

MEDIA INFORMATION

„I multiplied myself to feel myself“¹

On Intersections, Lines of Connection, Personal Networks and Accomplices

Opening: 23 Oct. 2014

Duration: 24 Oct. – 6 Dec. 2014

Press tour: 22 Oct. 2014, 11.00

Artists: Anna Barfuss, Klaus vom Bruch, Sunah Choi, Michael Elmgreen/Henrik Olesen, Loretta Fahrenholz, Feminist Land Art Retreat, GCC, David Hockney, Kathi Hofer, Marcus Karkhof/Anna-Sophie Berger, Marcus Karkhof/Tanja Widmann, KERNEL, Kiki Kogelnik, Kalin Lindena, Josip Novosel/Jasper Spicero, Sarah Ortmeyer/John Skoog, Nora Rekade/ Liesl Raff, Dario Wokurka, Catharina Wronn/Astrid Wagner, u.a.

Curator: Barbara Rüdiger

Assistant curator: Cathrin Mayer

Either we sit in front of our computers or we meet friends who we already work with, or soon will. Later we go out to an evening event to meet old and supposedly new acquaintances. The real workspace, whether it is a studio or an office, is becoming the party zone and the party is becoming the office. It is “work around the clock”, be multiple and constantly available.

If we occasionally do not make it to one event or another, we make sure we are informed, who was there and what went on. On social platforms we are even friends with people we do not know and we take part in events that are sometimes taking place in other continents, in order to publicly demonstrate that we share an interest in special people and places with our (virtual) circle. We are constantly accompanied by the desire to be informed and connected with all current events. This permanent condition of enabling simultaneous actions opens up various forms of the multiplication and intensification of the self.

¹ Fernando Pessoa

„We need to perform because to do so is what is asked of us“ (Jan Verwoert)

Both within and outside the field of art, the “network” seems to be displaying an omnipresence that is almost striving for the infinite. Alongside the natural form of curiosity, the powerful desire for this form of participation results not least from the current economically and politically unstable society. The personal and symbolic “network” has become a substitute for the previously more strongly present and protected infrastructure. As symbolic capital it serves as a currency. At the same time it assumes an identity-forming function and makes it possible for its actors to achieve a sporadic and sometimes only short-lived membership of a larger structure or community. This participation usually expresses itself in the form of precarious working conditions, which seem to be increasing exponentially with the crisis-torn economy but have long predominated in the art world.

The promise that such an always deregulated and thus occasionally ostensibly barrier-free society provides is self-realisation. Here, too, artists have assumed an exemplary pioneering position that they have long sought to defend and which in recent decades has increasingly been taken up by freelancers or start-up companies. At the same time, in contrast, a structural convergence can be observed. The public appearance of artists or artists’ collectives as entrepreneurial organisations on the one hand suggests a productive increase in efficiency – at the same time this affirmative type of appropriation and orientation on economic structures could also be read as a criticism of them.

Artistic Work Means Relationship Work

The basis for every form of artistic work, collective as well as individual, appears to have become the interaction with the real or virtual environment in which ideas appear to circulate and authorships can no longer be separated. Artistic work means relationship work going beyond the production of objects and consciously in social artistic practices aimed at the collective production of meaning.

At the same time – as the title “I multiply myself in order to feel myself” suggests – this interaction permits opportunities to factor oneself out and make oneself experienceable through others. In discussing ideas and through direct feedback thoughts are overlaid with new impulses, so that their

origin is no longer clearly recognisable. These different inputs circulate between and around the people, link them and network them.

The transition between profession and spare time is fluid – that has long been nothing new. On the other hand, what appears to be new is the fear of isolation in the “network”, which would simultaneously mean stagnation and ultimately economic destabilisation. Working in the “network” means working for the future, always in the hope and in the wise foresight of potentially participating in future projects. The general technology-driven acceleration that is taking place around us is turning the future into the present at ever shorter intervals.

The quantum of work, and thereby at the same time the investment in social relations, seems to be boundless. This boundless “network” is often ascribed a horizontal form that is characterised by infinite expansion and suggests the picture of a non-hierarchical breadth. In this case, talking, writing and acting critically about and in the “network” becomes a subtle affair, because it seems almost impossible to assume an externalised position. So it is all the more important to visualise the much-discussed and apparently abstract “network” in the field of art through relevant artistic positions and a setting that is specifically adapted to the theme and to give it a current surface and structure.

Support programme

20 Nov. 2014, 21.00

NETPARTY (as part of the VIENNA ART WEEK)

Current information at: www.netpartyblog.tumblr.com

Opening hours: Tuesday – Friday 11.00–19.00 and Saturday 11.00–15.00

Admission free

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Image material: <http://www.kunstraum.net/de/presse>