

NICHOLAS HOFFMAN

SOME NOTES ON PERFORMING BIRDHOUSE/NUTHOUSE

Birdhouse/nuthouse is an opera that revolves around ideas of domesticity, proportion and identity. Five characters interact with each other like echoes. They muse on animals, furniture and the weather forecast and in the process get so entangled with each other that they create a deliberately imprecise classification of the world around them.

With: Veronika Eberhart, Stephen Mathewson, William Meleyal, Klemens Waldhuber and Nicholas Hoffman



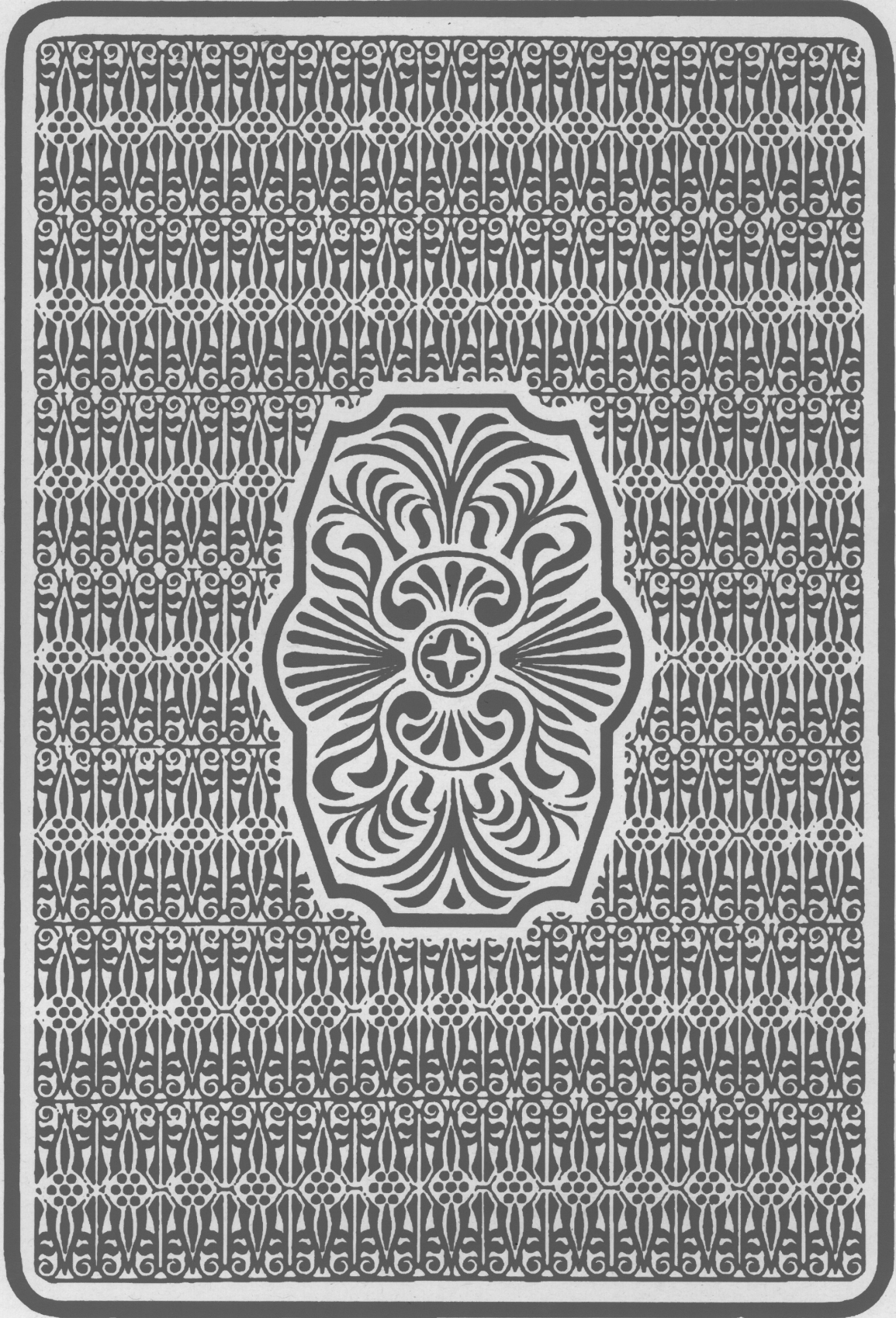
Nicholas Hoffman wurde 1985 in Canton, Ohio USA, geboren und lebt seit 2010 in Wien.

*Am 26. April 2015 wurde **birdhouse/nuthouse** mit fünf Performern zum ersten Mal vor Publikum im Pavillon der Kunsthalle Wien gezeigt. Es performten neben Nicholas Hoffman auch Veronika Eberhart, Stephen Mathewson, William Meleyal und Klemens Waldhuber. Für dieses Heft hat er einen Auszug seiner Performance *birdhouse/nuthouse* mit Handlungsanweisungen und Kommentaren neu arrangiert.*

BPM = 89, lazy Recitativo,
for 2 or more performers (one narrator only),
bold = chorus

NOTE: performance begins when performers approach the music stand, put on ties, and stand at attention making eye contact with the audience, the "PAUSE" must be spoken.

In this excerpt of the libretto, our main character, Clark Kant, is walking back down the stairs after listening to his fourth floor neighbor; Buck the Ex-Banker, filming his cats for a web series he makes. Clark retreats back down the stairs towards his apartment getting close to something like reflection as the chorus aids his ruminations.



PAUSE

He waddles back downstairs
Dragging behind him his briefcase

Things are getting serious now ohhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh
Is this hell he's in? **Nooooo.** This is 5 in the afternoon.

And his thinking is like a baseball game –
Slow and with very few points.

we're going home

He is one of those animals from the old stories;
Wrangled together
Whisked away on a giant

Ship of boogie-woogie.

Where are we going?

And who is steering the mob?

The ghosts of groove in your pocket

This is heaven **wrong again,** this is just 5 in the afternoon.

He believes he sees out of the corner of his eye

Right here

The Widow of the 2nd floor in the darkness of the stairwell.

Lights out

A funky passport version of herself Standing 6 steps down,
so it looks as if only her head is lying on the ground

Mind without body Staring right at him

Everyone can of course play that game
but one of the rules in this building is that

You do not criticize a very good elephant
For being a very awkward horse...

*NOTE: performers should now close magazine, remove tie and
hang on music stand to denote that the performance has finished.*

Fig. 1 and 2 show the importance of wearing a tie the correct way for performing. Tie should be loose and slack in the '5 o'clock-after-work-position' and neither absent, nor tight around the neck.

Fig.1



falsch

Fig.2



richtig

Fig. 3 and 4 show the importance of remaining loose, yet stoic while performing. Disco feet and waving fingers is strictly prohibited and only interferes with the choreography of the tongue and mouth.

Fig.3



falsch

Fig.4



richtig

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Fig. 5 and 6 shows the importance of eye contact between performers. Because the exchange between narrator and chorus should be fluid and bouncy, eye contact is crucial. Performers should not stand in a straight line in relation to one another, but rather in a half moon shape.

Fig.5



falsch

Fig.6



richtig