

Berlin



Das neue Verwaltungsverfahren ist juristisch mehrfach von Mitbewerbern erfolgreich angefochten worden, offenbar wegen formaler Fehler. Wie Sozialstaatssekretär Dirk Gerstle der Berliner Morgenpost bestätigte, sei es daher auch nicht möglich, vorläufige Betreiber einzusetzen. Die Sozialverwaltung hat nun ein neues Ausschreibungsverfahren aufgesetzt, das rechtssicher sein soll. Dazu habe man sich auch externen juristischen Sachverständigen geholt, sagte Gerstle. Bis Ende dieses Monats sollen die Ausschreibungsunterlagen verschickt werden, im Dezember könnten interessierten dann ihre Angebote abgeben. Die Entscheidungen zur Vergabe sollen

You want to sign our letter as well?

Just send an email including your name and institution, plus, if you want to, your country and city of residence to: [soli\(at\)theater-on.com](mailto:soli(at)theater-on.com)!

Berlin, March 24, 2017

Theater o.N. must keep its home!

Dear Honorable Mayor Michael Müller,
Dear Senator for Culture Dr. Klaus Lederer, Dear Secretary of State Dr. Torsten Wöhlert,
Dear District Mayor Sören Benn,

Theater o.N., one of the oldest independent theater groups in Berlin and one of the last cultural institutions in the Kollwitz neighborhood, now stands under threat of losing its venue of 20 years. The rental contract period at Kollwitzstraße 53 will end in July 2017 and sadly, negotiations to extend it remain unsuccessful.

Theater o.N., as a producing theater ensemble with its own venue, offers an ongoing repertoire operation with productions for children and adults. On weekdays, kindergartens and school classes come to the performances; on weekends, adults and families attend. Operating as a performance venue is an essential condition for our artistic development and financial survival.

Thanks to ongoing funding by the City of Berlin and the District of Pankow, we have been able to produce artistic work steadily in one location and thereby develop a solid bond with our audience. This would not have been possible without the support of our landlords and we hope that this will continue!

We are fighting to keep our venue as a fundament of our work. Thus we ask for your concrete, practical help in the discussions to come, in order to find a common solution between the landlords and ourselves.

Our desire is for a Berlin in which everyone has access to culture. Theater o.N. has always represented this goal and we will continue to fight for it.

We want to keep Theater o.N. in its home in the Kollwitzstraße 53!

Signed by the Theater o.N. Ensemble



Wir wollen bleiben!

Theater o.N.

Soli-Freitag vom Theater
UNTERSCHREIBEN

noch 77 Tage...

Theater o.N.

FREIWOHLKREIS

WICHTELMÄNNER

Christoph Tannert

Art Landscape East / West, 1989



Micha Brendel, *Der Mutterseelenalleinerling*, Performance und ErkenntnisART, Galerie Weisser Elefant, Ost-Berlin, 9. Juni 1989.
Courtesy the artist und VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn, Foto: Jochen Wermann, Berlin.

There are some who see the fall of the Berlin Wall as a performative event brought about through subversive digging work by GDR artists. I don't agree with that. Any revolutionary zeal to make the GDR more open and its borders more permeable was only visible amongst the very few. Furthermore, art is not able to change society in such a direct way nor does it react in such a short-term fashion to historical events. What it can do is charge emotions and underline attitudes. In 1989, some 200 painters, graphic artists, poets, performers, activists, experimental film makers working with Super 8 and rock musicians, craving creative spaces away from the state are confronted by a few thousand conformists. Who stood on which side and why, who changed sides and who gave up and moved to the West – this was recorded in the informer reports put together by the Stasi, who were watching/keeping an eye on the various milieus scenes not only from without, but also from within. This led smart-alecky people on the outside to view the colourful goings-on amongst today's non-conformists as a mere naïve posturing under glass-house conditions. The perspective of the milieu's protagonists on their own life and that of their friends speaks a different language. Twenty years after the Wall came down it now seems to be possible, and that is the novelty in the exhibition sector, to let the activities of representatives of this other GDR, who had by no means retreated into an arty ghetto, speak for themselves, in connection with the most diverse innovative tendencies in photography, art and fashion as they existed in GDR times at official and semi-official level, i.e. to no longer operate a categoric moral classification between 'adapted' and 'unadapted'.

Two current exhibitions in Berlin, the 'Übergangsgesellschaft: Porträts und Szenen (Society in Transition: Portraits and Scenes) 1980–1990' at the Akademie der Künste (Academy of Arts), projects geared mainly towards photographic documentation, and 'In Grenzen frei. Mode, Fotografie, Underground in der DDR (Free Within Boundaries. Art, photography, Underground in the GDR 1979–89)'

at the Kunstgewerbemuseum (Museum of Applied Arts) illustrate that the unofficial young art scene of the 1980s gave stimuli that with their potential to provoke, sometimes melancholy, sometimes just out to have fun, had an impact that transcended by far the circle of the initiated. Artists who had been trotting through the bland terrain of socialism for two or three decades longer were thrilled to take such new ideas on board in order to be inspired and released. The GDR's socialist camouflage paint was beginning to flake inexorably. GDR propaganda art was paling visibly. And it was exactly that which animated young artists of all decades to at least open the casket from time to time to fan some fresh air over the dear departed.

As early as the celebrations for the 750th anniversary of Berlin, West Berlin city magazines were euphorically reporting from the Prenzlauer Berg Underground – and droves of school groups from Swabia and Lower Saxony made the pilgrimage between Oderberger Straße, Schönhauser Allee and Kastanienallee in order to track down the Eastern Uprising – only to wash up, shoulders drooping, at Konnopke's curried sausage stall at the corner of Dimitroffstraße because the prey had already gone to ground at the Wiener Café or had made off to the West, tired of martyrdom. Whoever wanted to see anything had to make tracks to the artists' studios or was invited.

In 1989, folk in East Germany were doing just fine. Many responded with scepticism to those who wanted to flee to Austria via Hungary or to take shelter in the FRG's embassies in Prague, Budapest and Warsaw in order to force their emigration. With five *deutschemarks* (1 packet of KARO *ersatz* coffee, plus either 1 litre of milk, 5 rolls, 2 frankfurters, 1 *Schlager-Süßtafel* peanut chocolate bar – or 6 bottles of beer) a clever bohemian could live for an entire day. The rulers of the people's own shortage economy had prettified East Berlin to serve as the GDR's showcase. People lived in a comfortably cushioned ghetto which boasted everything that was not available

elsewhere, plus visits from friends from the West on a day permit. Add to that the parallel forces of the media – West German TV and a psychophysical minimum in rock music beyond the average rubbish. Few friends had a phone, so people would visit each other or hang out in Wilfriede Maaß's pottery workshop waiting for a meaningful feedback. We were living in a queue behind a protective screen. There was a lot we didn't have. Only one good we did have a lot of, and that was time. Time for the daily fiddling around with our outfits and gladrags, time for chitchat or to read books, time to make six carbon copies of texts, time to listen to music and copy vinyls, for setting up literary and art events together or to expand the tools of our perception. Public life was at its best during house parties. If there is something that I miss today, it is those pre-media private events in life's basements under real socialism, where we were working summer and winter in front of the most beautiful night skies on shifting perceptions.

Since the late 1970s a productive association grouping together the artistic vintage of around 1955 had developed, without being a media-friendly list of famous names. Whilst the Stasi were forever looking for ringleaders they were doomed to fail because they didn't understand that members of the scene associated in colourful and complex clusters and networks rather than in a pyramidal structure. There was never the singular off-venue with an exact location, not in East Berlin, not anywhere. Thus, Prenzlauer Berg is less a place than a certain way of behaving. In this, it is not restricted to East Berlin or the local form of proof, to pubs, self-help galleries and the tiny print-runs of illegal brochures, church, alternative and artistic printed materials as well as graphics – and-poetry one-offs. What could indeed be experienced was a kind of root network branching off in the most diverse ways. Events were born out of spontaneity. Creative spaces only existed where the individual had fought for them against the dictatorship of the officials: in East Berlin, in Dresden-Neustadt, in Leipzig-Connewitz

around Judy Lybke's Eigen+Art (a pun on 'being oneself' and being 'different') gallery, in Karl-Marx-Stadt, Jena, Erfurt, Halle, Magdeburg – and in Cottbus, where painter Hans Scheuerecker, assisted by red wine and surrounded by jazz musicians, actors, poets and graphic printers, was forever inventing new crazy projects to challenge a chintzy provincialism, thinking about the signs of the subculture and its social dimension in the East. Never was Scheuerecker better than in those magic moments: a four-wheel drive for his artistic environment that ploughed over day-to-day assholism, laughing.

The messianic enthusiasm of the 1960s, open socialism, which had still formed the Volker Braun generation, had long become irrelevant twenty years later. Poets and artists were soberly calculating their alienation experiences and either brought them up as they came or poured them into images blazing with colour.

In East Berlin, where there were always new artists arriving, often from Dresden and Leipzig where they'd studied at the local arts academies, it was the painters Cornelia Schleime, Uta Hünninger, Christine Schlegel, Gerd Sonntag and Klaus Killisch who broke out of the mazes and made the unsayable sayable. Thomas Florschuetz and Wolfram A Scheffler joined them from Karl-Marx-Stadt. Both were rhythm machines of their time and acted like grit in the system's gearbox. Once they had done the backyard par-cours of their possibilities they inevitably 'made off across the border', as did most of the nonconformists. After them, it was Klaus Killisch's turn. His cult 'Brennender Mann (Burning Man)' found its own expression to rhyme with the absurdity of German history. Florschuetz rapidly became an insider tip with his photographic tableaux. The black-and-white photos show him acting in front of the camera, formally strong in an open form, enthusiastically body-conscious, fragmented into the parts of its own self,

completely detached from the usual intellectual socialism. At the time, neither the norms of Socialist Realism nor Peter Bürger's 1974 concept of the avant-garde were of any relevance really. The avant-garde as a movement that beyond the aesthetic concerns would argue the case for radical change in society? That was only of interest to a handful of Western German lefties who enjoyed playing the salon Bolsheviks and played down Honecker's puritan terror, without of course wanting to ever live in the GDR themselves.

In the East however, sobriety in dealing with the conditions we were living under was the order of the day. We were opposing the order within an orderly framework.

As in the West, the wild new departures in painting played a prominent role. Inspired by the drumming beats of punk, compositions became more expressive, heightened to snotty-rude attacks against the canvas' stretcher bars. With a cool matter-of-factness, the young ripped off the old masters of the Dresden 'Brücke' expressionist group. Under the influence of the veterans of gloom pop JOY DIVISION and VIRGIN PRUNES, of the original only the skeleton was left, with the spirit of A R Penck, who had left the GDR as early as 1980 hovering above it. Ralf Kerbach, Reinhard Sandner, Michael Freudenberg, Helge Leiberg, Hans J Schulze and Klaus Hähner-Springmühl took the relay with rousingly ecstatic images and powerful intricacies of variation.

Shortly before the downfall of the GDR the 'auto-perforation artists' Micha Brendel, Else Gabriel, Rainer Görß and Via Lewandowsky staged their legendary performances. The group's interest in using unusual materials and their radical departure from all templates of realism made them a target for accusations that they wanted to use shock and disgust to make themselves more interesting.

This allegation was deeply political, as the 'aesthetics of dirt' (including the one employed by Joseph Beuys) was held to be part of late-bourgeois decadence, while zealous sunshine boys amongst the artists provided proof that in a socialist society frustration could never flourish. The 'auto-perforation artists' entered the fray as stimulators of an emancipatory society to tear down the cesspit temple of power by spreading some radical dirt in the ghetto of art. After the fall of the Wall Via Lewandowsky was the first who was also able to garner lasting attention in the West too – through his collaboration with the poet Durs Grünbein and through taking part in 'documenta IX' in Kassel in 1992.

The 'auto-perforation artists' formed the programmatic core of the self-styled 'Permanente Kunstkonferenz (Permanent Arts Conference)' in the Weißer Elefant (White Elephant) gallery in East Berlin, from 30 May to 30 June 1989 and organized by Eugen Blume and Christoph Tannert as an official part of the Berlin region's exhibition of the Verband Bildender Künstler association of visual artists, which presented the audience for the first time with performances, happenings and actions in the GDR. The curiosity of the mainly young audience was great, the atmosphere, due to the political situation, fairly heated.

While the arty community was coming together in Berlin, tens of thousands of students had set up camp on Beijing's Tiananmen Square. Hundreds of thousands of citizens pledging solidarity with the students roam the city centre. As people in Hungary and Poland, and the Baltic and Caucasian nations did before them, China's demonstrators too harnessed *glasnost* for their own needs. Deng Xiaoping and Gorbachev had met and assured each other that 'there can not and there will no longer be any rigid patterns for socialism.' At that point, history had already overtaken them. From the Elbe to the Yangtzekiang, real socialism

appeared to be nothing but a sample without commercial value. A banner held aloft by the demonstrators pronounced in Russian what would resound in a German version a few months later at Leipzig's Nikolaikirche church: '*Narod sdjes!*' – The People are Here. When the Chinese oppressor state hit back, and the news that hundreds of students had lost their lives in a hail of bullets and under Chinese tanks reaches East Berlin, Rainer Görz is the first to find clear words to publicly condemn the massacre. Everybody knows that Stasi informers are among the audience. But nothing happens. Nobody is arrested. Could it be possible to exercise free speech in the GDR in this revolutionary summer of 1989?

As there was an official ban on inviting artists from the West who were however to be a part of this concept of dialogue, the Western colleagues presented their work illegally in Erhard Monden's arts studio in Prenzlauer Berg's Sredzkistraße. Amongst those who joined us for the day from the Rhineland and West Berlin under the headline 'Weltsprache Aktion (Action – the Universal Language)' were Wolfgang Müller and 'Die Tödliche Doris (Lethal Doris)', Johannes Stüttgen (Free International University), head of Joseph Beuys' former studio, and the artists Georg Dietzler and Andreas Techler, with their deliberately socio-political and ecologically oriented arguments/discourse. Some of the Stone Age merchants from 'Minus Delta T' looked in on us too, and whilst they were unable to tell brains from bollocks, offered nevertheless a certain authenticity in their complex and convoluted incantation formulas, in the way of living bubblegum bubbles of the western world hitting the East as an alien planet. So much manic energy in one place, that was an absolute novelty, given that otherwise there was no normal artistic dialogue between Germany West and Germany East – least of all with conceptualists who questioned the classic concept of a work of art. We were asking about the perils of capitalism

without hiding the dirty corners of socialism. We recognized why we were divided as one. Before even the fall of the Wall, which nobody had foreseen in their wildest dreams, the hour of truth chimed for us, marking the end of the era where we didn't know anything about the other.

Something that had a defining influence on photographic reality of the year 1989 was a GDR big city realism, which was unmistakably being pushed by courageous and incorruptible photographers of the younger and middle generation. Tina Bara, Christiane Eisler, Markus Hawlik, Jürgen Hohmuth, Thomas Kläber, Jörg Knöfel, Bertram Kober, Georg Krause, Hans Wulf Kunze, Sven Marquardt, Reinhard Münch, Peter Oehlmann, Jens Röttsch, Michael Scheffer, Erasmus Schröter, Gundula Schulze, Maria Sewcz, Gerdi Sippel, Lutz Wabnitz, Ulrich Wüst, Renate Zeun and Harf Zimmermann became the most important photographers documenting the history of the East German mentality.

The photographic agency 'Ostkreuz (Eastern Junction)' formed by Sibylle Bergemann, Harald Hauswald, Ute Mahler, Werner Mahler, Jens Röttsch, Thomas Sandberg and Harf Zimmermann at the '*Wendezeit*' time of political change, told of surviving in times of unfulfilled dreams.

The taste of the GDR's classic red fizzy drink and the constitutional lies of the planned economy – that was their subject of choice. True, there had been exciting photographic images from the people's very own shortage economy before, to mention just Evelyn Richter and Arno Fischer, however, never before had we seen reports from inside the dictatorship that were so spot-on, so witty and garnished with a whiff of melancholy. A slight drift towards the anarchic appeared in the work of the art photographers Micha Brendel, Kurt Buchwald, Klaus Elle, Thomas Florschuetz, Else Gabriel and Matthias Leupold.

Exceptional personalities such as Klaus Hähner-Springmühl and Florian Merkel refused to bow to any pressures of social conditioning. Their diction, stuffed with absurd and idiotic aberrations, also staged as a musical improvisation, chimed uncannily well with life under socialist conditions.

However, 1989 was also a year where the art scene allowed itself to be extensively photographed – arranged sympathetically by the Leipzig photographer Karin Wieckhorst, who had placed a painted reply of the artist photographed above each of her over 25 portraits at the time, of figures such as Hartwig Ebersbach, Eberhard Göschel, Neo Rauch and Max Uhlig. This device proved unexpectedly capable of leading the fantastical to morph into the actual. As a counterpart, the Berlin photographer Ilona Ripke published a quiet homage to the masters of the Berlin school of painting and sculpture including their printers, led by way of a *leitmotif* by Lothar Böhme, Wolfgang Leber, Dieter Goltzsche, Harald Metzkes and Hans Vent. Ilona Ripke's portraits show a deep sympathy with the subject. However, because she is primarily an experienced photographer she chose a slightly milky lighting, pushing the atmospheric into a far-away time. This brackets her together in an unexpected way with the author of '*Leute von Seldwyla* (People of Seldwyla)' (Gottfried Keller), who one was reminded of already when looking at these images.

Whilst as a person coming from East Germany one sees the East as strange, especially when choosing a slanted view of society, the West appears like Heaven next door, like the sparkling empire of liberty with its excess of hope. The exhibition year in the West, which I was barred from participating in for 11 months as I was still stuck behind the Wall, proceeded to the sound of drums: diversity in the brightest colours. Not always intensively, but always immeasurably enticing – from Markus Brüderlin's great Donald Judd

show at the Kunsthalle Baden-Baden (1), which also represented a low bow at the altar of Minimal Art, to Harald Szeemann's formal-aesthetic blockbuster retrospective on art since the 1960s with 'Einleuchten (Illuminating)' (2) in the Deichtorhallen in Hamburg.

For his part, Werner Hofmann used the Kunsthalle Hamburg to stage 'Europa 1789' (3), a show which not only raised the issue of whether the French Revolution can work as an exhibition, but placed its sights on the radical changes in Eastern Europe, the pulling apart of opposites into extremes, in the present confrontation of puritan terror and democracy, Enlightenment and the zealous breath of the do-gooders, reason and ideological henchmen. The historical necessity of the breaking dawn of a new era found its confirmation in Kant's maxim: 'Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity.'

Art in revolution was Werner Hofmann's subject, another 1989 exhibition lining up revolutions in art like a string of pearls: 'Zeitzeichen. Stationen der Bildenden Kunst in Nordrhein-Westfalen (Signs of the Times. Stations of the Visual Arts in North Rhine Westphalia)' (4) opened up new horizons of enjoyment and education for me as well as leaving me badly depressed due to the fathomless depths of my own ignorance. Given the art scene on Rhine and Ruhr with its incredibly intricate network, main theatres and side shows, which for decades represented the art of the Federal Republic of Germany, the only option was to feel a head-in-the-clouds from the deepest Erzgebirge hills, as a hopeless latecomer who would never ever manage to get on the trail of the 'Golden West' which began its shining ascent as early as the 1950s. Whilst today Berlin continues to drain creative energies and economic resources from western Germany, the status of North-Rhine Westphalia as one of the art centres of the western world up to 1989 and incubator of international developments

in painting, photography, performance, happenings and Fluxus, with Informel, Zero, Joseph Beuys, video art and the New Wild is undeniable. With its 200 works, video programmes and TV documentations, the exhibition was a batting of wings, an inevitable rebellion and a milestone in the defence of the freedom of discourse of the west against the east – this however would only become evident in years to come.

Notes:

(1) Donald Judd, Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, 27 August – 15 October 1989.

(2) 'Einleuchten (Illuminating)', Deichtorhallen Hamburg, 9 November 1989 – 18 February 1990.

(3) 'Europa 1789 – Aufklärung, Verklärung, Verfall (Europe 1789 – Enlightenment, Idealization, Decay)', Kunsthalle Hamburg, 15 September – 19 November 1989.

(4) 'Zeitzeichen. Stationen der Bildenden Kunst in Nordrhein-Westfalen (Signs of the Times. Stations of Visual Arts in North-Rhine Westphalia)' was organized by Christoph Brockhaus and Ulrich Krempel and was first shown from 13 September to 19 October 1989 in North-Rhine Westphalia's Ministerium für Bundesangelegenheiten (Ministry for Federal Affairs) in Bonn. Intended as art export for the GDR, it went on to be shown in the Museum der Bildenden Künste (Museum of Visual Arts) and the gallery of the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst (Academy of Visual Arts) in Leipzig, where it ran between 10 November 1989 and 10 January 1990, i.e. exactly in those months following the Wall coming down.



Jürgen Schäfer, Umarmung, 1989, Acryl auf Hartfaser, 200 × 160 cm, Courtesy the artist, Repro: Eric Tschernow, Berlin.

Allegra Solitude

BERLIN UTOPIA

Several debates, articles and statistics have been published in an attempt to investigate deeply the actual state and potential of the free cultural scene in Berlin. The City of Berlin seems to be recently very engaged with this debate. Eventually instrumentalizing it due to political and economical interests.

Since the Cold War, Berlin developed a lively independent way to produce culture, based on the local enthusiastic but also worried social communities that exchanged resources and ideas within a larger political debate about the future of Berlin as a divided city within the territories of Communist Germany and new liberal post-Nazi Germany. West Berlin, an island in the large DDR (at that time the Pride of Communist regimes). As an island of the west in the east, West Berlin had been ruled under exceptional conditions and needed citizens to live there and show that the West was not afraid.

In fact the so-called Cold War had been several times very close to exploding into a fatal endgame.

German citizens had been motivated to stay in West Berlin being supported as there was not a real local economy. A natural environment for dissidents, artists, political refugees and immigrants. The rich population had been running away during the Second WW

and have not come back until today. A multitude of small initiatives were able to interconnect developing cooperative and experimental forms / models / formats for Festivals, Clubs, Bars and Project Spaces (equally distributed in every area of the city) to express and investigate contemporary culture and develop into a Micro Economy, profiting from plenty of abandoned spaces with extremely cheap conditions.

As Berlin became the capital city of Germany, the western and eastern sides vanished and the attempt to get together started. The first 10 years of reconfiguration included a very exciting process of social gathering under the form of House Projects and brilliant Parties born out of squatting empty buildings (mainly in the former east as no one knew any longer to who belonged various properties) and this allowed people to exchange stories, ideas and strategies on how to keep the City in people's hands, basically continuing the cultural activist tradition that was born in West Berlin.

At the same time business and political expectations increased together with high speculative opportunities for foreign investors and former owners of properties to come back and reclaim what before the Second WW belonged to them. In 2001 the European Union and the Euro as currency were born and Germany was already

the strongest economical power within the European countries while having to re-integrate half of the country's citizens and re-build Berlin as a broken Capital city that would still offer plenty of cheap spaces and a brilliant quality of Life (besides the weather and the challenge of learning German as a proud local language).

Young generations of immigrants like myself started to arrive massively. Since 10 years we could start to observe that the city had definitely entered a new age and "properties" have now new owners coming from all over the world, which shape the City (more or less consciously) under less autochthonous principles. Still the now local (meanwhile very international) independent scene has been able to establish strategies to be a political protagonist of this long debate, also representing an impressive cultural resource to profit from. The heads of the city's administrations (known as Senatsverwaltung für Wirtschaft, Technologie und Forschung, Der Regierende Bürgermeister von Berlin, Senatskanzlei – Kulturelle Angelegenheiten, Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung und Umwelt) are examining several proposals that have been submitted by established communities of cultural activists on how to distribute resources and visibility to this Micro Cultural Industry that seems to work as a raw model for future

developments worldwide, attracting artists, cultural producers and visitors from every country.

The concentration of such Social Milieus of cultural activists increased as the city has opened to the World and became a major international Hub of thinkers and practitioners, together with the risks of non-sustainable strategies towards Macro economies, if we look at global politics that sees economical profit as the only valuable good to be supported and exported to every corner of the Globe avoiding direct confrontations with local structures, traditions and cultural communities.

Investors and business companies are assuming the form of international partnerships with no faces but enormous capital resources that decide for the future of the citizens, delivering less and less social protection and consideration. The division between rich and poor increases everywhere and Berlin Citizens are now crashing into this model as well, risking to adopt populist positions against each other for the need of primary necessities.

Having introduced this quiet approximate but known state of things my next point would be to indicate once again those networks of initiatives that still keep Berlin being one of the epicenters for the search of democratic solutions considering the cultural field as one that can best portray the state of our society and give directions for a better development.

I would encourage all cultural

producers to engage deeply in the debate as well as the participating initiatives and established Networks like Netzwerk freier Berliner Projektträume und -initiativen, Haben und Brauchen, the Koalition der Freien Szene aller Künste (all of them have been improving English versions on their website and within the meetings even if German is the official language they operate). All artists' initiatives working in the field of the independent arts in Berlin, no matter what genre or format, should collaborate to strengthen higher financial support for independent art production.

Also specific networks as the reSource transmedial culture berlin, an initiative of the transmediale festival for art and digital culture, acts as a link between the cultural production of art festivals and collaborative networks in the framework of art and technology including debates about the actual state and conditions of cultural production.

All these initiatives are based on monthly meetings where decisions are made by all present, trying to avoid hierarchical approaches. Many project spaces and cultural producers are participating already within their capabilities, time and resources mainly as volunteers.

That is a point where the City finds its interests, harnessing such a potential to Marketize itself. Public funding becomes the field of competition in achieving economical resources. The general amount of it is limited and a large amount of it goes to major institutions such as theaters and public

Museums, therefore what's left for the free scene is a minimum to be shared between many. What once was sustainable as a possible model of Micro economy is today a luxury.

Phenomena as Crowd funding or Private - Public Partnerships are getting established here and what initially has been considered an opportunity to fill the gaps is turning into a major amount of Marketing work left to the individual capabilities of achieving "friends" with enough money to support small projects. Governments rely on it and the general state of things degrades into a competition between Marketing networkers.

To close, a bit like in a moralist fable from Phaedrus: Cooperative attitudes and the need to get together in search for common strategies are qualities that seem to work as a currency as well. A good Currency I would say. It allows everyone to exchange, participate and make decisions on a level that politics does not grant any longer due to the scale of it. Liquid democracy's attempts and popular citizen's initiatives are the heart of society and the brain as well.

Martin Böttger speaks / before / a small crowd / gathered in Jena / for / the workshop / “Hands for Peace” / 1982.

Lily Zabrowska

Where the grass and the wind meet, and when it becomes imperative
To make a stand, and to stand for the earth and the uncounted
The withheld, and the held down
Those that collapse and that are resistant
That find energy in the collective body
This we make today, like other days as we have seen and known
Undercover, opening and closing, like a hand under the table
Holding tight
Here we give voice, with voices shared and gathered in the service of the green earth
The hollow land that we seek to replenish, as a common good and a common aim
That is what we may grasp, and that guides the principle thought and action
To work for the peace of the community, this community
And those of despair and hope and conscience

Where the grass and the wind meet, and when it becomes essential
To stop and to demand and to listen, the listening out and for each other
Now that summer blooms and the headlines steal our tender project
To stop and to listen
And to gather, with words to resist the regime that builds only poverty
Of the fields turned dry, and the dry throats and dry ideals
This is why we paint, and we decorate, and we sing, and we join together
To form a coalition from the wounded and the empty
The strained voices, and the voices that spell out the possible, and that work
For the tattered dreams and the peace struggles, the theater actions and the readings, and for the libraries
of environmental papers, these stained reports
Pages stacked against pages, one report over the other
And that speak of you and us, and those that we know disappear
Or that lose themselves in the empty borderlands
This is what we organize today, the hands and the silent dignity and the colors
Of the green and the blue
And the papers, the books and the pages that may travel undercover
Of the hurting communities and the common breath
The haunted land, the haunted hands chapped with longing
What we've seen and what we've heard and that we know

Let us take note of what brings us together, if we can
 To call it by a name, and that may open new directions
 The streets that turn us toward this formation and gathering, the gathered together
 For you, for me, for the others, and even for them
 Those that stand in the back whispering
 You know of whom I speak, even against the cold
 Those voices raised over and against others, and the terrible listening that haunts and that captures, and that
 undermines the greater hearing

They hear, they whisper, and they report

That which deepens the empty sensation, that empties our words and our speaking

Which hollows the voice, this voice that speaks regardless, as it must

Of narratives, and of the missing, and the not knowing, but knowing as well

Which I do know, and yet knowing does little until it is spoken

Spoken against, and through, spoken from the position of the wounded

To speak over and above, under and below those that own the air, the walls, and the silence

To reshape the silence through our own compassion, and the good of the common breath and the earthly green

I am the green of the silence that speaks

I take support from the dark and dreaming eyes I see around me, and the lyrics she sings, and the forest boys
 who hide in the trees, and that build with broken pieces
 With nails stolen from the west, and the ink wells we dip our tongues into
 To print out in bursts of desire the sentences of deep veins and heart patterns
 The broken inspiration, the conscience of the underground
 Take back the city, take back the lost causes
 Take back the campaigns, and the military resources and consciousness
 Let us object to the invasive ponderings of the big no one
 No one and the great nothing that listens without listening, the lie of the gun and that rips the skin, that kills the
 idea of the new socialism, the green community and its workshops
 Let us object to the moral take over, and the take over of earthly possession
 The dead trees and acid leaks that I know you have tasted, and that give way to this effort and the efforts of the
 few and the many, even those that cannot stand and that lie down for the good of the common good
 The hungry generation, and those that try to construct the houses and the centers and the schools, against the
 poverty of all this



Can we speak of how such visions and such concerns may take root?
Can we build from the haunted land the beginnings of the wish and the hand in hand?
Can we fill the poverty of the voice with new sensations?

And what of the vacancy, the loss, and the impossibility?

That which deepens the forgotten desire

Which hollows the voice, this voice that speaks regardless

Of narratives, of the missing, and the not knowing

Which I do know, and yet knowing does little

While we may hide in the dark, and shiver to the touch of even the smallest breath of hope, I know that in the corners of talk, and in the backrooms and the secret hours you have already imagined and given movement to the deep human community

To scrape the grey surfaces so as to gather the pigment

To collect the dusty cloths so as to tie together

To bring the silence to life so as to voice the lyrical promise

Is this not why you have gathered today?

And which shivers the darkness with its bright touch

3. Wie viele Personen sind an dieser Zusammenarbeit beteiligt?
4. Was ist deine Motivation für diese Zusammenarbeit?
5. Wie würdest du das Produkt/ Format eurer Zusammenarbeit benennen?
6. Gibt es für dieses Produkt/ Format eine Bezahlung?
7. Ist die Form eurer Zusammenarbeit kurzfristig oder langfristig angelegt?
8. Wie oft trefft ihr euch (physisch)? Wie lange dauern diese Treffen?
9. Was findet im Internet statt?
10. Wieviel deiner Zeit nimmt diese Zusammenarbeit in Anspruch?
11. In wie vielen anderen Zusammenarbeiten befindest du dich noch?
12. Hältst du die Größe der Gruppe für gut geeignet für die Zusammenarbeit? Warum (nicht)?
13. Hat sich die Gruppe in ihrer Zusammensetzung geändert? Wie kam es dazu?
14. Welche Tätigkeiten werden in dieser Zusammenarbeit bezahlt? Wirst du für deine Arbeit bezahlt?
15. Kannst du die Aufgaben benennen, die zu dieser Zusammenarbeit dazu gehören?
16. Für welche Aufgaben übernimmst du Verantwortung? Und wofür sonst?
17. Womit verdienst du hauptsächlich dein Geld?
18. Hat die Zusammenarbeit im Hinblick auf das Produkt/ Format gut funktioniert? Inwiefern?
19. Wie hat die Zusammenarbeit in der Gruppe für dich funktioniert?
20. Würdest du die Zusammenarbeit als fair und solidarisch beschreiben? Warum (nicht)?

Arbeitsweise und Dynamiken

21. Welche Arbeitsteilung gibt es?
22. Wie wird diese Arbeitsteilung verhandelt und entschieden?
23. Gibt es Aufgaben/ Tätigkeiten, die du hauptsächlich oder immer wieder übernimmst? Welche sind es?
24. Was wird in den Absprachen untereinander definiert (z.B. Anzahl Arbeitsstunden, Deadlines, Arbeitsteilungen, Entlohnung)?
25. Sind diese Absprachen mit Arbeitsverträgen vergleichbar?
26. Wie werden vereinbarte Arbeitsteilungen durch unterschiedliches Zeitmanagement und Deadlines verändert?
27. Welche Methoden nutzt ihr, um eure Arbeitsprozesse zu organisieren und den Überblick über diese zu behalten?
28. Haben alle den gleichen Informations- und Kenntnisstand zu den jeweiligen Themen, Fragen oder Aufgaben?
29. Wie funktionieren eure Informationskanäle? Wie werden Neue/ Abwesende darin integriert?
30. Hast du das Gefühl, dass es Absprachen in der Gruppe gibt, die nicht transparent gemacht werden? Wenn ja, kannst

du sie benennen und sagen, worauf sie sich beziehen?

31. Welche formellen und informellen Hierarchien gibt es in dieser Form von Zusammenarbeit (z.B. Initiator*in, Bekanntheit, fachliche Kompetenzen, Nähe zum Antragsteller/ Geldgeber)?
32. Wie werden Entscheidungsprozesse in dieser Gruppe gestaltet?
33. Wann findest du Kompromisse sinnvoll oder nicht sinnvoll (gerne mit Beispielen)?
34. Wie geht die Gruppe damit um, wenn keine gemeinsame Entscheidung getroffen werden kann?
35. Gibtes den Anspruch gleichberechtigt zusammenzuarbeiten?
36. Welche Methoden nutzt ihr, um gleichberechtigt zu arbeiten?
37. Wodurch zeichnet sich gleichberechtigtes Zusammenarbeiten für dich aus?
38. Wie sehr identifizierst du dich mit dem Produkt/ Format eurer Zusammenarbeit?
39. Was schätzt du an dieser (Form von) Zusammenarbeit?

Gruppe werden, sein und bleiben?

40. Welchen Raum gibt es in eurer Zusammenarbeit für Emotionen, die nicht unmittelbar mit der Zusammenarbeit zu tun haben?
41. Habt ihr Gruppenpraktiken/ Methoden, um mit aufkommenden Emotionen umzugehen?
42. Gibt es Zeit für Gruppenprozesse und -reflexionen, die nicht (nur) mit den konkreten Aufgaben bzw. dem Produkt eurer Zusammenarbeit verbunden sind?
43. Wie werden aufkommende Emotionen benannt und verhandelt (als privat/ politisch)?
44. Wie geht ihr in dieser Gruppe mit Konflikten um?
45. Welche Art von Konflikten tauchen auf?
46. Gibt es Konflikte, die wiederholt auftauchen? Wenn ja, worum geht es dabei?
47. Geht es darin auch um die Arbeitsteilung? Oder um die Wertschätzung der jeweiligen Tätigkeiten?
48. Welche Rolle spielen Anerkennung, Loyalität und Konkurrenz in euren Konflikten?
49. Habt ihr jenseits konkreter Konflikte Formen, um Gruppendynamiken und Arbeitsprozesse zu reflektieren? Wie sehen diese aus?
50. Spielen Fragen von Gemeinschaft und Sorge in eurer Zusammenarbeit eine explizite Rolle?
51. Was sind deine Begehren oder Wünsche, die du mit ‚Zusammenarbeitet‘ verbindest?
52. Welche Rolle spielt Solidarität (mit wem oder was?) oder ein solidarisches Miteinanderagieren für dich darin? Worauf bezieht sie sich genauer?
53. Wie, denkst du, kann ein solidarisches und faires Zusammenarbeiten aussehen? Was ist dir darin wichtig?

Karolina Dreit, Janine Eisenächer, Aiko Okamoto and Felicita Reuschling

How do we want to work together?

A research on forms of collaboration in the field of freelance cultural production

For years, Berlin is regarded as a Mecca of art and cultural production as well as of artists*, cultural producers*, and art spaces without stable financing. Badly-paid or unpaid work in self-organized projects, project spaces, and contexts is very common. In the past 10 years, this precarious and self-exploitative freelance work has been extensively problematized and discussed within the art and cultural scene. At the same time, it has been omitted to consider how we as freelance cultural producers in this city practically work together within self-organized and rather informal structures.

How do we want to work together? Asking this question shows a discomfort with the existing structural and economic conditions that characterize our work. We¹ do not want to continue facing this sad, long-burning issue of our own work and life circumstances individually, instead we want to mutually explore its political dimensions. We want to interrupt the established modes of cultural production, the production constraints and project logics connected to these as well as the workflow, politics, and economies we have internalized so well. We want to ask: How do we actually work together? And how could a fair and solidary way of working together look and be realized?

Many of our experiences as freelance cultural producers* are characterized by non-transparent structures of communication and decision-making that serve both in- and exclusions as well as the labeling of territories through names and keywords. We rarely talk or negotiate openly about the labor division, the lines of communication, the hierarchies, the payment of our work, and the questions related to “intellectual property” or funding and award criteria. Aiming at thinking about and formulating criteria and methods for solidary and fair ways of working together, we have developed a questionnaire following the example of Karl Marx’ workers inquiry. We consider it as a self-reflection and participatory research, as a knowledge production and starting point for a ‘militant inquiry’ regarding forms of freelance and precarious collaboration within the so-called “free” art and cultural scene. In contrast to a sociological study, there is no clear separation between participant and researcher, and the goal is not to produce significant answers. With this questionnaire and inquiry we intend to provoke an interruption: starting from our daily experiences, calling into question the seemingly self-evident and what has become our

normality, supporting a consciousness-raising about our own work realities of realities of life. At the same, we want to open up a space in which we are able to critically reflect upon and move beyond the existing forms of collaborative work.

We understand this process as a primarily political one, which provokes the question how a political process can be realized within the cultural field itself without reproducing the usual production constraints, event and project logics – while moving in the same territory that we are investigating. During our workshop at Vierte Welt in December 2016, in which we were hosts and participants at once, we realized again that even a format for exchanging experiences could be traversed by the politics and economies of the established modes of cultural production. How can we as cultural producers* reflect upon our own working structures with artistic means but without stumbling into the usual marketing of investigative cultural practices such as ‘mapping’ and ‘artistic research’, and without creating a product out of these research results with which we would apply for the next funding, residency or festival?

To continue our militant research we want to share the questionnaire you find here. This is an invitation to you to participate in a mutual process of reflection, articulation, and discussion of our experiences with and in different forms of collaboration within freelance cultural production. You can ask for an online version of the questionnaire by sending an email to: wwwz@mail.de.

¹ We, Karolina Dreit, Janine Eisenächer, Aiko Okamoto, and Felicita Reuschling, have come to together last year in order to dedicate ourselves to the exploration of forms of collaborative work, informed by our individual and mutual interests, work realities and realities of life.

Questionnaire (work in process, effective 01.06.2017)

Basic conditions

1. How would you describe your form of collaboration/ working together (project group, network, collective, cooperation,...?)
2. How long have you been active in this?
3. How many people are taking part in this collaboration?
4. What is your motivation in this collaboration?

5. What would you call the product/ format of your collaboration?
6. Is there a payment for this product/ format?
7. Is this form of collaboration meant to be short- or longterm?
8. How often do you meet (physically)? How long do these meetings take?
9. What takes place online?
10. How much of your time does this collaboration take up?
11. In how many other collaborations are you involved?
12. Do you think the size of the group is suitable for working together? Why (not)?
13. Did the group constellation change over time? How did that happen?
14. Which of the working activities get paid in this collaboration? Are you paid for your working activities?
15. Can you name the tasks that belong to this collaboration?
16. For which of the work activities do you assume responsibility? For what else?
17. What do you mainly do to earn your living?
18. Did this collaboration work well regarding the product/ format? Why (not)?
19. How did this collaboration work out for you personally?
20. Would you describe this collaboration as a fair and solidary one? Why (not)?
32. How are decision-making processes put into shape in this group?
33. When do you find compromises useful or not useful (maybe you have examples)?
34. How do you as a group deal with situations where no common decision can be found?
35. Do you as a group have the ambition to work together on an equal basis?
36. Which methods do you use to work together on an equal basis?
37. In your opinion, by what is a collaboration on an equal basis characterized?
38. How much do you identify yourself with the product/ format of this collaboration?
39. What do you appreciate in this (form of) working together?

Becoming, being and staying a group?

Working modes and dynamics

21. What labor division is there in this collaboration?
22. How is this labor division negotiated and decided?
23. Are there tasks/ working activities that you mainly or always take care of? Which ones?
24. What do you define in your agreements within the group (e.g. number of working hours, deadlines, labor division, payment)?
25. Are these agreements comparable to work contracts?
26. How do agreed-upon labor divisions get changed through different time management and deadlines?
27. Which methods do you use to organize your working processes and to stay on top of these?
28. Is everyone on the same level of information and knowledge regarding the respective topics, questions or tasks?
29. How do your channels of information work? How do newcomers/ absentees get integrated in that?
30. Do you have the feeling that there are agreements within the group that are not made transparent? If yes, can you name them and say what they refer to?
31. Which formal and informal hierarchies do exist in this form of collaboration (e.g. initiator*, renown, professional competences, proximity to the applicant/ funder)?
40. What space is there in your working together to express emotions that are not directly related to the collaboration?
41. Do you have group practices/ methods to deal with emerging emotions?
42. Is there time for group processes and reflections that are not (only) related to the specific tasks or the product of your collaboration?
43. How are emerging emotions named and negotiated (as private/ political)?
44. How do you deal with conflicts in this group?
45. What kind of conflicts do occur?
46. Are there reoccurring conflicts? If so, what are they about?
47. Are they related to the labor division, too? Or to the appreciation of the respective working activities?
48. How important are recognition, loyalty, and competition within your conflicts?
49. Beyond concrete conflicts, do you as a group have forms to reflect upon group dynamics and work processes? What do they look like?
50. Do questions of community and care-taking have an explicit significance within your collaboration?
51. What are your desires or wishes related to 'working together'?
52. Within this collaboration, how important is solidarity (with whom, with what?) or a solidary acting/ doing together for you? What does it specifically relate to?
53. If you imagine a fair and solidary collaboration/ way of working together, what does it look like? What is important to you in that?

Karolina Dreit, Janine Eisenächer, Aiko Okamoto and Felicita Reuschling

Wie wollen wir zusammenarbeiten?

Eine Untersuchung zu Formen der Zusammenarbeit im Feld selbständiger Kulturproduktion

Berlin gilt seit Jahren als ein Mekka der Kunst- und Kulturproduktion, aber auch der Künstler*innen, Kulturproduzent*innen und Veranstaltungsorte ohne stabile Finanzierung. Schlecht bezahlte oder unbezahlte Arbeit in selbstorganisierten Projekten, Projekträumen und Kontexten ist stark verbreitet. Diese prekäre und von Selbstausbeutung geprägte selbständige Arbeit wurde in den letzten 10 Jahren von der Kunst- und Kulturszene ausgiebig problematisiert und diskutiert. Bisher wurde jedoch häufig ausgespart, wie wir als selbständige Kulturschaffende in dieser Stadt in selbstorganisierten und eher informellen Strukturen konkret zusammenarbeiten.

Wie wollen wir zusammenarbeiten? Diese Frage zu stellen, zeugt von einem Unbehagen an den bestehenden strukturellen und ökonomischen Bedingungen, die unsere Arbeit kennzeichnen. Wir¹ möchten diesen traurigen Dauerbrenner unserer eigenen Arbeits- und Lebensverhältnisse nicht weiter individualisiert erdulden, sondern gemeinsam politisch erkunden. Wir möchten den gängigen Betrieb der Kulturproduktion, die damit verbundenen Produktionszwänge und Projektlogiken sowie die von uns internalisierten Arbeitsabläufe, Politiken und Ökonomien selbständiger Kulturarbeit unterbrechen und fragen: Wie arbeiten wir eigentlich zusammen? Und wie kann eine faire und solidarische Zusammenarbeit aussehen?

Viele unserer Erfahrungen als selbständige Kulturproduzent*innen sind geprägt von intransparenten Kommunikations- und Entscheidungsstrukturen, die Ein- und Ausschlüssen dienen sowie der Markierung von Territorien durch Namen und Schlüsselbegriffe. Über die Arbeitsteilungen, Informationswege, Hierarchien, die Bezahlung von Leistungen, die Frage nach „geistigem Eigentum“ und teilweise auch über Vergabekriterien wird selten offen gesprochen oder gar vorab verhandelt. Mit dem Ziel, über Kriterien und Methoden für solidarische und faire Formen von Zusammenarbeit nachzudenken und solche zu formulieren, haben wir einen Fragebogen nach dem Vorbild der Arbeiter*innenbefragung von Karl Marx entwickelt. Wir verstehen ihn als Selbst- und Mituntersuchung, als Wissensgenerierung und Ausgangspunkt für eine 'militante Untersuchung' zu Formen selbständiger und prekärer Zusammenarbeit in der „freien“ Kunst- und Kulturszene. Im Unterschied zu soziologischen Studien gibt es hier keine eindeutige Trennung zwischen Teilnehmenden und Untersuchenden, und das Ziel geht darüber hinaus signifikante Antworten zu produzieren. Wir möchten mit unserer Untersuchung einerseits eine Unterbrechung erzeugen: unseren eigenen Alltag zum Ausgang nehmen, das scheinbar Selbstverständliche und zur

Normalität Gewordene befragen und einen Bewusstwerdungsprozess über die eigenen Arbeits- und Lebensrealitäten unterstützen. Andererseits wollen wir einen Raum öffnen, in dem wir über die bestehenden Formen von Zusammenarbeit gemeinsam kritisch hinaus denken können.

Dieses Vorhaben ist für uns primär ein politischer Prozess und wirft zugleich die Frage auf, wie sich ein politischer Prozess im Kulturfeld realisieren lässt, ohne Produktionszwang, Veranstaltungs- und Projektlogiken zu reproduzieren - bewegen wir uns doch auf demselben Territorium, das wir untersuchen. In der Durchführung unseres Workshops im Dezember 2016 in der Vierten Welt haben wir erneut die Erfahrung gemacht, dass auch das Angebot des Erfahrungsaustausches, in dem wir uns sowohl als Gastgeber*innen, aber auch als Teilnehmende verstehen, von Politiken und Ökonomien gängiger Kulturproduktion durchzogen wurde. Wie können wir als Kulturproduzent*innen unsere eigenen Arbeitsstrukturen mit künstlerischen Mitteln untersuchen, ohne in die gängige Vermarktung forschender Kulturpraktiken wie 'mapping' und 'artistic research' zu geraten und ohne die Ergebnisse in ein Produkt zu verwandeln, mit dem wir uns auf die nächste Förderung, Residency oder auf das nächste Festival bewerben?

Zur Fortsetzung unserer militanten Untersuchung möchten wir den hier abgedruckten Fragebogen weiter teilen. Dieser ist eine Einladung an dich/ euch zu einem gemeinsamen Prozess der Reflexion, Artikulation und Diskussion unserer Erfahrungen mit Formen der Zusammenarbeit in selbständiger Kulturproduktion. Eine online ausfüllbare Version des Fragebogens könnt ihr mit einer Email an wwwz@mail.de erfragen.

¹ Wir, Karolina Dreit, Janine Eisenächer, Aiko Okamoto und Felicita Reuschling, haben uns im letzten Jahr unter dem o.g. Titel zusammengefunden, um uns entlang unserer individuellen wie auch gemeinsamen Interessen, Arbeits- und Lebensrealitäten der Untersuchung von Formen der Zusammenarbeit zu widmen.

Fragebogen (im Prozess, Stand 01.06.2017)

Rahmenbedingungen

1. Wie würdest du eure Form der Zusammenarbeit bezeichnen (Projektgruppe, Netzwerk, Kollektiv, Team, Kollaboration, Kooperation, ...)?

2. Wie lange bist du darin aktiv?



BIBLIOTHEK
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GERMANY

get-togethers and soccer matches. Most important, however, soldiers got clear and specific instructions about the peril boys faced. The enemy was everywhere. Guards had perished line of duty, shot by fleeing citizens. Heavily armed groups of s were always plotting to crash the border, guards were told, one to any guard who got in their way. The East Germans tried to breach the Wall were either armed criminals or demented lunatics. This propaganda served several purposes. It reinforced the siege mentality and the importance of stopping escapes. It was often referred to as a combat zone. Each regiment, said troops, with a special glass case displaying information on s who had given their lives in the line of border duty. The idea of escapee-as-criminal also helped give legal justification the order to shoot. The 1975 Helsinki Accords and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights stipulated that citizens have the right to travel freely.

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soldier's town to boost a border guard to the top of a waiting list for an apartment. I asked about the four guards on trial. "Their main concerns were vacations and free time," he said. "They were normal, like all who were there. Every month the company leadership and Stasi officer did a personality evaluation of each individual soldier: possible Western contacts, psychological stability, position in the collective, family conflicts, political reliability. That evaluation determined where a soldier would go. There is no doubt that Heintz was rated as unstable. At the trial he said they had put him on kitchen duty early on because he said he wouldn't shoot—well, it had less to do with not wanting to shoot than the fact that he was being checked out, evaluated on whether he should be sent to the border. I wouldn't trust him for more than watching the horses. I had a friend, a woman in the middle. That would behave if

Dimitris Papadopoulos

Generation M.

Matter, Makers,

Microbiomes:

Compost for Gaia

1. Language, information and the virtual space were distinctive features of the previous generation. Craft, matter and the fusion of the digital and the material are defining generation M, the first generation of the 21st century.
2. Generation M makes stuff. Not through mass production but by tweaking and expanding the capabilities of existing things and processes. The maker's craft: hacking, tinkering, stretching, knitting, inventing, weaving, forking, recombining.
3. Making starts from what is there. Intensive recycling. Immediate caring. Generation M lives in a terraformed earth: climate change, toxic environments, the 6th extinction, soil degradation, energy crises, increasing enclosures of the naturecultural commons. It encounters these harmful life thresholds with response-ability for the limits of productionism. Production does not characterise generation M's mode of life—co-existence does. Responsible terraformation. We make as we co-exist in ecological spaces.
4. Generation M is all about collaborations that create the very material conditions we live in. But these are neither collaborations between individuals or minds, nor social cooperation. These are collaborations between diverse material and symbolic forces of living matter and abiotic matter. Beyond the masculine and able-bodied logic of expansive productionism making is, literally, about creating and maintaining relations and exchanges in proximity (not necessarily spatial or temporal proximity).
5. It is about making life with other beings and material formations. The organisational principle of this mode of existence is neither the singular subject nor the network nor the pack but the communities of species and things. The microbiome is a manifestation of this principle: to be invaded and to let oneself be invaded by bacterial communities, to be a host and to be under attack simultaneously—co-exist, exchange, change—in order to form a sustainable life. From the sterile environments of network society, cognitive capitalism and the knowledge economy that characterised the previous generation to the wet, contagious involutions of interspecies and multi-material communities.
6. Making is uncomfortable with both the mass production of the Fordist era and the lean production of the post-Fordist period. We move from industrialism through immaterial labour to embodied manufacturing; from the factory through the social factory to communal production.
7. Generation M's work is self-organised and community managed. Post-Fordism is characterised by the flexibilisation and precarisation of work. Precarity is institutionalized in the public and private sectors and presented as unavoidable for society and economy. Responses that oppose precarity (as trade unions occasionally do) or fantasize zero work (70s-80s social movements and their revivals) become irrelevant as work in the M age becomes inextricable from our very ontological make-up.

8. The digital and the material fuse. The digital alone is no longer the drive of social life and innovation. There is no opposition between matter and code. Everyday objects are digitalized and inter-linked within the web of things.

9. Technoscience is more than knowledge and innovation. It is the immediate and vital environment which the first generation of the 21st century inhabits. The participation in and the appropriation of technoscience is essential for Generation M's self-organised and community managed work.

10. Financialisation, algorithmic valuation and the virtualisation of money served as the engines for strengthening the trembling economies of the Global North in the previous decades. But together with the creative, digital and service industries they now become conservative and conventional socio-economic sectors. Micro-manufacturing and hacking percolates into these sectors and transforms their social and material composition.

11. Various social movements prepared the ascendance of generation M by defending social rights, expanding the commons, creating open software/open science/open hardware, by fighting for a real democratic, equal and just access to material and symbolic resources against racist, sexual, gender and geo-political exclusions.

12. Social movements in the M age make a step further. They will not only act politically and institutionally to defend the commons but immerse in immediate, real, material practices for commoning life and the environment. A new cycle of social antagonism is emerging, one that unfolds through molecules, tissues, composite materials, energy flows, cross-species love, mundane caring for others we live with.

13. This is ecological transversality—the transfer of substances, processes and practices across disparate material registers and communities of life. Today, we are stuck in the process of translation. As much as translation is necessary it captures only a small part of the communication between disparate communities. Rather than through translation, communication happens through involuntary infections and contingent permutations between organisms or substances that attract each other.

14. Making is always located in mundane interactions and encounters across divergent ecologies. This is the unintentional gift economy of matter and cross-species action. The maker's worlds always contaminate each other laterally. Drifting matter. Stuck in translation, we believe in the one universal world of communication and value.

15. This is the underlying trope of the anthropocene narrative: We terraformed Earth™! We have created this mess! Against the anthropocene story as the ultimate popular and intellectual fantasy of ecological guilt and techno-redemption a new practical imaginary captures Generation M: Another

world is possible! Another world is here! A world that challenges the oppressive universalism of the maker-of-one-world. Generation M inverts terraformation: neither the making of one single ontology nor the making of multiple ontologies, but grounded making: the non-anthropocentric making of alter-ontologies. From alter-globalisation to alter- ontologies.

16. Making::composting. Everyday life as something that can be composted, as something that has the capacity in the right conditions to change its ontological constitution in ways that avoid erosion, toxicity, and acidity. To compost is to sustain an environment that allows mixtures of organic residues to decompose and transform into new organic compounds for nurturing the soil and growing plants; to compost everyday life means to contribute to the emergence of new mixtures of social, biotic and inorganic materials that nurture liveable worlds.

17. Surveillance and control of the virtual space (think NSA) is destructive and oppressing, but a similar type of surveillance on the material level would be truly terrifying. The direct surveillance of bodies and ecologies on a chemical-molecular level will cause unbelievable pain and install totalitarian control. Generation M feels this danger. The hope is in acting autonomously to protect our own bodies and the eco-bodies from the malignant growth of material policing.

18. Some of the infrastructures of generation M's autonomy are already under construction. Justice engrained into the material constitution of our lives. Striving for institutional justice is not enough. Justice needs to be fought for on the level of matter and through close alliances between engaged groups of animals and plants, committed groups of humans and accessible material objects.

19. The hype of human-nonhuman mixtures cannot sustain the commitment to material justice. Post-humanism and actor networks are not good enough for this. An autonomous political posthumanism emerges in the infrastructures of the M era: political autonomy as material interconnectedness; being in the quantum vortex of constant interdependences; knowing and naming one's allies; building communities of justice, that is action groups of committed humans and engaged non-human others.

20. Generation M is not a 'post' generation. Generation M is in the making. Compost. Generation M does not announce something definite and new; it is the first generation that makes itself—literally. Many things are possible and many worlds can emerge within the situated constraints of our material interdependences.

21. M for matter, M for manufacture, M for material, M for making, M for makers, M for microbiomes.

22. M for Gaia.

Franz Jägerstätter was born in Sankt Radegund, Upper Austria, a small village between Salzburg and Braunau am Inn. He was the illegitimate child of Rosalia Huber, a chambermaid, and Franz Bachmeier, a farmer. He was first cared for by his grandmother, Elisabeth Huber. Franz's natural father was killed in World War I when he was still a child, and when his mother married in 1917, Franz was adopted by her husband, Heinrich Jägerstätter.

In his youth, Franz gained a reputation for being a wild fellow, but, in general, his daily life was like that of most Austrian peasants. He worked as a farmhand and also as a miner in Eisenerz, until in 1933 he inherited the farmstead of his foster father. In that same year, he fathered an out-of-wedlock daughter, Hildegard Auer. On Maundy Thursday of 1936, he married Franziska Schwaninger (1913–2013), a deeply religious woman. After the ceremony, the bridal couple proceeded on a pilgrimage to Rome. The marriage produced three daughters.

When German troops moved into Austria in 1938, Jägerstätter was the only person in the village to vote against the Anschluss in the plebiscite of 10 April. The local authorities suppressed his dissent and announced unanimous approval. Although he was not involved with any political organization and did undergo one brief period of military training, he remained openly anti-Nazi. He joined the Third Order of Saint Francis in 1940 and worked as a sacristan at the local parish church, being deferred from military service several times. In 1940, aged 33, he was conscripted into the German army and completed basic training. Returning home in 1941 under an exemption as a farmer, he began to examine the morality of the war and discussed this with his bishop. He emerged from the conversation saddened that the bishop seemed afraid to confront the issues.

After many delays, Jägerstätter was finally called to active duty on 23 February 1943. By this time, he had three daughters with his wife, the eldest not quite six. He maintained his position against fighting for the Third Reich and upon entering into the Wehrmacht on March 1 declared his conscientious objection. His offer to serve as a paramedic was ignored. A priest from his village visited him in jail and tried to talk him into serving, but did not succeed. He was immediately imprisoned, first at Linz, then at Berlin-Tegel.

Accused of Wehrkraftzersetzung (undermining of military morale), after a military trial at the Reichskriegsgericht he was sentenced to death on 6 July and subsequently executed by guillotine at Brandenburg-Görden Prison on 9 August 1943, aged 36. In 1946, his ashes were buried at the Sankt Radegund cemetery.

“Does not the perspective of a better future depend on something like an international community of the shaken which, ignoring state boundaries, political systems, and power blocs, standing outside the high game of traditional politics, aspiring to no titles and appointments, will seek to make a real political force out of a phenomenon so ridiculed by the technicians of power – the phenomenon of human conscience?”
(Václav Havel, *“Politics and Conscience”*)



Franz Jägerstätter, “the wild fellow”, at home and on his motorcycle.



On July 6, 1943, at Witzlebenstrasse 4-10, Berlin, Franz Jägerstätter was sentenced to death for his conscientious objection to military service.

Lars-Broder Keil

When Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke to East Berlin



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“Where people break down the dividing wall of hostility which separates them from their brothers, Christ achieves his ministry of reconciliation.” One speech, two locations and very different impacts.

The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke those words in front of more than 20,000 people in the West Berlin Waldbühne amphitheater on Sept. 13, 1964, and triggered nods of agreement. Christians in the audience understood it as a metaphor. Just months before, King had celebrated the enactment of America’s landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964, which banned discrimination.

Yet the same words repeated a few hours later in two overcrowded churches in East Berlin produced breathless silence. Because for many citizens of the German Democratic Republic, the “dividing wall” was no metaphor.

King had the opportunity to see this with his own eyes, when, in the early hours of Sept. 13, Michael Meyer, a 21-year-old jockey from the GDR, was shot while crossing the border but pulled over the wall to freedom by a U.S. soldier. King rushed to the scene, gave interviews and talked to the inhabitants of a West Berlin apartment block that had been hit by numerous bullets.

While King had been officially invited to West Berlin by Mayor Willy Brandt to join a memorial ceremony for U.S. President John F. Kennedy, the invitation to East Berlin was private, from Provost Heinrich Grüber. Grüber had joined the church resistance against the Nazis and was imprisoned in a concentration camp. But by 1964 he’d become a critic of the restrictive church politics of the GDR’s ruling party, the SED (Socialist Unity Party of Germany). He had been barred from visiting his parishes in the GDR since the erection of the wall in 1961. Perhaps Grüber sought a way to support his colleagues in East Berlin, some of whom had been driven to the west or arrested.

U.S. authorities had confiscated King’s passport in West Berlin, possibly out of concern for his safety or because they intended to deny him a popular event in the east. However, GDR border guards recognized the preacher and, after a quick phone call to superiors, allowed him to enter. King’s American Express card was all the identification he needed.

What he couldn’t have imagined at Checkpoint Charlie: The church (Marienkirche) in which he was to talk was overflowing an hour before he was supposed to arrive. This despite an SED order to newspapers not to mention the visit. Only a small board outside the church announced the event, and yet, around 3,000 GDR citizens showed up. The pleas of church leaders to the hundreds of people waiting to please leave fell upon deaf ears. After a short deliberation, they announced that King would hold a second speech in the nearby Sophienkirche.

King captured the audience with his first words. He delivered greetings to “dear Christian friends from East Berlin” from the Christians in the western part of the city and from the United States, and he thanked his parents, who had given him the name of the great German reformer Martin Luther.

“We, who felt trapped and abandoned, were sent greetings from Christians in the west. This really moved me,” remembers one member of the audience. King then talked about his beliefs, his philosophy of nonviolence and his vision, without commenting on recent events.

“Here are God’s children on both sides of the wall, and no man-made barrier can destroy this fact,” King shouted. “With this faith we will be able to tear out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope.” In faith, people can stand up for freedom “in the knowledge that one day we will be free.”

Of course, the SED regime needed to know what was going on in the church. Stasi spies joined and a photographer from the feared secret service took impressive pictures. In July 1964, GDR newspapers such as the Neues Deutschland had praised the “negro leader Dr. Martin Luther King” for denouncing the nomination of conservative Barry Goldwater for U.S. president. But the GDR press published only dry reports on the speech that day and failed to mention King’s words about barriers and walls. There was a halfhearted attempt to portray King as a labor leader.

Stefan Appelius, political scientist and professor of contemporary history from the University of Oldenburg, says that while King’s criticism of the U.S. government and his fight against apartheid appealed to GDR leaders, King’s campaigns for peaceful mass protest did not. “This was something to which the GDR leaders could not really relate,” he said.



Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'

Martin Luther King predigt in der Hauptstadt der DDR

Photo: Siegfried Krüger

Martin Luther King's visit to East Berlin came to an end in the restaurant of the Hospiz an der Friedrichstraße. The Hotel Albrechtshof stands there today, and a plaque bears a reminder of the visit. Photos from the meal show the American minister at the table in enthusiastic discussions with the East Berlin pastors as they enjoyed beer, wine and fat cigars.

The visit had a lasting effect. "His call to have courage, to resist peacefully ... gave many people the strength to protest against the crushing of the 'Prague Spring' — the uprising against Communist rule in Czechoslovakia — four years later," says Appelius.

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Chronology of Dr. King's visit to Berlin:

September 12

3 pm: Arrival at Tempelhof Airport and Welcome by West Berlin Government and Church Officials Press / Conference at the West Berlin Senate Guest House, Grunewald

September 13

10 am: Reception at West Berlin City Hall with Mayor Willy Brandt and Signing of the City's Golden Book

11 am: Opening of the 14th Annual Cultural Festival with a Memorial Service for John F. Kennedy at the Berlin Philharmonic Hall

1 pm: Reception at the Foyer of the Berlin Academy of Arts hosted by West Berlin Senator for Arts and Science, Dr. Werner Stein

3 pm: Open Air Church Rally and Sermon at the "Waldbühne" (20,000 people)

Visit to the Berlin Wall (Bernauer, Schwedter and Stallschreiber Street)

5.30 pm: Award Ceremony for an Honorary Degree of the Theological School of the West Berlin Protestant Church in the home of Bishop Dr. Otto Dibelius

7 pm: Border Crossing at Checkpoint Charlie 8 (Friedrich Street)

8 pm: Church Service in East Berlin's Marienkirche (St. Mary's)

10 pm: Additional Church Service at the Sophienkirche (Sophia Church) in East Berlin and Meeting with Leading Representatives of the Protestant Church Berlin Brandenburg at the Hospice Albrecht Street

11 pm: Return to West Berlin and Late Dinner at Guest House Grunewald

September 14:

End of Visit and Onward Journey to Munich

Audre Lorde Archive

The award-winning African-American poet Audre Lorde (1934-1992), known as a fighter for the rights of black people, especially women, regularly visited Berlin in the last eight years of her life. There, she shaped the beginnings of the Afro-German movement and the anti-racism discourse among whites. Dagmar Schultz, then assistant professor at the John F. Kennedy Institute and publisher of Audre Lorde's books in the Orlanda Verlag, brought her to the institute as a visiting professor and accompanied her during her stays in Germany, often with a sound recorder, camera or video camera. These recordings, complemented by current interviews with friends and fellow campaigners, form the basis of the documentary *Audre Lorde - The Berlin Years, 1984-1992*, which had its world premiere in the Panorama section of the Berlin Film Festival 2012. After producing the film, Dagmar Schultz donated the historical raw material for her film - audio and video recordings, photographs, letters and posters - to Freie Universität Berlin.

Through a joint project of the John F. Kennedy Institute and the University Archive, the extensive materials that include audio recordings of all seminar sessions and many poetry readings were indexed, archived and made accessible to the public. The original media are kept in the University Archive and can be viewed there. The Library of the John F. Kennedy Institute presents selected digitized collection items on this page.

<http://www.jfki.fu-berlin.de/en/library/holdings/audrelorde/index.html>

“The dichotomy between the spiritual and the political is also false, resulting from an incomplete attention to our erotic knowledge. For the bridge which connects them is formed by the erotic – the sensual – those physical, emotional, and psychic expressions of what is deepest and strongest and richest within each of us, being shared: the passions of love, in its deepest meanings.”
– Audre Lorde

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Free Berlin is free. Pass it on.



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