



“messenger“, DV, 2000 / Wandprojektion 3.5x5m, Ton: Christof Steinmann

Nasal body

The nose is carried at the forefront of our body. It can't make the whole body stop or move in another direction like our arms or legs. Well, the objection may be raised that it is not actually our legs or arms moving our body but rather our brain giving the impulse to move our limbs. But that's exactly it, the brain transmits this to our arms and legs and not to our nose. So the nose is there, right in the middle of our face, protruding. Its root merges into the eyebrows and forehead, the ridge into the cheeks, the nostrils into the upper lip. Our nose is firmly conjoined with our head, not flexible like an arm or a leg. So it cannot be moved on its own. We perceive all our limbs separately in their instrumental function. The brain steers, the limbs execute. The nose may twist, wrinkle, flare and sniff with the nostrils, and the point of our nose can retract a little, but if it doesn't do any of these self-contained movements, it is simply there. The body, or more specifically, the face carries it in the front. It anticipates and scents odours, is caressed by the wind or washed by water.

In the „Messenger“ projection, we meet a body that, after a moment's observation, immersed in sound and coloured light, will lead us to a level of non-controlled, relaxed movement of brain and limbs. This slender body lies in water and is bathed in green light. Gradually, we recognise the long nose of a fish (yes, I know, fish do not breathe with any kind of nose). It sinks down slowly from the top left towards the middle of the projected surface, moving forward at the same time. The movements are slow, steady and calm. When it's moved forward a bit, it stops and lets itself be shifted by the current. Then it moves forward a bit more. The mouth, full of teeth, slowly opens and closes again with a low jar.

Blades of grass moves almost unnoticed in the current, a few air bubbles drift past. The sounds that have been added to the low jar of the fish mouth put us in a kind of floating state, similar to

that of the drifting nasal body of the fish. It then moves horizontally almost to the right edge of the projection, from where it withdraws gradually, with intervals, back to the top. This nasal body demonstrates the unity of impulse, movement and limbs. Body and mind calm down while observing and listening. The fish, almost like a messenger from another evolutionary phase, activates a level of perception that uses this nasal body to recall our own sensory organs, their location in our head and their relation to our thinking and our body. Our mind leaves rational places and the urge to allocate and control behind, and inner sensoriums open up to reveal layers of the vegetative system that supports us.

Irene Schubiger, Basel, 2001