem Kirche, Tscharnergut, Holenacker, Gäbelbach, Ramuzstrasse to end at Brücken Westside Bahnhof.

The 8 tram stops at Helvetiaplatz every 10 minutes and continues 9 stops in the direction of Saali. The 8 tram stops at Luisenstrasse, Thunplatz, Brunnadernstrasse, Weltpostverein, Egghölzli, Wittigkofen, and Saali.

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Studio: Verein Radio Bern RaBe

Thanks to Bruce Caldwell (vocal coach), Philipp Nauer (vocal coach),  
Martin Schneider (RaBe).