

"The DA program will prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that this man is not an artist, but an ordinary criminal."

# THE TRIAL OF HOWARD KATZZ

All "medial" traces of the worldwide renowned artist Howard Katzz have suddenly disappeared. None of his books are on their shelves, all his films and musical recordings, all his pictures in museums and galleries, every mention of him on the internet have gone. There are no more clues leading to him, it's as if he had never existed. The sponsors, participating labels, galleries, museums, editors of his works have become alarmed. They fear for their investments. The public at large is starting to pay attention. Questions are being asked. Finally, the DA is demanding an investigation, with the artist himself as main defendant.

## The Trial of Howard Katzz...

... is the first Live-stream-internet-trial worldwide. This special interactive form based on the merger of video technology and traditional means of the stage involves the spectators in a sort of a "live film," casting them as representatives of the public mind.

Howard Katzz at first assumes his own defense, with any means at his disposal, although he later agrees to be represented by the defense program, VICKI. The questions and accusations raised by the virtual court and the prosecution program, RALPH, are met with characteristic bravado: his songs, his dances, his stories have become his evidence.

During the trial Katzz is confronted with various colliding interested parties. The public expects to be fed with the hottest news all the time, the state insists on a complete juridic elucidation. The cooperation partners, TV and radio stations, i-platforms, firms, papers, etc., all want to make their share off the current "star" - as long as the business flourishes they all rush in for new stories, new lessons on the nature of performance, new heart-felt musical interludes - the material offered as evidence for the defence.

## The Trial of Howard Katzz...

... is a medial "tour de force" featuring the Berlin-based performance-artist Howard Katz - a visually challenging glimpse of an artist's fight for autonomy. Questions of copyright ownership, of the personal freedom of an artist who is part of a market economy are being touched upon. System and artist - how are they influencing one another? What's the interplay between the public at large and the artist? Is he merely a product of his own time? Who is creating the art - the public at large or the artist himself? Who creates demand? Who owns one's own idea, one's own biography?

The team of **Howard Katz** consists of video-artist **Yoann Trelu** and musician **Felix Zoepf**. In conjunction with his dance, singing, and play they are creating a world whose aesthetic permits the spectator's immediate immersion. The performance adapts elements of today's pop culture without becoming Pop itself.

## The Trial of Howard Katzz...

... simultaneously virtual and real - a sign of the times? A film? A life? A biography?...