

## Introduction to the *Protocoles Méta* and the *Congrès Singuliers*

Since 2003, the “protocoles méta” have been offering experimentation sessions and “congrès singuliers” that link up diverse disciplines and allow different audiences to intersect. These conferences have taken place in artistic as well as extra-artistic spaces in different cities: Blois, Paris, Roubaix, Marseille, Aix-en-Provence, Rabat, Cavaillon, Avignon, etc.

“**Protocoles-méta**” is a mobile, infiltrating, and progressively evolving experimentation project, whose aim is to explore modes of behavior and action in ways that go beyond conventional approaches to exhibitions, performances, and entertainment.

The project itself functions in an experimental mode that is always evolving depending on the situation. Every session (with or without a theme) brings into play the trinomial of encounter – indeterminacy – improvisation. We thus proceed by successive experiments, constantly concerned with sharing our ideas and practices.

These are “situated protocols,” whose terms and modes can always be questioned and, if necessary, reenacted in a different way. It is a *subtractive approach*.\*

Since 2006 we have been regularly questioning the relationships between artistic, social, and political experimentation, and the misunderstandings (or misadventures) that crop up between them.

We maintain a necessary critical distance in relation to each event. We are not concerned with “creating a work” in the conventional sense of the term, but with collectively “living” the situation as we bring our methods to bear and feel our way forward, one experiment at a time.

We envisage this “congrès singulier” as a construction following a somewhat inverted plan, where the lines keep moving, time is malleable, the participants heterogeneous, and the experiment one of deproduction.

**Being there ... Creating situations...  
Appearing/disappearing... Being elsewhere...**

*\* “Protocoles Méta” is an approach and an experiment that has developed in several phases without a fixed goal. This is what was interesting from the outset and what continues to be interesting about what takes shape in this way, what has subsequently emerged—it is an approach that has always remained, from the very beginning, essentially open. That this can also be disconcerting is also clear. Many of those who joined us at one moment or another, without knowing exactly what to expect, can testify to this, as can the terms themselves according to which this experiment has developed—that is, as meta experiment. A meta approach like this one, or the meta protocols associated with it, are much more a reflection on the conditions in which an approach or an experiment can take place than a program. It is an essentially subtractive approach, designed to liberate as yet unexplored possibilities.*

*An approach of this kind implies that we reflect, as we move along, on what enters into play in artistic experiments or practices (or those that are considered artistic), along with all the representations that are an inevitable part of them and which always*

*ultimately constitute, for those who participate, a backdrop—one that can be caught out, put to the test, and submitted to doubt. This ambivalence precisely justifies the approach's subtractive nature. This aspect, which I am only touching on very briefly here, distinguishes itself from our normal expectations in that we invest in a process which, as soon as it is set in motion, becomes eminently problematic due to its uncertain and undetermined aims.*

*A subtractive approach (Jean-Pierre Cometti, April 2007 - extract).*