

This is an analyzed thought-process of the performance "ORACLE and SACRIFICE in the woods",
by Magdalena Riegler.

A sacred public-private experience.

Prepared voice notes, a big park in Vienna, "der Prater", and many individuals lost in their own ears. The audience starts by being released one by one into a green space while receiving an audio file. Getting information about their surroundings and guided up and inward to mythological phrases. Brought through meadows and trees – suddenly there are audience members lying face down on the green and brown surface. No hesitation, no questions, we are supposed to smell the soil.

The participants are led through this green island, pointed towards the sun, and guided under a tree; the attention is drawn to for once truly see, or even be, nature. To bugs and mushrooms living on a dead tree, but is it really dead when there is life re-wiring itself?

Performers appear sometimes seemingly lost to themselves and their surroundings and sometimes connection seeking with the audience; a glimpse or an intense stare. The participants are teased with notes and tasks throughout forests and little pathways. Finding their own time and way, finding their own thoughts and reflections, and finding maybe a nature-led meditation. A meditation without stillness. A stillness without meditation. The quiet pool of organs and water within.

Released from voices in our ears, we find ourselves on a big meadow surrounded by tall and stable plane trees. Invited by blankets on the grass to pause and process the last walking hour.

Performers wait and slowly appear by the trees, feeling and moving with them. Walking, striding and soon running. Blankets are taken and re-used as capes. And we are brought into another space, a circular space of trees, bushes, and sticks. Blankets are no longer blankets, but moving creatures – growing, collapsing, and moving flowers.

Performers are merging and blankets will soon grow on trees. Performers are free, performers grow hair and plant it back to earth.

Sounds; prickling-goosebump-pulling noises. Withing these immersing soundscapes private plants appear and they get caressed and worshiped, hugged, and placed.

And then? And then a moment of silence. The unspoken doubt of clapping feels right, but social cues are strong, so slowly the clapping starts and stays for a while.