

ONCURATING.org

1,2,3, --- THINKING ABOUT EXHIBITIONS



Sturtevant, Warhol Silver Clouds, 1987/2004, Mylar and helium, dimensions vary with installation, 88,5 x 12,2cm (each)

Photo: Courtesy of Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main

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Sturtevant, Gonzales-Torres *Untitled (America)*, 2004, 15 watt light bulbs, rubber light sockets and extension cords, dimensions vary with installation, 12 parts, 20m with 7,5m extra cord (each)
Photo: Courtesy of Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main

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1,2,3, --- THINKING ABOUT EXHIBITIONS

EDITORIAL

Dorothee Richter

The issue *1,2,3, --- thinking about exhibitions* combines discussions, interviews, and articles concerning recent discussions in Rotterdam and Hamburg. The symposium in Rotterdam, *The Curators*, at Witte de With emphasized the role of the curator-subject. This issue includes two interviews which critically review the contributions and results of the symposium, revealing different aspects and controversial facets of their topics. The two featured interviews include one with Nikolaus Schaffhausen and Zoe Gray, those responsible for the organization of the symposium, as well as one interview with Paul O'Neill, a contributor.

The second symposium took place in Hamburg. Florian Waldvogel and Annette Hans chose a more historical approach to the field of exhibition making. *Forms of Exhibitions* presented influential exhibitions re-worked by curators and art historians. For example, Frederick Kiesler's work was presented through Monika Pesler, from the Vienna based Kiesler foundation. Antonia Wunderlich spoke about *Les Immatricieux*, Jan Hoet presented *Chambres d'Amis*, and Nikolaus Schaffhausen debated his commission of the German Pavillion with a journalist from Frankfurter

Allgemeine. These recent insights are complemented with essays.

An article by Dorothee Richter explores the history of exhibition displays, providing an overview from the French Revolution onwards until today. The article aims to reveal perspectives and the ideology of displays, as well as providing a list of relevant literature on the topic. In Hito Steyerl's essay *Is a museum a factory?* Steyerl investigates the immense overflow of media work in recent exhibitions and the impact on viewer positions. The third article by Sabine Gebhard Fink provides a theoretical approach to performative aspects of mediation, showing that curating can be seen as a specific kind of art mediation and therefore as a part of a broader educational complex.

As *carte blanche* in this issue of *On-Curating*, the acrylic glass panels of *Poor Man's Expression* by Martin Ebner and Florian Zeyfang set the stage for a model of an expanded understanding of curating.
(www.poormansexpression.com)

ROTTERDAM DIALOGUES

**The Curators, symposium at Witte de With,
Rotterdam 5th – 7th March 2009**

**Interview with Nicolaus Schaffhausen and Zoë Gray
Conducted by Dorothee Richter**

Speakers, among others, were:

Jamila Adeli, Anke Bangma, Bart de Baere, Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, Pablo León De La Barra, Ute Meta Bauer, Lorenzo Benedetti, Iwona Blazwick, Nicolas Bourriaud, Sabine Breitwieser, Adam Budak, Ann Demeester, Barnaby Drabble, Mai Abu Eldahab, Zoran Eric, Bruce Ferguson, Juan Gaitan, Hou Hanru, Jan Hoet, Jens Hoffmann, Manray Hsu, Renske Janssen, Stefan Kalmár, Xenia Kalpaktoglou, Emmanuel Lambion, Enrico Lunghi, Raimundas Malasauskas, Gerardo Mosquera, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Sophie von Olfers, Paul O'Neill, Livia Páldi, Philippe Pirotte, PiST, Irit Rogoff, Beatrix Ruf, The Salford Restoration Office, Brigitte van der Sande, Kitty Scott, Seth Siegelaub, Saskia van Stein, Adam Szymczyk, Andrea Viliani, Rein Wolfs, and What, how & for whom.

Questions to Zoë and Nicolaus:

Dorothee Richter (DR): In your concept for the symposium, you spoke about curating as a topic which is frequently discussed in the art world, but is often neglected by the media so that the broader public is largely unaware of it. This comes rather as a surprise because it has been widely discussed; on the contrary, curators collect so-called cultural capital from the work of artists and endow them with their own meaning. The first historical well-known example is Harald Szeemann in 1972. He used photographs to present to the press a hierarchy of curator and artists resembling that of a king and his knights, or of god and his angels. Even today curators seem to be mega stars, their names are the only ones which the broader public can recollect in connection with an exhibition. The symposium in Rotterdam too was a line-up of big names in the curatorial business. Could you please briefly explain your starting point?

Nicolaus Schaffhausen (NS): Within the art world, the role of the curator is clearly one that has seen much discussion in recent years. However, to the broader public – those not frequently attending contemporary art exhibitions and not reading specialized art magazines and journals – we believe that the curator is still somewhat of an unknown element. Whilst the situation is perhaps different in the German-speaking context, in the Netherlands there is less and less space dedicated to art criticism in the media (a topic that we addressed in the first symposium of this sequence: *The Critics*). The few articles and reviews that appear tend either to cover the blockbuster shows (Manet, Cezanne...) or occasional features with museum directors, for example Jan Hoet. When the media does (rarely) cover contemporary art, the curator seldom gets a look-in. We would certainly disagree with your comment that the only thing an audience remembers from a show is the name of its curator.

Zoë Gray (ZG): The impetus behind *Rotterdam Dialogues: The Curators* was not simply to explain to an imaginary public what a curator is or does. The symposium – which is one of



Rotterdam Dialogues.

Photos: Barnaby Drabble

three: Critics, Curators, Artists – came about following our discussions with colleagues across the art world about a number of curatorial questions that we thought needed raising, or – in some cases – raising again. As Hans Ulrich Obrist stated during the symposium, this was the first time in 18 years that such a range of curators had come together to discuss their practice in public. There are of course international events such as the IKT and ICOM conferences that bring together a large number of curators, but those tend to put less emphasis on critical dialogue and more on networking, and – crucially – they are not open to the public. Finally, we were careful to present a range of speakers and panellists during the symposium. We brought together some of the 'mega stars' that you mention with a younger generation of people who are working on curatorial projects, but who further problematize the title or the label of curator – for example, the artist duo PiST from Istanbul, the curator/gallerist Pablo Leon De La Barra and the Salford Restoration Office from Manchester, to name a few.

DR: You organized the symposium as a series of panels, except for the philosophical contribution of Irit Rogoff about *Curating vs. The Curatorial* with the title: *the implicated – a model for the Curatorial?* Could you please tell us what interests and fascinates you in this presentation?

ZG: The symposium was actually structured around several different formats of discussion, all of which were chosen with the aim of opening up the dialogue to include the people beyond and not simply those sitting at the front of the room holding the microphones. We had several panels, we had two interviews, there were some moderated dialogues and there was one lecture, which served as the opening to the symposium. We decided together with Irit Rogoff that this monologue construction was the best way for her to

share her thoughts, and for us to create a concentrated moment at the very beginning of the three days of discussion. The topic is a line of thinking that Professor Rogoff has been developing for some time, as part of the PhD program she has initiated at Goldsmiths College, London. It was also an extension of one of the topics that emerged from *The Critics*, where Simon Sheikh from Malmö evoked the useful distinction between criticism (as the daily practice of the art critic) and critique (as something more philosophical and more closely linked to the creation of new ways of thinking), to summarise briefly. We were interested to see if a similar distinction would be productive in thinking about curating, which it certainly turned out to be. Professor Rogoff's contribution was picked up upon by several of the subsequent speakers and served as a touchstone for many of the discussions.

DR: Did some of the ideas developed in the panels come as a surprise to you? Which new idea did you like best?

NS: For us it was not a question of choosing a favourite idea from the three days of intense discussion. It was about setting up a platform for debate and bringing together people that we thought would have something to say to each other. We were not at all disappointed, in fact the most pleasant surprise was the large number of people attending – over 300 each day – many of whom had travelled to the Netherlands especially for this event. The level of concentration and attention remained high throughout the three long days and there was excellent interaction between the public and the invited guests.

DR: As I told you before, we were a bit sad about not being invited to participate, because we believe that we and other



Rotterdam Dialogues.
Photos: Barnaby Drabble

members of a more critical German-speaking academic group, who are concerned with curating (and other ways to address the public) had made some specific contributions to this field. To name only a few: Oliver Marchart's new publication on hegemony in the field of fine arts, in which he discusses the shifts in the field along *dX*, *D11*, *d12* and thus analyses the conservative rollback of the last *documenta* in detail.¹ Marion von Osten who works as a curator and writer, has for instance published an article dealing with the male subjectivity in curating, see our reader *Curating Critique*;² others like Nora Sternfeld have pointed out that it is the institutional framework and setting which are telling, the art institution that decontextualises and resignifies as its underlying structure, and in Zurich we

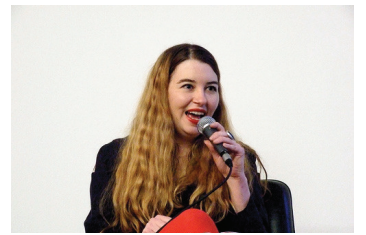
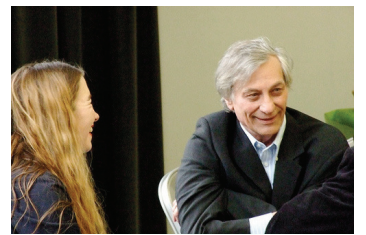
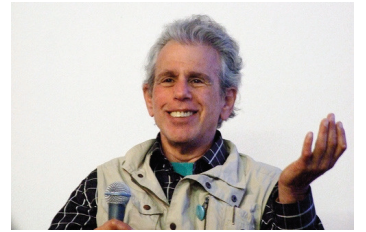
have just now published the last of three publications accompanying a research project on exhibition displays.³ From my point of view there seems to be a difference between a German-speaking context and an English-speaking one, rather than a generational gap to which you refer to in one of the panels. How do you see this now, reviewing the symposium?

ZG: We asked whether there was a generation gap in curating and it emerged that in fact there were several. Both Jan Hoet and Gerardo Mosquera – each representative of a different curatorial generation – mentioned the changes that they witnessed in the profession, and some of the younger speakers that attended certainly saw their own practice in a different light from the curators who are now in their early 40s and running institutions.

1
Oliver Marchart,
*Hegemonie im
Kunstfeld.
Die documenta
– Ausstellungen
dX, D11, d12 und
die Politik der
Biennalisierung*,
Köln: Verlag der
Buchhandlung
Walther König,
2008.

2
Marianne
Eigenheer, Barnaby
Drabble and
Dorothee Richter,
eds., *CURATING
CRITIQUE:
ICE – Reader No.
1*, Frankfurt,
2008.

3
Jennifer John,
Dorothee Richter
and Sigrid
Schade, eds.,
*Re-Visionen des
Displays*, Zurich:
JRP Ringier
Kunstverlag,
2009.





Rotterdam Dialogues. Photo: Barnaby Drabble

But to return to your question, there are certainly differences between some Germanophone and Anglophone practices, largely linked to the differences in university education in the two countries – whether this will change as the Bologna Accord comes into effect, who can say? We invited Barnaby Drabble to participate partly because he has a foot in each of these 'camps', as you see them, and due to his co-editorship of *Curating Critique*. We intentionally chose not to invite the founders of the curatorial training programmes (including those from the RCA, Goldsmiths, De Appel or Le Magasin) and instead invited people who had either been through these educational programmes, or who had tried to establish alternatives, for example Zoran Eric.

DR: And who benefits from curatorial training programmes according to the panel? Zoë, you as someone who has completed a curatorial training programme, what would you say?

ZG: Well, we would have to admit that this was one of the panels where the panellists avoided the question put to them! Personally, I would say that I benefited from the education I received at Goldsmiths, in terms of the range of thinkers and ideas it put me into contact with, and in terms of the professional network it connected me – although not without some effort on my own part. I think I can say without being accused of immodesty that such a training – combined with several years work experience – benefits the institution that employs me. And I think that it benefits the artists that I work with, in most cases, as it ensures that I have an understanding of a variety of artistic practices and of various histories of exhibition making. One possible downside of curatorial courses is that if they become de rigueur for anyone hoping to enter the profession, the range of curators risks being reduced and curatorial practice standardized. But this is also a problem with MFAs for artists.

DR: How do you (Nicolaus and Zoë) see the possibility of influencing politics and society through an input inserted by curatorial practice?

NS: Witte de With has recently been one of the instigators of the Committee van Roosendaal, a network connecting contemporary art institutions in the densely populated and concentrated economical zone spanning from Amsterdam to Luxembourg, Brussels to Cologne, that forms the heartland of North-Western Europe. The Comité van Roosendaal is a platform to discuss how artistic and practical policies connect, intersect and how they can be enhanced. In these discussions, we cannot be negligent of the political and societal frameworks in which we operate.

The collective aspect of the Comité van Roosendaal is important to get our point across, a group is better heard than one voice speaking alone. Additionally, the Comité van Roosendaal creates a lively platform for exchange that gives life to many artistic collaborative projects in which our political concerns are reflected. Even during its pre-formalised phase some projects of a specific political and social engagement have sprung forth. To give you some examples: The Prize for Young Dutch Art Criticism was conceived within the group between Ann Demeester and myself, and it might be said that the seed of BAK's and the Van Abbemuseum's critical and ambitious *Former West* project (in collaboration with Kathrin Romberg) was planted due to these meetings.

DR: In what ways do you both believe that curatorial practice can change the (art) institution? And when you speak of institutions do you use the word in the sense of Peter Buerger or in the common sense of a specific art institution such as museum, kunststalle, kunstverein?

NS: We were using the term 'institution' in a broad sense, but informed by the discussions about new institutionalism that have taken place over the past 5 years or so. Curatorial practice – teamed together with artistic practice – can indeed challenge and change an institution, whether in small ways such reassessing ticketing policy to fit the artwork (as we did for Geoffrey Farmer's 2008 exhibition at Witte de With) or by invited artists to alter the conventions of programming (as Liam Gillick did with his mid-career retrospective, a consciously 'empty' exhibition that lasted six months and gave half the space back to the institution). Each exhibition, event, symposium that I programme at Witte de With should have the capacity to change the current reality and the future of Witte de With.

DR: How do you think that the market affects curatorial practice in the institution as for example in Witte de With?

NS: The impact of the market is negligible on our programming at the current time. This may change in the near future, as state funding is increasingly reduced and institutions are forced to explore alternative avenues of finance.

DR: Which idea, insights or concepts developed in the symposium do you think might be valuable to participants of programmes in curating?

ZG & NS: All of them!

INTERVIEW: PAUL O'NEIL

The Curators, symposium at Witte de With, Rotterdam 5th – 7th March 2009

Interview by Dorothee Richter

Dorothee Richter (DR): The announcement of the symposium, *The curators* in big letters in a green/ blue shining surface was a bit scary, it seems to so clearly express the hierarchy that was installed in the art field from the 1970s, which made it possible to subsume the most different kinds of art under one heading. To see curating as a multi auctorial cultural production, as a platform where images, ideas and visibility are at stake, would make it less centred on a male white subjectivity and more based on an idea of access versus exclusion. Which curatorial perspectives were introduced in this respect and who brought them forward?

Paul O'Neil (PO): Of course this sets up a staging or framing of hierarchies, not only by focusing on curating as a primary subject, but with the emphasis on 'The...' rather than merely 'Curators', it also implies a further echelon within the curatorial field itself. Personally, I have always said that curating is an adaptive activity, allowing certain critical and discursive potentialities to emerge rather than be curtailed by limitations as to what might be constituted by the term. The Curatorial is about opening up rather than closing down meaningful relationships between things, peoples and ideas. I see the curatorial as a form of ideological production, such as how exhibitions, in whatever form they take, as being akin to a cluster of differential positions, and when brought together there is a multilayered interface of ideologies and statements, which may agree, contest or antagonise each other. In many ways such symposiums operate as 'an exhibition of discourse', a public display of curatorial positions within a narrow field, where individual articulations attempt to gather a certain symbolic value within a reputational economy already in operation within the so-called art world – where such events always re-enact these value systems that we have grown to be accustomed to during 'the curator's moment' of the last twenty years, and rather than see such eventful moments as spaces, which are available to us for critique from within the field itself.

DR: The symposium was organised as a series of panels, except for the philosophical contribution of Irit Rogoff about *Curating vs. The Curatorial* with the title: *the implicated – a model for the Curatorial?* Could you please tell us what interests you in this presentation?

PO: Recent histories of contemporary art curating come with their own inheritance, mythologies and amnesiac tendencies. Curating is an activity often limited by its association with self-representation, degrees of taxonomic order, canons, and certain value systems linked to western modernist traditions of exhibition-making practices, which might be summarised as having a late capitalist tendency for over-production with an emphasis on individualism. Curating also centralizes the role of the curator as an individual author within such an emphasis on production, visibility and containment – expanding out of a longer history of museums as conveyors of truth and as performed spaces of civilizing processes. So the curatorial might be positioned differently in Irit's argumentation for a more productive critical distance within the art field,

whereby the curatorial implies a space of potentiality for new kinds of as yet unknown knowledges to emerge, whilst shifting focus away from exhibition production whilst including activist, discursive and self-organisational initiatives as part of a wider discourse on the 'curatorial'. The notion of curating emphasized an activity as doing-as-making with the authorial position functioning as the basic premise of a contemporary curatorial discourse. From Irit's perspective we are all implicated by our understanding of our place in an art world, its sociality, its economies, and only in recognition of our own implication within it, can we begin by taking a more transitional space as a move forward, but without predicating what that might become. There is a co-dependency for all curators within the art world as an operable social sub-system whereby to achieve anything within the field forms of immaterial labour get to be translated into a form of celebrity culture and so on. The curatorial offers a still-open space that has yet to be saturated, fixed, closed off. On some level I would agree that idea, but I also see exhibition-making as a potential space of cooperative thinking, whereby modes of knowledge might emerge that could not been foreseen without the initial impetus to make something happen out of nothing and without restricting what that might end up being.

DR: Could you please comment the format of the symposium, especially because we are now in the process of preparing a symposium at the Kunsthalle Fridericianum for 2010.

PO: Well firstly, it must be acknowledged that it was well organised and programmed, although the configuration of certain panels occasionally seemed arbitrary and there was little room for speculative thinking. Speaking from my own 'implicated' perspective, the panel I moderated attempted to be critical of the separation of critics, curators and artist, but I also understood the organisers desire to establish an internal dialogue within the curatorial field, but of course there are many curatorial fields. Many of the more interesting curators, for me, often shift between artist, critic, pedagogue and curator. Also artistic practice is often invested in the curatorial, either at the level of the organisational, the discursive or taking presentation and display factors into account. So I am critical of this separation, although I understand the organisational desire to frame the discussion in such a way. Also, some specific clusters of either artists or curators already implies a level of order to things, it reifies and accepts that this is how things are already, without affecting it on any great way. I'm interested in the possibility of the space of the curatorial being a form of artistic practice in its own right as an expressed desire to move beyond the parameters of semi-autonomous practice, but also in the idea of the curatorial as a space within which phrased certain organisational principles can be used, adapted and applied, and where different and multiple artistic positions and points of access can be brought together to create something that couldn't been foreseen without those principle categories of organisation being initiated from the outset. In a sense I also played, or was aware that I was performing my part in the game I was asked to join up to.

On the whole, the symposium also marked a type of ending point of the emergence of a new focus on curating over the last twenty years, in particular the 1990s generation of curators, and more specifically how it functioned alongside the expanding and proliferating biennials during this time, and its accompanying discourse specific to a professional field aligned to nomadic or global curation in the context of large-scale exhibitions. It felt like a 'where to next?' moment, which was interesting in itself as a provocative statement, but without really trying to offer a productive way forward, although the suggestion by Ute Meta Bauer's panel that the academy and the curatorial field could benefit from one another from a peda-

gogical perspective was productive. In retrospect, there was also a strange melancholy underlying the symposium whereby a linear narrative began to emerge across the three days. It was clearly developed through by the one to one interviews with Seth Siegelau (for the late 60-70s), Jan Hoet (for the 80s) and Hans Ulrich Obrist (for the 90s). This can be read as a heroic representative for every decade, and it was a clearly gendered model, because there could be many other versions of this trajectory such as Lucy Lippard (70s), Ute Meta Bauer and Maria Lind who could also be seen as bridging the 80 and 90s. I was somehow astonished about that.

So many of the framing questions functioned as a kind of toolbox for the discussions, but in many of the panels participants did lack some shared background, even a shared language or knowledge-base from which to commence a dialogue with one another. The format of small talk shows fitted well into an already saturated event-based culture, with one quite complicated philosophical lecture at the beginning, but this stood as a singled out moment, although it was useful as a reference point across the three days, but we could have done with more reference points, and there was no dominant or alternative theoretical viewpoint that might have brought another theorized approach to either curating (or the curatorial). As such, the symposium might be measured as a kind of success, as it was well attended and highlighted a high degree of interest in curators, and what they have to say about curating, as much as it might be deemed a failure because of the very nature of how we have accommodated and sustained a certain self-referential curatorial discourse and allowed it to govern, to perpetuate and to discipline its form, format and level of critique.



Rotterdam Dialogues. Photo: Barnaby Drabble

IS A MUSEUM A FACTORY ?

By Hito Steyerl

The film *La hora de los hornos* (*The Hour of the Furnaces*, 1968), a Third Cinema manifesto against neocolonialism, has a brilliant installation specification.¹ A banner was to be hung at every screening with text reading: "Every spectator is either a coward or a traitor."² It was intended to break down the distinctions between filmmaker and audience, author and producer, and thus create a sphere of political action. And where was this film shown? In factories, of course.

Now, political films are no longer shown in factories.³ They are shown in the museum, or the gallery – the art space. That is, in any sort of white cube.⁴

How did this happen? First of all, the traditional Fordist factory is, for the most part, gone.⁵ It's been emptied out, machines packed up and shipped off to China. Former workers have been retrained for further retraining, or become software programmers and started working from home. Secondly, the cinema has been transformed almost as dramatically as the factory. It's been multiplexed, digitized, and sequelized, as well as rapidly commercialized as neoliberalism became hegemonic in its reach and influence. Before cinema's recent demise, political films sought refuge elsewhere. Their return to cinematic space is rather recent, and the cinema was never the space for formally more experimental works. Now, political and experimental films alike are shown in black boxes set within white cubes – in fortresses, bunkers, docks, and former churches. The sound is almost always awful.

But terrible projections and dismal installation notwithstanding, these works catalyze surprising desire. Crowds of people can be seen bending and crouching in order to catch glimpses of political cinema and video art. Is this audience sick of media monopolies? Are they trying to find answers to the obvious crisis of everything? And why should they be looking for these answers in art spaces?

Afraid of the Real?

The conservative response to the exodus of political films (or video installations) to the museum is to assume that they are thus losing relevance. It deplores their internment in the bourgeois ivory tower of high culture. The works are thought to be isolated inside this elitist cordon sanitaire – sanitized, sequestered, cut off from 'reality.' Indeed, Jean-Luc Godard reportedly said that video installation artists shouldn't be "afraid of reality," assuming of course that they in fact were.⁶

Where is reality then? Out there, beyond the white cube and its display technologies? How about inverting this claim, somewhat polemically, to assert that the white cube is in fact the Real with a capital R: the blank horror and emptiness of the bourgeois interior.

On the other hand – and in a much more optimistic vein – there is no need to have recourse to Lacan in order to contest Godard's accusation. This is because the displacement from factory to museum never took place. In

reality, political films are very often screened in the exact same place as they always were: in former factories, which are today, more often than not, museums. A gallery, an art space, a white cube with abysmal sound isolation. Which will certainly show political films. But which also has become a hotbed of contemporary production. Of images, jargon, lifestyles, and values. Of exhibition value, speculation value, and cult value. Of entertainment plus gravitas. Or of aura minus distance. A flagship store of Cultural Industries, staffed by eager interns who work for free.

A factory, so to speak, but a different one. It is still a space for production, still a space of exploitation and even of political screenings. It is a space of physical meeting and sometimes even common discussion. At the same time, it has changed almost beyond recognition. So what sort of factory is this?

Productive Turn

The typical setup of the museum-as-factory looks like this. Before: an industrial workplace. Now: people spending their leisure time in front of TV monitors. Before: people working in these factories. Now: people working at home in front of computer monitors.

Andy Warhol's Factory served as model for the new museum in its productive turn towards being a 'social factory.'⁷ By now, descriptions of the social factory abound.⁸ It exceeds its traditional boundaries and spills over into almost everything else. It pervades bedrooms and dreams alike, as well as perception, affection, and attention. It transforms everything it touches into culture, if not art. It is an a-factory, which produces affect as effect. It integrates intimacy, eccentricity, and other formally unofficial forms of creation. Private and public spheres get

1
Grupo Cine Liberación (Fernando E. Solanas, Octavio Getino), Argentina, 1968. The work is one of the most important films of Third Cinema.

2
A quote from Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*. The film was of course banned and had to be shown clandestinely.

3
Or videos or video/film installations. To properly make the distinctions (which exist and are important) would require another text.

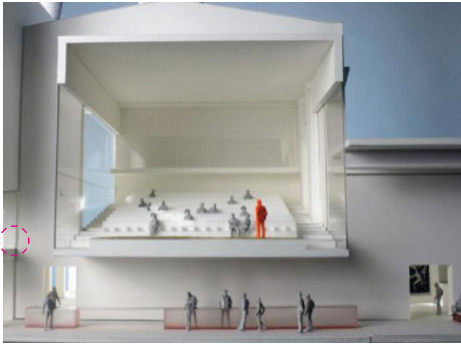
4
I am aware of the problem of treating all these spaces as similar.

5
At least in Western countries.

6
The context of Godard's comment is a conversation – a monologue, apparently – with young installation artists, whom he reprimands for their use of what he calls technological dispositifs in exhibitions. See "Debrief de conversations avec Jean-Luc Godard," the Sans casser des briques blog, March 10, 2009, <<http://bbjt.wordpress.com/2009/03/10/debrief-de-conversations-avec-jean-luc-godard/>>.

7
See Brian Holmes, "Warhol in the Rising Sun: Art, Subcultures and Semiotic Production," 16 Beaver ARTicles, August 8, 2004, <<http://www.16beavergroup.org/mtarchive/archives/001177.php>>.

8
Sabeth Buchmann quotes Hardt and Negri: "The 'social factory' is a form of production which touches on and penetrates every sphere and aspect of public and private life, of knowledge production and communication," in "From Systems-Oriented Art to Biopolitical Art Practice," NODE. London, <<http://publication.node.org/node/74/>>.



OMA model for the Riga Contemporary Art Museum, to be built in a converted power plant, 2006. (top left)

Workers Leaving The Lumière Factory, Luis Lumière, 1895. (top middle)

Andy Warhol's Silver Factory. (top right)

Visitors entering the museum, Edo-Tokyo Museum, 2003. courtesy istaro. (bottom)

entangled in a blurred zone of hyper-production.

In the museum-as-factory, something continues to be produced. Installation, planning, carpentry, viewing, discussing, maintenance, betting on rising values, and networking alternate in cycles. An art space is a factory, which is simultaneously a supermarket – a casino and a place of worship whose reproductive work is performed by cleaning ladies and cellphone-video bloggers alike.

In this economy, even spectators are transformed into workers. As Jonathan Beller argues, cinema and its derivatives (television, Internet, and so on) are factories, in which spectators work. Now, "to look is to labor."⁹ Cinema, which integrated the logic of Taylorist production and the conveyor belt, now spreads the factory wherever it travels. But this type of production is much more intensive than the industrial one. The senses are drafted into production, the media capitalize upon the aesthetic faculties and imaginary practices of viewers.¹⁰ In that sense, any space that integrates cinema and its successors has now become a factory, and this obviously includes the museum. While in the history of political filmmaking the factory became a cinema, cinema now turns museum spaces back into factories.

Workers Leaving the Factory

It is quite curious that the first films ever made by Louis Lumière show workers leaving the factory. At the beginning of cinema, workers leave the industrial workplace. The invention of cinema thus symbolically marks the start of the exodus of workers from industrial modes of production. But even if they leave the factory building, it doesn't mean that they have left labor behind. Rather, they take it along with them and disperse it into every sector of life.

A brilliant installation by Harun Farocki makes clear where the workers leaving the factory are headed. Farocki collected and installed different cinematic versions of *Workers Leaving the Factory*, from the original silent version(s) by Louis Lumière to contemporary surveillance footage.¹¹ Workers are streaming out of factories on several monitors simultaneously: from different eras and in different cinematic styles.¹² But where are these workers streaming to? Into the art space, where the work is installed.

Not only is Farocki's *Workers Leaving the Factory*, on the level of content, a wonderful archaeology of the (non) representation of labor; on the level of form it points to the spilling over of the factory into the art space. Workers who left the factory have ended up inside another one: the museum.

It might even be the same factory. Because the former Lumière factory, whose gates are portrayed in the original *Workers Leaving The Lumière Factory* is today just that: a museum of cinema.¹³ In 1995, the ruin of the former factory was declared a historical monument and developed into a site of culture. The Lumière factory, which used to produce photographic film, is today a cinema with a reception space to be rented by companies: "a location loaded with history and emotion for your brunches, cocktails and dinners."¹⁴ The workers who left the factory in 1895 have today been recaptured on the screen of the cinema within the same space. They only left the factory to reemerge as a spectacle inside it.

As workers exit the factory, the space they enter is one of cinema and cultural industry, producing emotion and

attention. How do its spectators look inside this new factory?

Cinema and Factory

At this point, a decisive difference emerges between classical cinema and the museum. While the classical space of cinema resembles the space of the industrial factory, the museum corresponds to the dispersed space of the social factory. Both cinema and Fordist factory are organized as locations of confinement, arrest, and temporal control. Imagine: Workers leaving the factory. Spectators leaving the cinema – a similar mass, disciplined and controlled in time, assembled and released at regular intervals. As the traditional factory arrests its workers, the cinema arrests the spectator. Both are disciplinary spaces and spaces of confinement.¹⁵

But now imagine: Workers leaving the factory. Spectators trickling out of the museum (or even queuing to get in). An entirely different constellation of time and space. This second crowd is not a mass, but a multitude.¹⁶ The museum doesn't organize a coherent crowd of people. People are dispersed in time and space – a silent crowd, immersed and atomized, struggling between passivity and overstimulation.

This spatial transformation is reflected by the format of many newer cinematic works. Whereas traditional cinematic works are singlechannel, focusing the gaze and organizing time, many of the newer works explode into space. While the traditional cinema setup works from a single central perspective, multi-screen projections create a multifocal space. While cinema is a mass medium, multi-screen installations address a multitude spread out in space, connected only by distraction, separation, and difference.¹⁷

9 the Lumière museum, the opening of the former gate is now blocked by a transparent glass pane to indicate the framing of the early film. Leaving spectators have to go around this obstacle, and leave through the former location of the gate itself, which no longer exists. Thus, the current situation is like a negative of the former one: people are blocked by the former opening, which has now turned into a glass screen; they have to exit through the former walls of the factory, which have now partly vanished. See photographs at ibid.

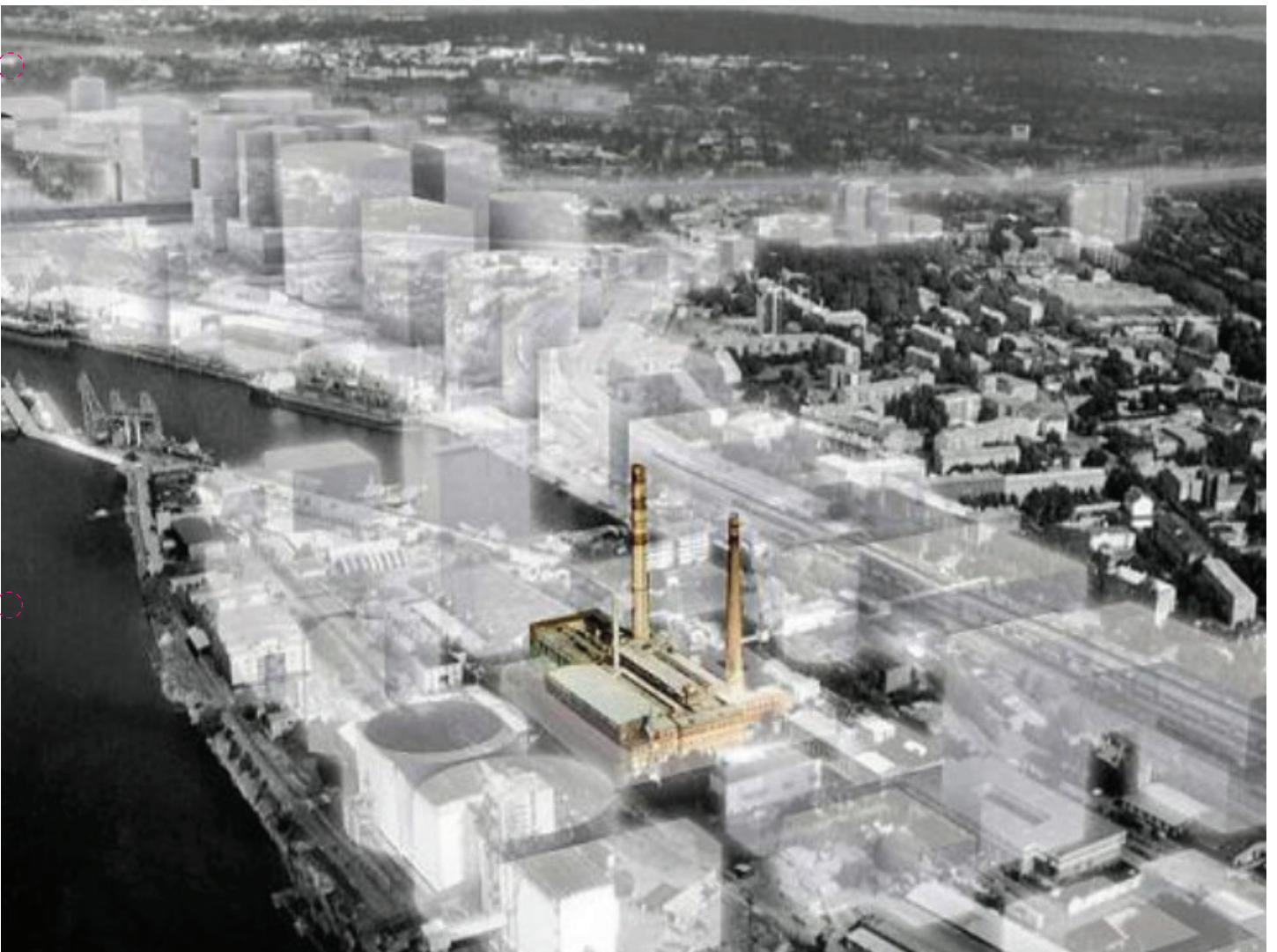
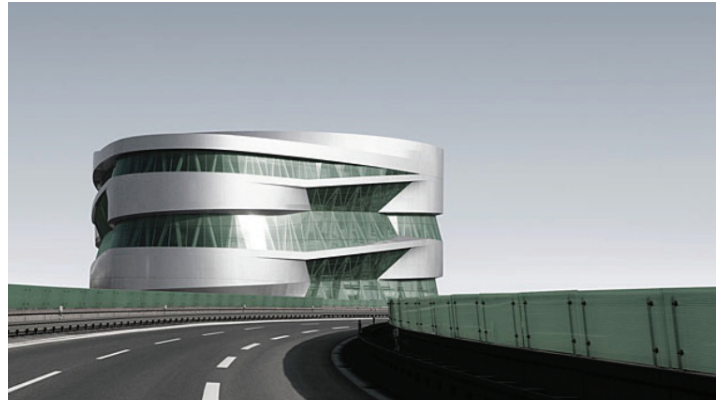
10 For a great essay about this work see Harun Farocki, "Workers Leaving the Factory," in *Nachdruck/Imprint: Texte/Writings*, trans. Laurent Faasch-Ibrahim (Berlin: Verlag Vorwerk, New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2001), reprinted on the Senses of Cinema Web site, <http://archive.sensesofcinema.com/contents/02/21/farocki_workers.html>.

11 My description refers to the Generali Foundation show, "Kino wie noch nie" (2005). See <<http://foundation.generali.at/index.php?id=429>>.

12 "Aujourd'hui le décor du premier film est sauvé et abrite une <<http://institut-lumiere.org/francais/cinema/ssalle.html>> salle de cinéma <<http://institut-lumiere.org/francais/cinema/sallescine.html>> de 270 fauteuils. Là où sortirent les ouvriers et les ouvrières de l'usine, les spectateurs vont au cinéma, sur le lieu de son invention," Institut Lumière, <<http://institut-lumiere.org/%20/francais/hangar/hangaraccueil.html>>.

13 "La partie Hangar, spacieux hall de réception chargé d'histoire et d'émotion pour tous vos déjeuners, cocktail, diners... [Formule assise 250 personnes ou formule debout jusqu'à 300 personnes]," Institut Lumière, <<http://www.institut-lumiere.org/francais/location/location.html>>.

14 There is however one interesting difference between cinema and factory: in the rebuilt scenery of



Harun Farocki, *Workers Leaving the Factory in Eleven Decades*, 2006, video still. Courtesy of the Leonard & Bina Ellen Art Gallery. (top left)

Mercedes-Benz Museum, Stuttgart. (top right)

OMA diagram for the Riga Contemporary Art Museum, 2006. (bottom)

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The difference between mass and multitude arises on the line between confinement and dispersion, between homogeneity and multiplicity, between cinema space and museum installation space. This is a very important distinction, because it will also affect the question of the museum as public space.

Public Space

It is obvious that the space of the factory is traditionally more or less invisible in public. Its visibility is policed, and surveillance produces a one-way gaze. Paradoxically, a museum is not so different. In a lucid 1972 interview Godard pointed out that, because filming is prohibited in factories, museums, and airports, effectively 80% of productive activity in France is rendered invisible: "The exploiter doesn't show the exploitation to the exploited."¹⁸ This still applies today, if for different reasons. Museums prohibit filming or charge exorbitant shooting fees.¹⁹ Just as the work performed in the factory cannot be shown outside it, most of the works on display in a museum cannot be shown outside its walls. A paradoxical situation arises: a museum predicated on producing and marketing visibility can itself not be shown – the labor performed there is just as publicly invisible as that of any sausage factory.

This extreme control over visibility sits rather uncomfortably alongside the perception of the museum as a public space. What does this invisibility then say about the contemporary museum as a public space? And how does the inclusion of cinematic works complicate this picture?

The current discussion of cinema and the museum as public sphere is an animated one. Thomas Elsaesser, for example, asks whether cinema in the museum might constitute the last remaining bourgeois public sphere.²⁰ Jürgen Habermas outlined the conditions in this arena in which people speak in turn and others respond, all participating together in the same rational, equal, and transparent discourse surrounding public matters.²¹ In actuality, the contemporary museum is more like a cacophony – installations blare simultaneously while nobody listens. To make matters worse, the timebased mode of many cinematic installation works precludes a truly shared discourse around them; if works are too long, spectators will simply desert them. What would be seen as an act of betrayal in a cinema – leaving the projection while it lasts – becomes standard behavior in any spatial installation situation. In the installation space of the museum, spectators indeed become traitors – traitors of cinematic duration itself. In circulating through the space, spectators are actively montaging, zapping, combining fragments – effectively co-curating the show. Rationally conversing about shared impressions then becomes next to impossible. A bourgeois public sphere? Instead of its ideal manifestation, the contemporary museum rather represents its unfulfilled reality.

Sovereign Subjects

In his choice of words, Elsaesser also addresses a less democratic dimension of this space. By, as he dramatically phrases it, arresting cinema – suspending it, suspending its license, or even holding it under a suspended sentence – cinema is preserved at its own expense when it is taken into 'protective custody.'²² Protective custody is no simple arrest. It refers to a state of exception or (at least) a temporal suspension of legality that allows the suspension of the law itself. This state of exception is also addressed in Boris Groys' essay *Politics of Installation*.²³ Harking back to Carl Schmitt, Groys assigns the role of sovereign

to the artist who – in a state of exception – violently establishes his own law by 'arresting' a space in the form of an installation. The artist then assumes a role as sovereign founder of the exhibition's public sphere.

At first glance, this repeats the old myth of artist as crazy genius, or more precisely, as petty-bourgeois dictator. But the point is: if this works well as an artistic mode of production, it becomes standard practice in any social factory. So then, how about the idea that inside the museum, almost everybody tries to behave like a sovereign (or petty-bourgeois dictator)? After all, the multitude inside museums is composed of competing sovereigns: curators, spectators, artists, critics.

Let's have a closer look at the spectator-as-sovereign. In judging an exhibition, many attempt to assume the compromised sovereignty of the traditional bourgeois subject, who aims to (re)-master the show, to tame the unruly multiplicity of its meanings, to pronounce a verdict, and to assign value. But, unfortunately, cinematic duration makes this subject position unavailable. It reduces all parties involved to the role of workers – unable to gain an overview of the whole process of production. Many – primarily critics – are thus frustrated by archival shows and their abundance of cinematic time. Remember the vitriolic attacks on the length of films and video in Documenta 11? To multiply cinematic duration means to blow apart the vantage point of sovereign judgment. It also makes it impossible to reconfigure yourself as its subject. Cinema in the museum renders overview, review, and survey impossible. Partial impressions dominate the picture. The true labor of spectatorship can no longer be ignored by casting oneself as master of judgment. Under these circumstances, a transparent,

18
Godard on *Tout va bien* (1972),
<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hnx7mxjmlk0>>.

19
"Photography and video filming are not normally allowed at Tate" (<<http://www.tate.org.uk/about/media/copy-right/>>). However, filming there is welcomed on a commercial basis, with location fees starting at £200 an hour (<<http://www.tate.org.uk/about/media/filming/>>). Policy at the Centre Pompidou is more confusing: "You may film or photograph works from permanent collections (which you will find on levels 4 and 5 and in the Atelier Brancusi) for your own personal use. You may not, however, photograph or film works that have a red dot, and you may not use a flash or stand." (<<http://www.centrepompidou.fr/Pompidou/Communication.nsf/0/3590D3A7D1BDB820C125707C004512D4?OpenDocument&L=2>>).

20
"The Cinema in the Museum: Our Last Bourgeois Public Sphere?" (paper presented at the International Film Studies Conference, "Perspectives on the Public Sphere: Cinematic Configurations of 'I' and 'We,'" Berlin, Germany, April 23–25, 2009).

21
Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger with the assistance of Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, [1962] 1991).

22
Elsaesser, "The Cinema in the Museum."

23
Boris Groys, "Politics of Installation," *e-flux journal*, no. 2 (January 2009), <<http://www.e-flux.com/journal/view/31>>.

informed, inclusive discourse becomes difficult, if not impossible.

The question of cinema makes clear that the museum is not a public sphere, but rather places its consistent lack on display – it makes this lack public, so to speak. Instead of filling this space, it conserves its absence. But it also simultaneously displays its potential and the desire for something to be realized in its place.

As a multitude, the public operates under the condition of partial invisibility, incomplete access, fragmented realities – of commodification within clandestinity. Transparency, overview, and the sovereign gaze cloud over to become opaque. Cinema itself explodes into multiplicity – into spatially dispersed multi-screen arrangements that cannot be contained by a single point of view. The full picture, so to speak, remains unavailable. There is always something missing – people miss parts of the screening, the sound doesn't work, the screen itself or any vantage point from which it could be seen are missing.

Rupture

Without notice, the question of political cinema has been inverted. What began as a discussion of political cinema in the museum has turned into a question of cinematic politics in a factory. Traditionally, political cinema was meant to educate – it was an instrumental effort at 'representation' in order to achieve its effects in 'reality.' It was measured in terms of efficiency, of revolutionary revelation, of gains in consciousness, or as potential triggers of action.

Today, cinematic politics are postrepresentational. They do not educate the crowd, but produce it. They articulate the crowd in space and in time. They submerge it in partial invisibility and then orchestrate their dispersion, movement, and reconfiguration. They organize the crowd without preaching to it. They replace the gaze of the bourgeois sovereign spectator of the white cube with the incomplete, obscured, fractured, and over-whelmed vision of the spectator-as-laborer.

But there is one aspect that goes well beyond this. What else is missing from these cinematic installations?²⁴ Let's return to the liminal case of Documenta 11, which was said to contain more cinematic material than could be seen by a single person in the 100 days that the exhibition was open to the public. No single spectator could even claim to have even seen everything, much less to have exhausted the meanings in this volume of work. It is obvious what is missing from this arrangement: since no single spectator can possibly make sense of such a volume of work, it calls for a multiplicity of spectators. In fact, the exhibition could only be seen by a multiplicity of gazes and points of view, which then supplements the impressions of others. Only if the night guards and various spectators worked together in shifts could the cinematic material of D11 be viewed. But in order to understand what (and how) they are watching, they must meet to make sense of it. This shared activity is completely different from that of spectators narcissistically gazing at themselves and each other inside exhibitions – it does not simply ignore the artwork (or treat it as mere pretext), but takes it to another level.

Cinema inside the museum thus calls for a multiple gaze, which is no longer collective, but common, which is incomplete, but in process, which is distracted and singular, but can be edited into various sequences and combinations. This gaze is no longer the gaze of the

individual sovereign master, nor, more precisely, of the self-deluded sovereign (even if "just for one day," as David Bowie sang). It isn't even a product of common labor, but focuses its point of rupture on the paradigm of productivity. The museum-as-factory and its cinematic politics interpellate this missing, multiple subject. But by displaying its absence and its lack, they simultaneously activate a desire for this subject.

Cinematic Politics

But does this now mean that all cinematic works have become political? Or, rather, is there still any difference between different forms of cinematic politics? The answer is simple. Any conventional cinematic work will try to reproduce the existing setup: a projection of a public, which is not public after all, and in which participation and exploitation become indistinguishable. But a political cinematic articulation might try to come up with something completely different.

What else is desperately missing from the museum-as-factory? An exit. If the factory is everywhere, then there is no longer a gate by which to leave it – there is no way to escape relentless productivity. Political cinema could then become the screen through which people could leave the museum-as-social-factory. But on which screen could this exit take place? On the one that is currently missing, of course.

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<<http://www.e-flux.com/journal/view/71>>

24
A good example would be "Democracies" by Artur Mijewski, an un-synchronized multi-screen installation with trillions of possibilities of screen-content combinations.

CARTE BLANCHE

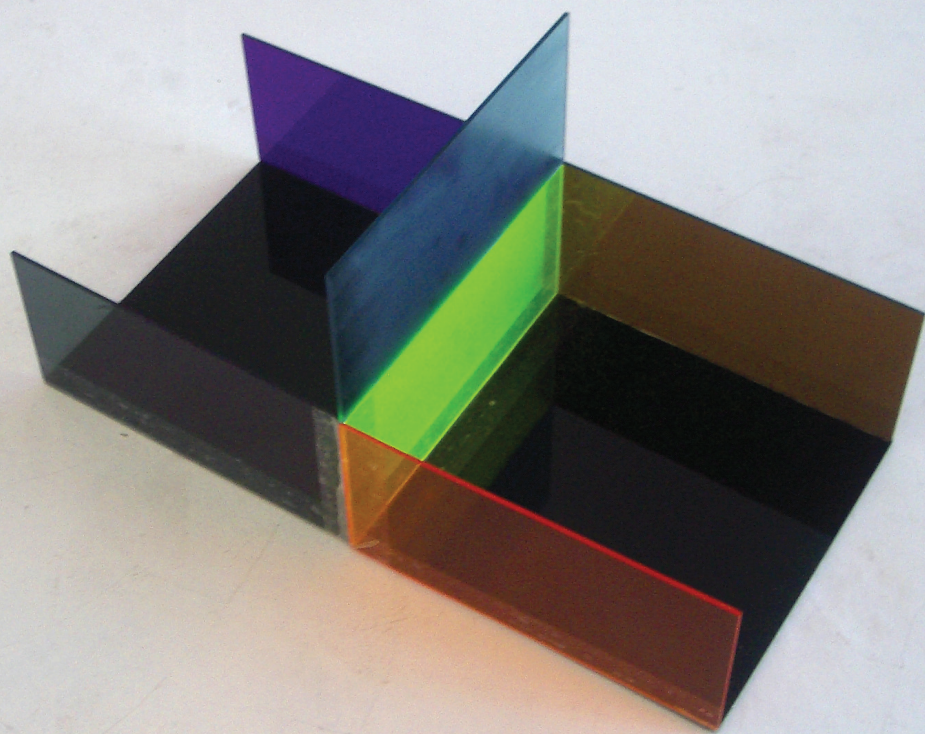
Martin Ebner and Florian Zeyfang

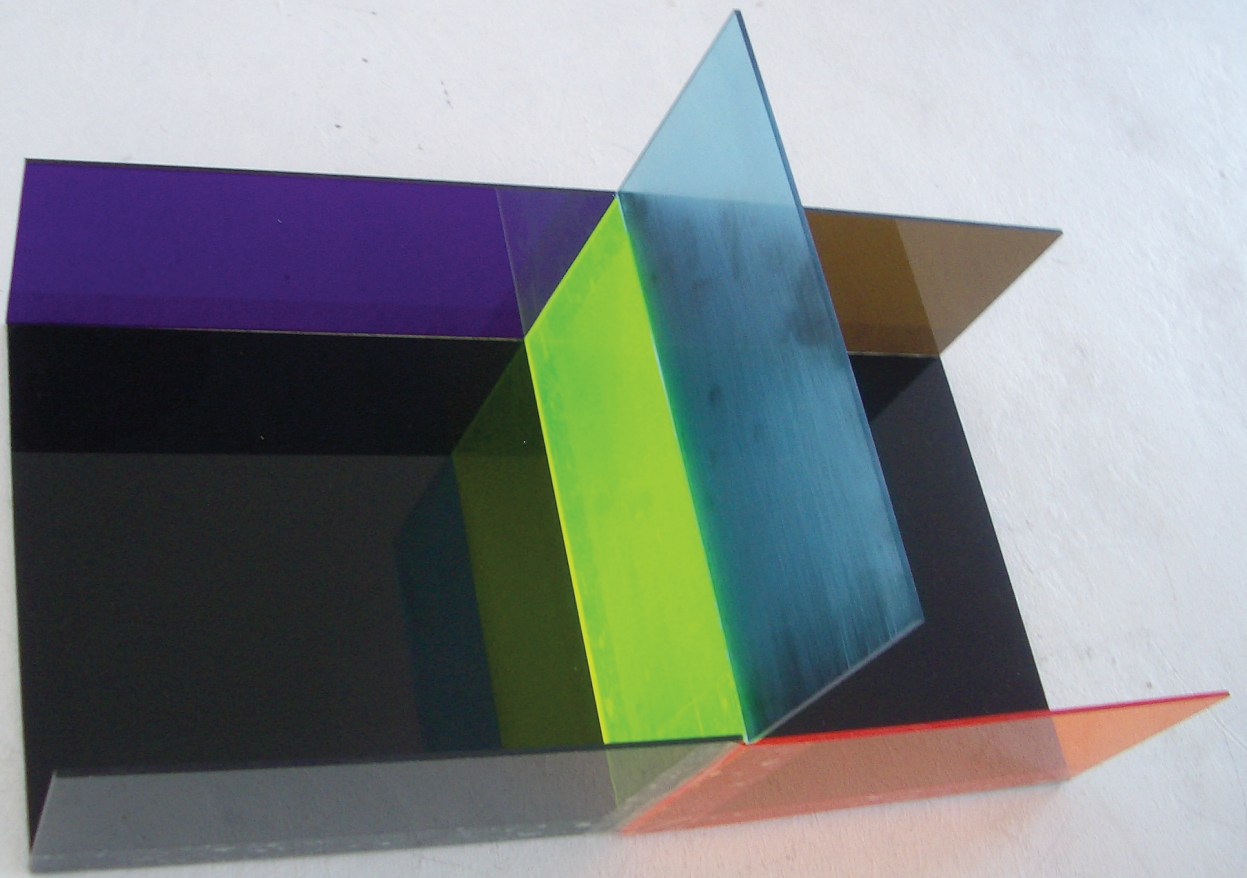
On-Curating invites for the first time an artist contribution for a carte blanche. Martin Ebner and Florian Zeyfang designed five pages on the basis of *Poor Man's Expression*, using the model for their eponymous exhibition project in 2006 in Berlin, which will be represented in an upcoming publication with Sternberg Press. *Poor Man's Expression* examined the relationship between film, video, technology, and art, with a particular focus on the reciprocal influences between conceptual art and experimental film. The publication will respond to the questions that arise as to the semantics of critical and experimental conceptual art, medial representation, and the expansion of a concept of technology towards social functions and psychology; it explores problems of medial control, intellectual property, and a changing concept of the public.

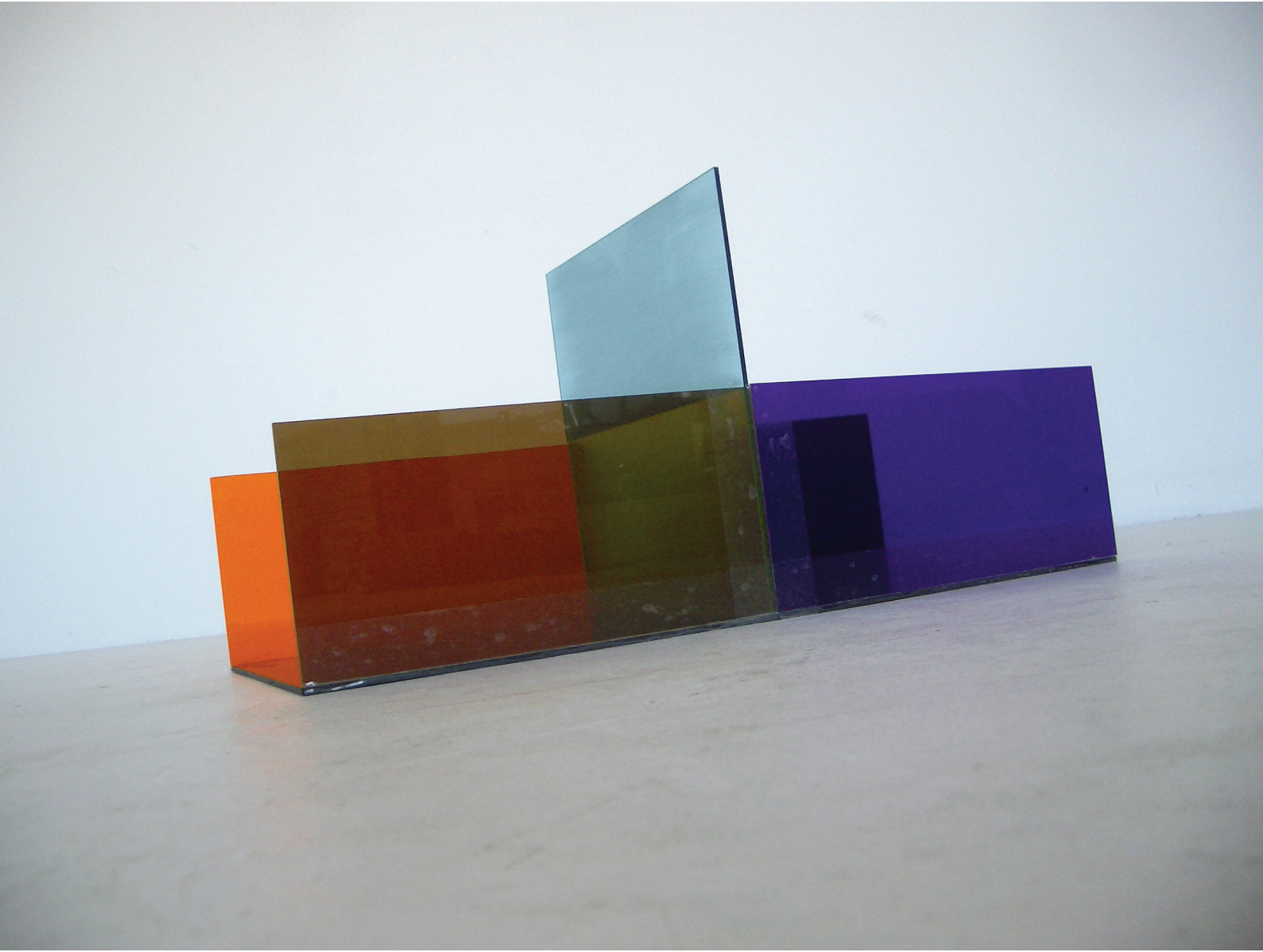
As a point of departure we have assumed that there was once a close relationship between forms that now exist rather separately, namely the realms of visual art, experimental film, literature, poetry, music – and very much the development of technology, too. What is it supposed to mean that 16mm projectors now occupy their luxurious final performance sites at art societies and galleries, while iphone youtube (without open source codecs, to be sure) is the current way to watch a hollis frampton interview.

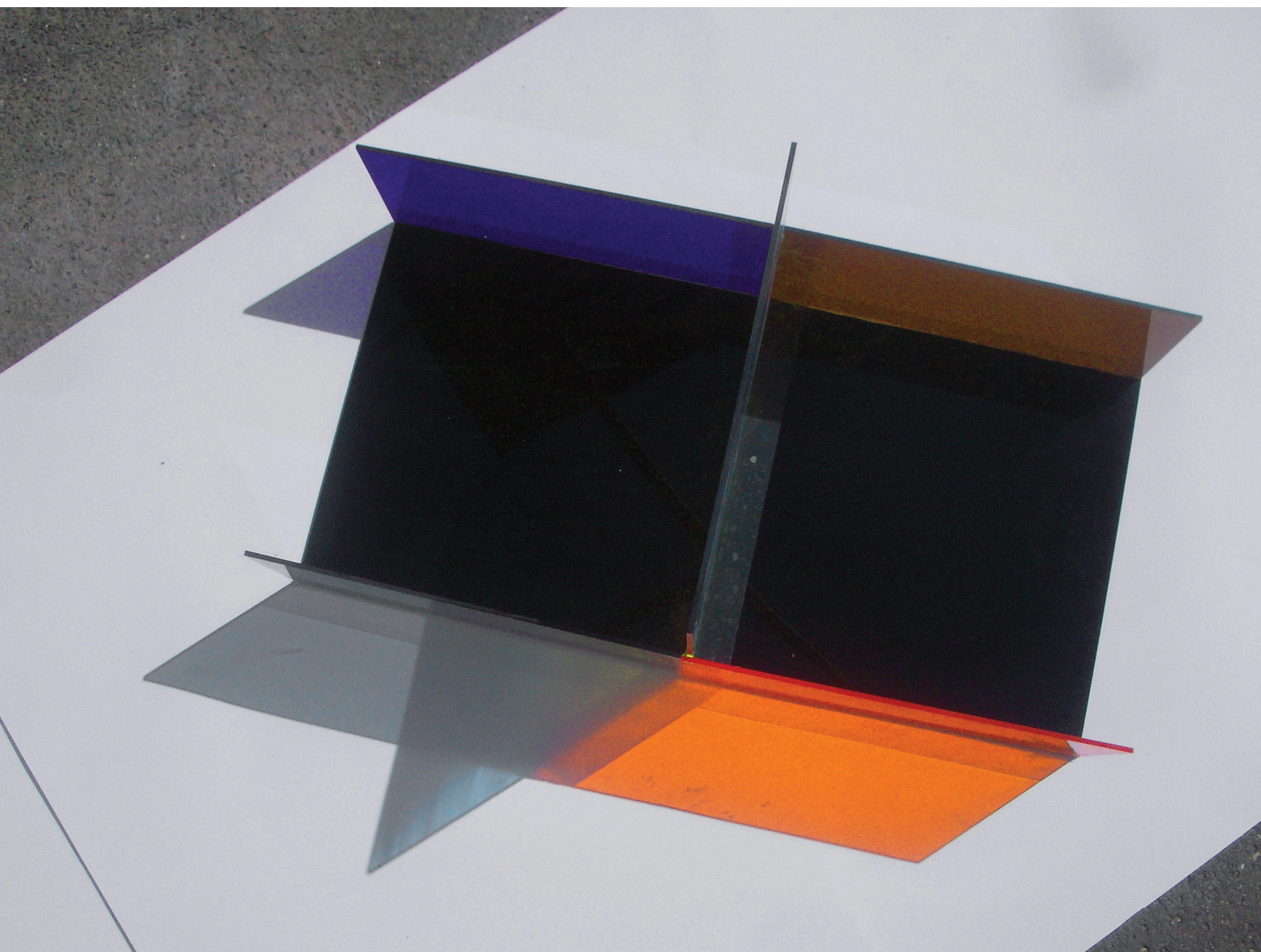
The other way around, isn't the gentle entry of the genre of 'experimental film' into the realm of 'media art' of the 1980s and 1990s itself a transformation analog to general social and medial development brought about by the development of individualization and consumer society? In poor man's expression we have sought, through an advanced setting (neon light surfaces, and the exhibition's bipartite spatial principle) to address the surrounding 'corporate public' architecture of the sony center as well as the film archive deep underground and the dark cinema space of the 'avant-garde film.'

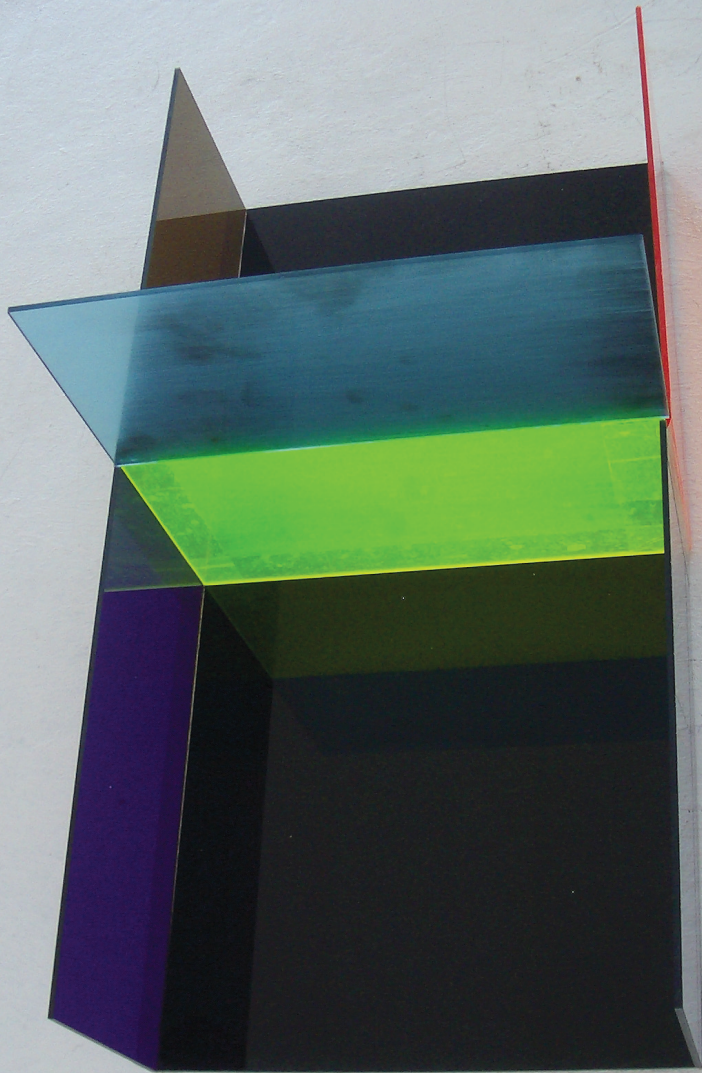
(www.poormansexpression.com)











ANNETTE HANS AND FLORIAN WALDVOGEL

Interview by Dorothee Richter

Dorothee Richter (DR): The symposium *Forms of Exhibitions* in July 2009 at Kunstverein Hamburg did look for the historical positions in exhibition making that are still relevant for artists and curators. For example Frederick Kiesler's work is a strong reference point for many artists and curators, lately Markus Schinwald and Liam Gillick made this obvious. What do you think were the most interesting aspects of Kieslers work?

A. Hans and F. Waldvogel (AH + FW): Kiesler had a two-fold outset when developing his exhibition designs. The one was working with the art work, the other with the viewer and both were aimed at creating a continuous environment. He worked with the exhibition space in a way that is closer related to theatre than exhibition making. To look back at his practice can be very fruitful after the extensive rise of the white cube and thus the idea to present art as uninfluenced as possible by an outer situation to bring its potential fully afore. Kiesler follows a very different understanding in that sense when even developing viewing machines for certain artworks, like for example works by Paul Klee or Marcel Duchamp. Such machines, his seating designs, his making use of the whole space and placing works at certain angles, the implementation of sound, all these are methods that directed the viewer in a certain way. But first and foremost they allowed the artwork and the viewer to share a space – a quite specific and maybe almost fictional space that engaged the viewer. To work with the space and both, artworks and viewers, the way Kiesler did may encourage us to approach these aspects with a mandate to dare – if one can say so.

DR: In the discussions where I made some inputs as a commentator it became clear, that some aspects were not visible in the presentations, for example the economic situation was a point of departure for *Chambres d'Amis* or the title *Westkunst* was a position against the western concept of a universal 'Weltkunst' but also a problematic politically relevant term. Could you specify on that topic? And in what way is this interesting for your situation today?

AH + FW: In the course of history writing, representation and remembrance certain aspects tend to become somewhat hidden in a bigger picture. The knowledge of the circumstances under which *Chambres d'Amis* evolved – and many other exhibitions and experimental formats as well – is maybe not essential in judging the exhibition as such and questioning its potential and problematics, but it certainly is a reason to engage productively with problematic issues. In very common means, as when it comes to money problems, and also in the sense of taking political and societal situations into account.

Everything we do is placed in a current context and every exhibition making ideally reflects this situation and accepts this challenge – needless to stress the 'ideally' in the sentence. Nonetheless this is something to strive for and thus to continually question ones practice in



Ann Demester, Jan Hoet.

Photo: Courtesy Kunstverein Hamburg.

relation to situations and issues outside the respective institution, the people involved, the art world so to say, to be able to develop adequate formats and activate potential.

DR: Martin Beck developed a historical change of meaning of the term 'display' in the 50ies, which suggested a strong pedagogical viewpoint, oriented on the idea of convincing the viewer. The idea of spectacle and a general emphasize on the numbers of viewer is a later development. In what way do you think the expectations are differentiated and changed today?

AH + FW: Given that Lissitzky, Kiesler and others had developed displays that were focussed on engaging and emancipating the viewer and expanding the single artwork into a spatial surrounding, there have been more differentiated aspects to the term then as well. The convincing moment of the display is one that is – and then was – rather inherent to commercial strategies such as the presentation at fairs. One will find a lot of literature for example concerning the exhibition displays of fair booths. And this concerns most likely other fairs, not art fairs where the white cube is preserved in its little, half shrunken brother most of the time.

As Martin Beck pointed out in his lecture, it is very difficult to define the term display as it is used in many contexts and there is a whole field of possible research around this topic. Therefore it is rather difficult to jot down changes and differences in a few lines. We are still



Audience and participants (left).

Monica Pessler, Kiesler Foundation (right).

Photo: Courtesy Kunstverein Hamburg.



today, or maybe even more so, confronted with a connotation of display as convincing strategy instead of pointing strategy (stating this knowingly that both are intertwined). In the exhibition context displays are most of the time used in more remote ways (than Lissitzky and Kiesler did for example) to not interfere with the artworks. Nevertheless, display is booming.

Today's resurrection of the display can be seen closer related to the art practice maybe than the exhibition practice in itself. The context, the spatial surrounding and the presentation of single pieces, the extension of the singular work into the installation are important aspects in that sense and gave way to the growing tendency to have an exhibition design or ask an artist to develop overall displays. By means of contextualizing, creating a certain setting and atmosphere, art is being reimplemented into the experiential surrounding of the viewer.

DR: Beatrice von Bismarck developed the change in positions of authorship, of work/production and of art as a

product/commodity in the 60ies alongside Gerry Schum's Video Gallery. In what way do you think it is possible to address these crucial issues in contemporary exhibition making again?

AH + FW: Concerning the question of authorship in exhibition making, we would go with an understanding closer related to Jan Hoet's exhibition making practice. He opts for the curator as agent of the artist trying to realize an artwork or a project as ideal as possible and in accordance to the artist's needs. Exhibition making is of course being in a dialogue and developing projects together but in the end one is assisting in making an idea become reality instead of participating in a sense of a collective authorship. The case with Gerry Schum's Gallery was a slightly different one as he, as camera man, was directing the shots in the end and also did the cutting. But, every exhibition making introduces a perspective and contextualizes which is not to be seen equal to authoring a piece. Maybe today, these issues of authorship, work/production and product/commodity have become less crucial than they once were?

TALKING BACK AND QUEER READING – AN ESSAY ON PERFORMANCE THEORY AND ITS POSSIBLE IMPACTS ON DISSEMINATION OF ART

Sabine Gebhardt Fink

The following reflections on performance theory and the dissemination of art are based on a paper that I gave at the symposium on *Performing Art* in Kassel on 20th July 2009, co-organised by the Institute for Art Education at Zurich University of the Arts (ZHDK) and the Kunsthalle Fridericianum. My lecture there was conceived as a dialogue between Nora Landkammer, Anna Schürch, and myself. The aim was to enable a talking back and, in doing so, to create a method for performative lecturing. Nora and Anna both responded to and intervened in my thoughts on performance theory from their point of view as art educators. While their voices are not explicitly present here, I nevertheless wish to let their statements reverberate in my thoughts on the impacts of performance theory in the dissemination of art. It is clear that I am speaking as a performance theorist, which means that I am trying to talk back a second time.

My thoughts here start from Judith Butler's theses in her essay *Performative Acts and Gender Constitution* (1988). From my point of view, her thoughts are still relevant today. In particular, Butler's political goal to establish a critical theoretical practice to define new modes of performative acts is worth re-reading. In order to talk back to Butler's ideas, I will address the following issues in what follows: presence and embodiment, strategies of self-enactment in collective social practices, and constructions of place and mediality. I will analyse these themes within various performative art projects, from Alexandra Bachzetsis and San Keller to William Hunt and Katerina Šedá.

Performative Acts and the Apparatus

It is worth recalling that Judith Butler defined a 'performative act' as something that should be repeated and must be legitimated socially through the repetitions of bodily styles.¹ A paradigmatic act of this kind is – still following Butler – the constitution of gender. Even Butler neglected the idea of a fixed place, that is, a locus for agency, from which actions in the social realm should and could start. It is this very stylisation of the

repetition of actions as a whole that regenerates agency on each occasion as social construction.² On the other hand, however, it is exactly this ornamented repetition of actions that creates a subversive possibility, and thereby enables the politics of divergence in the constitution of gender. The limits of this deviation are marked in societies by operations of what Althusser called the apparatus. In later texts, Butler also accepted that the performative act in social life is not free to produce unsanctioned deviations like a critical practice would do, nor indeed to transgress the patterns of bodily actions without negative consequences.³

To develop my own theories on performative acts, I have re-interpreted Butler's statements in the context of contemporary performance art. This has led me to the recognition of a twofold performative act. Following Butler, the first performative act that defines agency in everyday experiences is the performative act. Secondly, this act is re-enacted and re-presented in the field of performance art. I will call this act the twofold performative act.⁴ This concept of performativity, which is based on Butler's concept of 'performative acts,' explicitly contradicts all the essentialist notions of performance art, and of performativity and the given body, embodiments that were propagated by the so-called new phenomenologists. My concept of the twofold performative act also contradicts the idea that agency could be established through the presence of a body per se. Thirdly, it criticises the notion of space as an 'empty container' waiting to be filled, for example with meaning, which is then assumed to be exposed by objects and 'auratised' by bodies and their presentness.

Interestingly, a wide variety of current performative

1
Judith Butler,
"Performative Acts
and Gender
Constitution,"
first published in:
Theatre Journal
40/4, 1988,
pp. 519-513,
reprinted in:
Auslander, London
2003, Vol. 4,
pp. 97-110.

2
Butler, 2003,
p. 97/98.

3
I am grateful to
Dorothee Richter
and Carmen Mörsch
for this hint to
Althusser during
our discussion
in Kassel.

4
Sabine Gebhardt
Fink, "Situierter
Körper und
Sexualisierter
Raum," in: Martina
Oster, *Geschlecht
in Musik, Kunst
und Neuen Medien*,
Hamburg 2008.



Top 2 images

Katerina Šedá, OVER AND OVER, 2008.

Installation view of the 5th berlin biennial for contemporary art at Skulpturenpark Berlin-Zentrum, Installation, mixed media, Diameter 9,55 m

Photo: Courtesy Katerina Šedá, Franco Soffiantino Arte Contemporaneo, Torino. © berlin biennial for contemporary art, Uwe Walter, 2008

Bottom image

Katerina Šedá, OVER AND OVER, 2008

Installation view of the 5th berlin biennial for contemporary art at KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Drawings, models, mixed media, Dimensions variable

Photo: Courtesy Katerina Šedá; Franco Soffiantino Arte Contemporanea, Torino, © berlin biennial for contemporary art, Uwe Walter, 2008

projects address this issue by focusing on the recipient of an action. They thus provide a range of models of agency in performative artistic acts situated between artist and addressee. The dissemination and teaching of art could then envisage a reflection of this twofold act in general.

Presence and Embodiment – San Keller // Read it from my lips, Zurich 2009

During his May 2009 performance of *Read it from My Lips* at the Gessnerallee Theatre in Zurich, San Keller asked those present to comment on the performances during the intervals between the acts. Audience comments were recorded on camera in a separate room, with the sound muted. Afterwards, the clips were projected via closed circuit into the exhibition space opened for the next performance. Those members of the audience who had stayed in the auditorium were confronted with the faces of the interviewees in close-up and in silenced speech, seeking to decode the 'silent' words from their lips and looking around the auditorium to identify the speakers as neighbours when watching the last performances.

In which way is the aesthetic structure to be read and the social coding to be revealed as a signifying mechanism that leads to the construction and to the representation of an action during *read it from my lips*?⁵ And what is the signifying operation of that performance? In *read it...*, presence is shown as mediated and produced; that is, the acts of producing and perceiving the performance are separated.⁶ Presence is shown as something to be constructed during a performative act and finished somewhere else, or indeed 'later.'⁷ Only by accepting this state of constructedness could the 'non-seen' be judged as "the potentially seen, delineated in the currently seen in a determinate/indeterminate manner,"⁸ as Bernhard Waldenfels observes. Instead of assuming a 'here and now' and an omnipresent presence in performance art, this work makes explicit that the idea of a 'here and now' is something to be constructed through speech acts and through bodily styles during those acts. The aesthetic of acting enfolds or signifies a 'folding' between 'participation' and 'partaking' in the encounters between author, curator, educator, spectator, theorist, and performer. Consequently, the insights of Keller's work should be taken as proposals for the 'seen' as a starting point for further possible performative acts, as Alice Creischer once assumed for her own socio-aesthetic practice. What Kellers work proposes in the context of education and dissemination is this possibility of reflection through re-reading and analysing the present as the 'uncompensated past.'

Strategies of self-enactment in collective social acts of reception – Katerina Šedá // Over and Over, Berlin 2008

In her performative art project *Over and Over*, Katerina Šedá asked the inhabitants of her hometown Líšen in the Czech Republic to open up the fences surrounding their private grounds after the 'opening' of their country in 1999. The idea was to revitalise civic life that had died out during the new capitalistic era. What was exhibited of this project during the Berlin Biennale was a model of the fences and the constructions built by the inhabitants to cross or open them up. This mise-en-scène of a 'latent' form of interaction can be seen as an artistic strategy for criticising and deconstructing atmospheres of commodity and possession.

The reasons for the emergence of new forms of reception in the 1990s, like Šedá's above work, can be found in the structure of urban space itself, specifically within the sites of so-called 'social computing' and public 'screenings,' or 'mobile phone networks' and the increasing aggressiveness in which the public sphere is reoccupied as a private terrain of commodity and private property. Former public zones tend to be reserved for specific communities and new private owners, thereby domesticating the public space into spheres of private control and governmentality. It is thus clear that a critical artistic practice of that time addressed these tendencies and intervened into these newly built spaces. Šedá's political spatial practice attracts dominant concepts of space, which Henry Lefebvre has described in the following words: "The more carefully one examines space, considering it not only with the eyes, not only with the intellect, but also with all senses, with the total body, the more clearly one becomes aware of the conflicts at work within it, conflicts which foster the explosion of abstract space and the production of a space that is other."⁹ For Kluge and Negt, this abstract space represents a system of governance that follows economic rules. Against those rules, Šedá's project pits a 'being-with,' as Jean-Luc Nancy once formulated the being-in-common.¹⁰

To be clear: this site of 'being-in-common' does not already exist. Instead, it is a place to be produced, and it is as such the missing space. Nancy postulates for this kind of place a new form of presence: it is something to be constructed. Although Nancy is convinced that it is not possible to define this kind of place through art or artistic processes, I am not sure whether he is right.¹¹ Šedá's project, for example, articulates in the presence of a number of speakers a 'being-in common'

5
Pierre Bourdieu,
*Practical Reason:
On the Theory of
Action*. Stanford
1998, p. 3.

6
Sigrid Schade,
"Das unabgeholte
der Vergangenheit,"
in: Jahrbuch 3
HGKZ, NOW! /
*Gegenwart in den
Künsten*, eds.
Sigrid Adorf /
Sabine Gebhardt
Pink / Sigrid
Schade / Steffen
Schmidt, 2007.

7
The original
German reads:
"potentiell
Gesehenes im
aktuell Gesehenen
auf bestimm-
unbestimmte Weise
vorgezeichnet."
Bernhard
Waldenfels,
*Phänomenologie der
Aufmerksamkeit*,
Frankfurt M.,
1998, p. 208

8
Waldenfels,
Ibid.: "...und
gleichzeitig
wird...im
Gesehenen
Nichtgesehenes,
bis zu einem
gewissen Grade...
nachgezeichnet."
p. 211. "... at
the same time ..
the seen becomes
to a certain
extent traced in
the non-seen"
(translation Mark
Kyburz).

9
Henry Lefebvre,
*The Production of
Space*, translated
by Donald
Nicholson-Smith,
2007, 25th ed.
(1st English
edition 1991; the
original French
version appeared
in 1974), p. 391.

10
"The missing
space is precisely
the singularly
plural. It is
thus, too, that of
being – and thus
also that which is
decidedly not the
substratum of that
which exists in
toto, but rather
brings existing
beings onto the
same path, to be
with all others
[...]. The With,
its irreducible
structure of
proximity and
distance, its
irreducible
tension, which it
produces between
one and the other,
is now before us
and must be
considered: for
only the With
makes sense." Jean
Luc Nancy, *Être
singulier pluriel*
(Paris: Galilée,
1996) (translation
Mark Kyburz).

11
Jean-Luc Nancy,
2004, p. 20.

between the generalising 'We all' and the individualistic 'me I'. This also implies that the action is located in a specific place. Being is neither a state nor an essence, but rather that kind of action/passion in whose aftermath what Kant termed the 'mere position of an object' occurs.¹²

If once accepted as a being-in-common, it is no longer possible to conceive the public as whole. However, it would be equally mistaken to believe in a neo-utopian concept of community. What is really addressed in artworks like Šedá's is the idea of an opening up of the unique community. In 1996, Jean-Luc Nancy analysed this kind of community as follows: "... when the community begins to stammer a strange uniqueness [...], then the community understands that it is itself that gapes open – gapingly opened to its absent unity and essence. It understands that it is confronted within itself with this rupture. Community stands against community, strangers versus strangers, those acquainted versus those acquainted; it tears itself apart by tearing apart others, who have no possibility of community and communion."¹³

On the level of the performative act, the 'being-in-common' of an urban society in Nancy's sense,¹⁴ which Šedá only indicates on a metaphorical level through the opened fences, is constructed through participant interaction. It is a being-in-common that remains unhomogeneous during the entire project because of the participants' different aims and interests. This kind of being-in-common, moreover, only exists for a short period of time although the processes documented can remain in the cultural memories of those involved. This being-in-common is very close to Nancy's concept of community: "Being-with is the community, which [...] does not allow itself to be made manifest [...]. Consequently, it cannot be communicated even if it is itself that which is shared and probably because this is what it is."¹⁵ He continues thus: "Instead, the With is dry and neutral: it is neither communion nor atomisation, merely the sharing of a place, at best contact: a being-together without a joining-together."¹⁶

With and against Nancy, *Over and Over* provides an instrument for constructing a community as a being-in-common. Documenting the acts of *Over and Over* during a short period of time and in a concrete situation allows for divergent participation. This implies for the dissemination of art that it should provide different patterns of meaning and reading, and open up opportunities for 'being-in-common.'

Constructions of place – Alexandra Bachzetsis // *handwork*, Basel 2008

Producing this kind of being-in-common in an collective act of reception makes necessary the development of a sensorium of community and historicity in the context of ephemeral constructions of place. Realising this requires performative acts. Alexandra Bachzetsis's performance *handwork* helps us explain what is meant by the construction of a site as process. Here, the performance space is a combination between a ballet training studio (mirrors on the walls and light) and bar (pole dance and highheeled shoes). Besides Bachzetsis, the setting also involves fellow artists Ayelene Parolin and Saga Sigurardottir. When the sexualised body, as Butler says, needs training and disciplining as a naturalised construct in ritualised actions, then the actions of Bachzetsis and her colleagues, which border on stereotyped sexualised acts, intend to make evident those slight differences, and to produce critique and desorientatedness. This particular setting aimed to deconstruct both the movement patterns of ballet

and of pole dance. Bachzetsis thus attempts to create in one single place the dis-orientation of the fixed patterns involved in the production of sex and gender.

Contrary to postmodern and site-specific works, which adjusted bodily movements to time-space environments and disciplined them without being noticed by their users, because "abstract space asphyxiates whatever is conceived in it," as Lefebvre remarks,¹⁷ site-reflecting practices in contemporary art, such as Bachzetsis's *handwork*, seek a concept of place that overruns those fixed meanings and includes experiences that are 'other.' This place is also defined by power relations and influenced by the operations of the apparatus, which regulates individual agency and the agencies of groups and collectives. It was space, namely, the domestic place, property, money, and consumerism that offered participation in the bourgeois world of Fordism.¹⁸ Place, moreover, offers the same in poststructuralism and post-Fordism. I agree with Nancy Fraser when she assumes that in our 'post-national' times, new forms and structures of sovereignty can be recognised and the change from space to place is only one index of this change.¹⁹ In this social context, the meaning of artistic practice can be affirmative or contradictory. And Hal Foster warns us that even critical art can reaffirm existing exclusions and abjections: for Kristeva, the operation of abjection is fundamental to the maintenance of subject and society alike, while the condition of being abject corrodes both formations.²⁰ With regard to Bachzetsis's performance, we need to consider whether it produces exactly that kind of critique that reaffirms existing role-models and gender-images, or not. The dissemination of art should offer different types of gender-constructions, and open up fixed stereotypes of sexuality.

- 12
Jean-Luc Nancy,
2004, p. 35.
- 13
Jean-Luc Nancy,
*La communauté
désœuvrée*
(Paris: Christian
Bourgois, 1983)
(translation
Mark Kyburz);
see also *Die
herausgeforderte
Gemeinschaft*,
trans. Esther von
den Osten, Berlin
2007, p. 14.
- 14
Jean-Luc Nancy,
Ibid.
(see also *Die
herausgeforderte
Gemeinschaft*,
Zürich/Berlin
2007, p. 30).
- 15
Jean-Luc Nancy,
Zürich/Berlin
2007, p. 29. Nancy
thus prefers the
neutral term
'with,' which I
also use here, to
'community.' "(It
was clear) that
the accentuation
of a necessary,
yet forever
insufficiently
clarified concept
(of a community)
went hand in hand
at the time with a
revival of
communitarian and
sometimes even
fascist driving
forces," see p. 31
(translation Mark
Kyburz). Compare
Nancy's *Being
Singular Plural*:
"it is a question
of the alterity or
alteration of the
world. In other
words it is not
the question of an
aliud, or an alius
or an alienus, or
another in general
as the essential
stranger, who is
opposed to what is
proper, but of an
alter, that is,
'one of the two.'"
Translated by
Robert E.
Richardson & Anne
E. Byrne, Stanford
University Press
2000, p. 11.
- 16
Nancy, Zürich/
Berlin 2007, p.
31. Similar
thoughts are
expressed by Nancy
in *Etre singulier
pluriel*: "(...) the
mode of Being
which is that of
disposition/
co-appearance and
which, strictly
speaking, is
neither negative
nor positive, but
instead the mode
of being-together
or being-with."
in: *Being Singular
Plural*, p. 13.
- 17
Henry Lefebvre,
*The Production of
Space*, Malden,
Oxford, Victoria
1991, p. 370.
- 18
Anna McCarthy,
*Ambient Tele-
vision. Visual
Culture and Public
Space*, Durham Duke
University Press
2001, p. 10. See
also Arnold von
Gennep, *Les rites
de passage*. 1909.
- 19
Nancy Fraser,
"Die Trans-
nationalisierung
der Öffentlich-
keit," p. 24, in:
*Publicum. Theorien
der Öffent-
lichkeit*, eds.
Gerald Raunig and
Ulf Wuggenig,
Vienna 2005,
pp. 18-30.
- 20
Hal Foster,
*The Return of
the Real: The
Avantgarde at
the End of the
Century*, Cambridge
Mass. 1996,
pp. 125-168,
p. 156.

Mediality and Performativity – William Hunt // The impotence of radicalism in face of all these extreme positions 2005

I would like to close with an example from William Hunt's *The impotence of radicalism in face of all these extreme positions* (2005). In this performance, Hunt declares the mediality of the work to be the theme of the artistic process. Hunt's guitar-playing pose cites the gestures of a rockstar. But he turns both these and himself upside down: in a self-constructed instrument, he performs amusing and bizarre actions to remain balanced while his head inclines over the floor and his feet swivel in the air during his playing. In this constant production of an inverse pose, the performer gives no chance to either fantasies of completeness or to "representation without reproduction," as Peggy Phelan once hoped to find in the ontology of Performance Art.²¹ Instead, Hunt shows us that the mediality of performance is a "subversive repetition of [...] (a bodily) style," as Butler has observed. Furthermore, he also draws attention to the other three aspects of the 'structures of embodiment' indicated by Butler, namely, 'to do,' "to dramatize," and 'to reproduce.'²²

For the dissemination of art, this also means to do, to dramatise, and to reproduce!

21
Peggy Phelan,
*Unmarked:
The Politics of
Performance*,
London 1993.

22
Judith Butler,
London 2003,
reprinted in
Auslander,
pp. 98/99.



Katerina Šedá, *OVER AND OVER*, 2008, Installation view of the 5th berlin biennial for contemporary art at KW Institute for Contemporary Art, drawings, models, mixed media, dimensions variable. Photo: Courtesy Katerina Šedá; Franco Soffiantino Arte Contemporanea, Torino, © berlin biennial for contemporary art, Uwe Walter, 2008



1 David Teniers the Younger, *Painting Gallery of Archduke Leopold William of Austria*, 106 x 129, 1653

A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF EXHIBITION MAKING

Dorothee Richter

Using various illustrations, this paper delineates the history of exhibition display and establishes connections within that history. It also provides a list of suggested further reading. The outline begins at a point in history when art emancipated itself from being a cult object and became an exhibition object. Interpreting various depictions of exhibitions, I raise questions about representation, specifically who or what is represented, and about the human subjects involved, specifically how these are addressed as recipients or as depicted figures. How did such address and depiction affect the formation of identities? Which kinds of being-in-the-world, arrangements of power, and gaze regimes are conveyed by these illustrations? Which status do art objects have within the context of an entire staging, and how does its arrangement predetermine meaning?

1 David Teniers the Younger, *Painting Gallery of Archduke Leopold William of Austria*

The painting by Daniel Teniers does not depict a particular exhibition, but instead a fictitious and programmatic exhibition, or what Ekkehard Mai has called a "personal pantheon of painting."¹ Depictions of galleries from Francken to Teniers, Pannini and Robert exhibit an art collection whose displaying was meant to demonstrate the connection between power and spirit, in order to substantiate the claims of one's own dynasty against the claims to power asserted by an array of courts, states, churches, and countries. The paintings need not necessarily reflect actual collections, and those on display were probably

exhibited in different places, or they were copies, or indeed they were in the possession of the respective ruler only at a certain point in time. The guiding principles of the collection were size, the number of figures, and theme. "It was not until the eighteenth century," Mai observes, "that nation, state, and history became equally valid points of reference, not only for contemporary art but also for that of the past and so the representative discourse changed into a public discourse."²

Cartesian perspective is mostly associated with the abstract and detached subject of central perspective, who observes matters from a safe distance. The gaze from within Teniers's painting gallery falls directly and authoritatively upon the viewer. The geometry of the mathematical certainty afforded by central perspective seems to be equated with the certainty of an order established by God. Inscribed in the 'show'-room, moreover, are the concepts and effects of gender differences, which since the Renaissance had been constructed upon distancing effects and upon the male subject as the subject of central

¹ See Ekkehard MAI, "Ausgestellt – Funktionen von Museen und Ausstellungen im Vergleich." in: *Kunst des Ausstellens, Beiträge, Statements, Diskussionen*, ed. Hubert Locher, Stuttgart: Schulte, 2002.

² See also Hubert LOCHER, "Die Kunst des Ausstellens, Anmerkungen zu einem unübersichtlichen Diskurs," in: *Kunst des Ausstellens, Beiträge, Statements, Diskussionen*, ed. Hubert Locher, Stuttgart: Schulte, 2002.



2 Pierre Subleyras, *The Studio of the Painter*, 125 x 99, after 1740

3 Gabriel Jacques de St. Aubin: *The 1767 Salon*, Aquarelle and Gouache, 1767

4 Johann Zoffany: *Charles Towneley's Library in Park Street*, 127 x 99, 1783

perspective. 'Woman' became an object – of the male gaze – and she thus became readily available and her image commodified. The gaze is as a rule associated with the male (subject) and the viewed or displayed with the female (object). In structural terms, 'woman' bears within herself the place viewed and taken aim at. Anja Zimmermann, for instance, identifies this structure when she summarises the insights that many contemporary cultural studies scholars have arrived at: "Both the position 'within' the image and the position of whoever is gazing at the image are gender-specific positions. Not so much by way of attribution to concrete subjects, but in relation to the significance of this gaze regime for the definition of gender difference itself."³ The eroticising of the gaze, that is, the pleasure derived from looking, remains the unalterable prerequisite for addressing viewers: the sexually charged nature of the exhibited results from this particular structure.⁴

2 Pierre Subleyras, *The Studio of the Painter*

Subleyras's representation of the painter's studio leaves a striking impression of exhibiting what were still pre-modern values at the time. The atmosphere seems calm and inward, focused on the painter's craft.

Malcolm Baker has outlined how the places where art objects were traded were transformed over time: "The artist's studio or workshop, as apparent in Subleyras's painting [...] were a place where art was presented and where business transactions between artists and clients could be conducted. But the commodification of art, which the growing art market indicated on the one hand, and the way in which art took on a life of its own as a separate aesthetic category on the other, both led to the establishment of new spaces serving the viewing of images and sculptures by an increasing wider public."⁵ The fine arts emancipated themselves progressively from their status as an artisanal, manual craft, while their commodity character became nebulous.

3 Gabriel Jacques de St. Aubin, *The 1767 Salon*

One such newly established space was the Salon de Paris (or simply the Salon), as shown in Aubin's aquarelle. The Salon was first held following a royal sanction. Various genres were exhibited alongside each other, including history paintings, portraits, landscapes, portrait busts, and stucco models for large sculptures. Exhibits were displayed hierarchically, depending on size. Malcolm Baker has observed that "the exhibitions at the Salon were discussed extensively in contemporary periodicals and art literature, thereby attracting the attention of a wider

public to the exhibition event."⁶ The profane and direct trading with art became increasingly invisible; competition among artists, and the discourse on their works, now moved into the foreground."⁷ Moreover, "this shift occurred in the second half of the eighteenth century, especially in France and England. The exhibition artist now became the new leading type of artist, taking the place of the employed court artist; the second leading type who rose to the fore was the artist-as-entrepreneur who accepted commissions for different clients or worked for the market," as Oskar Bätschmann's extensive historical research has revealed.⁸

4 Johann Zoffany, *Charles Towneley's Library in Park Street*

In the eighteenth century, art was increasingly depicted as a place of tasteful pleasure and critical judgement. Being able to speak appropriately about art was regarded as an expression of educated behaviour. The ability to pass individual judgement and to behave accordingly imputes a self-responsible subject, an ideological construction that assumed increasing significance. For Immanuel Kant, one of the most important Enlightenment philosophers, aesthetics assumed a prominent place: for instance, the current Suhrkamp edition of his

3 Anja ZIMMERMANN, *Skandalöse Bilder. Skandalöse Körper. Abject Art vom Surrealismus bis zu den Culture Wars*. Berlin 2001, p. 119.

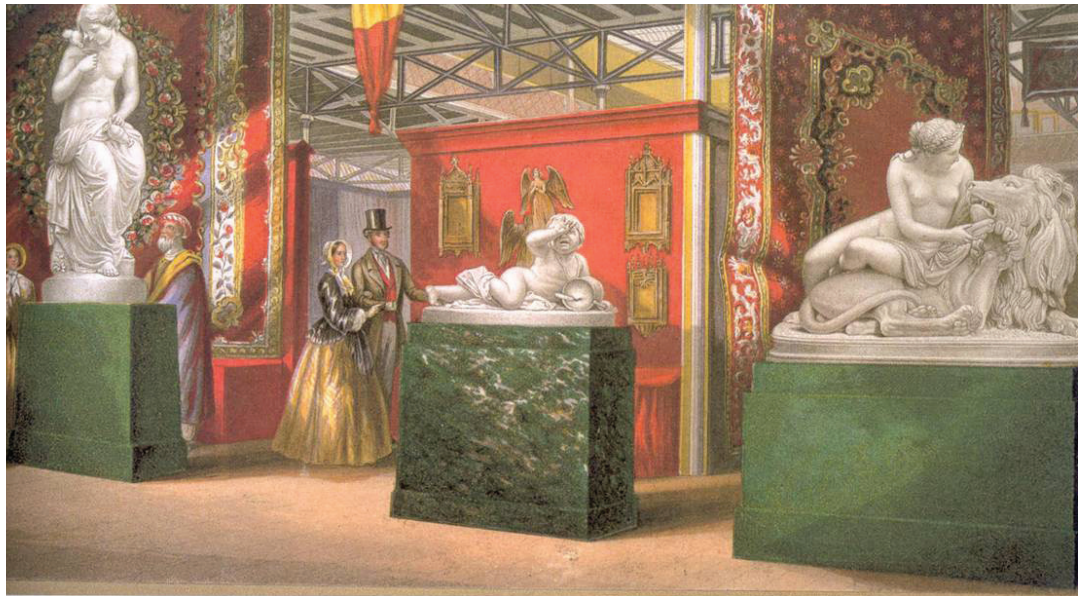
4 For a detailed discussion and extensive bibliography, see Sigrid SCHADE and Silke WENK, "Inszenierung des Sehens, Kunst, Geschichte und Geschlechterdifferenz," in: BUSSMANN, HOF: *Genus, zur Geschlechterdifferenz in den Kulturwissenschaften*, Stuttgart 1995, pp. 340-407.

5 Malcolm BAKER, (Deputy Head of Research at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London), in: Dumont, *Geschichte der Kunst, (The Oxford History of Western Art)*, London 2000, Cologne 2003, pp. 288/289

6 BAKER, *Ibid.*, pp. 288/289.

7 LOCHER pp. 22/23.

8 Oskar BÄTSCHMANN, *Ausstellungskünstler, Kult und Karriere im modernen Kunstsystem*, Cologne 1997, p. 9.



5 George Baxter, *Gems of the World Fair, (Belgian section)*, wood engraving, coloured, 12,1 x 24,1, 1854

Critique of Judgement, in which the first and second versions of the text are reprinted, runs to 456 pages. Terry Eagleton has shown that Kant discusses aesthetics as an ideological function through which aesthetic judgement produces individuality.⁹ Jointly savoured judgement renders aesthetics a utopian place, the only place where a sense of community can arise. Such thinking differs markedly from the Middle Ages, where human beings occupied a fixed, unalterable position in a certain social strata, for instance a guild, family, or system of belief, and regarded themselves as part of a group, from whose determined positions behaviour and moral stance largely resulted. The ideology of the autonomous subject coincided with the development of a mercantile class.

Dating from 1883, Zoffany's painting shows the British officer and collector Charles Towneley (1737-1805) surrounded by sculptures or their casts amid a group of men engaged in discussion. The men are positioned at eye-level between the Greek sculptures. The casts of ancient sculptures refer to the democratic ideal of ancient Greece, as the pictorially represented historical legitimization of democratic values claims.¹⁰

The first public exhibition for the 'common people' was held at the Louvre in 1792, as a 'Museum of the French Republic.' Images, furniture, and art objects taken from the defeated aristocracy were placed on public display. Written into this spectacle were both the appropriation and affirmation of prevailing circumstances. Hubert Locher describes how exhibitions were increasingly regarded as narratives or stagings, in which the meanings of single, autonomous works of art were placed within a overall context: "Shortly after 1800, Friedrich Schlegel, the German philosopher and theorist of art and literature used the term 'exhibition' in the context of a museum presentation. While in Paris, he visited the Louvre to see displayed the works that Napoleon had looted, especially in Italy. Schlegel described his experience for German readers interested in art in a journal that he edited. In the light of a series of the most important canonical paintings, he observed that each arrangement of a series of paintings in an exhibition presented the viewer with a new 'body,' and that such presentation entailed a new concept."¹¹ The rightful owner of the Louvre art collection

was the Republic, that is to say the nation, and no longer an individual ruler, around whose gesture of display art objects had previously been grouped. The context of exhibitions therefore had to be organised around another (imaginary) place of representation.

5 George Baxter, *Gems of the World Fair, (Belgian section)*

During the nineteenth century, national gallery exhibitions and world fairs were held across Europe and in the United States. World fairs were still exhibitions that jointly displayed commercial products, technology, and art as expansive, large-scale international exhibitions: 1851 in London (Crystal Palace), 1855 Paris, 1853 New York, 1854 Munich, 1867, 1878, 1889 Paris, 1876 Philadelphia, 1879 Sydney, 1880 Melbourne, 1885 Amsterdam, and 1888 Brussels. From about 1850, museum associations began establishing bourgeois museums.

Sculptures on display at world fairs included items assembled from what we would today consider unusual combinations of materials, for instance volcanised rubber or papier-mâché, since at the same time they represented new technologies. The participating countries

9 Terry EAGLETON, *Ästhetik. Die Geschichte ihrer Ideologie*, Stuttgart, Weimar 1994.

10 BAKER, pp. 288/289.

11 LOCHER, p. 20.



6 Adolph von Menzel, *The Studio Wall*, 111 x 79,3, 1872



7 The New Salle des États, Paris. Louvre, Illustration, 1886



8 Jules Alexandre Grün, *Friday at the Salon des Artistes Français*, 3,60 x 6,16, 1909

and their products competed against each other, in an attempt to draw attention to themselves. Statues, industrial products and other arti-facts were exhibited side by side.¹² Writing about the spectacle that such large exhibitions involved, Walter Benjamin wrote: "The world fairs glorify the exchange value of goods. They create a framework in which their use value recedes. They open up phantasmagoria, into which the human being enters for the purpose of distraction."¹³ The inter-relation of mass audience, industrial products and art can be seen as a precursor of the 'culture industry,' that is, the blending of commerce, spectacle and culture that became subject to Adorno's critique and that of other representatives of the Frankfurt School in the mid-twentieth century.

6 Adolph von Menzel, *The Studio Wall*

Access to studios was still reserved for an exclusive audience, and art was disseminated to bourgeois society through illustrated journals. Philipp Ward writes that "in the early nineteenth century it became a fashionable obligation for highbred foreign visitors to Rome to tour the workshops," and that "engravings depicting artists' studios appeared in popular illustrated journals and sculptors explained works in progress to select visitors."¹⁴ Adolph von Menzel's picture shows a later atelier situation, and the serial hanging of casts and death masks conveys a notion of serial, industrial work. There is an uncanny and dramatic air about the death masks, and bodies are shown in dismembered form. Viewers are emotionally involved in the picture. A threatening feeling looms, evoked, among others, by the fact that we can see but a small excerpt of the whole space. Viewers are kept in the dark about the remaining space, and no autonomous subject position exists. This is no longer a simple work and sales space; instead, the 'studio' is here charged in variable and mysterious ways.

7 The New Salle des États, Paris. Louvre

The doors of the new Salle des États are flanked protectively by neo-Baroque figures, personifications of France. The discourse attendant upon exhibitions and the founding of museums at the end of the nineteenth century was oriented toward the national. Collections, moreover, were organised along historical and stylistic lines.¹⁵ Carol Duncan stresses the ideological benefit of public art museums in a world increasingly determined by the bourgeoisie. Existing princely and royal art exhibitions were often rededicated as public exhibitions. She observes that "in 1815, almost every Western capital, whether a monarchy or a republic, had such a museum. Some of the so-called 'national galleries' were obviously nothing other than established princely collections bearing new

titles." While the audience had now expanded to the affluent citizenry, large parts of the population nevertheless remained excluded from the outset, or as Duncan mentions, "the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, for instance, still required visitors to wear glamorous gala dress until 1866."¹⁶

An expanded circle of visitors was subject to disciplinary measures, as Tony Bennett has discussed at length.¹⁷ Bennett conceives the museum not only as a place of instruction, but also as a place that ostentatively altered behavioural norms and inscribed them in the body. From the mid-nineteenth century, a series of measures was developed to educate broad social strata to appreciate art. Brochures, guided tours, and instructions served to inculcate a specific chastened habitus. The paternalist instruction of manual labourers at the world fair in Glasgow included a ban on spitting, raising one's voice, or excessive movement.¹⁸ This setting of instruction effectuated choreography with implicit actors, behavioural drills, and distance-maintaining regulations.

8 Jules Alexandre Grün, *Friday at the Salon des Artistes Français*

Sculptures were exhibited at large fora, like the Salon de Paris and the Royal Academy in London. These fora partly

¹² See Philipp WARD-JACKSON, in: Dumont, *Geschichte der Kunst*, (*The Oxford History of Western Art*), London 2000, Cologne 2003, p. 348.

¹³ See Walter BENJAMIN, *Das Passagen-Werk*, *Collected Works*, vol. 1, eds. TIEDEMANN, SCHWEPPEHÄUSER, Frankfurt a.M. 1974

¹⁴ See WARD-JACKSON, p. 348

¹⁵ Carol DUNCAN, in: Dumont, *Geschichte der Kunst*, (*The Oxford History of Western Art*), London 2000, Cologne 2003, p. 405.

¹⁶ DUNCAN, p. 405.

¹⁷ See Tony BENNETT, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics*, London 1995

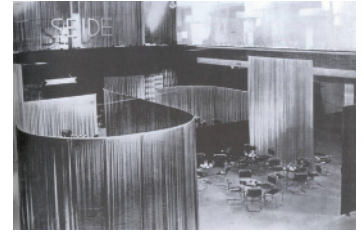
¹⁸ See Oliver MARCHART, "Die Institution spricht, Kunstvermittlung als Herrschafts- und als Emanzipationstechnologie," in: *Wer spricht? Autorität und Autorschaft in Ausstellungen*, eds. JASCHKE, MARTINEZ-TUREK, STERNFELD, Vienna, 2005, pp. 36/37



9 Galerie 43 at the Landesmuseum Hannover



10 Dome Gallery, Landesmuseum 1917



11 Mies van der Rohe and Lilly Reich: The Velvet and Silk Café, Ladies Fashion Exhibition, Berlin 1927

represented the performance of a bourgeois public sphere, comparable to cafés, parliaments and newspapers, thereby rendering obvious that access to the 'public sphere' and thus to the discursive power was reserved for a small section of the population. How images were assessed was now related to a 'public' discourse.¹⁹

9 Galerie 43 at the Landesmuseum Hannover

Walter Grasskamp's exhaustive chronology shows that the practice of hanging images in a single row on a white wall was largely established in German museums.²⁰ While eighteenth and nineteenth-century museums commonly adopted the former courtly practice of presenting art objects on coloured wall spans and vivid wallpaper, a gradual shift occurred toward upper-class interiors featuring quasi-residential collection arrangements. The Impressionists assumed a pioneering role when they mounted sales exhibitions in their workshops-cum-studios around 1870. In 1888, Paul Signet demanded exhibits to be hung in a single row, and already in 1888 gray fabric was used preferably to cover exhibition walls. We can nevertheless imagine late nineteenth-century exhibition spaces as distinctly colourful and splendid. Between 1870 and 1900, single-row hanging became the preferred convention; human eye-level became the basic measure, and exhibition spaces were planned accordingly with lower ceilings.

10 Dome Gallery, Landesmuseum 1917

The white wall, however, derives from architecture and the interior furnishing of modernity, and can be traced to the brighter design factories and workspaces. In 1906, white walls were used to design one part of the *Jahrhundertausstellung deutscher Kunst [Centennial Exhibition of German Art]* at the National Gallery in Berlin. The director of the National Gallery thereafter retained this exhibition technique on the upper floor. Almost concurrently, this form of presentation was also introduced in the Rhineland. Initially, walls were mostly covered with white or pale-gray fabric, and a white or light-coloured wall design also began to assert itself in the academies. Especially in the Vienna Secession exhibition arrangements became increasingly colder from 1903 onward. In 1910, a solo exhibition of the works of Gustav Klimt presented the modern exhibition practice to an international audience. The Venice Biennale, founded in 1895, played a decisive role in spreading this practice. In the second decade of the twentieth century, studio aesthetics increasingly became a convention of museum exhibition practice. The

early exhibitions of the Russian Constructivists were important stations for abandoning the picture frame; exhibits were, however, not hung in linear fashion. As Grasskamp observes, it was the *Große deutsche Kunstausstellung [Great German Art Exhibition]* of all things, held in the newly built Haus der deutschen Kunst [House of German Art] in Berlin in 1937, that bears witness to the triumph of the white exhibition wall.

11 Mies van der Rohe and Lilly Reich: The Velvet and Silk Café, Ladies Fashion Exhibition, Berlin 1927

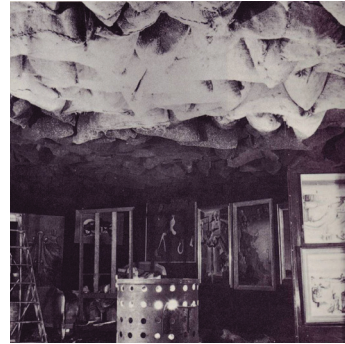
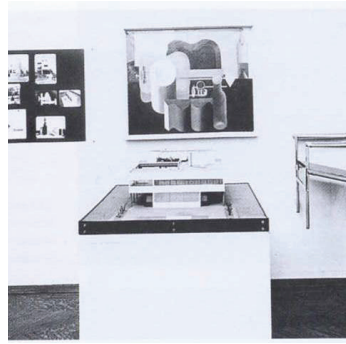
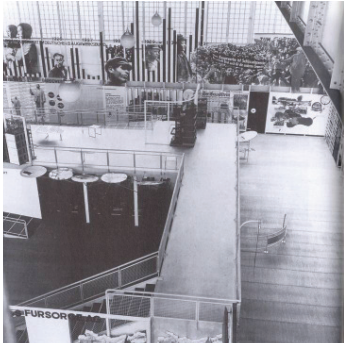
Nevertheless, numerous experimental exhibition and spatial designs existed, especially in the twenties and thirties, to which contemporary artists often refer these days. One such example is Mies van der Rohe and Lilly Reich's Velvet and Silk Café (1927). Visitors' bodies were conceived here not as disembodied pairs of eyes, but also as subjects enjoying themselves and exchanging ideas. The softly flowing fabrics create niches and blinds, providing spaces for smaller groups.

12 Herbert Bayer, Walter Gropius and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy. Trade Union Building, Berlin 1936

Another example is the education of workers in a

¹⁹
LOCHER, p. 23.

²⁰
Walter GRASSKAMP, "Die weisse Ausstellungswand," in: Wolfgang ULLRICH, Juliane VOGEL, *Weiss*, Fischer 2003, pp. 29 -63.



12 Herbert Bayer, Walter Gropius and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy. Trade Union Building, Berlin 1935

13 A Glance at the Exhibition on Cubism and Abstract Art, The Museum of Modern Art, New York 1936

14 Exposition internationale du Surrealisme, Man Ray, Max Ernst, Miro, Dali, Tanguy, Ceiling installation: Duchamp, Paris 1938

15 Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Atrium 1959

very modern-seeming exhibition set-up, which provided a predetermined itinerary on different levels. The viewer became the subject of instruction. Visitors were offered the possibility of a change of perspective, together with different lines of view and vistas. At the same time, they could draw close to the artifacts on display. Auratising the objects was dispensed with; instead, they served as print media conveying knowledge and as means of directly addressing visitors as a political group.

13 A Glance at the Exhibition on Cubism and Abstract Art. The Museum of Modern Art, New York 1936

The exhibition convention now widely known as the White Cube asserted itself on an international scale in the thirties and forties, among others at the Museum of Modern Art in New York where the opening exhibition was mounted in 1936 in what was now acclaimed as an 'international style.' From 1945, this type of exhibition was considered the generally accepted norm.

14 Exposition internationale du Surrealisme, Man Ray, Max Ernst, Miro, Dali, Tanguy, Duchamp, Paris 1938

Artists also began to question the single-row, auratic hanging of exhibits and its implications, among others at the 1938 exhibition of Surrealist work in Paris. Of special interest here is Duchamp's installation using bags of coal suspended from the ceiling. The only source of light was the stove at the centre, said to be coal-fired. In effect, the bags were empty, stuffed with paper, and the stove was lit with electricity. Duchamp thus established a relationship between the gallery space and its implicit presuppositions. An abundance of artifacts, things and fabrics, odour (a coffee roaster), the laughter of asylum inmates via a loudspeaker were supposed to evoke a synaesthetic and confusing experience, and to arouse desires.²¹

15 Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Atrium 1959

A new wave of museum building began in 1945. Due to the migration movements and the altered international balance of power brought about by the Second World War, American collectors now had huge collections of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist works and, moreover, they collected modern and abstract works.²² New economies of attention

developed with the differentiation of the art system, in which spectacular museum buildings played an important role in the competition for public favour. The paradigm of such buildings is Frank Lloyd Wright's sensational Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, designed in 1943 to house the collection of abstract art, and built between 1956 and 1959 on a corner plot on Fifth Avenue.²³ Such spectacular buildings deviate from the linear design of former museum buildings, enabling vista and relations almost capable of producing hallucinatory effects. Architecture often competes with and stands in a conflicting relationship with the art on display. In the exhibition hall, visitors are positioned less as individuals, than as a mass divided into small sections. Central perspective is no longer the exclusive architectural paradigm; vistas and open spaces no longer deploy the subject as a ruler of perspective but instead subject it to events occurring in the exhibition space.

16 Yves Klein, Anthropométrie et Symphonie monotone, Paris, 1960

The new art forms, like video and performance, also provided women with access to art, since these fields

²¹ BÄTSCHMANN, pp. 189/190.

²² See Serge GUILBAUT, *Wie New York die Idee der Modernen Kunst gestohlen hat*, Dresden, Basel, 1997.

²³ See Brandon TAYLOR, "Kunstmuseen," in: *Geschichte der Kunst*, (The Oxford History of Western Art), London 2000, Cologne 2003, p. 514.

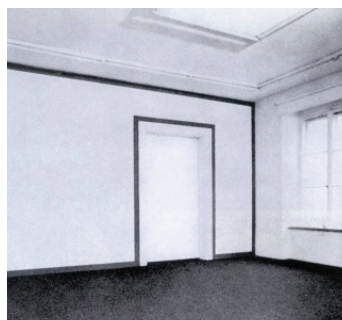


16 Yves Klein, *Anthropométrie et Symphonie monotone*, Paris, 1960

17 Andy Warhol, *Silver Pillows*, New York Castelli Gallery 1966

18 Palermo: Wall painting, 1971

19 8.10.72, Last day of Documenta 5, Harald Szeemann among artists



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were less occupied by men than traditional genres like painting and sculpture. The new media of art were nevertheless pervaded by patriarchal patterns, even though these had meanwhile been modified. The ideal of the idle, culturally refined aristocratic male had shifted into the ideal of the energetic, enterprising male. This relationship also emerged in the new art directions, and the topos of the genius was once again revived. As Abigail Solomon-Godeau writes: "This development is largely the consequence of the redefinition of masculinity under the auspices of a bourgeois culture. The aristocratic, courtly ideal of male comeliness and elegance was irreconcilable with a new gender ideology, according to which the concept of beauty and grace was increasingly and exclusively associated with femininity."²⁴

17 Andy Warhol, *Silver Pillows*, New York Castelli Gallery 1966

The exhibition space also became a subject for discussion increasingly among conceptual artists. Andy Warhol's work follows on iconographically from Duchamp's ceiling installation. Nevertheless, this work does not negate the white space, but instead renders it visible.

18 Palermo, Wall painting, 1971

In the 1960s, a radical paradigm shift occurred in the fine arts: Pop Art, Fluxus, Concept Art all focused attention on 'the institution of art' and the relationship between art and the financial market. Artists integrated references to philosophical discourses into the works. On a theoretical level, moreover, the fine arts were subject to review, as Brandon Taylor, among others, has observed: "A sociology based on statistical empiricism, as developed for instance by Pierre Boudieu in *The Rules of Art* (1969), related a dedication to art institutions with factors like education and class membership. Since the 1960s, conceptual artists have repeatedly and directly addressed the relationship between art museums and the power to define culture; for instance, Michael Asher and Hans Haacke, and most recently Louise Lawler and Andrea Fraser, have debated institutional structures and the meaning of gaze conditions in the work."²⁵

19 8.10.72, last day of Documenta 5, Harald Szeemann among artists

Harald Szeemann was the prototype of the free curator. His exhibitions became 'works,' and the impressario staging them an author. This development occurred, since curators no longer worked only as salaried staff for museums or other institutions, that is to say, as a 'function' of the museum, but as independent guest or migrant workers, requiring them to make themselves known and recognisable,

like freelance artists. This brought the various actors in the field of art into competing positions, whose structure was clearly hierarchical.²⁶ Daniel Buren has commented on the curator's unifying meta-function:

"More and more, the subject of an exhibition tends not to be the display of artworks, but the exhibition of the exhibition as a work of art. [...] The organizer assumes the contradictions; it is who safeguards them."²⁷

While this critique became visible as a contribution to the catalogue for Documenta 5, it was also integrated into the exhibition as a whole. Robert Smithson cancelled his participation.

Positionings in the field now had to be negotiated between curators, artists, and institutions. Power – and social, cultural and economic capital – is subject to negotiation. Professionalisation points to the emergence of courses in curating. Postgraduate courses, like the Postgraduate Program in Curating at Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK), aim to provide theoretically well-grounded training, leading to collaborative working methods and projects.

20 Daniel Buren, *Une Peinture en 5 sur deux murs*, 1973/76

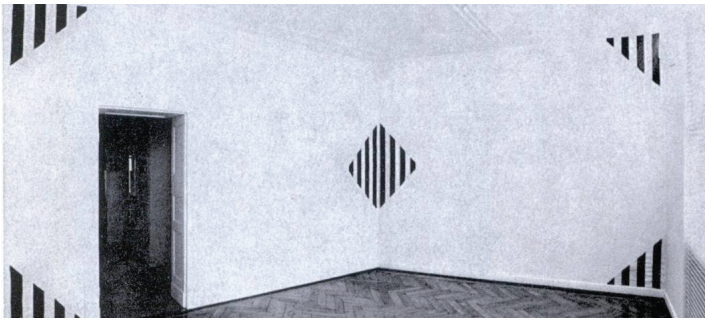
Brian O'Doherty's collection of essays *The White Cube*, published in 1974, attempted to describe the framing power of the white exhibition space as an institution within art, especially its elevating, charismatic, and ideological

24
Abigail
SOLOMON-GODEAU,
"Die Beine der
Gräfin," in:
*Weiblichkeit als
Maskerade*, ed.
Liliane WEISSBERG,
Frankfurt a.M.,
1994 p. 121.

25
TAYLOR, p. 515.

26
Beatrice von
BISMARCK,
"Curating," in: *Du
Monts
Begrifflexikon zur
zeitgenössischen
Kunst*, ed. BUTIN,
Cologne 2002,
pp. 56-59

27
Daniel BUREN,
"Exposition d'une
exposition," in:
*Documenta5,
Ausstellungskatalog*; quoted in
BÄTSCHMANN, p. 222
The original
English version is
reprinted at:
http://www.e-flux.com/projects/next_doc/d_buren_printable.html



20 Daniel Buren. *Une Peinture en 5 sur deux murs*, 1973/76

21 Entrance Hall, Architecture and Design Collection, MoMA, New York, 1984

22 *Materials – A Temporary Archive of Feminist Art Practices in Contemporary Art*, Künstlerhaus Bremen, 1999



effects. O'Doherty's polemical and combative tone revealed that aesthetic debates also involved social groups formulating and rejecting claims. Thus, he writes: "During the classical period of the polarisation of artist and audience, the gallery space preserved its status quo by implementing its contradictions in the described socio-aesthetic imperatives. For many of us, the gallery space has negative associations to this day. Aesthetics becomes an elitist affair: the gallery space is exclusive. Neatly isolated from each other, the objects on display somewhat resemble precious items, jewelry or silver – aesthetics becomes a commodity: the gallery space is expensive. What it contains is almost incomprehensible without specialist guidance: art in the gallery space is difficult. An exclusive audience, valuable objects, difficult to understand – these ingredients make for social, financial and intellectual snobbery, which our system of limited production, our values, and our social behaviour wholly reproduce (and in the worst case parody). No other space corresponds better to the prejudices and values of the upper middle classes and boosts its self-image more effectively.

The classical gallery of modernity hangs in limbo between studio and lounge. Here, the conventions of both zones move around on neutral ground. Here, moreover, the respect for the artist's achievement utterly reshapes the bourgeois striving for private property. It does so because ultimately, the gallery is a sales facility, quite unobjectionally so. The mysterious social customs clustering around this fact, the stuff of which our social comedy is made, deflect attention from business, which is about attributing a material value to an object that effectively has none."²⁸ In these essays, O'Doherty referred to illustrations of concept art, which used visual means to formulate strategic counterdiscourses, and which reflected their fetish character of art and the conditions of its production, distribution, and reception. Prompted by philosophy, linguistics and structuralism, art, its installations and objects were subject to a radical reinterpretation. These visual rereadings remained not only on a formal level but also revealed political connections.²⁹

21 Entrance Hall, Architecture and Design Collection, MoMA, New York, 1984

Art and exhibition institutions now became a subject increasingly discussed in art journals and academic publications. The dehistoricising effect of the neutral presentation of artifacts, as occasioned by an idealising, ennobling exhibition practice was criticised, among others, by Douglas Crimp in *On the Museum's Ruins*. Writing about the exhibition of a combat helicopter at MoMA, which celebrated it as a beautiful object, Crimp classified this

performative presentation as a hegemonic demonstration: "[...] the hard facts are that Bell helicopters are manufactured by the Fort Worth corporation Textron, a major U.S. defense contractor, which supplies the Bell and Huey model helicopters used against the civilian populations of El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Guatemala. But because the contemporary art of exhibition has thought us to distinguish between the political and the aesthetic, a New York Times editorial entitled 'Marvelous MOMA' was able to say of MOMA's proud new object: 'A helicopter, suspended from the ceiling, hovers over an escalator in the Museum of Modern Art... The chopper is bright green, bug-eyed and beautiful. We know that it is beautiful because MOMA showed us the way to look at the 20th century.'³⁰

22 *Materials – A Temporary Archive of Feminist Art Practices in Contemporary Art*, Künstlerhaus Bremen

Works of the eighties and nineties were subsumed under the term context art and displayed in an eponymous exhibition; the works focused explicitly on institutional, political, and social contexts, that is, the context of discourses. Subsuming very different artistic practices under a single term is, however, in itself reductive, a programmatic monopolising of discourse that some artists therefore rejected.³¹ Institutional critique affiliated itself

28
Brian O'DOHERTY,
*In der weißen
Zelle. Inside the
White Cube. Part
3: Kontext als
Text*. Eds. KEMP
and BRÜDERLIN,
Berlin, 1996,
pp. 84/ 85

29
See Film by
Stefan RÖMER:
*Conceptual
Paradies*, 2006

30
Crimp Douglas:
"The Art of
Exhibition" in *On
the Museum's
Ruins*, London
1993, p. 275

31
The eponymous
publication
emerged from the
exhibition in
Graz; see Peter
WEIBEL, *Kontext
Kunst*, Cologne,
1996.



Sturtevant, *Warhol Flowers, 1965*, View of exhibition space, Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main, 25 September 2004 – 30 January 2005

with political concerns and sought new formats of self-organisation. Once more, the power structures within the institution of art were subject to negotiation. Under the artistic direction of Helmut Draxler, Andrea Fraser examined the Kunstverein München in 1993 as a *Gesellschaft des Geschmacks* (*A Society of Taste*). Free floating groups of cultural producers committed to politics and feminism protested the possibility of using art institutions as sites for the articulation of agonistic interests. Besides the occasionally booming market for paintings, a 'counter-public' based on cooperative working methods has emerged in the niches of culture. (In the German-speaking world, this includes, among others, Büro Bert und Botschaft e.V. in Berlin, Shedhalle in Zürich, Künstlerhaus in Stuttgart, Depot in Vienna, Künstlerhaus Bremen). Reflecting on this development, Marion von Osten remarks: "Beyond the familiar artistic strategies, there also existed, from a historical perspective since the rise of the transmission complex of bourgeois art, a tactical usage of institutionalised spaces by groups of artists, left-wing, anti-racist, and feminist collectives and of course consumers themselves. These tactics, including the use of the art gallery for debates, meetings, workshops, film programmes, community projects, and so forth, became active in the shadow of the official art market, its power of distribution and a bourgeois public sphere; in Michel de Certeau's terms, they can be considered an attempt to appropriate and reinterpret hegemonic structures – in the knowledge that they will not simply vanish."³² Other forms of knowledge production, oriented not towards display but process, also mattered in these bureaus, clubs, action groups, artists' houses and media initiatives. Integrating these groups and their working methods into the spaces of representation ran the risk of keeling over into a stylised, symbolic gesture.³³

23 Sturtevant, *Warhol Flowers, 1965*, View of exhibition space, Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main, 2004/05

In Sturtevant's work, the White Cube functioned as a self-quote; the status of space, art and the bodies

arranged therein became questionable; certainties dissolved. Appropriation Art still deployed the subject as the subject of central perspective; this subject must exhibit restrained, controlled behaviour and become a pair of 'wandering eyes.' Nevertheless, the status of the art object, space, spectator and artist changes, for where am I if art is no longer art but imitation?

Seldom disclosing her first name and only signing her works with her surname, Sturtevant thus also indirectly broaches the subject of gender and the attributions of masculinity and femininity bound up therewith. What do we see – original or copy? Sturtevant eventually claimed in the catalogue that one collector passes off one of her works as a genuine Warhol, since he is no longer able to match artists and works. Subtly, this failure also calls into question the art market.

We have now arrived in the present, where the advent of digital media often renders impossible the distinction between copy and original;

32
Marion von OSTEN, "Producing Publics - Making Worlds! Zum Verhältnis von Kunstöffentlichkeit und Gegenöffentlichkeit," in: *Publicum*, RAUNIG, WUGGENIG, Vienna, 2006.

33
Detailed, but problematic in the tendency of validation: KUBE VENTURA, Holger: *Politische Kunst Begriffe, in den 1990 Jahren im deutschsprachigen Raum*, Wien, 2001

in reality, pixeled printouts of a so-called 'original' are indistinct therefrom. Manipulated images are also no longer distinguishable from 'reproductions.' The truth claim of art and re-production is thus dissolved. The gaze regime of modernity is shifting towards a hallucinatory visual, which Martin Jay has presented in detail as one of three overlapping scopic regimes of (post)modernity.³⁴ Notwithstanding the manifold artistic and theory-based critique of exhibition situations, of the ensemble of rule-governed procedures for the circulation, production and reception of art, of the disciplining of subjects, of the practices deployed to contain discourses, the White Cube remains the preferred mode of presentation in contemporary museums and galleries. Often, reference is made to the sensuous, self-explanatory presence of the work, and the object is situated within the tradition of idealistic aesthetics as an inexplicable, incircumventable thing-in-itself. Objects and subjects are arranged in a relatively rigid hierarchical relationship. All types of exhibition – whether art exhibitions or indeed video, design, history, or knowledge exhibitions – are meanwhile often subject to politics with regard to their commercialisation, their connection with the tourist industry, and their representation function (that is, to represent the city, nation, professional group, industry sector), and less with regard to an expand educational remit. The key measure of things is the number of visitors.³⁵ Exhibition formats consequently become aligned – the staged media spectacle enters classical art and knowledge exhibition formats, and the ennobling gesture of the museum moves into product fairs.³⁶ Media-based modes of display do not alter the passive strolling through an exhibition as such, but they can also create an infantilisation of visitors towards the senses. Instead of this apparent compensation of the passivity of visitors in the mass-media-staged exhibition, a new diversification of exhibition formats would need to be claimed. One measure of quality is a fundamental involvement of the public in terms of participation, discussion, and self-empowerment. Available as a banner and sticker, Antoni Muntadas's statement (which can also be read vice versa) points in this direction: "Warning: Perception requires Involvement."

34
Martin JAY,
"Scopic Regimes of
Modernity," in:
Hal Forster (ed.):
*Vision and
Visuality*,
Routledge 1988.

35
Beatrice von
BISMARCK, Making
"Exhibitions,
Processing
Relations," in:
PAKESCH, BUDAK:
*Protections, Das
ist keine
Ausstellung, This
is not an
Exhibition*, Graz
2006, pp. 41-57.

36
Anna SCHÖBER,
*Montierte
Geschichten,
programmatische
inszenierte
historische
Ausstellungen*,
Vienna 1994.

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