very rough draft first sketches for oltingen sportplatz
very subject to change!!

field

court

Opening: Audience walks from church to sport field. lights are already on.

As the audience enters the space, the performers are already in place in the grass area preparing to begin.

Meanwhile in the middle of the court area is a mound/construction including a set of speakers, lights, objects for performance, possibly a bubble machine, and electronic instruments. I call it a mound because I imagine that at first it will be covered with grass matching the performers, but it is also a kind of stage construction which is used at the ending section of the piece. Possibly it will not be covered with grass, but will be more aesthetically related to the lines on the court.

There area also speakers in the church tower, and other locations for spatial/echo effects.

Sections:

1. Night game - bright lights - artificial nature ritual in grass field - “grass creature” performers dressed in grass/moss costumes, pull objects on long strings towards center point of grass area (each object is maybe a unique symbol, or all the same, not sure). Sounds are created by the performers as they pull the objects, e.g. bells alternated with slide whistles holding a chord, then stopping between pulling to change pitches; and/or the opposite, playing the chord in between pulling? to be determined.
2. Once the objects are pulled to the center of the field, the grass creatures perform a transition choreography. Possibly the objects on the end of the strings will be a lightweight construction, and then the performers can fly the objects connected to the end of long poles. Moving towards the center of the court area, the performers move in a ritualistic/sport way along the lines on the court to the center point.
3. When they get to the middle of the court, they begin to pull white fabric from the mound/construction - suddenly the overhead field lights go off - at the perfect moment (e.g. after creating a first shape with the fabric coming from the construction). EDIT: possibly before they pull the fabric from the center, they shed their mossy grass costumes to reveal track-suits with bright lines on them (addias?), mirroring the lines on the court.
4. The performers continue to pull the white fabric from the center construction, and eventually have a very large piece of white material that they move with in the court area. The material glows light a ghost jellyfish in the darkness (with moonlight). EDIT: possibly the material could all be thin lines, but I also like the image of a more organically moving large scale object.
5. Second section of court choreography in the dark, new objects on LED lights come out from the center construction, and/or performance objects constructed from the objects on strings used in the opening grass section, moving around court light stars, and then back to middle (big bang?).
6. Center performance. Ensemble section at middle of court. Performers are inside the construction in the middle of the court. Four speakers aim outwards. Highly digital sounding material, using midi drum controllers (BopPads), meanwhile other performers work with objects projecting shadows onto a thin ring shaped screen surrounding the group. The screen is integrated into a complex natural/artificial assemblage. The impression is of a band, performing with shadows and tree branches, flashlights (and LEDs?) in the middle of the court.
7. Climax of center performance: bubble machine with black lights.
8. Almost ending. Lights flicker with echo impulses reflecting off of the school building and church tower, reverberating through the surrounding valley, maybe some soft bird wing fluttering in between.
9. Ending: sound from church tower speaker. At first, natural sound of bells (playback), then becoming glitchy, mixing with bird sounds, bats, frogs, cards, cows, sheep, bicycle bells, and final impulse echoes.
10. Lights come back on.

overhead lights on (from audience entrance)
grass characters in grass area (field), pulling some kind of grassy objects on long strings (or potentially lightweight objects) towards them, in quasi circle. audience can come in close to see if the want (but probably will stand on edge of circle).
in the middle of the orange rubbery area (court) there is a box covered in grass
(or some kind of grass mound?) hiding the speakers, white fabric and other materials.

sound:
small sounds, maybe bells attached to grassy objects
or
slide whistles, and/or other types of whistles, performed by the moss creatures pulling the objects towards them

after all grassy objects arrive at grass characters, they pick them up and move to court.

possibly if we go with the lightweight object option, the objects might be on strings connected to long poles that the performers swing around to make them fly in the air. this transition section is also a continuation of the ritual.

sound:
natural sounds of performers moving to rubber court area and movements of object/instruments

they progress to the mound in the middle of the court (maybe on some kind of platform that we can move in/out between rehearsals?).

choreography follow the lines on the court, and/or uses other references to the design of the lines on the court (maybe play a game there?)

sound:
natural sounds of performers moving to court

the grassy creatures go to the center mound/structure and open the top, or removing objects/fabric covering, revealing a mass of white material, (long strips at first) --

as white material appears, the overhead lights suddenly go off.

sound:
when the characters get to the mound electronic sounds begin, co-located at mound (4 channels at mound?)
after lights go off, sounds shift to being oriented towards the larger space (activating echoes, and blending with environment).
accent speakers by the school are used to create impulses of various kinds which create echoes, reflecting off the buildings, church, and hills.
(extra speaker in church as well)

sound:
line game sound from center
speakers connects with movement
of performers
contrasted with large scale spatial sound
echoes etc.

the audience's eyes adjust to the dark and can clearly see the white objects,
in particular the white lines on the rubbery court seem to glow.
performers work with the material, creating dialog with the white lines on the court, following the shape with long white strips of fabric.

possibly when the lights go off the performers shed their mossy grass layer and come out in track-suits
with bright lines that connect them with the lines on the court.

sound:
sound from center speakers connects
with movement of new white fabric
creature (in the dark)

large scale spatial sound echoes etc.
continues (echolocation?)

after following the lines, the performers bring the material together again to the middle point,
to form new creature from the material (also using new material from inside the mound)
creature might be made from large piece of fabric, with sticks (or not) performed to become a kind of
giant bird or jellyfish, glowing in the dark night.

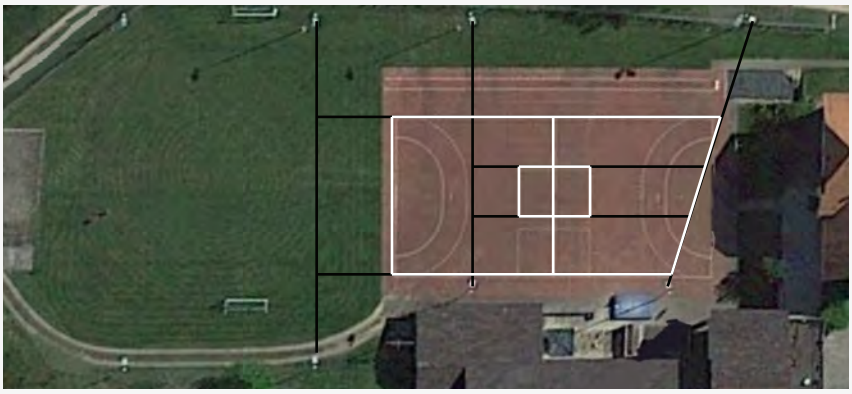
this part is still being determined,
shadows

thin very bright beams of light that cut into the fabric at different angles, and/or using shadows, but
this might require more performers. I would like to match the colors of the lines on the court

this part is still being determined, but possibly we could project on the creature either using a projector
or laser -- after some initial research I think a projector will be easier to deal with. other options could be
very thin very bright beams of light that cut into the fabric at different angles, and/or using shadows, but
this might require more performers. I would like to match the colors of the lines on the court

continued --->

update 13.5. I think we will not hang things now, but leaving in the sketch for reference



one idea would be to hang tension ropes from the light poles (ca. 4-5 meters up? as high as possible) and then create a floating version of the white lines of the rubbery court. use black for the main support lines, and then attach thicker white material in the sections where the lines on the ground are.

the ropes could function as a visual mirroring (especially nice in the dark) and also provide a structure to support the puppet fabric.

we also discussed the possibility of creating a box with lightweight plastic material (like the thin plastic sheets) and fill the inside with fog, for use with the laser. the problem I can foresee with the laser would be for safety concerns.

however, this could still be interesting. for example, possibly as an ending, the walls could raise up from the ground, and fill with fog and light... but not sure this is the right thing to do.

maybe more simple, the ending might be a kind of larger fabric structure that contains the grassy mound (and hidden lights there). then when the structure expands (via ropes and pulleys attached to the tension rope "grid") we could light it from inside, and make 3D shadows from inside the structure.

possibly in connection with the projection on creature part, or separately, strobe lights, or sudden single flashes of light on the buildings in different angles could be used to emphasize the echo reflections

... ending to be determined