StoryFutures
National Centre for Immersive Storytelling

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ScanLAB Projects

Press Information

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WORLD PREMIERE OF *FELIX'S ROOM*: IN JUNE, KOMISCHE OPER BERLIN AND BERLINER ENSEMBLE WILL PRESENT A DIGITAL HYBRID PRODUCTION BY ADAM GANZ AND SCANLAB PROJECTS

Directed by Adam Ganz and ScanLAB Projects, Felix's Room is a co-production of Berliner Ensemble, Komische Oper Berlin in association with ScanLAB Projects.

In late June 2023, Komische Oper Berlin and Berliner Ensemble will present the world premiere of Felix's Room, a digital hybrid production directed by writer Adam Ganz and creative studio ScanLAB Projects. The theatrical installation was selected by a jury from over 300 international applications as part of the collaborative project Spielräume!, which is funded by the Federal Cultural Foundation. This programme aims to facilitate a pilot project that goes beyond the customary genre limitations of drama and musical theatre, opening new perspectives and opportunities regarding digitally animated art and connecting the realms of the analogue and the digital. The world premiere will take place on a stage specifically installed for this production at Berliner Ensemble.

The Historical drama which reconstructs the life of Felix Ganz and his wife Erna from archival sources devises new digital narrative forms at the intersection of theatre, music and technical innovation, transporting the audience into the life of Felix Ganz by means of projected holographic effects and sets built using high resolution 3D scans. Incarcerated in a single room in a building designated for Jews in 1942, Felix looks back at his past through letters and contemporary documents. The sophisticated projection technology brings real places, his travels, and his memories to life on stage.

Reconstruction of a Life through holographic projections

A chest of drawers and a sketched floor plan are all that survives of the single room in a so-called "Jewish House" in the Kaiserstraße in Mainz. Felix Ganz and his wife Erna were confined here for a year after they were evicted from his mansion overlooking the Rhine. His life as an international businessman is over, his home has been stolen, his children have escaped. Now his

engagement with the world is limited to letters, the sounds of neighbours and his view of the Gestapo Headquarters across the street. Felix's Room is both prison and memory palace and with

his gramophone he and Erna can escape briefly and fill the room with ghosts of exuberant parties and his journeys to far-off lands.

In Felix's Room, Adam Ganz pieces together his great-grandfather's story from a handful of surviving letters, which can never speak the whole truth as they were written in the knowledge that the Gestapo might be reading them too. The ScanLAB Projects team, headed by architect Matt Shaw, use their 3D scanning and projection technology to reconstruct their room from the original sketch and record the actual places he visited. Through this collaboration Felix and Erna have their presence and voices restored as the artists of Komische Oper Berlin and Berliner Ensemble breathe new life into their story.

ScanLAB Projects and Adam Ganz

Author and screenwriter Adam Ganz is a Professor at the Department of Media Arts at Royal Holloway University of London and Head of the Writers Room at StoryFutures. His research focuses chiefly on audio-visual storytelling, especially on the migration of audio-visual production processes into the digital realm, and other forms of collaborative narration. ScanLAB Projects is a pioneering creative practice based in London. Led by architects Matt Shaw and William Trossell, the studio produces distinctive artworks, films and immersive installations using the cutting-edge medium of 3D scanning. ScanLAB's award-winning work has featured on the BBC, Arte, National Geographic, The Guardian and The New York Times and been exhibited internationally including at LACMA, La Biennale, The Louisiana, The New Museum NYC, the Royal Academy, and The Barbican.

Production is supported by international touring theatre company Complicité and StoryFutures, the National Centre for Immersive Storytelling in the UK.

The Collaborative Project *Spielräume!*

In the context of the collaborative project *Spielräume!*, which is funded by the Federal Cultural Foundation, Komische Oper and Berliner Ensemble intend to develop new artistic digital formats that combine digital technologies with the classic elements, skills and resources of theatre and opera. Over the course of the year, Komische Oper Berlin and Berliner Ensemble will present further artistic and educational projects in cooperation.

The co-production *Felix's Room* is part of the collaborative project *Spielräume!* funding as part of the Federal Cultural Foundation's programme Kultur Digital. Funded by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture.

Twitter: @AdamGanz @ScanLABprojects @Komische_Oper @blnensemble @Complicite @royalholloway @storyfuturesa

Instagram: @scanlab_projects @komischeoperberlin @blnensemble @complicitetheatre @storyfuturesa