

Andreas M. Kaufmann

Born at 28th of January 1961 in Zurich / Switzerland. Lives and works in Barcelona and Cologne.

He has studied from 1984–1991 intermedia Fine Arts at the “Kunstakademie Münster” with Prof. Timm Ulrichs and Prof. Paul Isenrath. Parallel with it he has studied Design at the Universities of Applied Science in Münster and Dortmund. Besides he has attended lectures and seminars at the “Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster” in the departments of Philosophy, German Literature and Language and History.

From 1999 – 2001 he has been Artistic-Academic Staff / Assistant to Prof. Zbigniew Rybczynski at the Academy of Media Arts Cologne. In 2003 he took together with the curator Montse Badia a Guest-professorship at the London Goldsmiths College – Centre for Cultural Studies (subject-matter: „Artistic practices with media and related curatorial approaches – Strategies of presentation and intervention in the public sphere“). In 2004/05 he has been co-curator for the touring exhibition Paisatges Mediàtics produced by Fundació „la Caixa“ Barcelona.

His work as an artist has been multiple awarded and has been shown internationally among others: Apex Art in New York, VI. Biennale Architecture in Venice, “Bunkier Sztuki” in Krakow, “Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst Leipzig”, Museum of Modern Art Saitama in Urawa, “Sagacho Exhibit Space” in Tokyo and “Wilhelm Lehmbruck Museum Duisburg”.

A central aspect of his artistic practice is the fact that he is collecting images for more than 20 years. They are mostly publicly accessible images, such as from print media, TV, archives, the www and other sources. Those images have been the material for many of his multimedia-based artworks. The fact that these images are often part of our collective memory, motivated him to explore in his artistic discourse the connection between the public sphere, representation and human identity against the background of the increasing standardization worldwide.

For further information please look at www.andreas-kaufmann.com

ARTIST STATEMENT:

Art calls for quietness and concentration if it is to be developed and experienced beyond the bounds of selfish interests. When this happens, art helps us to live in a more human way. Art can also help people discover links and structures in the growing complexities of their lives. It does this through direct experience, which is prompting attentiveness and reflection and above all if art is dealing with content and realities that are taboo, distorted or seen as meaningless in the common consciousness of bourgeois civilizations. Thus art is a foodstuff for society, just as food and drink sustain the individual. Having said this, Art is a reminder of the necessities of life: the need for a broad and continuous learning, how to pass on what has been learned and the need to stay mentally open-minded.

Humans mostly grasp the importance of art and culture when they get into situations that are inflicting the question of meaning. Art is made by people for people, and is solely recognized as such by them. This means it is based on the practice of active sharing and communicating.

As a human being and artist, I try to fulfill this claim, and help to keep these manifold sources alive for future generations.

KLEINE KUNSTGESCHICHTSMASCHINE

Since 1991 this smoothly revolving slide-projection has flagged art institutions and other public spaces all over the world.



Despite the constant speed of rotation, the viewer is enabled to experience the artwork in various ways, depending on his own position in the space. Technical speaking the installation itself consists of a projector that is slowly revolving horizontally and counterclockwise. Every three minutes the projector makes one full revolution. The shortest distance from projector to wall is approximately 30 cm. On the walls opposite the projector, the image looks sharp and undistorted, but suddenly becomes extremely distorted, only to shrink to the point where only a small cluster of light is visible. Whenever the light drawing becomes blur – that is while projecting on the nearest wall – the image's speed of rotation appears to be very slow. As the distance between projector and wall increases, the projection seems to accelerate, although the actual speed remains unchanged.

The image is a quotation of Michelangelo's iconic illustration of the animating hand of God as painted in the ceiling of the Roman Sistine Chapel.

Rotating mechanism, projector, one slide

SEE VIDEO-DOCUMENTATION: [CLICK HERE](#)

VALUES ON DEMAND -

AN ONGOING PROJECT STARTED BY ANDREAS M. KAUFMANN IN 2005

Point of Departure/ Motivations

The project VALUES ON DEMAND is based on an ongoing taking of an inventory inside Constitutions, Human Rights Declarations and other normative papers of agreement from all over our planet. The investigation has been focused so far on the presence of normative Values, which are supposed to function as mission statement for societies and their governments. Considering the reality (or better the mediated reality) of course one may point at the gap between those claims and actualities (Guantanamo etc.) Thus it seems on the first glance obvious to query their effectiveness as a political and social tool. But are those values tools? Or are they guidelines? Or are they rather of different nature, beyond short termed usability and other economic imperatives?

Anyhow, normative Values / Conceptions and Ideas (at least those which deserve this denotation) exist, due to a slow time-consuming screening process over several generations, sometimes even centuries; and this seemingly inefficiency has been-, and maybe is still making sense, as long as humans have a vision or concept of eternity, or at least of a future, whose dawn is not yet in sight ...

Normative Values describe basic human conditions and are essentially valid beyond time specific circumstances, fashions and other moment guided interests: They share this quality also with really good artworks and other unforgettable pictures, e.g. from press-photography. Moreover value-based conceptions and pictures/images structure-wise seem to have a lot more in common: in their essence, in their function, in the way they are passed on and are encoded in collective memories... Last but not least both share the aspect of having a high degree of abstraction and condensation, which at a point is melting down individual multiplicity, into a single term (which then is qualifying a value), or into a single picture. Thus those Conceptions and pictures in that sense claim to be of everybody's concern and they are consistently subject to the public sphere.

After devastating catastrophes (like the World War II, or the Tsunami) or other heavy irritations, the collective memory and identity of a society has been ever since, a meaningful source of power to built up again a new sensible life as an Individual and in community. Here normative values play a significant roll in their diversified embodiments and envisions. Why? Because they and their manifestations, represent in a compressed way the whole human knowledge and experience throughout the respective own history, and with it the respective own civilization.

Due to the fact of economic globalization, the issue of world governments seems not anymore entirely absurd. And as Governments need legitimacy in the one or the other form, the question raises immediately: on which bases? - Most likely on the basis of proven normative Values. Considering the "competition of options", the question will be: Which are the ones?

However cyclically I am irritated. Currently I am irritated, because I am witnessing, that the society I am living in is loosing increasingly the ability to understand their own civilization, its basic condition and its strength. Even worse: This misconception has reached a new quality through the omnipresent claim of the mass media to represent and to create reality, with heavy consequences for the individual and the collective... flanking this tendency the increasing commercialization of our collective memory is draining the last free accessible source, to search and to find orientation in a more and more confusing world and will lead on top of it to heavy restrictions concerning the civil rights, because the access to our own identity, will be increasingly dependent on our income ...

The project *VALUES ON DEMAND* is approaching these issues with several artistic strategies and media, with humor and charm, with derision, mockery and acumen, and last but not least with artistic presence and qualities.

VALORS FUNDAMENTALS EN LES CONSTITUTIONS

VALORES FUNDAMENTALES EN LAS CONSTITUCIONES

FUNDAMENTAL VALUES IN CONSTITUTIONS

Dignity, Dignitat, Dignidad

Albania, Algeria, Angola, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Congo, Czech Republic, Fiji, Finland, India, Iran, Ireland, Kuwait, Mauritania, Namibia, Paraguay, Romania, Thailand, Tunisia, Zambia

Freedom, Llibertat, Libertad

Albania, France, Germany, Hawaii, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Lebanon, Libya, Nigeria, Macedonia, Mauritania, Paraguay, Poland

Equality, Igualtat, Igualdad

Algeria, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chechnya, China, Congo, Croatia, Ethiopia, France, Greece, India, Italy, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liberia, Macedonia, Mauritania, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Paraguay, Russia, Rwanda, Tibet, Turkey

Brotherhood, Fraternitat, Fraternidad

Congo, France, India, Iraq, Madagascar, Namibia, Nepal, Rwanda

Justice, Justícia, Justicia

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahrain, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chechen Republic, Congo, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, Hawaii, India, Iran, Ireland, Japan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liberia, Macedonia, Mongolia, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Poland, Romania, Zambia, Russia, Rwanda, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Tibet, Tunisia, Turkey, USA, Zambia

God, Deu, Dio

Afghanistan, Argentina, Bahrain, Brazil, Canada, Fiji, Iran, Liberia, Madagascar, Nigeria, Paraguay, Poland, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Switzerland, Tunisia

Love, Amor, Amor

Chechen Republic, Chechnya, Congo, Hawaii, Liberia, Russia, South Korea, Turkey

Respect, Respekte, Respetto

Czech Republic, Ethiopia, Fiji, Hawaii, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Madagascar, Poland, Russia, Rwanda, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Zambia

Tolerance, Tolerância, Tolerancia

Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Liberia

Identity, Identitat, Identidad

Albania, Algeria, Belarus, Croatia, Iran, Lebanon, Madagascar

Solidarity, Solidaritat, Solidaridad

Albania, Algeria, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Nigeria, Poland, Switzerland, Tibet

Welfare, Benestar, Bienestar

Argentina, Austria, Bahrain, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Germany, Great Britain, Nigeria, Switzerland, USA, Taiwan

Security, Seguretat, Seguridad

Brazil, Bulgaria, China, Cyprus, Estonia, Japan, Morocco, Oman, South Korea, Spain

Pluralism, Pluralisme, Pluralismo

Angola, Brazil, Rumania

Independence, Independencia, Independencia

Afghanistan, Algeria, Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, China, Congo, Fiji, Hawaii, Iran, Ireland, Lithuania, Mauritania, Mongolia, Paraguay, Poland, Portugal, South Korea, Switzerland, Syria

Peace, Pau, Paz

Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahrain, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chechnya, China, Congo, Croatia, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, Hawaii, Japan, Liberia, Macedonia, Madagascar, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Oman, Russia, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Switzerland, Tibet, Tunisia, Turkey, South Korea

Andreas M. Kaufmann

IN MEMORY OF...¹

Light installation, 2009

Hans Ulrich Reck²

PICTORIAL IDEAS – On the Revision of a Genuine Platonic Motif ³

One of the essential convictions of Plato's epistemological theory disemboogues into the claim that it is impossible to depict ideas. With Plato there may be 'pure', theoretical beholding. For 'theoreia' literally means: spiritual vision. Now is this meant metaphorically or is it to be understood literally? If meant literally then, in agreement with Plato, one would reveal his assignment of cognitive faculties: it would then not be due to a false opinion or a 'doxa' that something true and non-pictorial would become untrue through false empirical behold ability. It would simply be the wrong people unsuited to this who profaned the display of ideas in their assumption that spiritual beholding is performed in the same or similar way to visual beholding, i.e. real seeing offers the guarantee that with spiritual beholding it is not about just any random thought but about the undeniably fixed recognition of absolute validity. Now Plato's opinion is without doubt that this involves a previously determined qualification of someone not only gifted in real realisation, but also someone decidedly called to it. How this assignment proceeds is unclear. Plato's narrative loses itself here, not only in the mythical from whence it comes but consciously in a hermeticalness into which it wishes to flow. The speculations regarding a magical aura in the number around which the programme of human breeding revolves – as an obsession of a form of eugenics led by the philosophers, as critically developed by Karl R. Popper – obviously relate to decidedly aristocratically selective predestination teachings of those called to realisation. Due to this historically decisive process of selection the realisation must be reserved to a sphere of pure, non-pictorial images. Even if the original guise of the ideas is described as pure pictureless magnitudes, at the same time the ideas represent 'real images'. Precisely for this reason everything that is an empirical image is denounced as unimaginative and illegitimate.

Now when Andreas M. Kaufmann demonstrates the spiritual world – not of theoretical realisation but of practical reason, i.e. that self-imposition of binding freedom seen since Kant as implicitly possible – as a sphere of visual perceptibility, he aims at the centre of not just the theories of Plato but also of the construction of a world view in which the implicitness of the postulations of true behaviour, i.e. of ethics and freedom, have become both leading and problematic issues.

¹ Technical Details:

Approximately 60 kilogram (depends on the size of the space) of green afterglow-color; a Moving Head with a Video-Beamer (Type: "DL 1" or "DL 2" – both produced by HIGH END SYSTEMS); an external digital Video-Server if the DL 1 is used; a DMX – Recorder; applicable cables, mounts and other fittings.

² Dr. Hans Ulrich Reck is professor for Art History in the context of Mediatisation at the Media Art Academy Cologne. More information: <http://www.khm.de/kmw/reck/>

³ Source: Reck, Hans Ulrich: "BILDLICHE IDEEN – Zur Revision eines genuinen platonischen Motivs". In: Eine Höhle für Platon (Katalog zur gleichnamigen Ausstellung). Hg. Montag Stiftung Bildende Kunst Bonn. Verlag für Moderne Kunst Nürnberg 2009. ISBN 978-3-941185-91-3. S. 60 - 71.
Translated from German into English: Honecker und Bootz – Übersetzungen, Stuttgart





The temptation experienced when interacting with Kaufmann's staging exists in the spellbinding implicitness of the visual experiencing of ideas. While the words here do stand for concepts they are not just names for the conceptual issues. Instead they contain and – to put it in paradoxical terms – they show exactly those ideas they describe. As they say, paper does not blush. And at the end of the tunnel waits the light. It lightens up the situation; truths come to light, as they say. Walls as image bearers are less tolerant or patient. In its material form words thoughtlessly spoken or written might be arbitrarily unimportant, the smallest possible bearers of meaning: in Kaufmann's spherical staging they become really stirring content. They are no longer those hackneyed phrases worn out by politicians of the world politics-changing power of enlightened values and ideas but terms that confuse us with their powers of luminosity and pictorially. Projected onto precise segments of wall panels, floors, walls and ceiling they remain in the cube painted in luminous colour throughout, thereby creating a cave as a projection room, working not in the pre-sorted realm of ideas but only in the resonance of their projection.

Wherever people move in the light cone the lettering is shaded in its after-effect. The observers are present in the cave. They not only perceive each other but, inevitably, they also experience themselves as obstacles, nuisances or even as image-giving entities in a projection process. The cave is only perfect in and through this. With light and the exactly programmed moving-head projector ideas become insistent images as concepts.

The terms projected aim at the centre of that phenomenon of a social contract, which has determined western modelling of practical reason since Plato, that phenomenon of a constitution, of the creation of a social context that is executed as binding, controlling and forcing order. What values should guide us? What order is desirable? Is it the ideas, the political scheming, the nationalism, the political theocracy of the appointees within the exclusive state? Is it the demarcation between what is your own/your truth and other/wrong/external ones? Is it still the contrast between citizens appointed aristocratically through birth and fortune and non-native 'metics', dehumanised slaves or even externalised barbarians, i.e. all those unable to speak the language of the Greeks (those who are endogenous, indigenous) i.e. the language of truth that is of course always none other than each person's self-assertion of the order governing the sphere of life, the assertion of those who, as ones supposedly privileged and called to power, have indeed simply called themselves to precisely this power?

If this were not enough: In Kaufmann's interpretation of the issue one treatment emerges in the history of ideas of the leading terms for metaphysically substantiated political orders. This is because they appear here not as sublime, purely spiritual constructs but as physically powerful, materially stirring ones, as sculpture. The fact that the ideas are given a sculpted shape in the cave, not as literal descriptions of conceptual content but as representations of real existence, proves that Plato succumbs to a paradox. The ideas themselves can only be perceived in their conceptual force if they are present in the cave as mysterious entities of a physical presence, i.e. visually.

Pure ideas would be mere thought-contents, magnitudes of imagination. These would only be limited by visualisation. Going against usual expectations, Kaufmann's grand staging shows that the stirring power of the ideas is precisely that which is not purely conceptual but something that is able to produce sculptural effect. This is not a justification of the pictorial but proof beyond the Platonic aporia that pure beholding is only possible if it becomes pictureless. The concepts are indeed pictureless: Namely not as beheld magnitudes but as physical dynamisms in a visually stirred space.

Kaufmann's 'In Memory of ...' apexes in the proof that Plato's cave is the only probationary space for human ideas. It is because ideas become pictorially inductive magnitudes that it is possible to mistrust the lie of pictureless ideas as that of the actual inductive factors of power. It is a

cunning, momentous and essential reversal of the image defamation that has arisen from Platonic dualism. It is the close-up view of physically present pictures that forces us to understand the ideas as the active agents of our history, i.e. as something that is real precisely because of the pictorially of the ideas and because of the picturelessness of those powers formulated within the ideas. But all this not in the name of the truth of a few but in relation to the historic fates of one inevitability: for people the only things that are conceptually real are those that are materially real and those which can be seen and experienced in real life.

The history of human rights develops its effect as a real construction not powered by virtue of a nominalistic one. This is something not understood by those wanting to withdraw to the relativism of cultural sensitivity in the face of a civilizing obligation of the concepts of order of a constitutional state or social contract. This relativisation could not be executed in the name of ethics or practical reason but only in fundamental terms. With great aplomb Kaufmann's staging contradicts every fundamentalist curtailing of different designs of life. This ends where it began: in the claim that there are pure ideas and it is therefore about doing justice to these ideas in all their non-profane purity.



STUFFED SILENCE

is a Values on Demand project, dedicated to the Nigerian inventor of Afro Beat Fela Anikulapo Kuti and realized in co-operation with the musician Gabriel Ananda in 2005

SHORT ABSTRACT OF THE CONCEPTION

STUFFED SILENCE deals with the issue of rapid loss of identities, norms and values in our society. This process seems to be the result of the increasing standardization of the planet, consequently abolishing the need for thinking of alternatives.

The Nigerian musician *Fela Anikulapo Kuti*, with whose music I have been living for the last 20 years, has inspired *STUFFED SILENCE*. This installation was created in collaboration with the Musician Gabriel Ananda, who composed the soundtrack.

Fela Kuti was a very charismatic figure, which fused coherent expression, super grooves and very personal lyrics in a unique way. His was a sincere engagement in favor of human rights and a free and united Africa. This combination has always been fascinating for me.

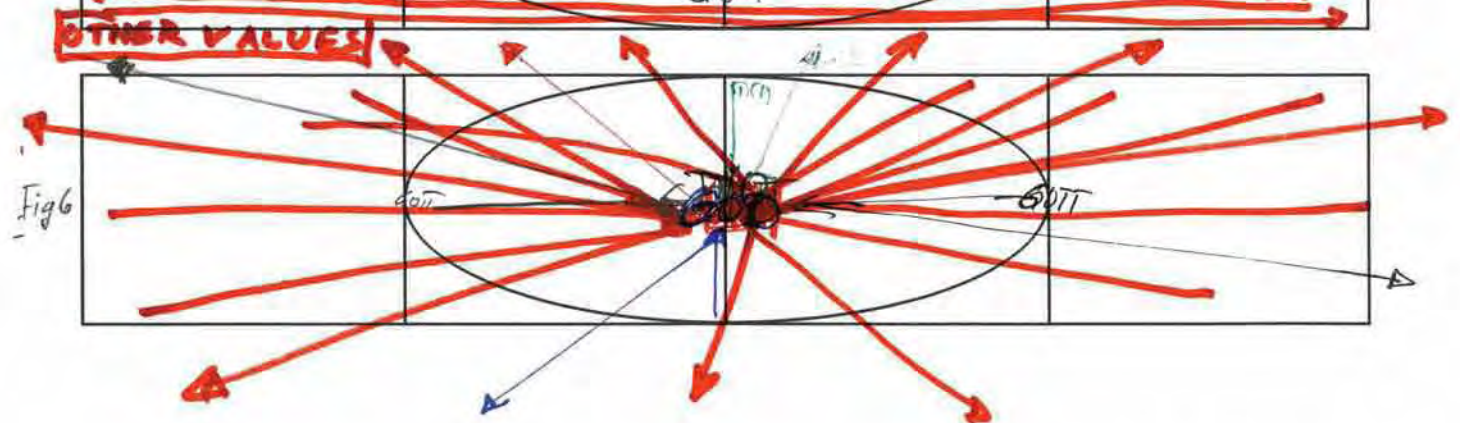
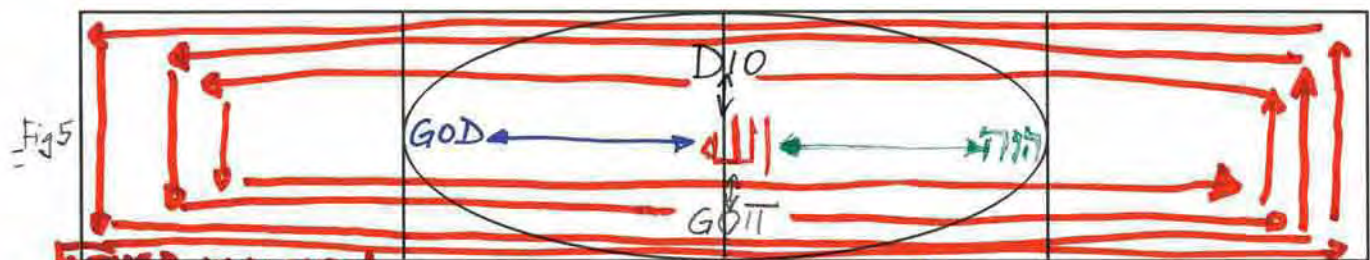
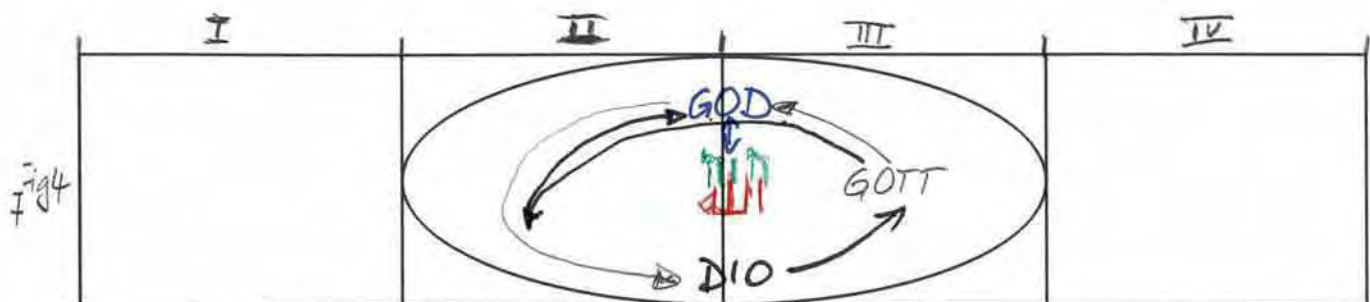
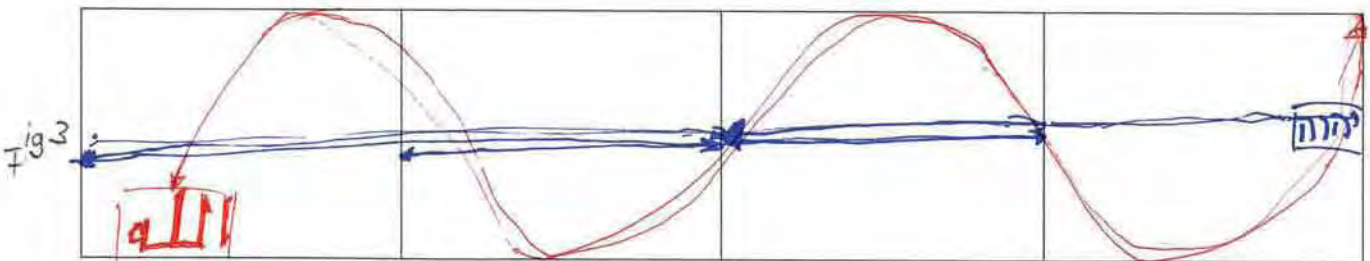
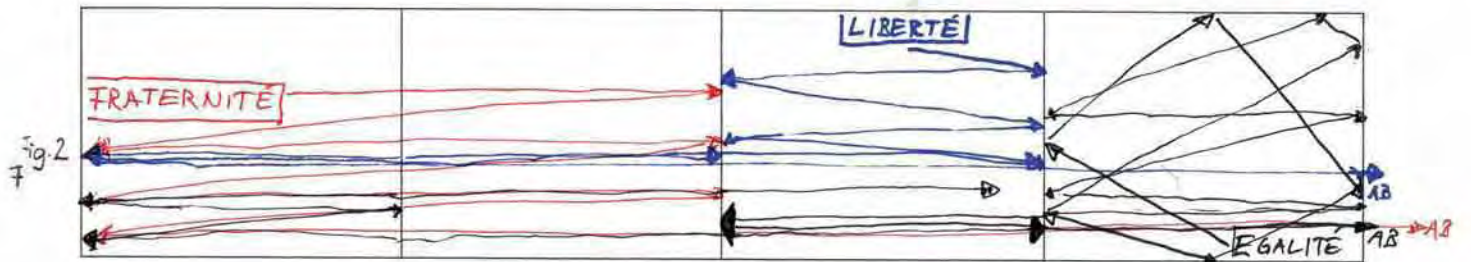
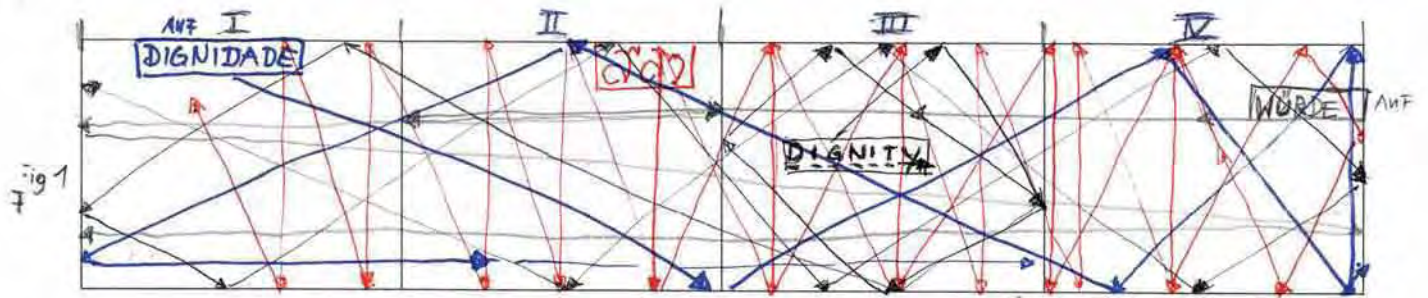
Since meeting Gabriel Ananda we have spent many nights talking about common structures in visual art and music. I soon understood that Gabriel's music (a sort of emotion evoking Techno) has much in common with Fela's Afro beat.

This was the beginning of a process that eventually culminated in the installation *STUFFED SILENCE*, which is based on an analysis of constitutions and human rights declarations from all over the world. The extracted verbal norms and values have been choreographed in this four-channel video-installation. In formal terms the Installation deals with touchable and untouchable borders of spaces. This installation can be installed in spaces, which are based on a square or a rectangular ground plan.

STUFFED SILENCE is part of the group of artworks, which are labeling under the title *VALUES ON DEMAND* (short: *VOD*); actually the umbrella project *VOD* has been rather motivated significantly through the process of realizing *STUFFED SILENCE*.

Technical Description:

Four-channel-video-installation consisting of a video-animation-film, four video beamers, one video server and mounting Material. Variable Dimensions.



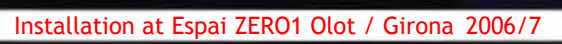
STUFFED SILENCE:
Installation conception

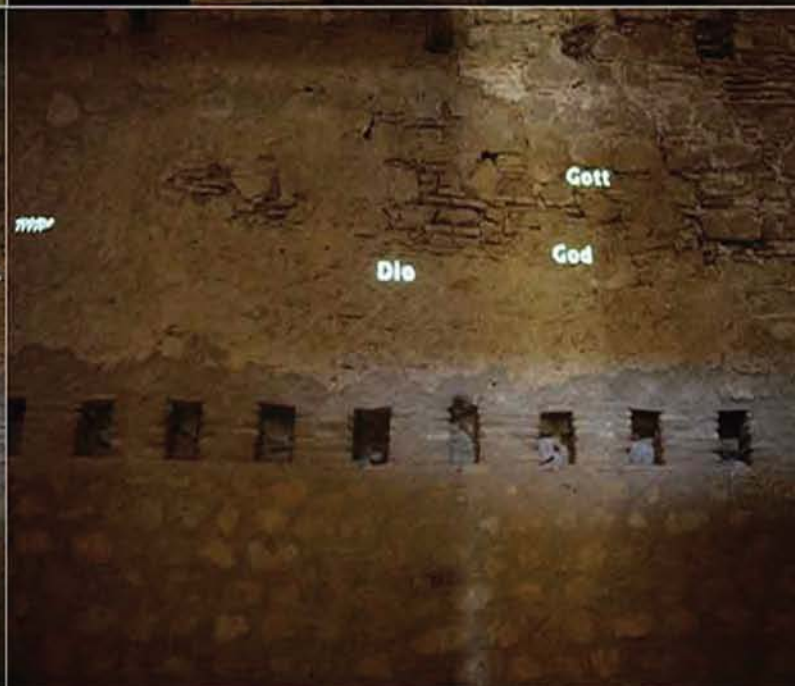


sectional drawing



ground plan





Installation at Forteresse de Salses 2008

IMAGE INTERMISSION *

A project for the Schildergasse, Cologne

Initial considerations:

When in April 1990 I visited what was then still the German Democratic Republic (GDR) to shoot photographs of the Communist propaganda images plastering the so-called public domain, I was initially gravely disappointed. Evidently, the GDR citizens had been very quick to get rid of this propaganda after the first 'free' elections. Apart from a few memorials in remote locations and some murals glorifying the proletariat, I didn't find any visual representations of Communism as a social form. Instead, the cities I saw were de-imaged, so to speak, since Marlboro, Lindt, Chiquita and the like had not yet inundated the billboards. The lettering advertising the shops was modest, mostly faded, and scarcely visible to the eye. There were hardly any traffic signs to add color to the streets. It occurred to me that the first modern cities of the 19th century, such as Paris or Berlin, must have looked something like that. Suddenly I knew what drove the masses to the then annual salon exhibitions in the Grand Palais – they were probably hungry for the images that had not yet started to flood public areas. If urbanity in the 19th century was always an expression of political and social self-understanding, its contemporary appearance is often that of a residual mass of banks, department stores and various means of transportation – devoid of identity, geared towards functionality, decorative at best. The urban realm is no longer a site of identity-giving communal experience, but the arena for delirious consumerism with a narcotic effect on the masses. Anything that interferes with this purpose of movements in public is unwelcome. This is the point at which 'Image Intermission', my proposed intervention, sets in.

The 'Image Intermission' project:

This project is a continuation of my previous work that asks the basic question: what does it mean to create a picture of something? What effect do images have on people? What do they mean to them? The concept underlying 'Image Intermission' is located between the private and public realms, and questions the image along the lines stated above.

My proposed public intervention is a conceivably simple act, yet highly complicated in the implementation, since it interferes with rights of ownership and commercial interests. In the centre of a shopping district such as the Schildergasse in Cologne, I would remove all displays of images and text for

a stretch of 100 to 200 meters. For instance, the shop windows would contain only merchandise with no printed matter or pictures, and the price tags would disappear, too – along with everything else in pictorial or written form. This 'image intermission' would end as abruptly as it starts.

It is likely that this de-imaging of the city would radically change the view of public space, and possibly bring about an impetus of disorientation that allows by passers to consciously experience both the aesthetic and psychosocial dimensions of the street. Some might instantly be struck by the planless results of urban planning. The hobo might be lying outside the same doorway still, but would be more visible due to the absence of colorful pictures to distract one's attention.

In this way, the intervention would expose the public displays of visual fast food to be a bourgeois concealment strategy. Liberated from its apparently fixed functional definition, urban space would become a multilayered and autonomous form of experience.

Disruption of accustomed viewing habits produces heightened attentiveness. And the latter stimulates reflection – hopefully!

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* The "PAUSEN PROJEKTE" or "INTERMISSION PROJECTS" are dealing with issues related to the public sphere and / or the public space. But they do not claim to be realized. In the contrary, they rather pretend that they have been already executed in a specific site. Actually the truth is that they exist only as more or less perfect simulations, aiming to look alike a photo- or video-graphical documentation – just as if everything has been that way.

NO AGREEMENT TODAY - NO AGREEMENT TOMORROW

Duration of the project: 2002 – 2028

NO AGREEMENT TODAY, NO AGREEMENT TOMORROW, Kaufmanns media sculpture for the roundabout tackles the urban situation of one of the most frequented squares in Bergkamen. The artist takes the shape of the roundabout for his structure and contrasts the bustle of his location with the self-containment of a round pavilion and the dynamics of his own visual world. Revolving projectors, each loaded with six continuous changing slides, create this light show on the all-round projection area. Slides scurry across the round glass surface. Passers-by can see a continuous parade of human Gestures, which change continuously, becoming larger, sharper or being blurred and distorted until they are unrecognizable, are superimposed, just becoming a light point or vanishing.

All the images are taken from the public sphere especially the mass media. Most of them related to the fields of Politics, Economics, Culture, Sport and Media, but there are also anonymous individuals. All the projected people are detached from their original context and with it they are detached from preconceived interpretations. The isolated people refer to nothing more than their human essence and state in the moment they had been photographed. By showing these public made humans isolated, no agreement today, no agreement tomorrow emphasizes the impossibility to equate their interest, and thus creates an contemporary image of the Shakespearian dictum “the world is all a stage”. Constitutional for this image today might be the omnipresence of mass media, which give many opportunities to express oneself in public, but creates few chances of real communication and real understanding.

As a sort of ritual, the artist will substitute every year one of the old slides with a new gesture of the previous year. Thus the media sculpture will have exchanged after 24 years the entire personage and it will represent the history of the first 24 years of this city gate. On the occasion of this ritual the Citizens have the chance to talk to the artist about the sculpture and related issues. The point in these discussion is not to exchange opinions and arguments in order to come eventually to a consensus; neither is the point to trigger direct participation towards the sculpture. The goal here is rather to know each other better and to built up an atmosphere of respect and confidence” (press release on the occasion of handing over *no agreement today, no agreement tomorrow* to the public of Bergkamen).

Going with it, of course I have to explain my personal motivation for invading Bergkamen (a town with 20 % unemployment) with this media-sculpture and why I choose figures like George W. Bush or Bin Laden as my personage. Background for taking this quite risky decision, is that I am deeply convinced that public spaces have its deeper sense in creating commune experiences and that they are not only the playground for commercial interests, architects, designers, artist etc.

Consequently the ritual will be not only happen in the town hall or other representative edifice. On the contrary it is planed to execute the ritual (submitting the new slide with the gesture of the just passed year to the city) changing sites in Bergkamen, like the “Turkish culture club” or the “association for breeding pigeons” etc. This might lower the fear of thresholds for the average citizen and it seems to me suitable to create friendly atmosphere for a real communication. Moreover the citizens of the town will not only know more about me and my sculpture, but equally they will know more about their own city, its inhabitants and not at least about themselves. Thus the

invading piece of art, built without any compromise, functions as much as an counter image to the reality of mass media as a trigger for a process of communication.

Thus this Ritual will change over the years both: the appearance of the sculpture and the mentality of the involved citizens; and hopefully as a result of this 24 years lasting process, the physical sculpture will be transformed into a real “Social Sculpture”... –



“Technical” Data: Architectural media sculpture with approx 6 m Diameter, build on a roundabout. It is basically made of steel and acrylic glass, with four revolving projectors loaded in total with 24 slides. Furthermore the sculpture is requiring engagement and discipline (as well from the artist, as from the citizen of Bergkamen) in order to execute the annual ritual and to keep an eye on possibly triggered occurrences in the city, during the period of 24 years.

* The title is the refrain of Fela Kuti's unforgettable tune "NO AGREEMENT"



Slide set of Gestures in 2004

ICH KANN, WEIL ICH WILL, WAS ICH MUSS

Kooperationsprojekt von Andreas M. Kaufmann und Prof. Dr. Hans Ulrich Reck im Rahmen der Kulturhauptstadt Europas Ruhr.2010

What's to know, to see and experience, in brief: The site-specific U-boat sculpture „I CAN, BECAUSE I WANT, WHAT I MUST“ is the result of collaboration between image scientist and art historian Prof. Dr. Hans Ulrich Reck and artist Andreas M. Kaufmann. Reck and Kaufmann have condensed the complex civil relationships embedded in the idea of “Energy”, and manifested them in the form of a submarine on the Baldeneysee. Appropriately staged in a location that is historically associated with energy supply and demand, the boat itself is modeled after the American submarines implemented during the cold war to vividly objectify exported wars in general, and the conflict potential around energy resources in and for Europe. Thus exemplifying our demand for power in order that we maintain our standard of living, the sculpture also thematically embraces the energy of subversive artistic creativity.

One must leave solid ground to fully experience the Kaufmann + Reck work. Like all the other pieces of art shown on the lake, the sculpture is accessible by small paddleboats, which are available on the Baldeneysee. From the shore, the viewer sees only what looks like the observation tower of a submarine. At closer range, one can see that there is a statement cut from the outer wall, „I CAN, BECAUSE I WANT, WHAT I MUST“ as a mirror-image – the sentence can be read at the proper and intended perspective from the inside.

Thousands of transparent slides from established commemorative archives are mounted as an image collage on the interior of the sculpture, and the cutout letters provide „windows“ that allow daylight to illuminate the collage. In this manner, the windows become monitors, thereby emphasizing only the images that are backlit by their shape, and limiting the access to the others. Atmospherically, the interior might remind the visitor of a Gothic chapel. Moreover, the energy from the sunlight that illuminates this picture-world during the day for the inside viewer, is stored and repurposed in the evenings to illuminate the windows from the inside outwards.

The image motifs concern collective memory, using publicly accessible images (press pictures from the last 20 years) that refer to the reality of social and political logic, and images of the visionary, the dreamy, the traumatic, and the obscure (i.e., stills from surrealist films, alchemic presentations, scientific and research simulations, fantasies of outer space, and works of art) – all forms of energy which our human logic probably commands far more than we admit to ourselves.

The swimming U-Boat Sculpture is crafted from 6mm thick steel, measures 16,6 meters long x 7.3 meters wide x 6.5 meters high (at the tower). It can be found at the Meidericher Dockyard In Duisburg.





Notes on some keywords to illustrate the method of the collage's construction: *

Remembering

All societies record their knowledge and memories on vehicles: in works, through media inscriptions on bodies and the Earth, in books, and in artworks. History is frequently not only a site for the production of truth, but also a field for expressing different truths — synchronically as opposites in a field of tension; that is, as the history of strategies, and diachronically as a sequence of variously dominant models; that is, as the history of power. Images are signposts, but sometimes they are only ruins on the terrain of pictorial memory. They always refer to the memory formation of a suprapersonal way of life.

Extending the Use of Images in Digital Contemporaneity

Memory is — described from its operational logic — always to be understood as a movement between remembering and forgetting, as continually choosing one of these two actions. In the back and forth movement between the two possibilities, the systems-theoretical function logic develops a concept of memory which dispenses with all notions of “seat”, “location”, “trace”, and so on. It is with regard to the difference between remembering and forgetting, that is, “inside” the memory, that the vital benefit of being able to forget becomes apparent: to open up temporal latitude in order to ward off being inundated with information, to retain flexibility in human processing of information. Technically, providing there are no glitches, digital archives can be expanded ad infinitum and are always accessible. Unlike the older material archives, digitised archives do not deteriorate through use. On the contrary: every time a digitised archive is used, its holdings are enlarged. As a phenomenon this is rather magical. By contrast the forms of official timelines of meaningful events — for example, art history or the idealist philosophy of history that it is based on — operate on the assumption of transient, unique, and original items. In short, the singularity of a digital archive may be characterised as follows: the computer is incapable of remembering and phobic about forgetting. It does not possess specific memory traits or learning capacity where the relationship to the world comprises experience as arbitrary associations. Whoever or whatever is incapable of forgetting does not possess a memory.

From Style to Fiction. André Malraux and the Musée Imaginaire

The eminent art historian Jacob Burckhardt was not the only one to write analyses of artworks based on photographs. If one has studied the manipulative tricks of the great and less great art historians, for instance, taking Masaccio's Holy Trinity (ca. 1426) as an example, one is cured forever from complying with the pledge of secrecy towards the numinous and the real presence of the immensurable that they demand in the name of authenticity. In his legendary book *Le Musée Imaginaire de la sculpture mondiale* of 1947 André Malraux astutely named prerequisites and consequences of these phenomena, yet the immanent conditions he marked out have not become a generally accepted part of consciousness. Malraux rightly stated — following Walter Benjamin — that the conception of art indebted to the values of authentic, skilful, and unique production has

been replaced by the art of fiction on the part of the recipients. The fiction of art as homage to the authentic has yielded to the art of fiction as a montage of what is conceivable. The alarmingly simple fact that in modern technological society we have always been aware of art via reproductions invests the reproduction as a technical form of perception with proportionate importance of varying accentuations. Knowledge of and admiration for art presupposes comparability. Technical reproduction makes this possible. The equality of works of similar type is enhanced by the proximity of reproductions. Style and masterpiece are defined within the montage of images — as a form the image has itself become a montage — no longer through exclusion, but through relatedness. In this way technical reproducibility enables productive aesthetic associativity.

Art and Science

Today, science is no longer exclusively the production of knowledge by empirical methods, but is increasingly oriented on ever more complexity because of the accumulation of uncertainty. Science in risk society is obliged to develop a different model of cognition; one that is no longer deductive or positivist. Amongst other things this means that science increasingly has to examine its principles and engage with all the problems that result from unpredictable outcomes. Science is increasingly interrogated critically, and reacts to rising scepticism by consolidating its power base and by trying to gain acceptance through wholesale bribery and promises of future progress (increased longevity, creation of life in a test tube, etc.) Art and science differ from each other through their social definition. Their meaning is not carved in stone, nor is it normative. Their meaning is their utilisation in society. However, no credence should be given to claims of inherent holism for the different functions of art and science make them de facto different. In the area of research policy it is nevertheless important to continue to strive for recognition of common basic groundwork. Obstacles here are irrational hierarchies of values, apportionment of prestige, pure and simple customs and habits. Above all else, science and art mirror the socialisation history of scientists and artists.

GROSSE KUNSTGESCHICHTSMASCHINERIE / 1992

INSITU: Bright Light - International Contemporary Art auf Schloss Presteneck 1993



[SEE VIDEO-DOCUMENTATION CLICK HERE](#)



The large art history machine is an installation comprising an infinite number of light collages derived from reproductions of 280 paintings: all greatest hits in the history of art. Each carousel contains two identical sets of 40 images. The images are by 40 different artists and are arranged chronologically. Each projector contains a different example of the work of each artist. Thus each compartment number „1“ contains a work by Giotto, while compartment number „40“ contains always a work by a contemporary artist. The varying speeds at which the carousels turn is determined by timers in such a way that when the projectors are started simultaneously and begin by projecting a work by Giotto, the installation gradually becomes increasingly asynchronous.

7 rotating mechanisms, 7 Kodak Carousel projectors, 560 slides



ORTLOS

Gasometer Oberhausen 1996

My primary interest in the current situation in the Ruhr is how its industrial edifices and their machines, which were formerly conceived as functional, have lost their original function through the structural changes in that area. What have remained are bodies whose formal characteristics step into the foreground. In spite of any individuality they may have, they follow certain patterns. As icons of the industrial age they refer to a reality that is increasingly historicized or is already history. This architecture gave the area its original identity. Many edifices that are still present in our minds no longer stand. They have been torn down over the past twenty years in order to repress the old image of the Ruhr.

These stand opposite to as-yet unrealized architecture, economic, space and city planning that are supposed to give the area its new identity. As blue prints, their existence is relatively shadowy if not sketchy. The past, present and future are immaterial and intangible. We only have access to a present that lies in between as indefinable. Everything is in motion, in search of a new place.

For the exhibition “ICH PHOENIX - ein Kunstereignis”, I re-worked drawings and photographs from various archives into pictogram-like signs until they were ultimately project able slides.

A rotating stage projector equipped with a circular cartridge and corresponding controls projected onto two embankments, the “Gasometer” and a strip of woods. The projection appeared either relatively in focus and undistorted according to the position of its furthest projected distance, or was quickly distorted, fragmented and compressed until only a speck of light was visible at the shortest distance of the projection.

The different perceptible signs of light that wandered through the area during the intervention at the “Gasometer” transformed the architecture and functions that belonged to the past in to placeless (“ortlos”) and moving memory fragments, and freed them as ambiguous, autonomous forms.

Technical Data: Rotating table, stage projector with circular cartridge and controls, 15 slide, 15 B&W-slides, digital control unit





“WHY ARE CONCEPTUAL ARTISTS PAINTING AGAIN? BECAUSE THEY THINK IT’S A GOOD IDEA“ (JAN VERWOERT)

THE *INNOCENT COLORS* PROJECT

CONCEPTION:

INNOCENT COLORS is an ongoing project, which started with a collection of News, the related headlines and illustrations, downloaded systematical from the World Wide Web. The project is about creating a color-encoded archive of our Global communication based on this increasing material. It points at the psychoactive and therewith manipulative potential of press-photography.

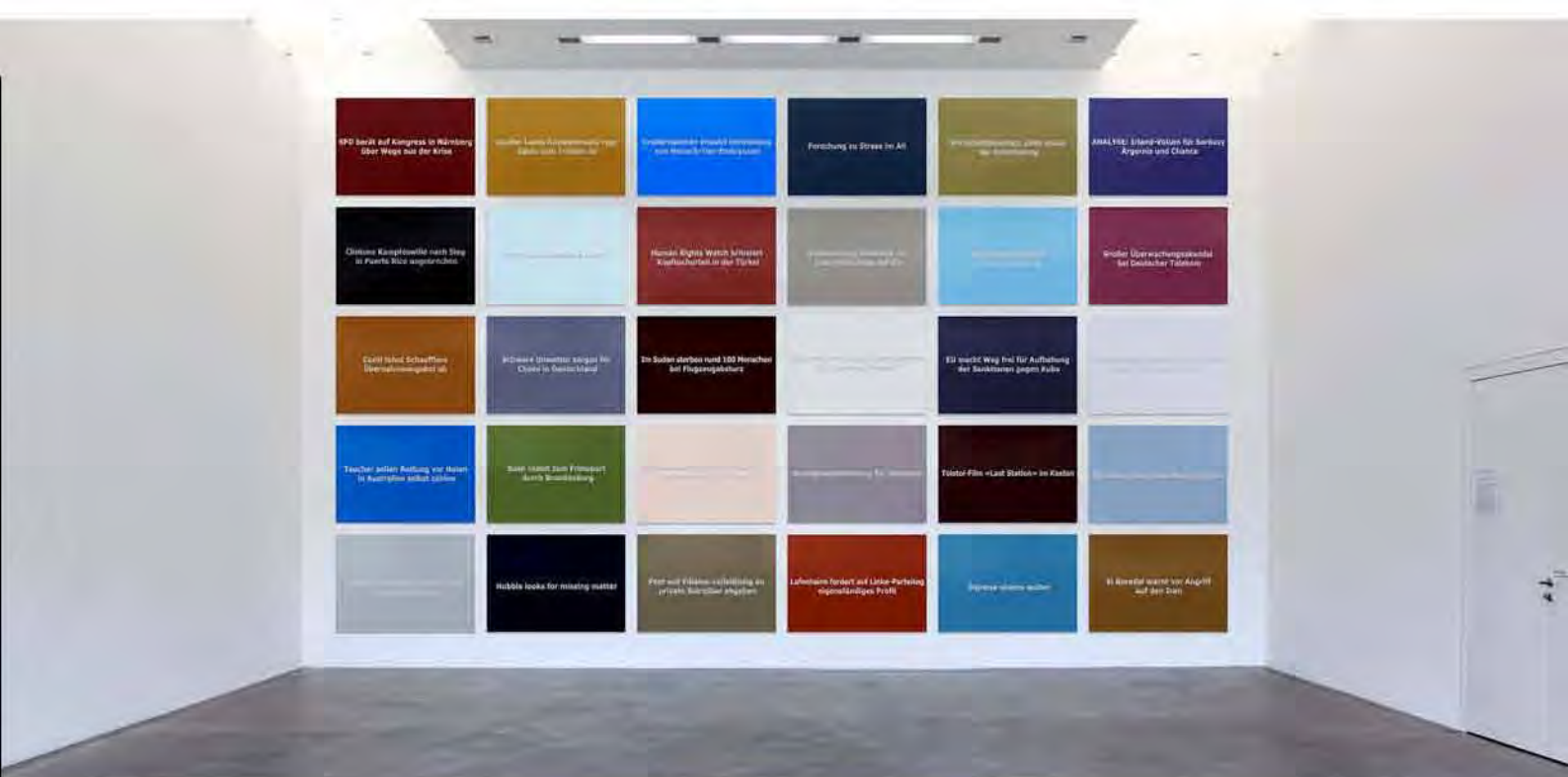
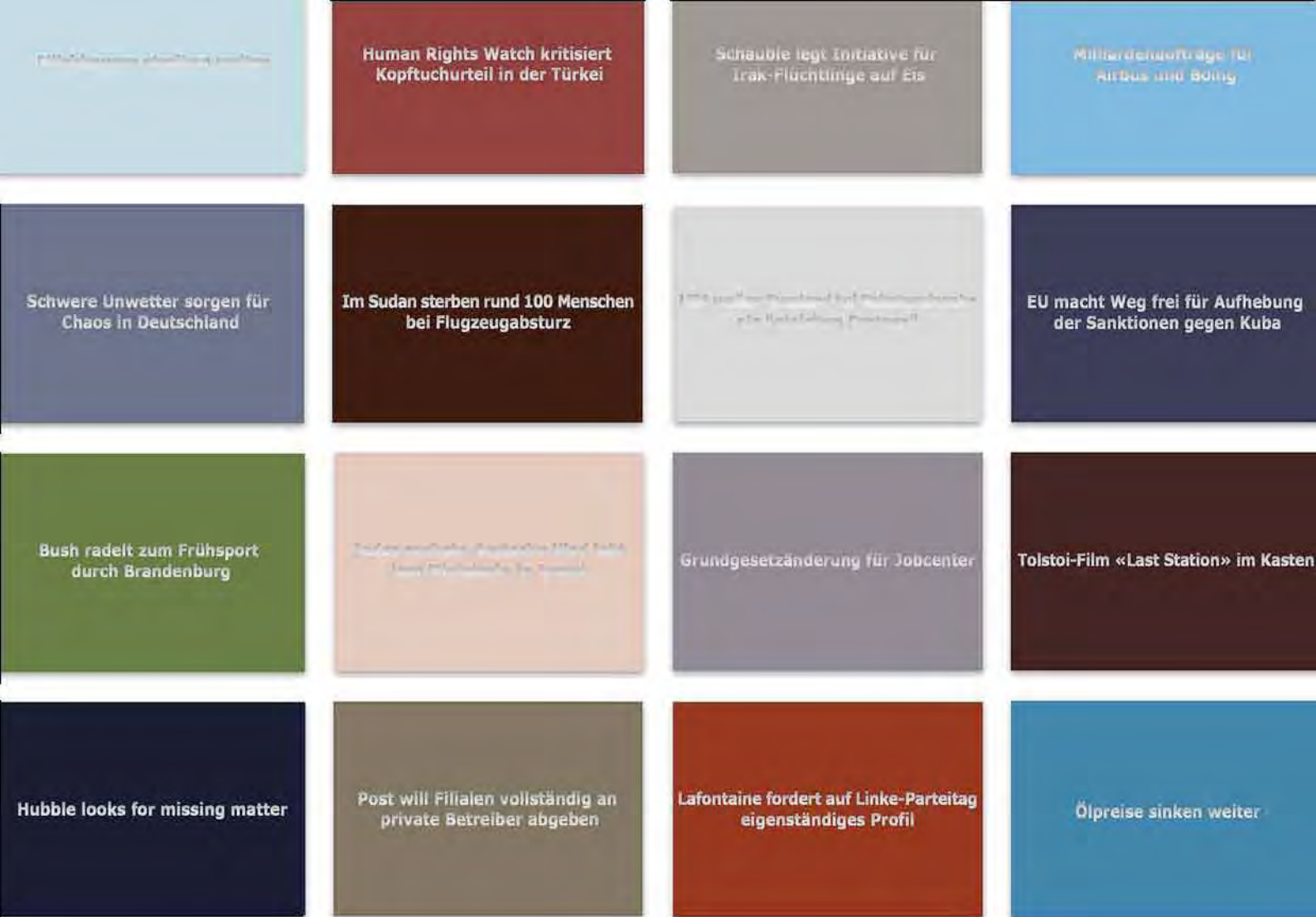
The Point of departure has been two observations:

1. Most news in the Internet appear illustrated with a photograph – casually with a photo I have seen already in a different context. The question arouses: to which extent the image is illustrating the information of the headline and the subsequent text? Moreover: Does the photograph in this context may have a function, which goes beyond denotative information?
2. The program “Photoshop” is providing a filter called “Average”, which is defining the actual average color of any kind of image. This filter functions actually like a colorimeter, which is analyzing the amount of RGB or CMYK: Applying this filter, e.g. a photo transforms into a clearly defined color of existing color-charts.

To each chosen illustration will be applied the abovementioned filter. As a result there will be plenty of exact defined colors respectively grey-tones and related headlines. All those colors and headlines can be thus allocated to a Pantone color value.

The headlines will be countersunk in a 3 mm aluminum plate – a material, which is dimensionally stable. After the application of the rotary cutter the plate will be lacquered with the Pantone color relating to the milled headline. Eventually there will be in different colors lacquered aluminum plates with the perforated headlines as holes, which will allow a glance onto what will be behind that plate.

TECHNICAL DATA: milled aluminum blank sheet, with monochrome color (matt).



Insitu: Kunsthalle Ziegelhütte Switzerland / 2011

THE BOOK PROJECT

(2002 – 2005)

press release:

Since summer 2005 the artist-book »on the occasion of an exhibition of Andreas M. Kaufmann at Bunkier Sztuki Kraków 2002« is officially available. This book and its process of creation have been always considered as something alive, with several stages. Being published, it has gone already through several phases of its public existence: it has got a sort of own biography! Before being published the book has been manifested itself in public two times: in the exhibition curated by Maria Anna Potocka “100%” at Bunkier Sztuki Kraków (2002) and in at the exhibition: “Claude Lévêque, Andreas M. Kaufmann, Dan Graham: Palais des arts - Present Distance” (Curator: Lydia Hempel / Site: “Palais im großen Garten”, Dresden (2005). This biographical process will hopefully go on in the heads of the viewers / readers, in form of texts about, book-presentations, new projects triggered by, etc.

The artist Andreas M. Kaufmann, who initiated this project, which has become the book »On the occasion of an exhibition of Andreas M. Kaufmann at Bunkier Sztuki Kraków 2002« considers himself in this case as key player who just has asked over 100 pretty different people worldwide for a reaction towards a selection of public accessible images, all collected by him. He reduced his role to deal with the authors, to organize the received materials and to write eventually the editorial “After All” which gives clues, what the book is all about.

It is a collaborative and nonprofit book project with 101 contributions – most of them made exclusively for this publication and all by different authors, such as architects, designers, filmmakers, artists, critics and curators etc from all over the world.

The book opens up to the outside by referring and linking itself to other media. It follows issues that are situated in the complex field of the "local" and "global" and asks for the collective memory/memories questioning if there can be a copyright on them. Being rather organized like a film-story-board, it subversively undermine of what one would generally expect from a book: In the main part of the Book all contributions are displayed in the original language they had been submitted; and the names of the respective authors as a rule can only be found in in the second part of this book called “references” unless the contribution is a letter for which sender and receiver are constitutional. Here however one may find most translations, names and biographies of the respective authors, additional information, etc. All texts have been translated into Polish and English.

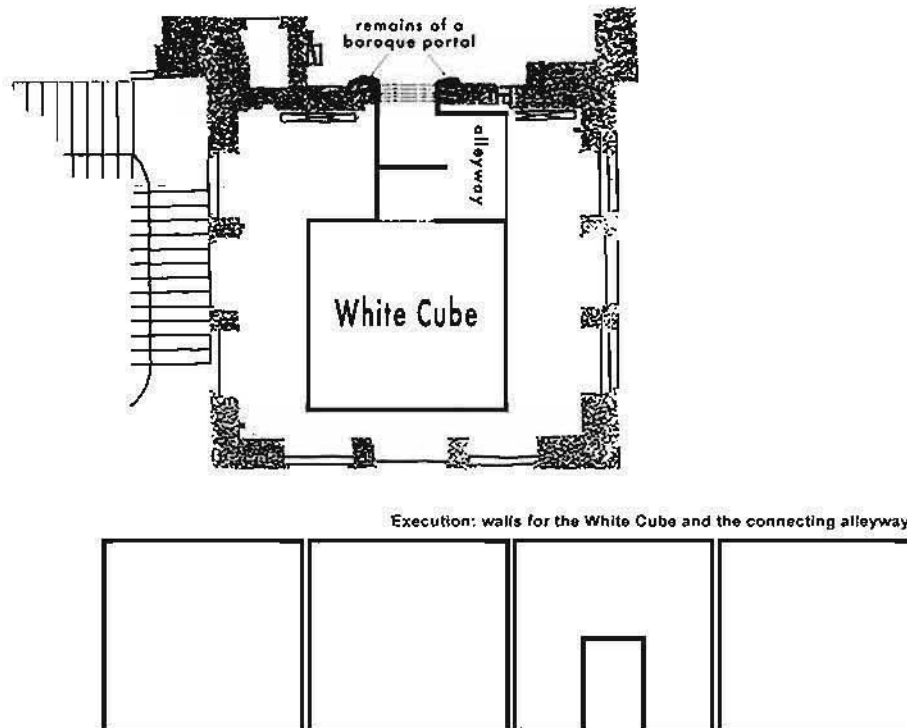
Last but not least the book is also to be understood as a exhibition space and an as object that wants to be used.



presentation of the bookproject as a work in progress at Bunkier Sztuki Kraków, october/november 2002

CONCEPT FOR THE EXHIBITION:

Palais des Arts – Present Distance: Dan Graham, Andreas M. Kaufmann, Claude Lévêque



The "Palais im Grossen Garten Dresden" is a baroque castle. On its apex it served all sorts of pleasures. Towards today's center of the city of Dresden, it is placed in a remote site. The exhibition "Palais des Arts - Present Distance" considers concept-wise this prevailing circumstance. My proposal is a reaction to both, the exhibition concept and the context of the site: I want to build a "White Cube" in one of the corner-rooms in the first floor with bright light and beautiful view towards the surrounding baroque park. The White Cube is supposed to quote a platonic body: six equal sides by 4,5 x 4,5 x 4,5 meter, with no windows and just one entrance.

The visitor enters the sober inside of the "White Cube" through the remains of a formerly rich decorated portal and a little corridor, which relates in formal terms to the aesthetics of the building White Cube. Being inside this implemented space, there is no visual connection to outside. Thus I detract a part of the castle's space from it self and its surroundings, alike the castle is far-flung from the center of the city. The inside of the White Cube is furnished only with a small white table and a black chair – on the table a copy of my not yet officially published book "on the occasion of an exhibition of andreas m. kaufmann at bunkier sztuki krakow 2002". It contains as well approximately 500 selected images from my collection, which mostly are stemmed from mass media, as 101 reactions towards these selection coming from all over the world. In such monadic formation the book somehow start to represent everything outside the white box, outside the castle, outside the park, outside the city, outside Germany, outside Europe, outside the planet and eventually everything from the frontiers of our imagination.



AFTER ALL

I believe in sharing. Issues of the ownership of the collective memory, sharing and exchanging have been leitmotifs in this project. Until now, the basis of my collection of images has been those that mass media makes available in the public domain. It is a selection of the appropriated images I have shared with the authors of this book.

In return, they shared their reaction towards these public images with me. In addition, everybody involved in this book project shared stories, situations, and anecdotes, which occurred because of the project and which could potentially be another reason to create images. Eventually the book brings the results of this process back into the public sphere. It is connected with the hope for more reactions, which will enrich the visual and text based discourse on visibility, image, the ownership of our collective memory and the public sphere.

Actually, the idea for this project came to me during the preparation of a solo exhibition at Bunkier Sztuki Kraków, which is the name of Cracow's Center for Contemporary Art. Since a rather voluminous book on my work of the past 10 years was published in 2000, it seemed a bit boring to see all these photographs again with critical texts in – for a change – Polish. At the time, I was more attracted by the idea of making a book about the reasons and premises of my artistic work, which is basically the fact that I have been collecting images for approximately 20 years. These images are taken from the daily and weekly press; they are stills of video-recordings of films and TV news – more or less reproduced public images. I wanted to share them with colleagues, critics and curators among others. Thus I offered a group of people who are somehow close to my artistic practice or to issues I am dealing with, access to a part of this very subjective collection as an inspiration to create texts and images that respond to the interest of their authors and not to a hermeneutic exercise. My interest has been to see what kind of thoughts and imaginations the sent material would evoke.

In the end, over 130 people received the invitation to join me in this project. The response to my proposal has been unexpectedly strong and overwhelming: 101 individuals have sent a contribution. Thank you all for engaging so generously! It has made me really happy!

The methodology of this project can be considered a game, which I initiated by producing a CD-ROM with a personal and moment-guided choice of the compiled images. A general rule based on action and reaction was established: each author received a CD-ROM with the material that has been the inspiration, motor and core of my own work. Of course this does not mean that I have used all of them in my artworks. On the contrary, in this compilation there are very few images used in my own work. Through this project they have again become a medium of exchange. In return I received reactions, which range from emotions of creative excitement to statements like: „I can't do anything with the material you present“ or even more frustrated reactions, “Why did you make me look again at this horror?” (The book may give answers). Of course I do not evaluate the statements, because I believe that a non-ideological approach to subjects generates more interesting discourses.

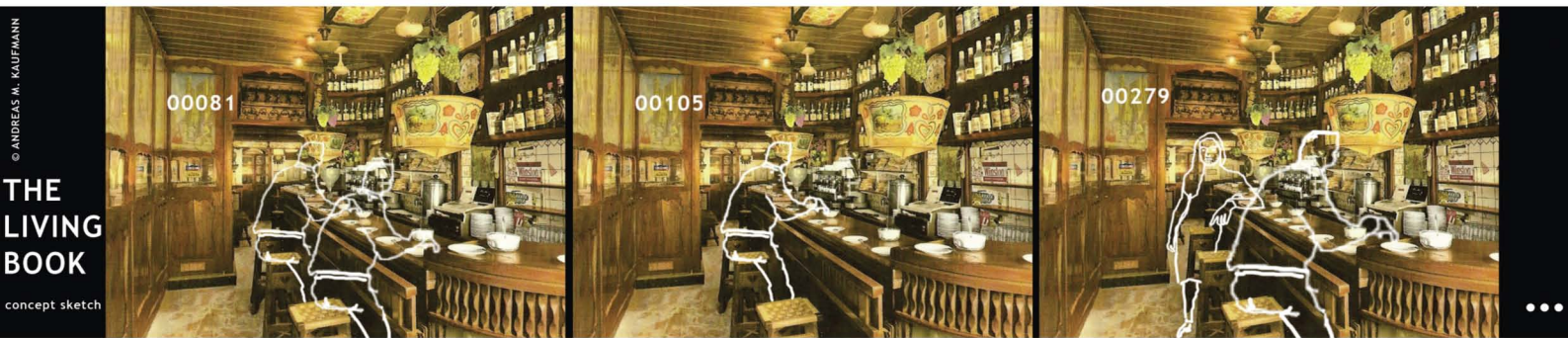
Consequently the authors invited to this project had complete freedom to deal with the material. They could react to my invitation through texts, collages, new images, sounds or other ideas. The only thing I really wanted to trigger has been authenticity in the reaction. There is no need to say that I did not necessarily expect text contributions from curators or critics and contributions of images from artists.

However the project follows a visual strategy that is similar to my machineries. In this sense, I present a series of images in a compilation that produces new images and readings. My contribution in the context of this project has been to define the rules of production, to compile the images on the CD-ROM, and to create the presentation concept for the different contributions.

Many of the collected images on the CD-ROM deal with political, social and global issues. Characteristically, those images invade us in an unpredictable order. Considering this aspect of the discontinuous invasion to our consciousness and looking at the material received, I was sure that it would be completely uninteresting to organize it according to the alphabetical order of their authors or to mere thematically aspects. I felt the necessity to sequence the material due to spontaneous associations and to a rhythm, which follows closer to the rule of how I would edit a film. As a consequence of this, the reactions of the authors were put together more in terms of confrontations, montage, hard cuts and transitions – all strategies, which create a (more circular) narrative beyond academic and simply thematic discourses. In order not to distract from this narrative, the main part of the book does not present the authors name with his or her contribution, unless the reaction to the CD-ROM was a letter, for which receiver and sender are constitutional. The relationship between contribution and author is linked through the second part, which contains all relevant references, such as page references, biographical notes, translations and in some cases additional information to what is shown in the main part. As the contributors are coming from all over the world, another principle of the book is, in the case of texts, we kept the original language in the main part and put the translations into the reference. This creates a wonderful polyphony of voices and simultaneously guarantees a maximum of authenticity.

The book is an attempt to approach the issues connected with images, collective memory, mediatization and the public sphere in an explicitly personal way. In sharing the images I also share my insecurity towards them. This is why they keep me busy; and as they do with me I hope the book will do so with you.





THE LIVING BOOK

Project Sketch

In an old Bar in Barcelona I'm installing an eight-numbered projection of numerary. This counts over 1 month from number "000000001" until the month is over. In that time the counter switches every 15 seconds to the next higher numeric value.

During that time I imagine, that this consecutive counting appears like the one of a watch, just that this happens in another metering time period, as the units: seconds, minutes & hours; here, the minute just has 4 and not 60, and one hour just has $4 \times 60 = 240$ and not 3.600 and a day just has $4 \times 60 \times 24 = 5.760$ and not 86400 units.

Undergone time is clocked here and the special incidence gets connected with the casual noticed Number: The often-subjective braked up life itself gets exhibited.

This noticed Connection might remind the visitor of the bar to think about on what we remind when, where and why. Maybe the visitor can see other visitors, that are watching the same scene as himself and he/she may think about, what the other visitor will remind of all this later on – as the mountain of numerary is continuously growing....

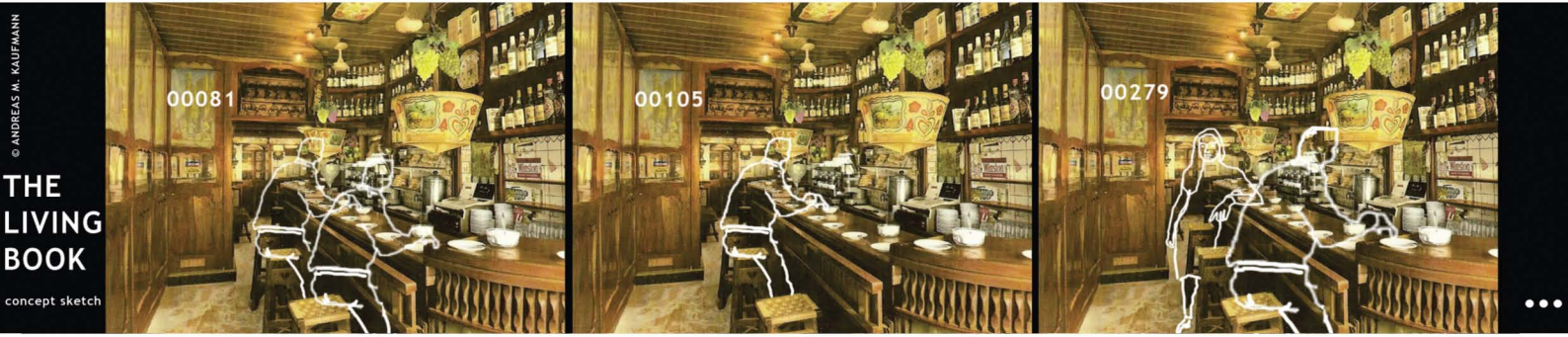
© Andreas M. Kaufmann im August/ September 2010



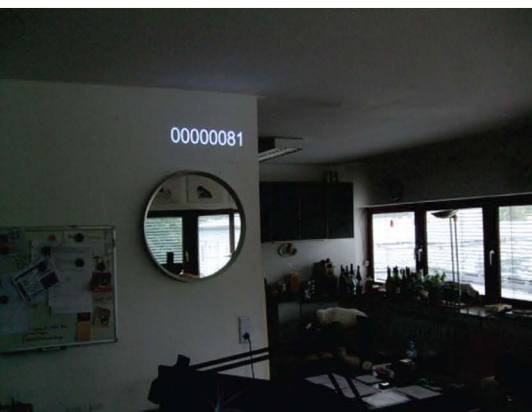
Test in my studio



In-situ: Festival Liliput 2010 BCN



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Test in my studio



In-situ: Festival Liliput 2010 BCN

PIERRE BISMUTH
CLAUDE CLOSKY
MINERVA CUEVAS
DANIEL GARCÍA ANDÚJAR
SWETLANA HEGER
CHRISTIAN JANKOWSKI
STEFANIE KLINGEMANN
MATTHIEU LAURETTE
ZBIGNIEW LIBERA
BJØRN MELHUS
JOAN MOREY
ESTER PARTEGAS
BARBARA VISSER

PAISATGES MEDIÀTICS



Any understanding of social and cultural change is impossible without the knowledge of the way media reshape our environment. We are more and more used to wars that are initiated in primetime, to presidents who visit the troops for Thanksgiving with fake Turkeys, to football players who are more glamorous and photogenic than good players, to armies which use inflatable tanks to give a powerful impression, to know all the details of the sexual affair of a president or to people who agrees in being operated in front of the cameras...

*"We have gone from the public space to the public image. The traditional city is organised around a public place, agora, forum or square. Starting with the 20th century, this space has been occupied by meeting rooms. Just think of the role of cinema in society over the last 40 years or of television nowadays. The primary city is a city in which what predominates is the public space, it is topical, whereas in the 20th century the city is no longer so bound up with this. We go from the theatre-city to the cinema-city and then to the tele-city. From a topical space to a teletopical space, in which the real time of the broadcasting of an event is imposed on the real space of the event itself. Tiananmen Square in 1989 was an extraordinary revelation. Here we had a teletopical event of the mass communications media as important as the landing on the moon twenty years before, in 1969."*¹

With this declaration, Paul Virilio sketches a perfect portrait of what we might define today as the global public sphere, determined by the leading role of electronic technologies of communication and information, which redraw the system of relations that connects the history of private life to a dynamic system of global information, and which reduces factors such as location to secondary status.

Actually, up to the time of the pinnacle of heavy industry as the leading economic factor, information or knowledge had been clearly located on specific places, administrated and communicated by specific people. With the rise global media, networks and communication, those places had become more abstract and the administration of these resources had become more anonymous. Likewise, chronological time – by nature extended – has been transformed into an intensive time of instantaneous novelties in which the individual, momentary gaze is more important than memory.

The global public sphere and the role played by the media in the (re)creation and (re)definition of reality have a great impact on the present. All the media reshape us completely. They are so persuasive in their personal, political, economic, aesthetic, psychological, moral, ethical, and social consequences, that they leave no part of us untouched or unaffected.

We live in a processed world. Mediatisation could be identified in many respects metaphorically with the concept of projection. In this sense, in both something is processed (information shaped as images and texts) to a point that the degree of visibility is directly proportional to the distance. Information moves instantaneously and globally. But this availability makes information also more vulnerable. To stay in the metaphor: Projections have their optimum of readability if they are projected onto flat surfaces. As soon as they hit a real spatial reality, projections reveal their

¹ VIRILIO, Paul. "Dromología: la lógica de la carrera. Una conversación con Giacinto Daghini", in *Media Culture*. Claudia Giannetti (ed.). L'Angelot, Barcelona, 1995 (p. 78)

potential of distortion and manipulation, which in fact is the other side, their real nature. This is known since the virtual space (the seemingly space of paintings and screens) has been described in the early Renaissance with the geometry of linear perspective. The form in which appeared this knowledge is called “anamorphosis”, and is based on an extreme use of this geometry. A famous example is the mural of a cupola in the church of St. Ignatius in Rom, done by Andrea Pozzo. Only from a specific point of view, which is marked on the ground of the church, the painted architecture is present as a perfect illusion. From any other point of view the painted form decline in more or less readable relics of perception. The geometry of lineal perspective (and with it the one of the “Anamorphosis”) has determined the most significant part of the picture production in western civilization during the last 500 years –and it still does in the mass media.

“*The medium is the message*” of Marshall McLuhan is now truer than he could ever imagine. Through media such as the telephone, television, the personal computer and the Internet, we are increasingly linked together across the globe. We can now hear and see events taking place very far away in a matter of seconds, often quicker than we hear of events in our own neighbourhood. This is exactly what Marshall McLuhan predicted: “‘*Time*’ has ceased, ‘*space*’ has vanished. *We now live in a global village... a simultaneous happening.*”² The broadcast images of the I Gulf War are a good example of McLuhan’s vision, and go even further. Watching the missiles approaching their target from the point of view of the pilot or the rocket, we do not experience the events solely through our own ears and eyes. Through technology we bring the action closer to us, so the pilot can get a better shot, but this also enables us to stay at a safe physical distance. The TV screen has transformed into a computer game with invisible victims.

Media and victims, media and war have been always together... “*There is no war without photography*” said Ernst Jünger in 1930. In the recent Iraq Attacks (and let’s not forget the media name of the operation, “Enduring Freedom”) war reporters who accompanied soldiers, filmed and recorded the comments of the soldiers on shots, and their impressions after having hit their targets. In contrast to this depiction the victims were treated as collateral damage and broadcasted as humans of real flesh and blood. In the war against “the enemies of America” there are still different rules concerning what can be or can’t be shown: the images of the corpses of the sons of Saddam can be shown all over the world, but not the coffins of the American soldiers; Saddam in the moment of the capture, but not the American prisoners. But also, the preservation of these rules has interstices in between, and forbidden images or information are filtrated: the bloodcurdling images of the tortures to Iraqi prisoners in the jail of Abu Ghraib...

Paradoxically enough, we live in a time of “transparency” and “lightness”: the glass is dominating in architecture (with the glass cupola of the Reichstag in Berlin as an paradigm of the transparency of the political class), and even, the former Inner Minister Angel Acebes was insisting in “transparency” as a value when he was communicating news (100% manipulated) during the eve of the Spanish Elections last March.

We may like it or dislike it, but television plays a central role in configuring the way society thinks. As Barbara Nierhoff points out: “*The mirror of the media age is the television screen.*”³ Television transforms events into ideas in the social imagination (It is not a coincidence that the main character of the film *Good bye Lenin* recreates the reality of the former DDR, specially TV news, to avoid her mother the shock of waking up from a coma and witness that all her values and understanding of

² McLUHAN, Marshall. *Understanding Media: the extensions of man*. McGraw-Hill, New York, 1964 (p. 63)

³ NIERHOFF, Barbara. “What form divinely fair within this magic mirror is revealed!” in *Bjørn Melhus* (catalogue) Kunsthalle Bremen / Hauschild Bremen, 2002 (p. 37)

life have fallen apart). What does not appear on TV does not exist socially and, in this sense, live broadcasting is a conceptual revolution, which allows us to be at a distance and at the same time in the place where things are happening. The spectator is physically distant but emotionally close, participating in the broadcast event. Watching becomes more important than living⁴. The ritual assembly in front of the TV for a live transmission is a way of identifying, of sharing the same sensibility, with other anonymous – and this is new – spectators. The events, which are broadcast live are related to universal arguments: the conquest (the landing of a man on the moon), rites of passage (coronations, royal weddings or funerals), the reward (the Oscar awards)⁵, etc. Broadcasting live follows a strict script in which everything is planned until the latest detail. That's why the live event is only 100% live when the script is disrupted and the camera movements appear nervous and imprecise. One of the first examples of this was in 1969 on a local TV station in Dallas, when a banal conversation between two ladies was interrupted by a nervous journalist announcing Kennedy's murder.

The efficiency of the attacks of September 11th was carefully planned not only as regards their physical, political, economic and sociologic consequences, but also their media impact. With almost perfect timing, the 15 minutes which separated the impact of the first plane on the North Tower and the shock to the South Tower allowed all the TV channels in the world to connect up and witness the second impact and subsequent collapse live. After the initial confusion, the images of the impacts were repeated again and again, and, after a while, they returned to the script: to the individual stories of the victims.

In the politics of the age before TV, charisma was the most important element of leadership, it being that rare ability of leaders to inspire loyalty and faith in the legitimacy of their autonomy. In the age of TV, political charisma as an intrinsic characteristic of personality has been substituted by charm, a value susceptible of being designed, implanted and retouched. Political images, polls and voter preferences are extremely sensitive to charm. Each time a politician makes a public speech, there is a meticulous art direction work, which defines if the politician has to wear formal or casual clothes, or even military uniform, and also there is a strict casting of the people who appear next to him. But from time to time, this rigid scenario is broken and makes evident all these mechanisms, as it happened during a speech of George Bush in Orange County (Florida) when a 12 year old boy, situated in the stage close to the president, couldn't stop yawning during the 15 minutes of Bush' speech for desperation of the other extras in the scene, not to talk about the president's image advisers.

“We live in a time of fictive election results, which decide a fictive president, who send us to a war for fictive reasons”. This is the way the filmmaker Michael Moore referred to our present during the Oscar ceremony award in March 2003. Politicians do not rule the world anymore, the world is now ruled by commercial interest and lobbies, which have more power than the political debates. Recently, the magazine *Forbes* published a survey of the 50 more powerful people in the world. There was not a single politician in this survey, but directors of multinationals or economical empires.

⁴ Although this experience is not really new: During the historical period called “Roccoco” especially the ladies of the high society loved to drink tea at vantage points while they where watching through their operaglasses battles which happend in a secure distance.

⁵ AAVV, *Món TV. La cultura de la televisió* (catalogue). Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona (CCCB), Barcelona 1999

In these days of the end of ideologies and mass-unemployment, as a result of globalisation and technisation of work, entertainment becomes the super-ideology of TV discourse, not only through TV series, sitcoms and soap operas but also through a new concept, *infotainment* (information and entertainment) now derived into *wartainment*⁶ (war and entertainment), according to which wars are initiated in primetime and the countdown of the 48 previous hours becomes a TV show. The massive cult of serials reached one of its apexes during the war in Croatia, whose intensity decreased whenever Croatian TV was broadcasting a new episode of the soap opera *Santa Barbara*. For an hour the audience could forget the cruelties of war to identify collectively with the problems, setbacks, love affairs and revelations of family secrets of the characters in this fiction.

Television is a way to escape from reality but also bring us to an imperious need to get closer to reality by way of its most morbid aspects. A good indicator of this phenomenon is the success of television shows such as *Big Brother* (and all its followers), of Web cameras that show people's daily lives in the most literal detail, or of reality shows that offer their participants those Warholian 15 minutes of fame in exchange for publicly confessing their most secret desires, which are compulsively consumed by an audience eager for hard-hitting experiences. This is the society of the spectacle announced by Guy Debord, in which spectacle is not an ensemble of images, but a social relation among people mediated by images. As Mònica Terribas has analysed: "*the gradual loss of importance of thought through a light form of abandonment of intellectual discourse or the lack of will by the media to incorporate it for fear of losing the receivers' interest, has led the mass media to make use of the private domain as a priority source of production of its messages and as the beginning and end of its aims. And so in many television formats, the private domain is not only used as an essential element; it is structured and produced as a show in itself, subject to a process of theatricalisation which wipes out any possibility of a real reading of everyday experience. The theatricalisation of the private domain through those formats requires everyday life to be transformed, adapted, subjected to the dynamic needed to make it an entertainment product*".⁷

Privacy is becoming a trademark of identity. But once the simplistic ideas of identity are surpassed, we realize that authenticity might be equally menaced, from the moment when individuality becomes a mass phenomenon and identity is identified with images and products. Publicity doesn't sell products but life styles. It is not only that we buy Calvin Klein or Donna Karan perfumes because of their fragrance, but also because of the image they communicate. Reality goes further and it is not only that we name Kleenex, Tempo or Tampax to refer to handkerchiefs or tampons, but now Chanel, Armani, Timberland or Canon are names chosen by some parents for their children. If in the past, names were taken from nature or saints, now is obvious that the models or ideals of our global world are the brands, the cosmology of the brands. Harvard, Louvre, New York, Naomi Campbell or David Beckham are much more than a university, a museum, a city, a top model or a football player, they are brands. According to Vicente Verdú, we are living the age of the capitalism of fiction. If in the capitalism of production (from the end of XVIII century until the II World War) the importance was given to goods, the capitalism of consumption (from II World War to the fall of Berlin wall) was focused on the signs, the signification of the products. In the present capitalism of fiction, the main aspect is to produce sensations. In other words, if the first and second formulations of capitalism provided reality with consumer goods, the third one improves reality by creating a new one.

⁶ RÖTZER, Florian. „Wartainment. Der Krieg als Medienspektakel“. KUNSTFORUM, num. 165. Ruppichterorth, June-july 2003 (pp 39-63)

⁷ TERRIBAS, Mònica. „The theatricalisation of the private domain and the hybridisation of television genres“ in *Revolving Doors* (catalogue). Fundación Telefónica, Madrid, 2004 (p. 26)

During the capitalism of consumption - still under the impression of the Second World War - ethical standards, personal integrity and attitude have been norms. In our today reality of global societies and the „capitalism of fiction“, the invasion of the economic imperative in almost all parts of our life, availability and the skills, where and how to get knowledge have become the compensations for those norms. This does not necessary lead to the loss of memory, cultural identity, history, ethical standards and values etc. But they have become norms on demand: memory is “on” or “off”; ethical values are “on” or “off”; cultural identity is “on” or “off” – “on” or “off” seems to be no longer a question of principle, but of occasion. But this compensation jeopardize the substance of our common cultural identity with all related values, for which humans in the western hemisphere have fought for since the bill of rights. One day someone might raise in public the fatal question: „Can we still afford human rights?“

These are some of the reflections, which mark the starting point of the project *Paisatges Mediàtics*, an exhibition, which sets out to explore the impact of the media in the definition of our present. The title of our article *mediascapes (media landscapes)* is a term used by anthropologist Arjun Appadurai⁸ to rethink the distinctions between cultural undergoing globalization. He uses the suffix “-scapes” (derived from the geographical metaphor of landscapes, to provide a framework for thinking about particular sorts of global flows. For him, the term “mediascapes” refers to the movement of media and cultural products throughout the world. Artists like Muntadas have analyzed extensively in his works the landscape of the media, that is, the creation (or mediatization) of the contemporary conscience, which includes all aspects of our lives, from how economic and cultural values are determined to the progressive disappearance of public space.

Not by coincidence, the works of many contemporary artists use and refer to the media and their strategies to raise questions about our present, including the appropriation, infiltration or redefinition of TV formats, cinematic references, advertising and corporate codes. And also, not by coincidence the artists (as well as the curators) participating in the exhibition *Paisatges Mediàtics* belong to different contexts but to the same generation: the generation that has grown up with TV. Their proposals amplify the views on the impact of the media in our present, in other words, they present different approaches to different types of mediatization or construction of reality: the mass media, represented by television (Bjørn Melhus, Christian Jankowski, Barbara Visser and Matthieu Laurette), collective memory through printed media (Zbigniew Libera), marketing strategies and their power structures (Claude Closky, Svetlana Heger, Joan Morey, Ester Partegàs, Daniel Garcia Andújar and Minerva Cuevas) and codes of representation (Pierre Bismuth and Stefanie Klingemann). With their proposals –ironical, critical, engaged, mimetic or distant – artists make things visible, evidence mechanisms and dynamics, show contradictions and, in the end, raise – or invite us to raise- questions about our present and our relation to it.

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⁸ APPADURAI, Arjun. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1996