

## **Beyond the Black Box: the art of concentration**

By [Josje Kerkhoven](#) on 26 February 2019, [rektoverso.be](#)

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On the collar of the man in front of you is a sticker, a white dot. Behind you walks another man—you have a white dot on your neck, on your hood, too—so does he. You have to concentrate on that white circle, that's what the artist asked you to do. You follow, keep the rhythm. No one stands still, everyone's stride is the same.

You concentrate on that dot in front of you. You focus. Don't let your focus stray. Outside, it's still light. The dot becomes light, or even air. The sky is almost white, the dot becomes sky, a line joins up the dots of air. But no, the dots—now empty inside—don't just form a line, they're connected to everything around you, to all the negative space, and this is how air flows through the line of people.

The back of the man's head in front of you now seems more familiar than that of a good friend. Now, you are one with those in front of, and behind you, the air connects you to the others as if you are vacuum packed together. Pure concentration.

**Art and concentration have always been a couple.**

That is the astonishing effect of the work *223m* of collective SoAP, a participatory experience spanning 223 meters, performed for the first time from 7 to 9 February in and around the Brakke Grond in Amsterdam, during the new three-day festival *Beyond the Black Box*.