

ATELIER EUROPA



ATELIER EUROPA:
A SMALL POSTFORDIST DRAMA

3 April – 13 June 2004
<http://www.ateliereruopa.com>

The project is looking at the social context in which cultural- and knowledge producers have to position themselves today, since they are increasingly stylized into role models of commercial privatization and the economizing of the social sector.

EINRÜCKEN In the assumptions of political and economical discourses, not only are inequalities, including unemployment, of other professions not mentioned, but also left out is the resilience of cultural occupations with regard to the process of economic utilization.

Instead of describing the field of cultural and creative work as a place where the source of economical innovation could be placed, this congress and exhibition bring together people and groups that in recent years have worked on formulating a critique of neo-liberal economics through the perspective of culture and have reflected on their active participation in this discourse. Addressed are individuals and groups, newspaper projects, artists, designers, film-, fashion- and theater makers from Spain, France, England, Switzerland, Austria and Germany. The desire for a diversified production, concepts for doing and living, new forms of collaboration and knowledge production in interdisciplinary contexts, becomes the departure point and motif for desired social change which holds on to a critique of organized labour and consumer relationships within a controlled society.

Cultural practices, which are dealing with the question of their own involvement in neo-liberal argumentation, can themselves contradict each other and are not easily systematized. In the format of a weekend of discussion and an exhibition, different cultural forms of articulation, theoretical points of departure, political strategies and practices which leftist producers use to agitate about their ambivalent positions regarding to this process of modernization are introduced and no singular conclusive interpretation of the current situation is delivered. The meeting and exhibition in Munich are aiming at a networking of different European positions: do new alliances exist because of common goals and/or theoretical/praxis models? Or does the cultural field increasingly develop into a metaphorical realm of dissent?

FOYER

Archive with additional material for the exhibition
Book-table of the theme bookshop Pro qm, Berlin

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

A

Kamera läuft! - Material für einen Film (the camera is running! - material for a film), Berlin / Zurich 2004

Video, staircase, 35 min.

Video projection, 43 min.

Brigitta Kuster, Katja Reichard and Marion von Osten have initiated a film project for Atelier Europa and realized it with a large staff of producers and actors in a staged casting situation which is based on interview material with 15 Berlin based cultural producers.

UPPER LEVEL, STAIRCASE HALL

B

Insert Atelier Europa – Publication of the project, Berlin 2004

Excerpts of the insert *DRUCKSACHE SPRING 04*, Kunstverein München

In the run-up to the project interviews were held with theoreticians, in which the project's perspective on living and working conditions of cultural producers were discussed. In the photo spread a connection is made between the cultural production of the 70s and 80s and the theme of the project.

C

À out of a ABÉCédaire by *Claudia Blum*, Zurich 2004

ABÉCédaire, designed for *Atelier Europa*, implies a Modernist typographic tradition which translated human bodies into dynamic movements in “Kapitälchenschriften”. In spite of this the illustrations of Claudia Blum only show body hulls working on laptops, in lying or sitting positions, which are more reminiscent of leisure than work.

D

NameGame by *Ingo Vetter / Annette Weisser*, Berlin 2003

Print Outs

The central part of the project *NameGame* consists of workshops with precariously employed members of the culture- and science section from the “Halle für Kunst” (hall for art), Lüneburg, in the “Forum Stadtpark” (forum city park), Graz. Interviews with different ‘experts on

precariousness' took place at the end of 2003 and were published in the form of a catalogue, from which excerpts are presented.

E

Multitudes 15: Art contemporain: La recherche du dehors

(Multitudes 15: Contemporary Art: the search for an outside), Paris winter 2004

Proof sheets

Multitudes is a transnational collective which publishes a quarterly journal and maintains a website. Even if *Multitudes*, above all, is occupied with politics, nevertheless, it is not a political group in the classical sense of an organization. The collective understands itself as part of a global and informal context based around Toni Negri and his book *Empire*. The 15th volume of the journal *Multitudes*, which is dedicated to contemporary art, was edited by Brian Holmes and introduced a line of research and intervention in the context of production and usage. It is neither about the atelier nor the institutional system as a context but about the social field of immaterial work and its geography of globalization.

F

de-, dis-, ex-

Volume 5, London / New York 2004

Layout design of an issue of the journal *de-, dis-, ex-* on immaterial work, conceptualism and art as a working process and research, published by Marina Vishmidt and Melanie Giligan.

EINRÜCKEN Meanwhile, the issue, published at the end of April 2004, takes the ubiquitous concept of 'immaterial labour' as an occasion to research the crossover between commerce and contemporary art practice. The research based, conceptual core of many artistic works seems to coincide with the emerging artistic paradigms in science and economics. Paradoxically the artist and specialist is increasingly conceptualized as a worker. They become, in word and deed, proletarian, like so many other employed members of the middle class, whose abilities are segregated and optimized by market mechanisms. At the same time, 'lifelong learning' and Lifestyle-Marketing are constructing a creative mass subject. The magazine brings back the politicized moments in the art history of the 20th Century, to obtain departure points for analysis of contemporary socially critical cultural practices.

EINRÜCKEN The journal *de-, dis-, ex-*, which is issued by Black Dog, a small independent publisher, in London and New York, which specializes in books about art, architecture and theory.

G

N for Negri

A conversation with Antonio Negri by *Carles Guerra*, Barcelona 2000

Video, 140 min.

The conversation was recorded on June 6th 2000 in Rome at the home of Tony Negri. Negri's thoughts about the transformation of work since the 70s are relevant for understanding the working conditions in contemporary art practice.

EINRÜCKEN The video is organized along the ABCs. This produces a clash between analytical terms of Negri's work and aspects that are firmly connected to his life story, such as prison and exile.

PASSAGE TO THE GREAT HALL

I

The Praise of Laziness by *Mladen Stilinic*, Zagreb 2001

The working text for the catalogue of the exhibition *Ausgeträumt...* (the dream is over ...) in the Secession Wien (secession vienna) 2001/2002, about the relation between laziness, work and art.

GREAT HALL

Exhibition architecture from former furnishings of the “Münchner Rück.” The Münchner Rück-Group (founded in 1880) is, with 5,900 employees in 60 branches worldwide a leader amongst reinsurance companies. “The evaluation of risks and the dealing with ever new handicaps requires a large amount of flexibility, mobility and creativity.” (<http://www.munichre.com>) *EINRÜCKEN* The furnishing is from the discarded contents of an open-plan office that is dismantled into pieces, and stored away. If interested in the furniture (free of charge), please sign up at the counter.

J

CONSTRUCTION

Video documentation of the construction of the exhibition architecture, Munich 2004

The exhibition team of the Kunstverein had the task to store the stock of an out of use open-plan office in the exhibition hall. A 1,5 meter space up to the wall had to be kept and the storing proceeded from the entrance side. The working process was documented from the opposite side of the room with a small camera. The arrangement that resulted from this was the departure point for the actual room setting.

K

Hey Production by *Judith Hopf*, Berlin 2001

Video, 7 min.

Hey Production picks out as a central theme the productivity of power relationships in the context of material objectives. For Judith Hopf “to be productive” in our society means to transform abilities into things, valuables or money. The counterpart, a state of contemplation, which bets on pure knowledge gain and is not directly obliged to a logic of production, is immediately differentiating itself as its own area. The film is a plea for the enchanted park visitor, in the sense of a romantic world view.

L

Munich - Sofia by *Pauline Boudry / Brigitta Kuster / Renate Lorenz*, Berlin 2004

Video installation, 7 min. / 9 min.

”We make films, write, organize exhibitions or play in a band. So far, we didn't have any formal working relationship that existed over a longer period. The idea that our biography of work should be ascending, that it is important to work much and on a regular basis, to be mobile and flexible in looking for new employment opportunities, are subjects that become ever more frequent in our circle of friends to also critically contemplate our own lives. While interviewing IT-specialists who are working in Munich with a Greencard, we realized that their requirements are pretty similar to those we are confronted with. Do these highly valued jobs that are frequently

discussed in the media, perhaps produce not only software solutions and chip designs but also norms and ethical guidelines for the 'good' and 'correct' work mode? And how much 'sexual overtime' is necessary to oppose being addressed as 'hetersexual woman' at such places of work? What role does the Greencard play to establish mobility and flexibility as a social norm? With the interviews from Munich in our luggage, we went to Sofia and confronted three female IT-specialists there with the material."

M

Detroit Industries - Jax Carwash, Detroit / USA, 2000

de Tomaateters - Nico Duijvesteijn Kweekerij, Monster / Netherlands, 2002

Die Liftler - Zugspitzbahnen, Ehrwald / Austria, 2004

by *Ingo Vetter*

Slide projection

As a result of rationalization, globalization and flexibilization an increasing number of people find themselves in 'McJobs' - part time- or seasonally employed, freelance or in changing constellations. Ingo Vetter's question about a non-identified iconography of contemporary job conditions is formulated at this point. His series of photographs refers to art historical models: Diego Rivera's sketches of assembly line production at the Ford factory that resulted in the monumental mural *Detroit Industries*, in 1932; Vincent van Gogh's study *The Potato Eaters* from 1883-85, and the (national-) heroic paintings of the alpine region's opening up at the end of the 19th Century.

N

Les risques du métier (Occupational Risks) by *Antek Walczak*, Paris 2000

Video, 43 min.

The film is an absurd, contemplative comedy that researches a fictitious institution called the Contemporary Center (situated at Centre Pompidou) where art and cultural production and representation look like a big company. Antek Walczak was allowed access by the Centre Pompidou to video equipment and a production team for this project, and was able to film on all floors with a group of 20 actors. The result is a film that connects offices, a bookshop, a snack bar and escalators with the theme of office work, as well as with the smaller and greater disasters of everyday work. The heroine, a young employee, stagnates in her suffocating job, while everything around her changes. - The female rivals rise, there are secret deals with other companies, threats of legal actions, folders disappear, younger employees become activists. When her last illusion is destroyed, the heroine decides to quit and enter into the internet-economy but not without a small act of revenge against her former company.

O

Desk-Sharing IBM

Regula Bearth und *Marion von Osten* for *Be Creative! Der kreative Imperativ.*, Museum für Gestaltung Zürich, Zurich 2002

Slide projection

Photo documentation on the remaining open-plan offices in the headquarters of IBM Switzerland and excerpts of an interview with the human resource manager. IBM is the first globally operating enterprise that introduced desk-sharing workplaces. The employees do not work in a fixed workspace, but work increasingly outside the office or at home for the business.

P

Schöneggstrasse 5

Labork3000 / Marion von Osten for Be Creative! Der creative Imperativ. Museum für Gestaltung Zürich, Zurich 2002

Video, 8 interviews, 7 min. each

DVD film project realized with graphic- and multimedia designers and electronic musicians from Zurich in the office and atelier space *k3000*, on desires and objectives for self-organization and the connected living and working conditions.

Q

office discount feat. schönegg.biz

Betty Fleck for Be Creative! Der Kreative Imperativ., Museum für Gestaltung Zürich, Zurich 2002

Photos

The graphic label *büro_destruct* from Bern has opened up a producer's gallery in Zurich, in which it shows the works of colleagues and realizes events, comparable to practices established by the alternative art scene in the 1970s, which was searching for their own ways of distribution and mediation.

R

Die Falsches Leben Show (The False Life Show) by *AnbauNeueMitte* (AdditionalBuildingNewCenter), Berlin 2001/2002

Slide projection

The FLS was developed and realized for the 2001/2002 season of "Wohnbühne" (living stage) at "Berliner Prater".

EINRÜCKEN AnbauNeueMitte is a working-group solely founded for the FLS (Brigitta Kuster, Isabell Lorey, Katja Reichard, Jochen Becker, Walther Jahn, Stephan Lanz, Claudia Heynen, Thomas André, Madeleine Bernstorff, Kirsten Küppers). The group built up from existing work contexts and projects, for instance the publication "Die Stadt als Beute" (the city as loot), the exhibition and event project "Baustop.randstadt.-" (constructionstop.periphery.-) or the activist network "InnenStadtAktionen" (InnerCityActions), that are all dealing out of a structural perspective with the restructuring of cities into watched over, increasingly privatized consumer and service areas and the marginalization process that goes along with it. To a large extent these projects diminished the mundane practices of such subjects, particularly of the new urban middle class that structured with their needs, the criticized rebuilding of cities. *AnbauNeueMitte* actually tried to direct the attention away from the "other" to the question, how we ourselves as critical cultural producers are part of creating this New-Center-Everyday and are part of producing new working conditions, how the New-Center-Discourse already goes through our bodies and desires and how it joins in creating them. Even more so: if and how the New Center is made possible by our work and lifestyle and by our relationship to ourselves. Five shows with different contents were produced. In the exhibition excerpts from the third show *maloche.rmx* are presented.

S

Reflektion über das Scheitern V (Reflection on failure V) by *Armin Chodzinski*, Hamburg 2004

Collage

"The collage introduces different attempts for critical action. Beginning from my own biography, different production methods of the last 10 years are put in relation to each other. As a case study,

I supply my curriculum vitae, which moves constantly at the border between cultural production, entrepreneurial activity, bourgeois and precariousness. The material documents the ongoing effort to work as an artist and thereby to find out, what that really could be. "

T

Cinétracts by *précaires associés de paris*, Paris 2003/04

Video

tract 1 - 7'26; tract 2 - 6'06; tract 3 - 5'04; tract 4 - 3'30; tract 8 - 3'10

"What is an objective of/in battle/s? Which shapes? / Which practices? / Film as archive, as witness, the propaganda and political film, the film as means of communication, the artistic film, etc.? / Collective production? / Who knows their way around what? / Who has no knowledge? / Who is wishing for...? / Who made the film? / For which audience - first of all: Who is the audience? Is it them or is it us?"

U

Zimmerbrunnen (Indoor Fountain) by ___*fabrics interseason*, Vienna 2004

Installation

Within the framework of the exhibition *Atelier Europa ___fabrics interseason* deals with the analysis of a social phenomenon which in many everyday codes is manifested and objectified: the wellness boom. A kind of esoteric-lifestyle, that can be observed as it moves according to the target group, from the health sector to the design market: for instance Feng Shui living and office furnishing advice, which find their objective in a newly designed indoor fountain-pool. They promise a better quality of life and at last a 'natural' increase in performance at the living and working space. The work and / or living environment is thereby turned into a place of 'well-being'. This continuously babbling substitute for nature and religion, serves the stressed out 'neo-liberal' subject as a source of relaxation / contemplation and symbolizes its economically created desire for well being in the middle of a 'small postfordist drama'.

V

Tiempo real (Real time) by *Maria Ruido*, Barcelona 2003

Video, 43 min.

With its research on women in Europe, who are working under precarious conditions, *Tiempo real* proposes a political practice in terms of the feminist discourse, actions and strategies of representation. Influenced by Martha Rosler's concept of 'participatory representation', Maria Ruido sees the task of artists and cultural producers within the contemporary struggles, to produce representations, stories and gestures that incorporate our dreams and make it possible to distribute those personal experiences that produce collective memory and collective knowledge.

W

Mural by *Michaela Melián*, Munich 2004

The mural shows individuals, whose concept of living, between glamour and failure, between life-reform-movement, pop-commune and political initiative have characterized the Munich area for the last 200 years.

REAR ROOM

X

Crawling by numbers, Berlin 2004
Arranged by *Christiane Rösinger*
Music-CD

Featuring pieces by rhythm king and her friends, Britta, Lali Puna, Michaela Melián

Y

24 Stunden sind kein Tag (24 hours are not a day) von *René Pollesch*, Berlin 2003
TV-Soap
Video, 4 episodes, 30 min. each

The soap *24 Stunden sind kein Tag* wants to re-politicize the ordinary TV-format and is interested in the possible drop out variations for individuals: drop out of the economicizing of all areas of life, out of the repressively tolerated pseudo-self-employment or the prescribed role assignment in the supermarket of feelings. The fixed installation "Wohnbühne" (living stage) in the Prater, an extension of the "Volksbühne" (peoples stage) at Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz in Berlin, offers the ideal place for the TV-soap. The four episodes show the search for concepts of living in the era of globalization. "Here people pick each other up like dogs and explore each other for their individual survival strategies." The four episodes were broadcast in 3Sat in January 2004.

Z

Le Ping Pong d'amour Teil 1 (Subsistenz und Subjonctiv) Stil, Arbeit, Geld, Liebe
(Le Ping Pong d'amour part 1 (subsistence and subjunctiv) style, work, money, love)
by *Team PingPong*, Munich / Berlin 2002
Video, 94 min. (4 episodes)

The Soap "Le Ping Pong d'Amour I (Subsistenz and Subjonctiv)" was filmed in Kunstpark Ost, Munich, and deals with the attempts to handle the precarious economic and private living conditions of roommates, filtered through the Nouvelle Vague and the New Economy. A shared living space between subsistence and subjunctif: Il faut un jour que vous viviez de vortre travail. But how can one find a good balance between life and job and on top of that be able to pay the rent on time? The apartment becomes the venue for unusual means to find jobs.