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Those Who Were Seen Dancing Harald Szeemann and Armand Schulthess

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First the visionaries come, then the artists, then the artists make artworks, then the collectors come who want to live like artists but not in huts, then the architects come, and then comes misery.
—Harald Szeemann

Armand Schulthess (Alfred Fernand Armand Dürig, 1901–1972) is a key figure who can help us understand Harald Szeemann and the artists and ideas he loved and exhibited as part of his project to pursue the opposite of “misery”: free consciousness, the liberation and fulfillment of the self in a noncapitalist society, and a balanced relationship between the intellect and the senses, nature and culture, and culture and the cosmos. My intuition tells me that Armand Schulthess was Harald Szeemann’s alter ego. Like Szeemann, Schulthess was a visionary and a great archivist, but he was also his opposite, a hermit living a solitary and confined life in the woods, while Szeemann was a great interactor with other people – “warmhearted” as opposed to Schulthess.

Yet Schulthess is also just one link in a chain of figures that we could trace back to the poet and pacifist Gustav “Gusto” Gräser (1879–1958) and, before him, to the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) and from him back to the mythological god of the grape harvest and ritual madness, Dionysus¹. The circumstances surrounding Szeemann’s first encounter with Schulthess suggest that he was the core connection between the person Szeemann was up until documenta 5 in 1972 and the person he was in his later life, which revolved around the stories and knowledge woven together at Monte Verità, a utopian community founded in 1900 by poets, artists, and dancers from northern Europe in a hilly area on Lake Maggiore, above the towns of Ascona and Locarno, in the Italian part of Switzerland called Canton Ticino.

On January 30, 1970, Szeemann was named secretary general of documenta 5, in Kassel, Germany, shortly after he had resigned from his position at the Kunsthalle Bern. He assumed the new post on April 1, 1970, and the exhibition was held from June 30 to October 8, 1972. In September 1971, not long before the opening of documenta 5, the artist Ingeborg Lüscher went to see him in Bern, on the suggestion of Jean-Christophe Ammann, where she showed him her photographs and texts about Armand Schulthess to propose that her photographs of his work be included in the exhibition. On October 1971, Lüscher went to see Mr. Brücher at Dumont publishing house to ask him to publish her book on Schulthess and she mentioned they would be included in documenta 5. Schulthess was a dropout from society and “outsider” artist who lived in a small house in a remote wood on a steep hill outside the village of Auressio (from the Greek *orexis*, “desire,” “potentiality”), a few miles from Tegna, where Lüscher still lives today.

Lüscher had met Schulthess in 1969, after learning there was a hermit living and writing in the woods in Ticino from a man who was visiting her and who remembered this fact from his earlier childhood journey to the same region. There had been two photo-essays published by the Swiss

photographer Theo Fry, who had visited him in Auressio in 1964 and 1965, which Lüscher was not aware of at the time². Lüscher started taking pictures and bringing Schulthess discarded scientific articles and magazines, from which he drew many of the pieces of information that he incorporated into his work.

In the early spring of 1972 Lüscher was working on a book that she would publish that year: *Dokumentation über A. S.: "Der grösste Vogel kann nicht fliegen"*³ (Documentation on A. S.: "The biggest bird can not fly"). From Lüscher's conversations with Schulthess, which are the only dialogues between him and another human being that have been recorded, we learn much about his personality and the similarities and differences between him and Szeemann. Both men were curious. The only person who was ever able to get close to Schulthess after he became a hermit was Lüscher. Schulthess also offered her a home in the little house he had designed for a woman to live in.

Schulthess had been employed by or owned several small businesses in Zurich and Geneva, traveling to different European countries for his work. The financial crisis of the early 1930s led him to close his woman's apparel business in Geneva in 1934, after which he traveled to France, the Netherlands, and Spain until 1939. He had been married twice and had a child who died at an early age. In 1939, when Szeemann was six years old and he was thirty-eight, Schulthess found a job in the public administration in Bern and began working as a clerk for the revenue office. He was known as a reserved and quiet man who dutifully performed all his tasks. In parallel to his day job, however, he secretly created some seventy artist's books of collaged found images and press clippings. In 1951 he resigned and went to live as a visionary in autarky on a rural property off the main road of the village of Auressio, in the Onsernone Valley, just a stone's throw from Tegna and Ascona. He had started to acquire parcels of land there as early as 1941. By the time he dropped out of productive society to live alone, he had put together a steep sloping property of 4.5 acres with a stone house, in a wood of chestnut trees where he later constructed a second small house (for a woman to live in later).

Schulthess began inscribing information from books onto tops and bottoms of tin cans and other discarded metal containers and attaching them to trees on his property, arranging them according to field of knowledge. As Lucienne Peiry explains, "Schulthess organizes on his land a complex network of paths and trails, gangways, bridges, stairs and ladders as observation points and resting areas. He makes more than a thousand tin plates out of the bottoms of tin cans and used bins, which he would flatten and cover with a layer of yellow oil paint, which he would later decorate with thick, multicolored inscriptions in German, French, Italian, English, and Dutch, traced with makeshift means such as a rounded wooden stick or a knitting needle."⁴ Thus the more he ate from cans bought in Auressio, the more he organized knowledge and shared with the woods.

Lüscher had photographed Schulthess's *Enzyklopädie im Wald* (Encyclopedia in the forest) and wanted to share his world with others. While the ground floor of the Neue Galerie hosted an exhibition on realism curated mainly by Jean-Christophe Ammann, the top floor of the Neue Galerie hosted parallel visions of the representation of reality, including a section dedicated to "outsider" artists (art brut) curated by the Bern psychiatrist Theodor Spoerri, followed by the "Individuelle Mythologien" (Individual mythologies) section, with works by Alighiero Boetti, Joseph Cornell, David Medalla, Gustav Metzger, Giulio Paolini, Sigmar Polke, and others. In the original catalogue and artist lists published at the time of the exhibition, there is no mention of Armand Schulthess, except for one page near the section dedicated to art brut, with a single photo of his work in the woods and a short text, perhaps written by Spoerri. Szeemann asked Spoerri to include Schulthess in his group of "outsider artists". Too late, Spoerri realized that Schulthess does not belong fully to the category and in the last-minute turbulences of preparing the documenta

catalogue, Schulthess's contribution was forgotten. At the end of installation, Szeemann found "the perfect spot for Schulthess, marking him as the link between the "outsiders" and individual mythologies⁵". Lüscher's photographs of Schulthess's work were hung on a wall in the Neue Galerie which today is a balcony and put inside two large vitrines with hundreds of photographs and texts. Both her participation and that of Schulthess were nearly invisible in the catalogue and documentation we have of the exhibition. No images of the installation remain; the only accounts we have are hearsay.

Once documenta closed, Szeemann changed his life and went to live with Lüscher, who gave birth to his daughter Una in 1975. It was Monday, August 21, 1972, when Szeemann went to Tegna for the first time. The day before, he had gone to the Swiss national circus, Zirkus Knie. He returned ten days later, on September 1, as indicated in his notes in a little leporello daybook that can be found among his papers⁶. He was traveling from Kassel, to Milan, to Civitanova, to Frankfurt, Bern, and to Berlin between September 18 and 22, and he then went to Basel. documenta 5 closed on October 8, and a new life opened for him, centered in the area of Monte Verità. Although he did not open the exhibition devoted to the early twentieth-century Monte Verità utopian community until 1978, the roots of this were already there in the middle of documenta, in August 1972.

Lüscher and Szeemann went to visit Schulthess twice. The second time was in early September 1972. (Lüscher never mentions Szeemann by name in her book but says that she went to Schulthess's with a friend.) She writes: "Late summer of 1972. The book on Armand Schulthess has been printed and we want to throw him a little party. We stand in front of his door and call his name, but he does not answer. So we prepare a little table by the door with some offerings. Flowers, a cake, postcards, a bottle of wine, and the book. We come back later, we notice that he had brought everything inside but the flowers and the wine. We see him for just a moment while he is picking up some sticks, and he explains by saying, 'You need to do first what is more important'. Soon after it starts raining. That was our last meeting."⁷

Schulthess passed the baton to Szeemann: the artist was found dead outdoors on September 29, 1972, and his cosmic universe was destroyed and burned by his heirs a year later. Szeemann overlapped for two months, taking a trip to Tegna in early August and a second one in early September. By October 1972 Schulthess was gone, and Szeemann was in Tegna. It was a summer of love for him and a summer of change in his personal life. After the burning of Schulthess's property in 1973, Lüscher, Szeemann, his son, a friend and his father, spent time on his land collecting the remaining elements of the encyclopedia that would become the core of Szeemann's homage to Schulthess in his 1978 exhibition dedicated to Monte Verità. They collected elements left in trees, the golden relief of a woman, some terracotta pieces of vase, things that were under the stairs of Schulthess's house including a package under leaves containing a large drawing of electrical circuits.

Monte Verità: Berg der Wahrheit; Lokale Anthropologie als Beitrag zur Wiederentdeckung einer neuzeitlichen sakralen Topographie (Monte Verità: Mountain of truth; Local anthropology as a contribution to the rediscovery of a sacral topography of modernity) was the title of the catalog for this "local exhibition" based on an anthropological study of the people who had journeyed to and resided at Monte Verità from the late nineteenth century to the 1930s⁸. The cover of the catalogue shows a stylized palm tree and a view of the hills across the lake as seen from Monte Verità, thus referring to the mystical and mysterious microclimate of the area, which combines the alpine and the tropical.

The cover was inspired by an earlier publication about the community written by Robert Landmann, published in Berlin by Adalbert Schultz Verlag in 1930⁹. From Szeemann's handwritten research cards with notes from Landmann's book, it is clear that this was his first main written source, along

with many subsequent interviews¹⁰. Szeemann seems to have been in direct contact with the author, who is also referred to as Ackermann with an address in Johannesburg. Landmann had personally experienced the later years of the Monte Verità community, after the arrival of Baron Eduard von der Heydt, who bought the property in 1926 and built a Bauhaus-style hotel. Landmann's *Monte Verità, Ascona: Die Geschichte eines Berges* was indeed the only book to tell the story of this site before it was forgotten.

The exhibition was held from August 7 through August 30, 1978, in various locations in Ascona (the Museo Comunale, the Fondazione Marianne von Werefkin at the Museo Comunale, the Collegio Papio, the Ex Teatro, and the Nuova Palestra) and on the nearby Brissago Islands. In the main surviving building of the vegetarian commune on Monte Verità, Casa Anatta, Szeemann installed some material from Schulthess's wood, and these materials are again on view today.

Yet before Schulthess another man had come to the area from Germany. Gusto Gräser was one of two brothers who had founded on Monte Verità a rural libertarian, utopian, vegetarian artistic community in 1900 with Henri Oedenkoven and the pianist and feminist Ida Hofmann as well as Lotte Hattemer (daughter of a mayor of Berlin) and F. Grinne, a theosophist from Graz, Austria¹¹. The first *monteveritani* were of the generation of Szeemann's grandfather and of Schulthess's father; they were ruralists, feminists, pacifists, and vegetarians. Inspired by, among others, Tolstoy's late nineteenth-century *Lebensreform*, or agrarian communitarianism, they offered an alternative lifestyle that embraced neither communism nor capitalism and to which Szeemann would also subscribe seventy years later. Their revolutionary lifestyle grew in a place that had already been home to anarchists (Mikhail Bakunin had lived in Locarno in 1869) and theosophists (Alfredo Pioda had tried to found a pretheosophical commune on the same hill, at the time called Monescia, in 1889¹²).

These early settlers created an alternative and ecological architecture based on theosophical principles, according to which form should emerge from the inner core. This informal and poor architecture of wood, attentive to air and light and the conservation of energy resources, stood in opposition to the lavish new concrete structures being erected in cities at the time.

Gräser was a visual poet and prophet, a naturalist-ecologist *ante litteram*, and a pacifist originally influenced by the social reformer and communitarian Karl Wilhelm Diefenbach¹³, as well as by Walt Whitman and Nietzsche. Critical of the life at the community, by 1904 Gräser had moved to a cave on the nearby twin hill and definitively left the area for Berlin around 1911. He became a primary influence on Hermann Hesse (also shaping the author's development of *Siddhartha*) after the two spent time together in Gräser's remote cave just up the hill from Monte Verità around 1906–7. Gräser later joined pacifist movements in Munich in the 1920s, traveling all the way to Sweden to preach his nature worship, and thus contributed to the birth of what later in the twentieth century would become the hippie movement of the 1960s and 1970s, that is, of Szeemann's own generation. Gräser was also close to the Wandervogel, a youth movement influenced by the ideas of Nietzsche: these were people who refused urbanization and invoked a return to a natural, pagan life, worshipping the sun and advocating nudism and less constricting clothing in general as well as sexual liberation. Yet Nietzsche was absent from Szeemann's *Monte Verità* exhibition, not even mentioned as a source.

In an intellectual portrayal of Szeemann, the removal of Nietzsche from his lineage and exhibitions is indeed the biggest mystery of all. Nietzsche completed *The Birth of Tragedy* in Ascona in 1871, just two years after Bakunin had moved to the region. Nietzsche's generation (the generation of Szeemann's great-grandfather) lived in a historical period that Szeemann never fully traced or returned to in his studies. It is, however, in this late nineteenth-century period that we find the birth of the best and the worst of the modern era. It was a period in which the ecumenical, socially

progressive, and occult thinking of theosophy came into being¹⁴ and in which the collapse of the power of Christianity in the social normalization of modern urban bourgeois European culture was observed philosophically by Nietzsche, who called it the death of God and understood the immanence of all transcendence as a potential.

Nietzsche is a source for the importance of dance (Rudolf von Laban, Mary Wigman, etc.) and vegetarianism. Aside from anarchy, aside from theosophy, in the roots of Monte Verità there is also the Nietzschean thinking around the Dionysiac. This was suppressed later because of how Nietzsche's sister edited him, and he entered into Nazi thinking with a misinterpreted notion of the superhuman. When Szeemann studied the history of Monte Verità in the early 1970s, Nietzsche was the great absent person. This might be a sort of psychic removal by the generation of the 1970s, who still saw the philosopher as an inspiration for Nazi theories. Only after the new readings by Gilles Deleuze and Giorgio Agamben could we reestablish Nietzsche as foundational because it was he who affirmed that God is dead, that the transcendent is immanent and within us. This individualistic subject theory was then recuperated in the 1980s.

It was Nietzsche's revolutionary individualism that became a model for so many radical dropouts and communitarians in the early twentieth century, such as Gräser and later Schulthess. In the third part of his book *The Gay Science* (1882–87), inspired by Ralph Waldo Emerson's transcendentalist essays, Nietzsche in the notorious aphorism 125 affirms that our idea of there ever having been a God is dead—and that it is our own desire to better understand the world through philosophy and science that “killed” God. For the free spirits this would be a blessing; for others it could bring a pessimism not in tune with his life-affirming philosophy.

«God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him.

How shall we comfort ourselves, the murderers of all murderers?

What was holiest and mightiest of all that the world has yet owned has bled to death under our knives: who will wipe this blood off us? What water is there for us to clean ourselves? What festivals of atonement, what sacred games shall we have to invent? Is not the greatness of this deed too great for us? Must we ourselves not become gods simply to appear worthy of it? There has never been a greater deed; and whoever is born after us—for the sake of this deed he will belong to a higher history than all history hitherto¹⁵.»

This plunging into the Dionysiac was as much a source of what later became the antirationalism of twentieth-century fascist regimes as it was of the counterculture and the pacifism of the 1960s and 1970s that helped end the Vietnam War. It is this double side of existence, to act in order and to act in disorder, that was never spoken of by Szeemann and that remains unspoken today and is perhaps our biggest challenge. It is a struggle that Hegel had marked well in his master-slave dialectic on the birth of subjectivity and what constitutes a balanced self-consciousness.

A few miles from Szeemann and Lüscher's home in Tegna, along the Maggia River, was a former factory that Szeemann transformed in the mid-1980s into his mythic Fabbrica Rosa, an archive and study place where he conceptualized all his exhibitions. The worlds of art and knowledge combined into his Fabbrica. It was a post-documenta world, a place that he would always return to and think in and where he collected his materials.

Szeemann's oeuvre and mode of action lie in the eternal dialectic between order and disorder, between the Apollonian impulse to make order and transmit knowledge through being an *Ausstellungsmacher* and the Dionysian impulse to dance and drop out of productive society. This double dialectical impulse can be seen symbolically in his mode of drinking. For about thirty years he drank a simple midrange Ticino merlot Villa Jelmini and used the cardboard boxes that the wine

bottles had been packed in as containers for his archive, so that “the more I drink, the more I organize¹⁶.”

Szeemann was looking for the origins of his own self, the origins of his fascination with “outsiders”, his libertarianism and anarchist spirit. This is a journey that accompanies those who carry the burden of documenta. He did two things just after documenta: the research on Monte Verità around 1900 and the research on his paternal grandfather, a contemporary of the Monte Verità community. Perhaps he identified his grandfather with the paternal side of his soul and the hills above Ascona with a female side of his soul. Out of this inner search came two of the exhibitions that he organized in the years following documenta, *Grossvater: Ein Pionier wie wir* (Grandfather: A pioneer like us), 1974 and *Monte Verità / Berg der Wahrheit: Le mammelle della verità / Die Bruste der Wahrheit* (Monte Verità: The breasts of truth), 1978.

To a certain degree Szeemann studied the history, people, lifestyles, and events of Monte Verità from the late 1800s to the 1930s in order to understand on the level of a microcosm what his own documenta 5 had been, what had led up to it, and what—perhaps—had gone wrong. His utopian vision of the exhibition as one of art actions changed in spring 1971 into one that would also contain sections of traditional art hanging. Moreover, a number of artists, such as Robert Smithson and Daniel Buren, had protested Szeemann’s approach before the opening, and the expense of mounting the exhibition exceeded the revenues to such a degree that Szeemann was sued by the city of Kassel after the exhibition. This was rectified later by the city of Kassel, apologizing to Szeemann (the documenta 4 debts had been moved to documenta 5). For a number of years (he stated that it started in 1973, but I believe that it was during his summer of love, in 1972, when he first began to visit Tegna and Ascona) he used an archaeological and anthropological method to collect artifacts and documents in order to study a network of people who had dreamed of a new utopian world. This archive was based on observing a very small geography, just ten to twenty miles from one end to the other, after years of traveling extensively throughout Europe and the United States to make the biggest exhibition in the world to date, with more than 220 participating artists. It was a celebration of the local and the rooted, the earthy and the near. It was also similar to Kassel in one way, however: artists and critics flocked to Kassel from all over for one hundred days, and Ascona was a place where dissidents, libertarians, artists, and dropouts from the developing urban society of northern Europe would flock at the turn of the twentieth century.

It occurs to me that this retrospective gaze, which may have started during the summer months of 1972—that is, during documenta—was also a form of psychic elaboration of the hectic experience of curating documenta.

What came out of this process of studying Monte Verità for Szeemann? The conclusion lies, I believe, in a handwritten diagram I found on the first day I was working in his archive¹⁷. It concerns another later exhibition, *Der Hang zum Gesamtkunstwerk: Europäische Utopien seit 1800* (Tendency toward the *Gesamtkunstwerk*: European utopias since 1800), 1983, in which he explored the drive toward forms of art coinciding with life, beyond all boundaries between the senses and mediums that had characterized the twentieth century on the basis of earlier visions of all-encompassing worlds and worldviews, as well as the drive toward the total more generally in culture and politics. In this diagram he created a column for the *Gesamtkunstwerk* as a myth, “GKW als Fiktion.” Then he carefully positioned the progressive avant-garde visions of worlds and microcosms, from Kurt Schwitters’s *Merzbau* (ca. 1930–37) to Marcel Broodthaers’s *Musée d’Art Moderne, Département des Aigles* (Museum of modern art, Department of eagles, 1968–72), which had been prominent in documenta 5, to John Cage, to Joseph Beuys, to art therapy and social activism (social strategies as art) under the rubric “Totalkunst als Vermittlung von Fiktion und Faktizität” (Total art as mediation between fiction and factuality). To the far right of this diagram

he positioned totalitarian ideas of totality as ritual and described them as “Totalitarismus als Identität von Fiktion und Faktizität” (Totalitarianism as identity between fiction and factuality), and he put under this heading Ludwig II, the Nazi parades, contemporary choreography, light and sound plays, Leni Riefenstahl, Albert Speer, Mussolini, the idea of a universal man, social hygiene, Club Med, Disneyland, and Epcot.

If the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, the utopia, is a form of mediation between fiction and the real world, then it fails in the unification between those two, and somehow it remains safe. In its constant repetition and return, throughout history, it renews the dream, which remains in the space of the propositional—like waves of insurgency, waves of outrage, waves of refusal, waves of retreat. In this sense, perhaps, the winding-up of the Monte Verità vegetarian and theosophical community is precisely what allows for the dream of the counterculture to be constantly renewed as a constituent force rather than a constituted one. And so it reappeared in the late 1960s for Szeemann.

I was interested in Monte Verità for years before curating DOCUMENTA (13), which opened in the summer of 2012. I knew it had been important to Szeemann and that he believed there was something unique in the electromagnetic fields of the area, an energetic peculiarity that might explain why the climates and unique vegetation of the north and the south of Europe met right there, in the northeast corner of Lake Maggiore, gracing the area with palm trees. Or rather that is what I was interested in understanding. He believed that the electromagnetic field distortions or folds might explain why the anarchists and theosophists had gone to live there in the late 1800s and why artists and poets had followed around 1900. I visited the hotel established on Monte Verità by Eduard von der Heydt with the artist Lea Porsager in 2011 and again while writing this essay, in August 2017. The entire project of installing artworks in little huts and houses in the Auepark in Kassel in 2012 was inspired by the Monte Verità huts, a vision in which knowledge is embodied in a multispecies world of gardens and plant life. It was and is a question of measuring the distance from the particular to the universal, from the here and now to the cosmos, and finding one’s place within it.

When you organize documenta, it is such an effort, such a big project, that you need to reorient yourself. The time that follows it is a time after time, a messianic time in which you seek a compass and a new order in life. Schulthess offered Szeemann a way through this.

All the apparent signs of madness manifested in Schulthess’s writings are actually grounded in facts of his life. He often wrote about the economy and included warnings in his signs, and this might be related to the financial crisis that had marked his own life. That crisis led to the beginning of his more boring office life. Schulthess was a Bartleby the Scrivener type, yet he did not stay at the office to starve himself, as did the protagonist of Melville’s tale of resistance to power. Schulthess chose life and freedom.

Schulthess spoke to Lüscher about the importance of classifying things and making order. He created different zones on his property, areas where specific fields of knowledge would be located, subdividing and structuring the land as one would a library or an archive. Sentences around classification make me think of a conversation that might have taken place between Lüscher and Szeemann himself. Schulthess’s life was a balance between an Apollonian impulse to make order and a Dionysian impulse to have a life in the woods. And to find a form of sustainability and autarky: he would eat the chestnuts from the trees on his property, and he did not have any heating except for a fireplace, so he created a system of plastic bottles that would serve as insulation. He was a Robinson Crusoe or an inventor, an engineer of the space that he lived in. Not a madman.

His encounter with Schulthess offered a way forward for Szeemann: just as Schulthess had begun life anew in Ticino, far from the madding crowd, so too Szeemann himself, chased after by the city of Kassel for having gone over budget, could retreat to the safe haven of this tiny thirty-mile radius

to start all over again. Ticino offered a place for Szeemann, a local place, a grounded place, yet one that also carried with it a form of internationality and global connections that could remind him of Kassel: the idea of the whole world coming together in one place. Canton Ticino: Auressio, in the Onsernone Valley; his Fabbrica at Maggia, in the more open valley just northeast of that narrower valley; Tegna, where Lüscher and Szeemann's house was and where the waters of the Maggia and Melezza Rivers meet just before flowing into Lake Maggiore; Monte Verità, just a few miles down the road toward Ascona; and Locarno, at the mouth of the Maggia River. This place would provide a home, a port of return, a place to think, a place for love and embodied life for Szeemann for many years to come. The area became a version of another possible documenta, played out not over one hundred days and the various buildings and venues of Kassel but over many years, from 1900 to 1926 (Szeemann always wrote that once von der Heydt had bought Monte Verità it lost its authenticity) and harking back to roots in the late nineteenth century. Schulthess had sources and books inside but brought the world of knowledge outside and put it in the natural world, in the woods. Szeemann was never able to do that. He collected and archived the world of art inside. It was pre-Internet, so he had many binders and envelopes. In box 357 at the Getty Research Institute, there is a series of color slides of Schulthess's woods with accompanying text. These images—by Balthasar Burkhard, Ingeborg Lüscher, and Hans-Ulrich Schlumpf—were surely used for lectures, and one slide comments: “A S attempts to compile all the knowledge of our time alone. The woods become for us a center of information while for him, they are a catalogue of the treasures hidden inside his house”. Because Schulthess read, understood, and released pieces of information from books and magazines that he kept inside his house, all the texts found outside on trees are part of a visual exhibition: an organized and essentialized form of what is inside, a deeper layer of the archive as source material, so that a dialectic between the world outside (the exhibition) and the archive within is established. A similar dialectic arises between the materials and notes in the archive inside Szeemann's Fabbrica and the display of ideas and people that make up his exhibitions. A fascinating tension that Schulthess and Szeemann seem to have shared is that between, on the one hand, wanting to make an exhibition based on a series of concepts and then finding the appropriate artists or individuals and artworks to incarnate those ideas, and, on the other, wanting to display the work of specific artists/individuals and then having the overall concepts of the exhibition emerge. Szeemann also considered “the exhibition as the creation of a temporary world¹⁸.” Schulthess certainly created such a world on his property, working also on its paths, points of view, and seating areas, just as in a miniature theme park world and thought of it as an ever graving world that ought not to be temporary.

Schulthess's technique was to use the round tops and bottoms of cans to write on. Or he would open up the body of the can to make tin squares or rectangles. In this story a gift economy seems to allow for the renewal of life to take place. Schulthess offered Lüscher a house, though she would not end up using it. Lüscher for her part gifted Schulthess with magazines and articles, with photos and with the book she made of his life's oeuvre, and finally Schulthess gifted Szeemann with a place. When she went to Bern to meet the artistic director of documenta, Lüscher did not bring her portfolio or artworks: she brought Schulthess to Szeemann. It is this profound humbleness on her part, this gift of another to another, that allowed for the entire circulation of energy to occur. She gifted Schulthess to Szeemann. But Schulthess gifted her to Szeemann. A place and a story of love.

The esoteric relations between intellectuals are not visible in the exhibitions we make, but they are there, and when their energies drive what is esoteric on the outside, an intensity appears, a dialectical tension between our lives and our projections onto eternity, creating link after link over time, in an eternal return yet a rush toward tomorrow.

¹ There are curious coincidences to note: Szeemann moved to Tegna, in Canton Ticino, in fall 1972, just after Schultess was found dead in his forest of signs in late September of that year. Similarly Schulthess moved to his Auressio property in the Osernone Valley of Canton Ticino in 1951, while shortly thereafter, in 1958, Gräser died in Munich. Schultess was born in 1901, one year after the Monte Verità. community began, and it began the same year Nietzsche died.

² Theo Fry, *Luzerner Neueste Nachrichten*, June 4, 1965, and *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, July 1968.

³ Ingeborg Lüscher, *Dokumentation über A. S.: "Der grösste Vogel kann nicht fliegen"* (Cologne: Dumont, 1972).

⁴ Lucienne Peiry, "Armand Schulthess e la magia del Ticino," in *Armand Schulthess: Domaine N° 1* (Bellinzona: Sottoscala, 2016), 9. (translation by Pietro Rigolo).

⁵ Ingeborg Lüscher, conversation with the author, 2018.

⁶ Harald Szeemann Papers, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, acc. no. 2011.M.30, box 304, folder 2.

⁷ Ingeborg Lüscher, "Me demander", in *Armand Schulthess: Demaine, N° 1*, 36 (translation by Pietro Rigolo).

⁸ Harald Szeemann, ed., *Monte Verità: Berg der Wahrheit; Lokale Anthropologie als Beitrag zur Wiederentdeckung einer neuzeitlichen sakralen Topographie* (Milan: Electa, 1978).

⁹ Robert Landmann, *Monte Verità, Ascona: Die Geschichte eines Berges* (Berlin: Adalbert Schultz, 1931).

¹⁰ Szeemann Papers, boxes 358-360.

¹¹ Oedenkoven and Hofmann left for Brazil in 1920.

¹² The first theosophical meetings in the region were held in Milan in 1891, and Helena Blavatsky had often come to Italy and had been in touch with both Giuseppe Mazzini and Giuseppe Garibaldi. It seems that Annie Besant also gave lectures in Rome, Palermo, and Milan. Several books by Blavatsky and Besant were in Szeemann's collection.

¹³ As would be another monte veritano, the artist Fidus (1868–1948), who inspired the psychedelic art movement of the 1960s.

¹⁴ The Theosophical Society was founded in 1875 by Helena Blavatsky and Henry Steel Olcott. In their teachings and in Annie Besant's radical democratic ideas, all religions are grounded in one boundless principle or cosmic substance that is embodied in a manifest reality; therefore the equality of all beings is primary and the study of science and respect for nature are activities that allow a better understanding of this continuous and entangled reality.

¹⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science: With a Prelude in Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1974), 181.

¹⁶ Harald Szeemann, in Karin Prätorius, "Interview with Harald Szeemann", in *Interarchive: Archivarische Praktiken und Handlungsräume in zeitgenössischen Kunstfeld / Archival Practices and sites in the Contemporary Art Field*, ed. Beatrice Von Bismarck et al. (Cologne: Walther König, 2002), 338. See also Lindsey Sommer, "The Business Files of Harald Szeemann," *The Iris: Behind the Scenes at the Getty* (blog), May 6, 2015, <http://blogs.getty.edu/iris/treasures-from-the-vault-the-business-files-of-harald-szeemann/>.

¹⁷ Szeemann Papers, box 900**.

¹⁸ Harald Szeemann, "With by through because towards despite," in *Harald Szeemann: With by through because towards despite; Catalogue of All Exhibitions 1957–2005*, ed. Tobia Bezzola and Roman Kurzmeier (Zurich: Voldemeer; Vienna: Springer, 2007), 15.