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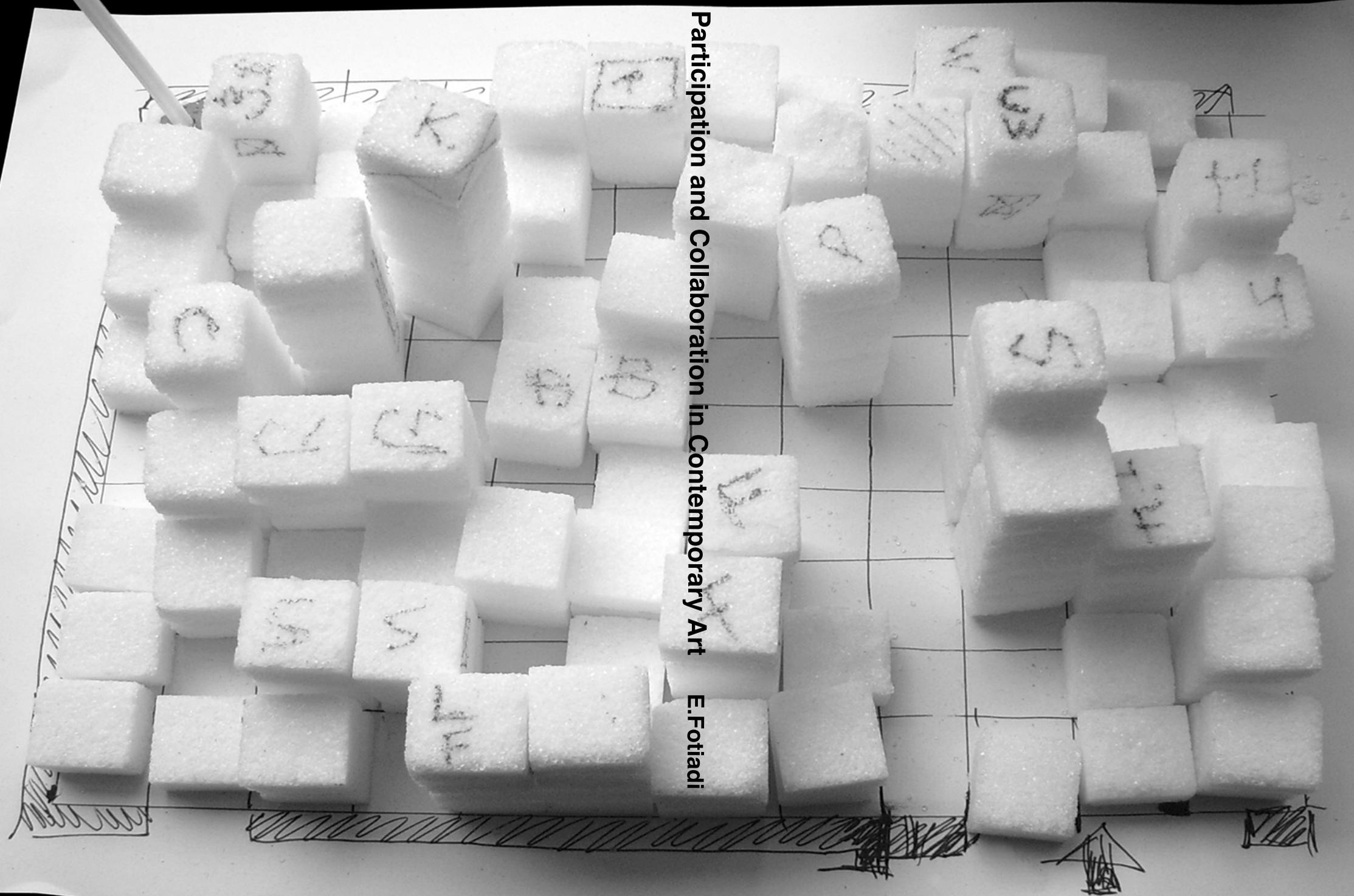
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Participation and Collaboration in Contemporary Art

A Game without Borders between Art and 'real' Life

Participation and Collaboration in Contemporary Art
E. Fotiadi



Participation and Collaboration
in Contemporary Art

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**PARTICIPATION AND COLLABORATION
IN CONTEMPORARY ART**

A Game without Borders between Art and 'real' Life

ACADEMISCH PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor
aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam
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INTRODUCTION

Object of enquiry, research questions, field of study

The 1990s in several countries saw a growing interest on the part of artists, as well as art institutions and policy makers in art outside formal exhibition venues and, more particularly, in art that engaged directly with audiences. That was mostly art not coincidentally produced and presented in just any place, but made with a specific site in mind. As Miwon Kwon noted, until the late 1960s early 1970s the “site” was considered to be the physical or architectural environment within which artworks were placed.¹ Gradually since then the term came to refer to the social context of a place, to a specific community (or a group of people considered as one), or to a specific social or political issue. By the end of the century it referred even to an artist him or herself, whose work was considered connected to a certain issue, so the artist was invited to different places to work specifically on that.

These observations regarding changing notions of what constitutes a site of art outside the white cube entailed broader changes in conceptions and practices regarding not only notions and roles of the artist, art institutions and audiences, but also of art production altogether in relation to social and political life. A number of books, articles, conferences, exhibitions and other projects since the 1990s dealt with various aspects of the above general phenomena. Not that taking art to the streets, to the people or to other disciplines was a groundbreaking innovation. Part of the 1990s discourse occupied itself with whether it was all just a catchy or naïve replica of 1960s and 1970s art, and what that would mean.² Anyhow authors tried to provide critical interpretational frameworks, historical references and theoretical tools including a vocabulary. Names of categories such as (new) public art, site-specific art, (socially or politically) engaged or responsible art, community(-based) art, participatory art, collaborative art, interactive art, activist art, interventionist art, art of encounter, relational art, Kontext Kunst (context art) were old and new terms turned into buzzwords.

The present research came out of this general context. The time-frame includes the 1990s and the first years after 2000, a period when the practices examined here flourished in Western Europe, where most of my case studies are located. For reasons of brevity “Europe” in this book refers to West-European countries, and “America” refers to the United States, unless otherwise indicated.³ The particular object of study is process-based, participatory or collaborative, public art practices. To be more precise, practices of public art in which artists involve in the art making process groups of people directly related to the social or political issues addressed within the projects. The projects discussed are ephemeral and long-term, comprised of a cycle of actions, activities or events, without any single object-based art work (e.g., an installation, a series of photographs) emerging from the process as concrete, final outcome. Due to their ephemerality and multiple authorship these artistic practices are considered amongst the most open-ended art forms possible. Almost all artists discussed have been working for years in that direction, building up experience as well as networks, both within the artistic as well as other relevant social or political fields. This building-up, operation and use of networks constitute an important part of their artistic practice.

It might have become apparent from the above description of the object of study that significant attention is given to form. Indeed, it is the forms of artistic practices, rather than the socio-political issues dealt with in art projects that are at the heart of the main research question. This focus reflects both my personal research interests, and also the curiosity to take certain paths in analyzing engaged participatory/collaborative, public art that were inadequately addressed in dominant discourses. To be more concrete, this book explores the question of what forms these practices employ and produce as art, and how these forms operate with regard to the social or political issues at stake in the projects. So after presenting what the projects are about, I analyze *how* they go about it. My analytical concerns lie with investigating the positions expressed in the projects primarily through the construction of their expression. This approach is most important in the case of long-term, ephemeral projects. Whether as pieces of art or objects of study, in a certain sense such projects “exist” in what is communicated about them: in narratives of their intentions, themes, concepts and descriptions of what has taken place. This is also where I start from. This book examines forms produced by the projects in question in a three-fold way. Initially, I examine the formation of concepts and narrations and the use of language - foremost verbal and, secondarily, visual. Then follows an investigation into the shaping of relations with all possible stakeholders of a project: from the groups referred to directly as participants or collaborators, to whichever group, organization, institution etc. becomes involved in setting up the art project. Finally, I consider the production of organized collective actions, activities or events during projects, all of which I conventionally call events.

At another level, there is a second research concern regarding the site-specificity of projects within the international or global (art)world. This concern has informed the choice of case studies and their contextual analysis. It originated particularly from two observations that led the path of this research during its early stages in 2003. Back then the artistic practices in question had reached their heyday in large international art events (e.g., biennials), as well as in national contexts such as in the

United States, Britain or the Netherlands, where they also had recognizable historical predecessors. Elsewhere as in my homeland Greece, they emerged as isolated cases that also caught attention. There, their public and engaged, participatory/collaborative character (without being performance art) appeared historically suspended, but it was not clear whether that was a deficiency of art, or of written history.⁴

A second observation was that the most widespread literature about this art during the 1990s originated from the United States. Interpretational frameworks proposed by Rosalyn Deutsche, Suzanne Lacy, Nina Felshin, Hal Foster, Suzi Gablic, Tom Finkelpearl, Grant Kester and after 2000 Miwon Kwon - to give only authors' names at this point - formed a common contemporary critical and theoretical ground on which discourses also in Western Europe were based. By and large, the above authors reviewed issues and perspectives specific to American socio-political and cultural circumstances, as well as to a Western modern and post-modern art canon. The period of my research coincided with the time that theoretical frameworks and a vocabulary prevailing in European contexts entered international discussions. For instance, the term "context art" ("Kontext Kunst") surfaced in German-speaking discourses thanks also to the exhibition in Graz curated by Peter Weibel under this name. The term "relational aesthetics" was first coined in France by Nicolas Bourriaud. While notions of participation, collaboration or interactivity surfaced simultaneously in several areas. Consequently, the second research concern of this thesis is to contextualize the artistic practices examined in their simultaneously overlapping and distinct local and international discourses. And subsequently to cross-examine points of resonance and tensions specific to the 1990s paradigm of "glocal" art production, issues and networks. This last point is examined particularly in chapter two of Part II, "A universe of relations." There, some widespread interpretational frameworks are scrutinized regarding art produced outside the Western centers of the modern art canon.

To sum up, there are two central, interwoven research concerns in this book. The one is a question of form. It asks: what forms of art do process-based, participatory/collaborative practices outside the white cube produce, and how do they operate? The second is a consideration of a site-specific contextualization mainly within West European art discourses.

Thus this research hovers between aesthetics and cultural theory. It falls within the area of enquiry that Rosalyn Deutsche defined as "urban aesthetics" or "spatial-cultural" discourse. Deutsche had in mind an interdisciplinary field that "ha[d] attracted considerable attention since the early 1980s" and which "combine[d] ideas about art, architecture and urban design, on the one hand, with theories of the city, social space and urban space, on the other."⁵ Deutsche was a pioneer in theorizing the intersection of public art and spatial politics by drawing analytical tools from radical theories of democracy. Authors who followed her strand of thought examined the political roles and potentials of public art, investigating conceptions of the publicness of space and of art. As axes in their analyses they took questions of space, evolving around notions of place, location, public sphere, site-specificity, the city and, further, community. Inspired years ago by Deutsche and largely remaining within the interests of the interdisciplinary field delineated by her, this study investigates the politics of public

art primarily through theorizing practices, rather than space. Analyses of the two are often difficult to differentiate. Suffice it to consider that major studies like Henri Lefebvre's *Production of Space* and his *Critique of Everyday Life*, Jürgen Habermas' *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Pierre Bourdieu's *Field of Cultural Production* or Michel de Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life* – the latter two directly drawn upon in this thesis – provide theoretical frameworks applicable at the same time to both questions of space and of practice.

In view of the above it would be handy to add here some observations dominant in 1990s art critique, regarding penetrations in the field of contemporary art practices and theory (not just in public art). As Marius Babias noted in 1995:

Central cultural work is performed today at the periphery. The removal of the aesthetic mandate to formerly peripheral fields such as philosophy, art critique and art management characterizes the situation since the beginning of the 1990s. The periphery has started hollowing the centre – the autonomous artistic assertion. Art is created today in the knowledge that it is addressing a specialized audience and connoisseurs, and that it is received within a fixed hierarchy where social, economic and ecological criteria dominate over aesthetic ones.⁶

Babias' concern with transformations both of practices of art creation and of their institutional and theoretical framings, reflected his interest in exploring means of cultural resistance and socio-political engagement that artists picked up during the 1990s. Although this presents a quite general and vague statement, and although in this book I try to show that aesthetics is eventually returning through the back door after seemingly having lost its primacy (see above, "the removal of the aesthetic mandate to formerly peripheral sectors"), I believe Babias has a point when he says that early in the 1990s various other fields and disciplines have permeated art. This entire dissertation works on the tension field of in-between or new spaces created when non-art practices are drawn by artists into the domain of art, and vice versa.

Therefore also, while four out of seven case studies discussed here refer to projects produced by artists as art, the rest are either produced by artists as something different (socio-economic development of local communities, urban planning), or are produced as art by non-art agents for their own purposes (cultural work for migration activism). However, the perspective I take on all of them by looking into the form of their practices, is an essentially aesthetical perspective. It is intrigued by practices in the contemporary art field and, just like them, it expands in various directions, as much as it is penetrated from various sides.

In the above, three interconnected key terms of this study are already surfacing: *practices*, a category of "real" life and a distinction between *art and non-art*. To start with the first, as the projects examined are long-term processes, comprising a circle of actions, activities or events collectively implemented, it is preferable to talk of these projects primarily as practices, rather than as artworks. It is a practice of doing something as art (i.e. the art project), even if its component parts - such as organizing meetings with officials to lobby for migrants' rights, workshops of urban planning

and design or outdoor festivals - are not themselves considered as art events. Rather, they simultaneously maintain their original character as, e.g., political actions, professional activities, festive events, while at the same time they are also organized within an art project. For the above context, the most apt conception of artistic practices can be drawn from philosopher Jacques Rancière: “artistic practices are ‘ways of doing and making’ that intervene in the general distribution of ways of doing and making as well as in the relationships they maintain to modes of being and forms of visibility.”⁷ The relation of Rancière and the analysis of artistic practices in this thesis will become more explicit in chapter two of Part II (“A universe of relations: (Un)doing practice”).

All the above entail a presumption that there exists a domain of “real” life as distinct from which art is understood as separate and autonomous. The relation between the two is what is at stake in engaged art: art is called upon to abandon its preoccupation with itself and symbolically or concretely serve interests – understood as urgent – in life. By and large, this perspective presupposes the existence of a reality commonly recognizable by everyone, understood in terms of needs and conflicting interests - social, political, economic. In this study, due to the necessity for a conception of reality while acknowledging the shortcomings of the presumptions of this concept, I use throughout the term “real” life or “real” world to designate the horizons of the artists’ engagement.

Finally, the distinction between art and non-art, while relevant to the aforementioned separation between art and “real” life is, at least in its use here, somewhat less ideologically loaded. I apply it when I talk about forms and practices that are principally recognized as related, for example, to a professional field, a social or leisure activity, and which are appropriated by artists in their projects. In the original contexts of reference that these forms or practices come from, they apparently serve needs and interests of “real” life. But the category of non-art encompasses any forms and practices, from the urgent political or social realities addressed in activist art, to the elitist or naïve, surplus sociability offered in “relational” art. The understanding of the distinction between art and non-art is again informed by (but does not directly apply) Rancière’s aesthetic theory, and the relation there between aesthetics and politics.

Structure of the thesis

The dissertation consists of two parts. In Part I, one artist is taken as case study. In the subsections all the themes of the dissertation are introduced: the production of forms of narrations, relations and events. In Part II, I take the approach to each theme as presented in Part I and by using further case studies I apply and expand further on one theme per chapter. Each chapter begins with relatively long descriptive sections presenting the case studies, supplemented, in the course of the text, by contextualizing details about the professional field or other related discourses. These descriptive and contextualizing sections came in response to a double deficiency observed in most available critical texts: a deficiency of detail about who was involved and what, where, how etc. happened during projects, as well as about the broader artistic, social or other context, within which the artists’ initiatives emerged, and to which they responded. This lack of information is not difficult to explain, as critics were primarily

drawn by the social or political aspects of the issues artists engaged with (remember here Babias).

Nonetheless, there is a potential deficiency in the case studies methodology in its application here. As the argumentation of my proposals in each chapter evolves closely around the analysis of each case study, the critique of practices might be narrowly regarded as criticism or appraisal of individual projects or artists. Case studies were selected however with the following criteria in mind. First, their relevancy to what I understood as important aspects of the artistic practices, and second, the artists' success or visibility within their fields. Central to the first, was the direct adaptation by the artists of forms of social, political, professional or other practices. Contingency, complicity, conflicting subject positions are inherent in the operation of relations in all of them. Re-produced as art, the uneasy character of their original models is sometimes reproduced too, while the professional success of the artists might even increase it. This is something that all artists I have interviewed were aware of, and dealt with it in individual ways.

In Part I the practice of the Dutch artist Jeanne van Heeswijk is taken as pilot case study. Since the early 1990s Van Heeswijk has been developing participatory and/or collaborative projects with both artworld peers and various other groups (e.g., exhibition visitors, residents of a neighborhood). The analysis of her practice starts from all verbal and visual narrations of what a project is about or what has taken place during its process, as rendered in publications, interviews, websites, flyers, art reviews etc.. They all communicate a project's story, or a project as a story, during and after its implementation. Considering a project as a set of narrations means here regarding it as a kind of narrative space, within which the project is acted out and forever re-enacted, re-written and re-born. Michel de Certeau's theory of space as a practiced place is employed, considering the project's narrative space as a practiced place. Afterwards, the discussion moves to the production of forms of relations. I maintain that in socio-politically engaged, collaborative/participatory art projects, relations of art production and relations produced as art become fused and confused. Thus the relations considered here encompass all possible stakeholders, from target groups to local authorities, organizational partners, sponsors, art institutions, artworld peers and many more. Again drawing from de Certeau, the artist's practice is considered as simultaneously appropriating the tactics of everyday life and the strategies of institutions in setting up her projects. Thus she draws the negotiations of "real" life relations into the domain of art. Finally, the analysis turns to events organized during Van Heeswijk's projects, such as meetings, workshops, festivals, performances, dinners and so on. The question is, what kind of category do these "events" constitute in terms of their taking place in time and in space? And consequently, what role do they play within the framework of art projects that may last some days or years? The form and mode of the taking place of "events" is discussed extensively. This occurs initially in terms of Grant Kester's "dialogical" model that emphasizes discursive communication. Next it is explored in terms of performative parameters of the events' staging. Finally and most importantly, it is discussed in the relation of the "events" to forms of play and games, and in so doing I turn into analytical tools philosophical concepts of "play" by Johan Huizinga and, above all, Georg Gadamer. Significantly,

while I use Gadamer's concept of play, I simultaneously revise his theory of play as the form and mode of the encounter between viewer and artwork. Instead of that theory, specifically with regard to contemporary process-based and participatory/collaborative art forms, I show how Gadamer's concept of play may describe the form and mode of events organized as part of the contemporary artworks proper.

The first chapter of Part II discusses the use of language, verbal or visual, in the construction of concepts and narrations by the art projects. Two projects of art-activism by the artists' group WochenKlausur and a joint one by artists Martin Krenn and Oliver Ressler are juxtaposed to artistic work developed by the women migrants' organization maiz as part of the latter's political activism. All three examples engage with issues of immigration in Austria, touching also upon official immigration policies and practices in the European Union after 1989. Issues of language and speech have been prominent in the debates over migration during this period in Austria. On the one hand, to be accepted as a "legal" non-EU immigrant one needed to obtain the correct official definition as "asylum seeker" or "refugee." On the other hand, in the increasingly frequent political and media debates about migration, immigrants hardly ever presented their positions themselves. Instead, they were represented by Austrian citizens. In the case studies the artists transfer political activism practices (giving people a voice) to art practices by means of participatory, public art projects, where, for instance, migrants are interviewed. In reverse, the activists transfer artistic practices (e.g., performance) to their political activism practices.

In the above examples I analyze how the narrations of projects as in videos, publications or websites operate in terms of content (articulated intentions) and form (the articulation of intentions). There are two central analytical questions. The first refers to the constitution of the subject of the narrations (narrating subject) and in the narrations (narrated subject). The subject at stake is the migrant as subject. The second question asks whether and how the social and political power structures that leave people marginalized and voiceless are challenged or confirmed in the narrative constructions of the artistic projects. With these two questions as guides and against the background of Austria's contemporary art-activism scene, I analyze the projects' narrative constructions and forms, and from that aesthetic analysis I return to the content of the artists' and activists' political statements. The initial inspiration for this chapter came from Judith Butler's approach to linguistic vulnerability, according to which, when we speak, we *do* language and we do it *on others*. While at the same time, language is also the thing that we do.

Chapter two in Part II is about the production of relations. Two case studies are presented. The first is the community-based, public art project TAMA (*Temporary Autonomous Museum for All*) by the Greek artist Maria Papadimitriou. TAMA was developed in Avliza, a location outside Athens, occupied by Roma and Vlach-Romanian Greeks. It aimed at setting up relations between artists, architects, theorists and residents of Avliza, as well as at developing a flexible infrastructural model for the Avliza settlement. TAMA attracted considerable interest in the international art world of biennials and mixed art-architecture exhibitions. The second case study is the ongoing (2001-) initiative *Gudran for Art and Development* in a small fishing

village called El-Max, outside the city of Alexandria in Egypt. Although initiated by artists, *Gudran* is a project where they use art for the social, infrastructural and economic development of the village. It has gained considerable visibility within networks of development NGOs, (social) art initiatives and cultural institutions in the Middle East region. In both the cases of TAMA and *Gudran* there is a merging of relations of production and relations produced as part of the projects.

In this chapter I employ the theoretical approach introduced in Part I. Instead of Michel de Certeau's theory of "the practice of everyday life," I take as starting point Pierre Bourdieu's model of relations and practices in the "field of cultural production." I adjust Bourdieu's model to contemporary conditions within an expanded and international field of networks that affect the local fields, within which the artists' projects of my case studies emerge. Practices of community development and of professional networking are re-produced by artists sometimes as art (TAMA) and sometimes not (*Gudran*). Demonstrating important parallels between the two projects, I maintain that in essence they both exemplify contemporary site-specific, community-based *artistic* practices. From this perspective, I investigate for both cases the aesthetic parameters of the formation and operation of relations produced by the projects. The critical aesthetical analysis of community-based artistic practices leads eventually to a critical analysis of both the changing landscapes of "peripheral" cultural fields (Greece, Egypt), as well as the changing horizons of their relations to the traditional centers of the Western (art) canon.

Finally, chapter three of Part II returns to the production of events, the forms of play and games and the Dutch context seen already in Part I. This chapter examines the practice of the so-called Bureau Venhuizen. It was established in 2001 by artist Hans Venhuizen who officially abandoned his artistic professional status and career to step into the field of professional spatial (urban) planning. Venhuizen has developed a methodology for collective decision-making, applicable when multiple stakeholders need to reach consensus over specific spatial planning projects. Bureau Venhuizen's methodology is based on a group game played by representatives of various groups of stakeholders. Stakeholders include policy makers, local authorities, urban planners, local residents and so on. Bureau Venhuizen is quite successful in the Netherlands, a country where almost every single square meter is planned, and an important percentage of the land is artificially constructed by man (polder land).

In this chapter I place Bureau Venhuizen's game-based methodology within a wider historical context of exchanges and collaborations between artists, architects and urbanists in the Netherlands. Throughout the 20th century a hybrid field of art and art-related practices in public spaces seems to have existed there. Urban planners have been keen on seasoning the rationality of their plans and blueprints by inviting artists to contribute creative ideas and practices, thereby making plans and blueprints more palatable. Here I analyze how various forms of play and games are very often met in the historical course of these collaborations and exchanges. I explain that these forms have functioned as interfaces bridging artistic concepts and practices with "real life" spatial (urban) planning situations. The analysis of forms brings to the surface the social ideas and political priorities that eventually determine final decision-making in spatial planning.

Discursive frames of reference and points of departure

It was maintained earlier that the practices of public, participatory/collaborative, engaged art that this book is about made their presence felt and were discussed in the United States earlier than in Europe.⁸ As the focus here is on the latter, I will limit my references to American discussions that reached this side of the Atlantic and especially the local contexts I have been studying. The American references below are predominantly from books, as books are the most easily disseminated, while the experience of events like exhibitions or conferences has a rather local impact, unless debated in print. In addition, some related periodicals such as *Documents* (1992-2004) or *Afterimage* were not widely distributed in Europe, whereas, for example, *October* is found practically everywhere. The references selected may not necessarily be the most widespread ones for their particular areas (e.g., activist art, community art, public art). They are the most relevant and broadly influential ones for the practices examined here (process-based, participatory/collaborative etc.).

Socio-politically engaged art in the United States during the 1980s often expressed oppositional positions to the conservative Ronald Reagan administration.⁹ In part it was activist art or, as Arlene Raven called it, “art in the public interest.”¹⁰ Some artists and authors differentiated it from “art in public spaces” that was supported by institutional and market constituencies.¹¹ The latter was connected to a public art sector that by the 1980s had gradually grown to a recognizable field following the establishment of the Art in Public Places Program at the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) in 1967, and the formation of state and city percent-for-the-art programs.¹²

The interesting category here is art in the public interest. This was perceived and assessed as activism. Artists turned to groups, audiences or communities considered as socially, politically and culturally excluded from mainstream institutional practices. The particular issues discussed in the American literature on engaged art during the 1980s and 1990s mirrored the areas negatively affected by the conservative political backlash. According to Lacy, the 1980s saw “increased racial discrimination and violence,” “attempts to circumscribe the gains women made in previous decades,” “cultural censorship on a scale not known since the fifties,” “deepening health and ecological crisis ... AIDS, pollution, and environmental destruction.” One could add here also homelessness.¹³ As with their work the artists opposed political decision-making for serving an economic rather than social mandate, their artistic practices were analyzed and evaluated accordingly through the lenses, priorities and vocabulary of their activist agenda. In the extracts below, Nina Felshin and Suzanne Lacy respectively describe and define activist and “new genre public art” (term coined by Lacy). Both authors lay emphasis on forms of collectivity in these artistic practices. These forms coincide to a great extent with those of the practices examined in this book: they are process-based, outside art institutions, participatory or collaborative, draw ways and methods from political and social activity, and make things happen that may only be possible through group work. Felshin explains:

Activist art, in both its forms and methods, is generally process-, rather than object- or product-oriented, and it usually takes place in public sites, rather than within the context of art-world venues...¹⁴

Participation is thus often an act of self-expression or self-representation by the entire community. Individuals are empowered through such creative expression, as they acquire a voice, visibility, and an awareness that they are part of a greater whole.¹⁵

And Lacy on new genre public art and its genealogy:

For the past three or so decades visual artists of varying backgrounds and perspectives have been working in a manner that resembles political and social activity but is distinguished by its aesthetic sensibility. Dealing with some of the most profound issues of our time – toxic waste, race relations, homelessness, aging, gang warfare, and cultural identity – a group of visual artists has developed distinct models of art whose public strategies of engagement are an important part of its aesthetic language. The source of these artworks' structure is not exclusively visual or political information, but rather an internal necessity perceived by the artist in collaboration with his or her audience. We might describe this as "new genre public art"¹⁶

This construction of a history of new genre public art is not built on a typology of materials, or artistic media, but rather on concepts of audience, relationship, communication and political intention.¹⁷

It is significant to note that in this context of engaged, participatory/collaborative art, the notion of the "aesthetic" appears problematic, especially as there is no consensus on its meaning. In some authors – relatively similar to the view of the "aesthetic" implied in the earlier citation by Babias – it is understood as referring to a self-absorbed art that forms an opposite to socially and politically concerned art. Often it is identified with a formalism à la Clement Greenberg, regarded as an elitist, well-marketed art. Such narrow understandings of the "aesthetic" are evident in some advocates of a collectivism along the lines described above, who often completely condemn "aesthetic" art. For example, Steven Bingler spoke highly of a mid-1980s community art project in Los Angeles that took "a strong position about the value of art beyond the abstract and aesthetic," and "support[ed] socially and culturally functional art that is inclusive rather than exclusive."¹⁸ Nonetheless, the exact same practices could be viewed with a completely different conception of the "aesthetic:" In the above citation by Suzanne Lacy the "aesthetic" is rather vaguely defined with reference to a sensibility specific to artists and to an almost intuitive power of collectivity activated by collaborative art. In Lacy's conceptualization of new genre public art the "aesthetic" serves not only the mandate of engagement. It appears as the cipher of surplus value that art contributes to the socio-political causes of engagement. It is the element distinguishing the uniqueness of artists' contribution to activism.

To leave the study of activist and community-based art and move on to concepts of public space, the theoretical contribution of Rosalyn Deutsche here remains unsurpassed. There is a strand of theoretical approaches to participation in art that examines its democratic potentials, and Deutsche laid the theoretical grounds. She demonstrated that during the 1980s the conservative "dominant paradigm of urban-aesthetic

interdisciplinarity” and “the most influential radical critiques of that paradigm – although they both mobilize a democratic rhetoric of “openness” and “accessibility,” had a common denominator.¹⁹ The model of democracy and public space they favored was one in which disagreements should be solved, conflicts resolved, differences dissolved. But in Deutsche’s view, if the ultimate targets were harmony and unity based on absolute consensus, this would respond to a totalitarian rather than a pluralistic democratic model. A model that would systematically suppress and exclude whatever expressions would not fit in.²⁰ Deutsche brought new – for the 1990s – theories of radical and plural democracy “to bear on current thought about what makes art public.”²¹ She turned, for instance, to Claude Lefort for a concept of democracy, to Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe for the term “antagonism” (see also the recently more often heard “agonistic” public sphere of Mouffe, after Hannah Arendt’s concept of “agonism”), she referred to Habermas’ model of the “public sphere,” to the latter’s critics such as Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge, and further to Étienne Balibar, Jean-Luc Nancy and others.²² Combining all the above, she offered the most exhaustive analysis of conceptions of “public space” in relation to spatial (urban) politics and art. She advocated for the necessarily conflictual relation between a social identity and its “constitutive outside” as the relation on which a really open and pluralistic, democratic public space should be based (see here Laclau).²³ Accordingly, a democratic public art should acknowledge and represent rather than negate and obscure this uneasiness of relations. Rosalyn Deutsche’s perspective, analytical framework and specific references from political theory have been extremely influential in later American and European discussions about art, public/urban space and democracy, as well as collectivity and democracy, which have been central for the topic of this thesis.²⁴

To leave the triangle art-space-democracy, another strand of critique relevant to engaged, process-based, participatory/collaborative art practice that also has its origins in American art theory is Hal Foster’s paradigm of the artist as ethnographer.²⁵ Foster perceived it as “a new paradigm structurally similar to the old ‘Author as Producer’ model” (Walter Benjamin, 1934) that “has emerged in advanced art of the left.” In the new “ethnographic” paradigm “the subject of association has changed: it is the culturally and/or ethnic other, in whose name the artist most often struggles.” This is no longer “defined in terms of economic relations” but “of cultural identity.”²⁶ This development came out of the artists’ engagement with cultural identities – ethnic, racial, gender etc. – and especially their engagement with exploring, bringing forward and advocating identities that were marginalized and invisible, for instance, in the context of race and colonialist oppression.²⁷ Foster’s famous essay “The artist as ethnographer” informed later discussions of artists’ involvement with any group understood as representing an “Other.”

Important points to retain here from his critique are, firstly, his formulation of the “realist assumption,” which has explicitly informed the conception of “real” life as I explained earlier for this thesis. According to Foster, “the ethnographic model, like the producer model, fails to reflect on its realist assumption: that the other, here postcolonial, there proletarian, is somehow in reality, in truth, not in ideology, because he or she is socially oppressed, politically transformative and/or materially productive.”²⁸ Quite importantly, Foster links this realist assumption with a “siting”

of political truth and of politics altogether in a projected other, outside the self, something that bears a twofold danger. It “may distract from a politics of here and now.” Or, reversely, it may cause a complex “self-othering,” if the artist gets too much identified with his or her subject of association, entering a politics of identification rather than identity.²⁹ Whichever the case, whether politics are sited somewhere outside or turn towards the self, a complicity might not be avoided of artists and art institutions alike, when they perform exercises in ethnography or cultural anthropology by projects that uncover histories of oppression (e.g., slavery, colonialism) and deconstruct power relations. Because at once artists and commissioning institutions “could have it both ways – retain the social status of art and entertain the moral purity of critique, the one a complement or compensation for the other.”³⁰ Foster’s paradigm has been used by critics skeptical of community-based art to scrutinize the validity of the latter’s argumentation. For instance with regard to Lacy’s model, where the history of new genre public art is understood as constructed on “concepts of audience, relationship, communication and political intention.”³¹ Foster’s critique has shown that it is exactly due to the politics at work in the formation of these concepts that artistic engagement becomes problematic. Here the critique of the ethnographic approach surfaces especially in Part II, chapter two, where the artists explain their engagement as triggered by the valuable cultural particularity of site-specific communities threatened due to the expansion of urban centers.

A third interpretational framework from the United States that rapidly caught attention in discourses across Europe was Miwon Kwon’s theorization of the notion of site-specificity. Her approach can be found in articles dating back to at least 1996-97, but the publication of the book *One Place After Another* facilitated its systematic dissemination.³² Moving within the field of “urban-aesthetic” or “spatial-cultural” discourse defined by Rosalyn Deutsche, Kwon’s contribution is interesting here from a three-fold perspective.³³ Firstly because she constructs a genealogy of three paradigms of site-specificity in art since the 1960s.³⁴ First a phenomenological or experiential understanding of the notion, in which the surrounding urban environment is considered the site of mostly sculptural works. Second is a social/institutional understanding of the site, as in the institutional critique of the 1960s and 1970s. The third is discursive, where the site might be a specific social or political issue, a community, or even an artist him or herself, whose work has been connected with a certain theme and is invited here and there to work site-specifically on that. Kwon examines “aspects of what the transformation of the site – from a sedentary to a nomadic model – might mean for the art object, for artists and art institutions today.”³⁵ She is strongly skeptical of community art, especially of new genre public art, arguing that it can “exacerbate uneven power relations, remarginalize (even colonize) already disenfranchised groups, depoliticize and remythify the artistic process, and finally further the separation of art and life (despite claims to the contrary).”³⁶ Kwon’s critical analysis of the notion of community as derived from community-based art is the second interesting parameter. It includes a schematic typology: community as mythic entity, “sited” communities, invented communities (temporary), invented communities (ongoing).³⁷ The third interesting aspect of Kwon’s contribution does not lie directly in what she proposes, but in that she combines Deutsche’s and Foster’s aforementioned

approaches. Thus she links the strands of the analyses of the democratic public space of art and the ethnographic paradigm, through the elaboration of the notions of site-specificity and community in public art.³⁸ This approach is inherently connected to the analysis here of the practices of artists who work directly with people from the very groups they work about, and in the latter's spaces.

Less directly influential for this thesis, but still important to mention are two further paradigms: art as service provision, and "dialogical" art. The former was introduced by Andrea Fraser and Helmut Draxler in the on-going, traveling project *Services* that started in 1993.³⁹ They registered a shift in artists' ways of working, turning from the artist's work as object production to service provision. I am here rather conventionally locating *Services* amongst American discourses, just because Fraser is an American artist. She collaborated with Helmut Draxler from Germany, and several other international artists got involved in meetings and presentations of the project, which toured only in Europe.⁴⁰ The second paradigm is Grant Kester's dialogical model.⁴¹ Kester drew up a genealogy of modern artworks that provide contexts of communication and dialogue rather than content. The seeds of their dialogical aesthetics he located already in the philosophy of the Enlightenment. Further, there are significant authors - artists, critics, historians - such as Allan Kaprow, Lucy Lippard, Suzi Gabolic, Martha Rosler, Adrian Piper or Tom Finkelpearl, whose impact on the wider discourses of the field studied here has been great, but less evident in this book.

In all the above American interpretational frameworks that have also been influential on this side of the Atlantic, there is one interesting common feature. All authors lay emphasis on genealogies. They provide historical artistic predecessors for the methods and interests of contemporary artistic practices. And in that history they find genealogies for the new concepts and interpretational frameworks they propose. The historical predecessors for American engaged, participatory/collaborative, public art practices coincide by and large across the literature. They combine civil-rights movements of the 1960s and 1970s (feminist, environmental, free-speech, Black, anti-war etc.) with the legacy of conceptualism, from minimal art to institutional critique and to Happenings and Events of Allan Kaprow and Fluxus.⁴² Within this framework the authors trace genealogies of practices or of concepts for their theoretical proposals. Interestingly, only Rosalyn Deutsche has also explained the notion of genealogy she has used for her concept of public space, with reference to Friedrich Nietzsche.⁴³ Nietzsche conceived first of the term "genealogy" to describe a conception of history in which "the recovery of origins does not reveal the essential, unchanging meaning of a concept; it shows, on the contrary, that meanings are conditional, formed out of struggles."⁴⁴ Amongst the other authors, for example Hal Foster describes his entire anthology *The Return of the Real* - where "The artist as ethnographer" belongs - as a study of genealogies of "innovative art and theory" in 20th century Western Art.⁴⁵ He "traces these genealogies through *turns* in critical models and *returns* of historical practices."⁴⁶ Furthermore, Miwon Kwon and Grant Kester also refer to the genealogies of concepts they explore, site-specificity and dialogical art respectively.

I must admit that up until revising the general bibliography to write this introduction I had paid little attention to this common approach. Then it suddenly re-

sponded to an ongoing concern. This thesis has been written by taking a mainly synchronic contextual perspective on the projects and practices discussed, rather than a historical one. Within this framework the last chapter where I discuss forms of play and games in Dutch public art by means of drawing up a genealogy of their relations to art and art-related practices and concepts during the 20th century, looked somewhat like an inset. Its necessity was derived from the requirement to explain in particular the relations between forms of play and games, and practices of artistic interventions in architecture and urbanism. These relations were traceable in concepts, practices and the institutions that supported them. And they have survived through the 20th century, transformed and transfigured. Juxtaposing all aforementioned approaches, it seems that the construction of genealogies has become a kind of conceptual and methodological tool for studies that see continuities in associations between concepts and forms in 20th century art, beyond the logic of a modern/post-modern interpretational framework.

On this side of the Atlantic public art and artistic socio-political engagement – in the context of which process-based, collective practices also came to the foreground – made a strong impact during the 1990s, persisting also after 2000.⁴⁷ This time-frame, as well as the thematic range varied from place to place. Nonetheless, for all its local particularities this was the period that transnational mobility and exchange took off unprecedentedly. Artists' residencies, projects co-produced by various institutions, biennials, artists' initiatives, cultural activism networks, free-lance curators, all took Europe as their playground and looked out far beyond.

For the interests of this thesis certain artistic, political or other events became common references hallmarking wider processes. For example the exhibition *Chambres d' Amis* curated by Jan Hoet in private apartments in Ghent back in 1986, brought up questions of public/private/institutional spaces of art, which would be picked up more emphatically later. Each Documenta in Kassel made its impact on art tendencies of the following years, whether as opposite reaction (Jan Hoet's Documenta IX in 1992 was targeted as too elitist) or by signaling new paradigms (Catherine David's Documenta X in 1997 and Okwui Enwezor's Documenta XI in 2001 for decentering attention from the West as artistic and political statement). Especially the year 1993 has been singled out by art critics as a hallmark, because several exhibitions across Europe pointed to the decade's prevailing directions: project rather than object-based, site-specific and often service-oriented, process-based art. Such exhibitions were *Sonsbeek '93* (Arnhem), *Unité* (Firminy), *Kontext Kunst* (Graz) *On Taking a Normal Situation* (Antwerp), *Viennese Story* (Vienna), *Oppositionen & Schwesternfelder* (Vienna, Kassel), *Backstage* (Hamburg, Luzern), *Integrale Kunstprojekte* (Berlin), *Fontanelle* (Potsdam), *Real* (Salzburg, Vienna, Graz).⁴⁸ The Venice and Whitney Biennials of that year also featured some artists working along similar lines.⁴⁹ Furthermore, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 stimulated mutual cultural curiosity for exchanges and collaborations between East and West, as well as political and economic activity and a huge migration wave that instantly caught art world interest.⁵⁰ The 1990s also saw the rise of the anti-globalization and various other transnational resistance movements and networks organizing "autonomous zones," within which cultural actions, predominantly collective and in public, urban spaces, gained attention.⁵¹

If in the United States the conservative Reagan administration represented a common frame that socio-politically concerned artists reacted against, the same could not exactly be maintained for Europe. The end of the communist era in the East, or a general neo-liberal turn of West-European governments, were indeed general frames within which, for instance, EU-wide policies were shaped.⁵² Yet the local coordinates determining the reception of such processes varied considerably according to national, regional and global economic, social, political and cultural circumstances. It would be impossible to elaborate here further on this matter. In each chapter some more details are provided in accordance with the issues addressed in the projects discussed.

Debates on the meanings of public art or of the public space of art, have by no means reached a conclusion. Rather, the ongoing discussions about them seem to have been giving content to the terms' meaningfulness. Discussions have focused on urban space, examining the changing face of cities, new patterns of work, habitation and movement, rapid changes in population composition, gentrification, new classes of rich and poor or the new geopolitical distribution of capital and production due to which the formerly industrial infrastructure of West European cities was handed over to cultural industries.⁵³ Furthermore, one should add the privatization of space and the regulation and control of people's movement in space, from regulating patterns of movement in privately owned—publicly accessible shopping centers, to controlling access of non-EU migrants in the so-called “fortress Europe.” Such approaches drew their theoretical tools mostly from the fields of social geography and political theory.⁵⁴ In the latter case, Rosalyn Deutsche's strand of thought was often followed, especially with regard to politics of gentrification. Within this context, certain concepts and theoretical frameworks affiliated to the notions of public space have been examined extensively. For example the “public sphere,” has been discussed mostly in revisions of the original Habermasian model, as in Chantal Mouffe's “agonistic” public sphere or Oskar Negt and Alex Kluge's multiple public spheres.⁵⁵ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's concepts of “Empire” and the “multitude” have resonated mostly in the area of the anti-globalization and other protest movements.⁵⁶ A re-working of concepts of “alternative” or “autonomous spaces” for art came part and parcel with the appearance in many places in Europe and beyond of artists' initiatives and networks, as well as with the expansion of new media that facilitated new organizational formations - sometimes mobile or virtual. In this context, the reconsideration of the political program of the Left after 1989, but also the promotion of governmental cultural policies that propagated social relevancy for the arts, while the welfare state was dismantled in the social policies, also played an important role.⁵⁷

Moreover, in the context of engaged art and theory certain concepts used to describe artists' practices resonated widely, regardless the exact issues handled in projects. Most notably the concepts of relational aesthetics, participation, collaboration, the art of encounter, and secondarily interactivity or context art (Kontext Kunst). Contrary to the earlier discussed paradigms of critique and theory, such as new genre public art or the ethnographic turn that were mostly introduced by a certain author, only relational aesthetics had a single inspirer, the French curator and critic Nicolas Bourriaud.⁵⁸

To the displeasure of many who considered Bourriaud's ideas either loosely argued, or representing the curator's professional circle, relational aesthetics triggered debates throughout Western Europe and also reached the United States. Bourriaud saw a new paradigm in practices of artists such as Rirkrit Tiravanija, Liam Gillick, Felix-Gonzalez Torres and Dominique Gonzalez-Foster, whose art created situations for meetings. Relational aesthetics referred both to concrete staged meetings, such as the famous Thai dinners of Tiravanija, or to projects that conceptualized conditions for potential or imaginary encounters, as in Carsten Höller's installations or Liam Gillick's work. Bourriaud's theory was conceived with gallery, rather than public art practices in mind. However, as Maria Lind noted in 2007 about the model's broad expansion:

... the notion of relational aesthetics ... has become a catchphrase carelessly used for any work within an interactive and/or socially related dimension. Recent years' relational tendencies, which often depart from the model Bourriaud formulated, include interventionist and off-site projects, discursive and pedagogical models, neo-activist strategies and increasingly functionalist approaches (e.g., art/architecture collaborative groups).⁵⁹

It is within this context of the expansion of Bourriaud's notion that it is useful for the practices examined in this book. To be more precise, the common ground is the priority of the question of form. Bourriaud maintained that:

the possibility of a *relational art* (an art taking as its theoretical horizon the realm of human interactions and its social context)... points to a radical upheaval of the aesthetic, cultural and political goals introduced by modern art. To sketch a sociology of this, this evolution stems essentially from the birth of a world-wide urban culture.⁶⁰

In the above, even though attention is given to categories of the social or the urban, this does not entail that aesthetics are examined in close connection to the political or social context of art's production, as in Deutsche or Kwon. Bourriaud's is "a theory of form," where *form* is understood as "a coherent unit, a structure (*independent entity of inner dependencies*) which shows the typical features of a world. The artwork does not have an exclusive hold on it, it is merely a subset in the overall series of existing forms."⁶¹ And "forms are *developed*, one from another. What was yesterday regarded formless or "informal" is no longer these things today. When the aesthetic discussion evolves, the status of form evolves with it and through it."⁶²

Vague as this definition of forms and their development might be, it can prove fruitful when applied in the consideration of the form of artistic practices and their operation, which is the object of analysis in this book. At first sight, Bourriaud's description of form as having certain bounds ("a coherent unit," "an independent entity") and a certain structure appears at odds with the celebrated open-endedness of ephemeral and collectively authored artistic practices. However, the discrepancy is given a response in the idea that in the course of the development of forms, the previously "formless or informal is no longer these things today." This means that the terms of the aesthetic discussion are internally transformed and reconfigured,

and so is the operation of the aesthetic in the world. In addition, the emphasis on the idea that the artwork is not the only kind of entity, the forms of which have a representational function in the world, but it is one amongst others, is also quite useful. Because it relates directly to the discussion of the exchange of practices between art and other domains. Quite importantly, relational aesthetics have caused a relocation of the category of relations with regard to art production. Contacts, affairs and exchanges between subjects are at the centre of recent aesthetic developments: “as part of a ‘relationist’ theory of art, intersubjectivity does not only represent the social setting of the reception of art, which is its ‘environment’, its ‘field’ (Bourdieu), but also becomes the quintessence of artistic practice.”⁶³ This points to what is at stake when practices from various fields, art and non-art, become practices produced as art.

In view of all the above, the theoretical terrain of Bourriaud’s relational aesthetics, however loosely constructed and dubious ideologically, is for the interests of this study the other part of the field of enquiry that begins there, where the interests of Rosalyn Deutsche’s analysis of spatial politics end. By which I mean that, as described above, the theoretical program of relational aesthetics could be linked to an “interdisciplinary field of ‘urban aesthetics’ or ‘spatial cultural’ discourse,” but its focus on the question of art form – and by extension, artistic practices – reconfigures the discussion.

To move on to further concepts, the most relevant ones here are “collaboration” and “participation” that basically refer to methodologies in art production. There is neither a single-authored hallmark study on the matter, nor on the differences between these two and other related terms. As Maria Lind pointed out in the book *Taking the Matter into Common Hands. On Contemporary Art and Collaborative Practices*, which she co-edited with artists Johanna Billing and Lars Nilsson following an international symposium under the same title (Iaspis, Stockholm, 2005): “From the outset ambiguities appear. Concepts like collaboration, cooperation, collective action, relationality, interaction and participation are used and often confused, although each of them has its own specific connotations.”⁶⁴ Amongst those terms Lind considers the meaning of collaboration to encompass all others.

The same word was favored also in another international conference, “Diffusion: Collaborative Practices in Contemporary Art” (Tate Modern, London, 2003) that was followed by a special issue of the periodical *Third Text* entitled “Art and Collaboration,” guest-edited by the conference organizers, John Roberts and Stephen Wright.⁶⁵ Without showing much preoccupation with other related terms possibly applicable to the same artistic practices, the following extract from the editors’ introduction shows where they consider the notion of collaboration in art to derive its special significance:

Collaboration in art is as much bound up with value – artistic value, the value of artistic labour, the value-form of capitalism – as it is with politics and representation. Indeed collaboration in art expressly allows one to talk about value in art as a political matter, for collaboration is where labour embodied in the artwork (manual skill, cognition, art-specific competences of all kinds) is exposed to scrutiny.⁶⁶

In the above, collaboration is connected to the value of the artistic product (artistic labor, the artwork) that is located at the conjunction of the worlds of art, economy and politics (under capitalism). It is this “location” and respective operation that renders the notion of collaboration important in art. And, more generally, as the editors write in the next paragraph: “Collaboration is that space of interconnection between art and non-art, art and other disciplines that continuously tests the social boundaries of where, how, with what and with whom art might be made.” Whilst undoubtedly the specific connections with the domains of the economic and the political stressed in the previous citation are significant for the role of art in the world at large, the second, more indeterminate citation that simply characterizes as “non-art” or “other disciplines” what is not art might, conceptually speaking, be more helpful here. The questions of “where, how, with what and with whom art might be made” refer in the first instance to the making of art, i.e. to artistic practices, rather than to outcomes. (Unless, of course, the process is the artistic outcome, which is something that happens particularly with process-based art, and that is exactly why the boundaries of art and other fields designate its space, rather than the limitations of its scope.) So without pre-empting the content or ignoring the importance of the parameters of the political and the economic in relation to art, the general formulation of art and non-art may enable one to find a different conceptual path for the consideration of transformations in the relations between the aforementioned three domains. This would be a path going through the analysis of forms, i.e. the means of art, and the aesthetic discussion of practices. And where practices are understood - as already mentioned earlier in this introduction - following a Rancièrian approach, as “ways of doing and making ’that intervene in the general distribution of ways of doing and making as well as in the relationships they maintain to modes of being and forms of visibility.”⁶⁷

For all the fuss over participatory art practices in recent years, the only known systematic study of the notion in contemporary art is provided in a reader compiled by Claire Bishop under the title *Participation*.⁶⁸ The reader contains pre-existing texts by philosophers and artists from the late 1950s onwards and by contemporary curators and critics. Some of Bishop’s introductory editor’s remarks are interesting to mention here. Firstly, she considers participatory artistic practices since the 1960s to be “appropriating *social* forms, as a way to bring art closer to everyday life.”⁶⁹ These forms are intangible experiences such as dancing samba or funk, drinking beer, running a café or a travel agency.⁷⁰ What Bishop understands as social forms relates to what in this book O refer to as “practices” drawn to art from other disciplines or fields. While “social forms” is a completely relevant term and in accordance with Bishop’s opening statement that her “point of departure is the *social* dimension of participation,” it nonetheless obscures the fact that some of the practices appropriated by artists primarily originate in the worlds of economic (e.g., commerce, services) or political (e.g., campaigns, propaganda) activity. But anyhow, the structure and operation of participation (or collaboration etc. for that matter) in the context of the artists’ appropriation of forms from any of the above fields is similar. Secondly, Bishop distinguishes between “an authored tradition that seeks to provoke participants” and that is “disruptive and interventionist,” starting with avant-garde practices like Dada mock trials. This tradition is opposed to a “de-authored lineage that aims to embrace collective creativity and is “constructive and ameliorative,” exemplified, for

instance, in Soviet mass spectacles like the Storming of the Winter Palace. Thirdly and finally, Bishop describes three concerns that she considers as summing up the triggering forces behind participation in art since the 1960s: activation, authorship, community.⁷¹ Activation links to the empowerment of individual subjects by means of their becoming participants symbolically or physically, which is thought to have emancipatory potential for individuals. The opening up of authorship to more than one individual is considered an egalitarian and democratic gesture, and thus valued “as emerg[ing] from, and producing a more positive and non-hierarchical social model.”⁷² Finally, community refers to a concern with “restor[ing] the social bond through a collective elaboration of meaning,” and it is understood as stemming from “a perceived crisis of community and collective responsibility.”⁷³

In the dissertation I constantly use the terms participatory/collaborative together. The first one is understood here to have connotations of a framed activity, within which other people (than the initiating agency) are activated. So, it indicates a framing format, as well as the precondition of some hierarchy of authorship. In addition, I consider the term participation as having more immediate, visible connotations of processes of democracy and representation, thus linking in the first instance with the political questions posed in collectively authored art. The second term, collaboration, does not really indicate anything about the framed character of the artistic practices in question here. This character is extremely important with regard to questions of authorship, representation and participants/collaborators’ emancipation. Nonetheless, collaboration has more obvious connotations of labor and production than the term participation, thus it appears more pertinent for the economy-related questions posed when art is produced collectively. Even if indeed, as mentioned earlier with reference to John Roberts and Stephen Wright’s citation that showed whence collaboration in art derives its importance, questions of value (economic domain), politics and representation (political domain) can hardly be separated. Consequently, the two terms supplement one another with each one’s particular connotations, covering the parameters of collectivity that are important specifically for this book.

Other related notions frequently used in the field are interactivity, context art and the art of encounter. Interactivity has been elaborated extensively with regard to art that activates viewers’ involvement, and recently especially in the context of new, interactive, media.⁷⁴ From both sides it is less relevant here. The term context art (mostly used in German, Kontext Kunst) was the title of an exhibition curated by Peter Weibel in Graz, in 1993. The exhibition focused on work that thematized the institutional, social and ideological framework of art production, emphasizing links between such tendencies in the early 1990s and the work of conceptual artists from the 1960s and 1970s.⁷⁵ Finally, the term art of encounter, quite common in the Netherlands (ontmoetingskunst), has been discussed in Erik Hagoort’s essay “Good intentions. Judging the art of encounter,” from which it would be useful to pick out a couple of points here. Hagoort reminds us that in 1993 – the year mentioned earlier as hallmark in Europe for the decade’s tendencies - Rirkrit Tiravanjia organized his first cooking meeting called *True to Life* as a gallery event in New York.⁷⁶ The same year the mega public art project “Culture in Action” curated by Mary Jane Jacobs opened in Chicago with several projects involving several local communities.⁷⁷ Hagoort main-

tains that “in retrospect” these two projects “marked the breakthrough of the art of encounter.” Because for all their differences, they shared an important common characteristic: “... the audience was expected to ‘interact’ ... [w]ithin a framework set by the artist The encounter was the essence, not looking at an art object or attending a performance.”⁷⁸ At the same time, the differences between the two events have their significance too. For Hagoort they hallmarked two offshoots of the art of encounter, “one representing low-key, lounge-type gatherings, the other large scale socially engaged activities.”⁷⁹ This dissertation considers cases of the second paradigm, though opening up its site-specific, community-based, public art approach in other directions. Besides, Hagoort’s approach of encounter as the outcome of art revolves predominantly around the question of ethics and aesthetics of artistically staged sociability.⁸⁰ In that context, other issues like labor or democracy are generally seen through the lens of morality.

In conclusion, all the above interpretational frameworks have influenced what follows in this dissertation. Some of them appearing as points of reference at various junctures, while others as points of departure in different directions to their original authors’ approach.

PART I



1 Jeanne van Heeswijk, *Dwaallicht*, Nieuw Crooswijk, Rotterdam, 2004. Event at Schuttersveld Sport Centre, September 18. Photo by the author.



2 Jeanne van Heeswijk, *Dwaallicht*. Nieuw Crooswijk, Rotterdam, 2004. Event at Schuttersveld Sport Centre, September 18. Photo by the author.

AN EVERYDAY PRACTICE OF ART

INTRODUCTION

It is Saturday afternoon, September 18th 2004, in the park by the Schuttersveld Sport Centre in the Nieuw Crooswijk area of Rotterdam. I am wandering around waiting for the second episode of the one-year long project *Dwaallicht* by Jeanne van Heeswijk to start. Over the coming ten years Nieuw Crooswijk will be undergoing an expanded regeneration process that is expected to change its architectural face as well as the composition of its population. Within the framework of the art project *Dwaallicht* the author Dick van den Heuvel is every month writing a chapter of the story *Een zoektocht door Nieuw Crooswijk* about the mysterious quest for Dwaallicht. It is based on stories told by residents about past and present events in Nieuw Crooswijk. The writing of the story is running parallel to events organized each month by the artist, her production team and people from the district. Jeanne van Heeswijk is herself a resident of Nieuw Crooswijk. So this second episode is about to begin with a parade of youngsters, as I hear. The Saturday visitors to the Schuttersveld Sports Centre are sometimes difficult to distinguish from people who are there for the project. A stage and some temporary stalls with flyers, food and other things are standing in the park ready for use.⁸¹ (Fig.1). It looks like a small festival. To kill the awkwardness and boredom of the non-Dutch speaker, I start chatting with a passer-by, when we hear that the parade has started in some street nearby and we head towards there. Ahead a team of teenagers with yellow T-shirts are playing percussion instruments bearing the words: "Antiliaanse Drumband Nos Kas." Some girls are dancing and behind them kids are holding banners reading, for instance, 'Thuis is het mooi in mijn huis.' A small crowd is following the parade – not more than the youngsters' parents and friends I assume (Fig. 2-3). A few people I register as looking like me: their clothes, their faces look



3 - 4 Jeanne van Heeswijk, *Dwaallicht*. Nieuw Crooswijk, Rotterdam, 2004. Event at Schuttersveld Sport Centre, September 18. Photo by the author.



5 - 6 Jeanne van Heeswijk, *Dwaallicht*. Nieuw Crooswijk, Rotterdam, 2004. Event at Schuttersveld Sport Centre, September 18. Photo by the author.

more like those who on a Saturday afternoon find the time to visit some art show. I guess they came for Jeanne. Finally, a small number of people must be the artist's production team: some are shooting a video and taking photographs, some running around looking concerned that everything is OK. The loud drums bring the neighbors out to their windows and balconies. The footsteps of our small crowd are loud by the street's standards. But for the rest it is a quiet parade, faces are serious, people do not shout anything. This absence of voices gives me an uncomfortable feeling that people are not parading for real, they are just doing it "as if." I ask my companion and learn that in the Netherlands people do not have to shout at demonstrations. Then I guess it is a cultural thing. I should myself start re-reading the signs, re-order the criteria of my observations. Yet neither a celebration, nor a protest mood are evident. But it may well just be my awkward position as observer of this crowd about which I know very little: they are at the moment participating in an art project, they must live in Nieuw Crooswijk and they are mostly of non-European descent. But then again, I still really do not have a clue beyond the information on the *Dwaallicht* website and my - as yet unclassified - observations and assumptions.

The parade reaches the park of Schuttersveld with the stalls and the stage, and people stop marching. The boys keep on beating their drums, the girls dance and the younger kids hold the banners, while the small crowd spreads around them and claps to the rhythm (Fig. 4-6). After a while attention dissolves; there is movement around the stage and the stalls. I stick around for some time with my random companion, but do not feel like staying to the end, so we depart. I got a small taste of an event in Jeanne's projects. My companion - an engineer by profession - was introduced to the idea that this can be an artist's project. In the subsequent months he followed almost all of the *Dwaallicht* events, becoming a more faithful attendant than I really.

Back in 2004, *Dwaallicht* was not meant to be included in this book that originally aimed at looking into projects already finished at the time of my research. But what does this mean? How would a subject's direct experience - that automatically includes a role, even as observer - of part of such a process-based project affect a later analysis? What does the concept of the project *Dwaallicht* say about the relations initiated and directed by the artist with different parties, from representatives of the Municipality of Rotterdam (Gemeente Rotterdam), to the borough Kralingen-Crooswijk (Deelgemeente), to the Department of Visual Arts and Public Spaces (Beeldende Kunst & Openbare Ruimte, BKOR) of the Visual Arts Centre of Rotterdam (Centrum Beeldende Kunst, CBK Rotterdam), to local residents and to the artist's production team, to journalists of the local press or art critics and institutions?⁸² What does the organizational and administrative efficiency in preparing an event say about the quality of the experience of people present during the event days of *Dwaallicht*? Should we consider the efficiency in project management, the communication with local residents, the quality of the experience of participants present during events, the relation between the conceptual and narrative framework of the project with Nieuw Crooswijk's everyday life, the political position of the artist on the city council's politics of urban renewal, the writing skill of Dick van den Heuvel (*Dwaallicht*'s commissioned author), the communicative and the aesthetic potential of the entire project's narrative as it appears on its website, on printed matter and in possible future

lectures or exhibitions as re-presentations of the project? Do all the above parameters constitute criteria to be considered when analyzing *Dwaallicht* as an *art* project? Are all the above part of an art historian's work and agenda? Which is? How does such an art practice function within an art context, especially from the moment on that its existence is registered and interest raised? Is such a project visible in another context? Are possibilities opened up for new social, mental and discursive spaces by means of the concepts and/or the interactive processes developed during such projects? And what does this art say about aesthetics in contemporary culture?

The first case study in this dissertation is the practice of the artist Jeanne van Heeswijk. Her work has been chosen as starting point for various reasons. It is in constant dialogue with issues and structures specific to the socio-political and artistic conditions of the Netherlands. At the same time it constitutes an interesting example of both the expansion of engaged, collaborative and participatory artistic practices in Europe since the early 1990s, as well as of their connections to related artists' practices that preceded them in the United States. Practically every project by Van Heeswijk is process-based and employs some model of interaction between people as working method, while it also thematizes the conditions and potential of this interaction. And this holds true even when certain objects play a significant part, such as a mobile room (*Room with a View*, various locations, 1993-1998) or the multifunctional machine "Vibe Detector" (*Valley Vibes*, London, U.K., 1998), their role being to create a platform and facilitate a process of dialogue.⁸³ In past years she has received particular attention within the Dutch art scene and responded to invitations by large art events - such as Manifesta 1 (Rotterdam, 1996) and the Venice Biennial (Dutch Pavillion, 2003) - as well as to opportunities for projects in the dullest urban or suburban, residential areas, such as Vlaardingen (1995, ongoing) or Columbus, Ohio (USA, 2002).⁸⁴

In what follows, I will first give an introduction to her projects from 1993 onwards, pointing out aspects that are significant to this thesis. The overwhelming size and complex structure of the projects render detailed descriptions within the main body of the thesis impossible. A full list of projects including descriptions is provided in Appendix I.⁸⁵ Following the discussion of her projects, the artist's practice will be analyzed on the basis of what is produced within her projects, splitting this "production" into three parts: the conceptual and narrative part, relations and events. This is a methodological division of three interwoven parameters and it does not correspond to any explanation by the artist that I am aware of. Indeed, for an art practice often so preoccupied with "real" life's socio-political issues, this approach might appear to reduce the content of those issues to a story-board for an art theory preoccupied with art forms and methods. However, in due course, this approach will become a way of relating what is presented as the content and agenda of Van Heeswijk's projects to the wider socio-political context within which her practice emerges, and to which it responds.

A point related to the above, and the last one to be made in this introduction, is that both in Part I, as well as in the last chapter on Hans Venhuizen, the importance of the links between the practices of the artists discussed and circumstances particular to the Netherlands cannot be overestimated. From the vague content of the

term “circumstances,” one parameter should be kept in mind throughout. Namely that the Netherlands constitute a very particular case in terms of urban and generally spatial planning. The creation of polderland in areas originally covered with water led to a long-established and uncontested, centralized system of spatial, urban and social planning. Related historical consequences, alongside the consequences of the general restructuring of the country after the 1939-1945 War, are still present in many aspects of contemporary Dutch society: from priorities in political decision-making to everyday life and, apparently, to art.⁸⁶ The specifically interesting aspect of this planning here, is its influence on the motives and practices of the artists’ socio-political engagement, in the face of both art-world and governmental cultural agendas. But let me focus for the time being on Jeanne van Heeswijk.

1 THE ARTIST: JEANNE VAN HEESWIJK

Looking back at Jeanne van Heeswijk’s art projects, most of them had a duration of at least a few weeks. There is hardly any single piece of art or of documentation left afterwards, which could be regarded as adequate representation of what a project was about, or of what exactly happened there. Therefore, I will start here with a presentation of the artist’s projects and practices, so as to avoid in subsequent sections a constant interruption of the flow of analysis for the sake of describing the projects referred to. Additionally, parameters significant to the questions of the entire thesis will also be directly or indirectly introduced.

Projects and practices

After the Jan van Eyck [Academy] I exhibited an installation near Flatland in Utrecht. It was a sort of diary of objects. But when I visited the exhibition after the opening, I suddenly noticed that I was terribly bored with my own work. I was convinced that this was not it, I had a vague idea that art had to be about something different. ... I started researching. I read a lot, I went to see a lot, and talked a lot with people. ... [Suchan Kinoshita] had the idea of doing something relating to borders, in the context of Schengen. I am quite good at organizing things and asked her if I could help her. ... I set up from my home a press office, an archive of correspondence with artists, press communication and address files. Everything published about borders in the press was faxed daily. This was the first time that I was truly myself the way I am, that I did things the way I did them and that I thought that this could be sufficient. It was an enormous relief. Because I really have to say one thing: I have always had great difficulties with the form. I have always wished to say lots of things and found narrative important, but it has always been a problem how I should put across all the things I have wanted to say in an object.⁸⁷

The project *The Office* for Suchan Kinoshita in 1993 is the oldest of Jeanne van Heeswijk’s works, about which information is given on her website (Fig. 7). During the same year she also organized *The Dinner*, in which she invited to her place the

artists Suchan Kinoshita, Q.S. Serafijn and Marcel Wanders asking each one to organize their own dinner party, with their own guests and a discussion theme (Fig. 8). According to Van Heeswijk, she was interested in their work and stories, but could not fully comprehend them. Therefore she took the role of a butler during the dinners, serving, listening, observing, but not actively participating.⁸⁸

Between 1993 and 1998 she presented the project *Room with a View* in different versions, according to the re-contextualizing setting where it was placed each time, such as her studio in Rotterdam, the Amsterdam art fair KUNST RAI, a psychiatric clinic in Germany and the Maritime Museum “Prins Hendrik” in Rotterdam. The Room was a wooden box with four walls, a door and wheels (Fig. 22-23). Each time it provided the artist with a space for discussions with various individuals, mainly from the art world.

In 1994 the CBK Rotterdam commissioned temporary works to local artists as part of *Opzoomeren*, an annual event organized by the city of Rotterdam at neighborhood level.⁸⁹ Jeanne van Heeswijk created a plan for the passageway that connects two houses for the elderly on the Mookhoekplein in Overschie. Together with residents of the two houses, she furnished the passageway as a living room. This project was named *Outside Livingroom* and was meant to last for one month, but in the event continued until 1998. Also in 1994 Van Heeswijk co-curated together with Ine Gevers the exhibition *I + the Other, Art and the Human Condition*. The exhibition was a joint initiative of the Dutch Red Cross and the Artimo Foundation and was hosted at the Beurs van Berlage in Amsterdam. It included artworks by a wide range of well-known, Dutch and international artists combined with visual and archive ma-



7 Jeanne van Heeswijk, *The Office*. Heurne-Hemden, 1993. Courtesy of the artist.

terial from the Red Cross and the media. This seems to have been the first project by the artist – here as curator – that attracted considerable attention by the art press, though not always favorable. Some art critics saw it as “dignity in exchange for art,” as art’s reduction to an instrument of human rights organizations and altogether as too didactic.⁹⁰

Early projects contained central elements and directions to be met again in later ones. The initiatives of *The Dinner* and *Room with a View* are foremost about staging a concrete situation for dialogue and encounter between particular individuals.⁹¹ In them, as well as in *The Office* for Kinoshita, Van Heeswijk appears more as a listener choosing her mentors or a work placement. In *The Office* and *The Dinner* the “tutorials” are symbolically exchanged for a service – as secretary, butler – reminding one also of the *Services* discussed by Andrea Fraser and Helmut Draxler between 1994 and 1996.⁹² What is particular about these two projects of Van Heeswijk is the emphasis on enriching her own knowledge and skills, an interest that will continue throughout her career. Only later it will be traceable more in the challenges posed by the extensive research and gradual complexity of projects, rather than as direct target.

From 1994 onwards, the basic model of providing a simple context or platform for a group to have a dialogue evolved into providing a context or platform for invited participants to produce something in their capacity as artists, architects, writers and so on. As such, Van Heeswijk’s projects conceptualize and function as a basic frame of reference, in response to which others develop their own concepts and practices. This basic motif of art-world peers as participants was repeated in *Until we meet again* (Vlaardingen, 1995-2004), *A House for the Community* (Oud Beijerland, 1996-2002), *NEStWORK* (Rotterdam, 1996), *State of mind* (Rotterdam, 1996), *Break Dance* (London, U.K., 1997), *The Secret City* (Middelburg, 1997), *Hotel New York PSI* (New York, USA, 1997), *A Christmas pudding for Henry* (Leeds, United Kingdom, 1999), *Subway to the outside* (New York, USA, 1999). In this light, Van Heeswijk’s projects especially till the mid-late 1990s display some elements of art practices that Nicolas Bourriaud connected to each other under his theoretical proposal of relational aesthetics from the mid-1990s.⁹³ Bourriaud was interested in gallery practices, in which relations that were produced, staged and elaborated on, circulated within art-world networks. It must, however, be pointed out that the relations



8 Jeanne van Heeswijk, *The Dinner*. Rotterdam, 1993. Courtesy of the artist.

and interactions at the core of Van Heeswijk's practice are almost always located on the map at the geographical and social locations inhabited by the people involved.

At first loosely and hesitantly, more focused and emphatically from the late 1990s onwards, Van Heeswijk herself and invited art-related participants sought to have direct interaction with people from the places that the site-specific projects focused on.⁹⁴ In some of the first projects these people were either the residents of an area as in *Until we meet again*, or of homes for the elderly as in *Outside Livingroom*, or of the new housing estate who were offered a 'Welcome package' in *Welcome Stranger*. The role of these people – whose urban and social environment supplied/provided the art projects' themes – appeared to become more active and complicated in the *Valley Vibes*. There, people took the "Vibe Detector" and decided how to use it. Or later, when in the two versions of *Face Your World* the children were provided with high-tech equipment in order to visualize how they would imagine (Columbus) or lobby local authorities (Slotervaart) about the design of their urban environment. In *The Strip* and *Dwaallicht* people from the respective areas were involved in activities and performative events. It is noticeable that – with the exception of *Face Your World* – in most projects outside the Netherlands the concepts and narratives of Van Heeswijk's projects do not thematize directly the particular conditions regarded as problematic in the neighborhoods. Even though it is due to these conditions that art is often called for in the first place.

This implies a consciousness of the ethical implications of what Miwon Kwon characterized as nomadic artists doing community art here and there with return tickets in their back-pockets.⁹⁵ But also a consistency with issues implicit in I + the Other and Van Heeswijk's own insistence on the necessity of "trust" and "accountability" towards all parties involved in a project.⁹⁶ Nonetheless, it is hard to deny that this understanding of the issues of I + the Other, "trust" and "accountability" originates with discourses of social work, ethnography or even with local authority policies. Only in about the past fifteen years such issues have emphatically entered art discourses. They are usually surfacing in discussions about what the artists' ultimate aspirations are, when they engage with art commissions during urban planning projects – a long-standing and complicated procedure in the Netherlands – and, even more, with groups designated as socially weak.⁹⁷

Let me return to the model of creating a platform where art-world fellows were provided with "space" to produce work. It should be underlined here that the extent to which variations of this model have been repeated by artists during the 1990s, and their initial enthusiastic reception by art events' curators of any scale, ideology or professional aspirations, created a sense of exhaustion.⁹⁸ This exhaustion was accompanied by a certain disgruntlement at the fact that the artworld networks promoted were often far more sophisticated and fascinating than the artworks produced, unless one equated the two. And that is not to mention an overdose of documentation-based [re]presentations of process-based projects in art exhibitions. In Van Heeswijk's projects some of the same collaborators appear time and again, such as Rolf and Maaïke Engelen, Wapke Feenstra, Marcel Wanders, Irene Hohenbüchler and so on.⁹⁹ From the late 1990s onwards the significance of inviting art-world peers starts dissolving with the appearance of differently prioritized collaborative structures with more vari-

able groups and based on more complex narratives and scenarios than before. What this means can be shown in the examples of two projects.

The first one, *A Christmas Pudding for Henry* (Leeds, UK, 1999), upon invitation by the Henry Moore Foundation External Programmes, comprised activities including workshops, fieldwork, presentations and discussions that were presented on three podiums (Fig. 9). The first was the Leeds Metropolitan University Gallery, where every evening somebody presented their visions of the city of Leeds in a lecture, performance, work or film screening. The website www.henry-w.org was the second podium, giving weekly updates. As the third podium, the prestigious, black marble façade of the Henry Moore Institute became a blackboard on which ideas about Leeds and activities in the city were presented. The whole project had the purpose of elaborating on a portrait of the city with an emphasis on cultural infrastructure and relationships. It was realized with the daily involvement of more than thirty artists and members of the public. What seems to be indicated by the project's organizational structure is the intention that, firstly, the creation of the city's portrait go through various agents, from art institutions to non-art related individuals. Secondly, that it be (re-)presented by means of various artistic and communication media and methods. Finally, that it addressed various audiences, from visible visitors to events, to invisible internet users and the random passers-by of the Henry Moore Institute. All production or audience groups are accorded equal significance within the project's formal concept and structure.

The second example, *The Strip* in the Westwijk district of the city of Vlaardingen, which lasted between May 2002 and May 2004, is far more complicated than the first (Fig. 10-13).¹⁰⁰ The project was born as part of *Until we meet again*, which was commissioned to Van Heeswijk by the Vlaardingen City Council. The Council had originally wanted a sculpture master plan for the finished, regenerated area and Van Heeswijk was one amongst three candidates. Her proposal was to switch from the sculpture master plan to the idea of a project accompanying the gentrification process, commenting and intervening in close collaboration with residents. This residential area counted as a typical example of modernist urban planning from the 1950s; dysfunctional in the 1990s. While *Until we meet again* was a project invisible outside Vlaardingen, *The Strip* rapidly developed much broader ambitions, expressed



9 Jeanne van Heeswijk, *A Christmas Pudding for Henry*. Leeds, 1999. Façade of Henry Moore Institute. Courtesy of the artist.

in its organizational, production and presentation structure. The artist was given access to a shopping strip pending demolition at that time. Its owner wished to avoid acts of vandalism by “decorating” the facade. In an area of minimal cultural production, inhabited by migrant families alongside elderly Dutch who had not moved since the 1950s, Van Heeswijk turned the shopping strip into a “factory” for art and community production. Under its roof *The Strip* hosted next to one another an exhibition branch of Rotterdam’s Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen including a café and bookshop, a space for different workshops on youth culture organized by MAMA (Showroom for Media and Moving Art, Rotterdam), studios and small workplaces that artists and craftsmen could use for periods of three months on condition that they be open to the public twice a week. Different spaces within *The Strip* were available for a lecture and performance program organized by inhabitants of Westwijk. Finally, a fortnightly newsletter announced news from *The Strip* and Westwijk. What the organization, production and presentation structures of this project indicate is an intention to have a maximum of activity and creativity in a place, where it is the least expected. In this way possibilities would open up for everyone to imagine what the area could be like during the years-long period of the regeneration, which seemed to be only about closing down, demolishing and dismantling. Instead, *The Strip* emphasized possibilities of using the empty spaces in transition to tell about a community in transition. The project formally embraced in its structures, as participants or audiences, residents of Westwijk, the municipal authorities of Vlaardingen, the housing association Waterweg Wonen and the artworld.¹⁰¹ Anyhow, it should be kept in mind that, while it all started officially for the benefit of the locals who were “there,” Westwijk’s ex-shopping strip would not have received the lights of publicity without the involvement of the Boijmans Museum, the MAMA Showroom and the appearance of some well-known artists, curators and art historians.

This brings us to an inherent link between the largest of Van Heeswijk’s recent projects in the Netherlands, namely *The Strip*, *Dwaallicht* and *Face Your World* (Slotervaart). All three showed an attempt to function as catalysts in bringing to the surface the creative potentials that exist in the urban fabric of poor, “uninteresting” areas, pending regeneration and inhabited largely by families of migrant background.¹⁰² This intention goes part and parcel with the Dutch government’s decision implemented in 1995, according to which Dutch housing corporations were privatized and financial priorities seem to have taken over social considerations in urban planning. As a result, such low-cost urban residential areas became subject to gentrification strategies favoring demolition rather than renovation, often displaying business indifference if not disapproval of the population composition of poor districts.¹⁰³

As is traditionally the case with most Dutch urban projects of large scale, there was some money allocated for art. And it is not unusual that the attention of commissioned artists – in this case Van Heeswijk’s – might be drawn to the social issues at stake. For these projects, the artist capitalized on existing opportunities: the initial invitation to just “embellish” the shopping strip’s façade, the interest of the Foundation Art and Public Spaces (SKOR) in a new version of *Face Your World* in Amsterdam, the attention Van Heeswijk received at the time as participant in the 2003 Venice Biennial.¹⁰⁴ An artist’s professional prestige is a cultural capital that can contribute to

convincing potential collaborators like local authorities to allow access to areas and budgets – even if the convincing takes a whole year like in Slotervaart.¹⁰⁵

According to the artist, residents of migrant background often know very little about what will happen to their neighborhoods. Her three projects were about raising awareness so that people could form their own opinions and appropriate their reality. Through such projects communities can come into being, groups can become visible and create their own identity.¹⁰⁶ None of the three projects had the character of radical oppositionality.¹⁰⁷ Rather, they aimed at providing those social groups, which planning decision-makers appear to regard as controllable and undifferentiated masses, with the means and confidence to demand a say in their future - starting here with their urban environment.

The artist's concerns and methods in these projects, including the direct participation of members of the communities thematized, the photographs and further printed promotion material seem to demonstrate a turn here towards "traditional" community art. Despite ridding their vocabulary of terms like "community empowerment" or "representation," they seem to have more in common with, for instance, the projects referred to by Finklerpearl, Felshin or Kwon principally for the United States, than with Van Heeswijk's earlier "relational platforming" of peers.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, the artist herself leaves us no room to assume that she is unaware of older community and activist art, of the critique they have received, as well as further theoretical approaches of communication with and representation of the "Other" from the fields of sociology, philosophy, anthropology, cultural theory and so on.¹⁰⁹ Thus excuses of ignorance or naiveté, occasionally heard for socially engaged artists eager to explore group dynamics, could not be applicable here.¹¹⁰ Van Heeswijk's recent practices can be read as a conscious "take it or leave it" proposal for a socially responsible art practice. This point will surface in the following sections on the production of concepts and narratives, of relations and of events.

2 CONCEPTS AND NARRATIVES

The term *concept* refers to "an idea or a principle relating to something abstract." A *narrative* is a "spoken or written account of events, a story," but *narrative* means also "telling a story."¹¹¹ In ephemeral, process-based art what exist at the very beginning are ideas and concepts. From them, all the ways through the formulation of a project proposal and the imagining of future scenarios, down to the involvement of various people and the implementation of selected events, a story is built up. A project's story or a project as a story exists in all possible forms of articulating and communicating a project's ideas and content. These might be written, verbal, visual or other. They might, or might not, be recorded. The narrative reaches beyond the official finissage of a project – provided a project has an endpoint – while there are also stories of projects unrealized.

In this section, seeing the project as narrative or in a narrative, will mean regarding it as a kind of space, within which a project is acted out and forever re-enacted, re-written and re-born. This is an important perspective to take, because through a project's story one gets to know about – and thus evaluate – the forms that the initial ideas and concepts have taken within projects. Narrative can thus

become the strength or the weakness of a project, whether before, during or after the latter's implementation. Here I will try to show what this narrative can be composed of and how it holds together not only single projects, but the whole practice, forming a most complex aspect of this art form with links reaching beyond the field of art.

The narrations within and without. Narrative as a practiced place¹¹²

Thus, my working process consists of a continuous exploration of questions. Working with those questions instead of with images is a process inching towards a slippery slope, since one will always make mistakes in the course of such a process. One could say that my work is merely an investigation of the conditions under which images could be regenerated. I believe that today's aesthetics has isolated art by separating the image from reality, while shifting presentation to representation. Because of that, isolated images have emerged without any connection to reality. In my work, I try to create contexts for images and their different possibilities so that images have the capacity to reconnect in a meaningful way to their environment.¹¹³

Where is the difference between working with questions and working with images? If questions are part of an investigation, are images part of an outcome? Moreover, does reality present itself or is it itself presentation, while today's images are only representing something, themselves mere means of representation – something detached? What if images are both, representing something *and* themselves presentations? And what constitutes that domain of aesthetics that appears to encompass the potentiality of all the above somehow in pairs, and in a time-based sequence marked by an implied ethics-driven prioritization? Is ethics here the yardstick of meaningfulness of an artist's vision against a reality?

Below I will investigate for sources, resources, references, as well as for times and places of articulating the questions that the artist poses. In essence this is an investigation for the means with which projects are constructed as narratives. The study material may include everything from the first official proposal to all texts, talks during presentations, promotion material, invitations, documentation (if compiled and accessible) and so on, all of which are produced to communicate a project to different publics. Such narrations are principally articulated by the means of language. Any visual means used for presentations in exhibition spaces, printed matter, public spaces etc. also depend on some text, if they are to communicate a project's story or content.¹¹⁴ Below I will initially refer to language-based means and later move on to visual ones.

Being foremost language- and issues-based, the narrative is in fact sharing similar means, references, concepts, points of skepticism, it complies to similar rules in building up its concepts and argumentation and it requires similar rhetorical skills or even tricks, as art critique and theory. It can include in the artwork its external critique, appropriate it even. An extreme example of how this works is the fictitious dialogue "Creative Urge" by Maaïke Engelen, published on the artist's website. A voice called "the poet" says:

Transgressions
Integrations
Appropriations

Under the pretext of art one can furnish many activities with loads of money and give them the requisite amount of kudos. How boring it would be otherwise, if no one would know about me reading to these people of whom I don't know whether they understand a mere iota of it. When I turn the activity into art, at least I've got a public. And that's how Jeanne would put it: it's very lucrative to call oneself an artist nowadays, and then just to go on doing what one wants to do, whatever it may be. Whether it's helping the homeless, preaching in public, or spading over vegetable gardens for the neighborhood, anything goes - public and money for nothing - when you're an artist and when you know to steer a middle way through all the specialisms.¹¹⁵

The dialogue was written for the presentation of an art prize to Van Heeswijk in 2001.¹¹⁶ Engelen - herself often involved in Van Heeswijk's projects - has staged on paper a number of "voices" originating from a range of capacities that either the artist or others had taken within her projects, such as a museum attendant, a chambermaid, a critic, a dancer, a poet and a thinker. They all suggest variant interpretations of Van Heeswijk's practices, echoing also positive and negative opinions expressed by critics in the past.¹¹⁷ One could, for instance, juxtapose the poet's quote about using art as pretext for money and public attention, with the criticism that the exhibition *I + the Other* (1994) put art at the service of the Red Cross, "reduc[ing] works of art to mere pamphlets ... in the cause of human dignity."¹¹⁸ But what is more interesting is that one could claim this dialogue falls within the narrative domain of Van Heeswijk's work. This claim could be argued for on the grounds of Maaïke Engelen's involvement in various projects, the occasion of the speech, the website where it is published and, of course, the origins of the conversing voices from Van Heeswijk's projects. Thus the critique of her work's weaknesses is incorporated in the narrative of the artist's work and potentially turned to a strength.

There are more ways in which such transgressions might occur. The following account by Mirjam Westen of the project *Until we meet again* (1997-2007), out of which *The Strip* was also born, could be an example here. *Until we meet again* was conceived to follow and comment on the ten year long reconstruction of the district of Westwijk in Vlaardingen. Westen's account accompanied a 2004 interview with Van Heeswijk:

The Strip ... is part of the extensive long-term plan *Until we meet again* which Van Heeswijk began to present in 1995. ... Her plan involved a series of projects that could make a positive contribution towards community life precisely during the chaotic period of dug up streets, unoccupied houses and vandalism. It became a comprehensive project aimed at involving residents in all the changes and initiating "meetings" between residents, the housing association and council departments. Van Heeswijk set up a series of activities for which she commissioned artists, architects and residents. In addition, for an eighteen-month period Van Heeswijk was given the use of a dilapidated shopping arcade in a block of flats, fulfilling an ambitious plan.¹¹⁹

Reading the above one is left with the impression that *Until we meet again* was a vibrant project already before *The Strip* started. Nonetheless, discussions with people from the Municipality of Vlaardingen, including the Municipal Council's cultural policy maker between 1999-2003, Esther Didden, gave a different picture. They all were favorably disposed towards the artist and her work in Vlaardingen. Yet according, for instance, to Didden, when she started as advisor, with Westwijk's reconstruction moving too slowly and Van Heeswijk traveling back and forth to New York during *Hotel New York P.S.I.*, the project was "sleeping."

Jeanne was frequently in the area, the meetings, but there was not much art going on, if I can put it this way. But she was there. And everybody slowly recognized her after a few times, that she was the artist, but there was no art. They were not worried or something, because they knew about the process [of Westwijk's urban renewal moving slowly] and all the limitations etc. But it was not a dynamic situation when I came in. ... *The Strip* was a savior for *Until we meet again*, it gave it an impulse.¹²⁰

From the 9-10 assignments given by Van Heeswijk to other artists, at the time of the 2005 interview with Didden only about six were realized. The realized ones were mostly limited in complexity, duration and reach beyond the sometimes few people directly involved.¹²¹ In total the project's short description reveals little about what actually took place.

It is hardly possible today to think of *The Strip* without remembering the publicity it generated. But for the project *Until we meet again* very little was known outside the area of Westwijk in Vlaardingen.¹²² Whatever took place, took place in Vlaardingen and amongst the Municipality, the housing association Stichting Waterweg Wonen and the residents involved. Access to information on the individual assignments and their outcomes is possible only through approaching the aforementioned parties. Under this perspective, when Mirjan Westen writes that "in addition" to the "series of activities" of the comprehensive project *Until we meet again* "for an eighteen month period Van Heeswijk was given the use of a dilapidated shopping arcade..," (i.e. the shopping *Strip*), it seems rather as if she is projecting on *Until we meet again* the image of a vibrant, multifaceted project that basically *The Strip* was at the time – and was also extensively published as such. Nonetheless, as the former saw its story published only rather locally, a text like Westen's may easily be incorporated into its story for the wider art public, potentially making something of it in excess of what it was.¹²³

To move to further aspects of the narrative construction of projects and practices, as many questions handled in Van Heeswijk's projects usually have their origins in non-art contexts, the artist draws from discourses in academic fields, such as cultural theory, sociology, social anthropology or philosophy. This engagement with theoretical discourses from the humanities and social sciences becomes evident in Van Heeswijk's article "Fleeting Images of Community." She starts by stating that "my whole artistic practice departs from my belief that art has the capacity to contribute to life" and a couple of paragraphs further on she explains:



10 - 11 Jeanne van Heeswijk, *The Strip*. Westwijk, Vlaardingen, 2002-2004. Façade of The Strip building. Courtesy of the artist.



12 - 13 Jeanne van Heeswijk, *The Strip*. Westwijk, Vlaardingen, 2002-2004. Various activities. Courtesy of the artist.

The direct attention in my work for the participant implies the creation of platforms where people are able to encounter each other again and design and represent their own environment. At the same time, one should attempt to formulate a new moral attitude, since I do not believe in an aesthetics without ethics.¹²⁴

And Van Heeswijk continues by discussing the new moral attitude of the artist that should also:

... focus on the necessity of creating contexts outside of recognized art spaces while breaking down the isolated positions of these spaces. These novel contexts intensify and even create meaning because of their capacity to intervene both physically and mentally in the domain of visual art, whereas another kind of experience might emerge as a precondition for an active process of signification.¹²⁵

With regard to the above fundamental points of how the artist reflects on and develops her practice, and especially about the ethical and communicative dimensions of how the “I” can relate to an “Other,” she points to the influence of sociologist Scott Lash, of Emmanuel Lévinas and Hannah Arendt on her thinking.¹²⁶ Quite interestingly, reading the above thoughts of the artist, the driving force and criteria of artistic explorations appear inherently connected to an investigation of ethics. Ethics, in the sense of the reflection on, and renegotiation of moral questions and principles governing a person’s attitude towards him or herself and towards others. Therefore, it does not come as surprise that in the same article she underlines art’s priority in her work, which distinguishes it from being merely a contribution to cultural theory discourses: “In my activities, imagination and the space for the image continue to be decisive.” In this article, just like in all her texts and interviews used for this thesis, Van Heeswijk’s discussion of her work has the strength of being coherent and – quite appreciated by art theorists – of creating spaces in one’s mind for an idealism that does not echo some over-chewed and outdated rhetoric. In this respect, the artist can help take the thinking on what the function and role of the artist’s engagement could be in today’s society a step forward.

But that’s exactly where the problem starts for projects that are developed on the basis of, or alongside the shaping of the artist’s thinking on meanings and objectives: the methods and interactive events employed, such as the “platforming” of peers, neighborhood meetings, activities with children, amateur band concerts, festival-like events, working group discussions with experts and so on, all these appear more commonplace, less sharp and intriguing than the thinking that frames them. This is not because they deal with a common-place and mundane everyday. Rather, it is because in comparison with the complex conceptual and theoretical approaches of how art may affect life, in the narrations of various projects there is a repetition, time and again, of similar patterns, motifs or formats of everyday life interactivity.

To elucidate the above, while keeping in mind the “new moral attitude” that one should attempt to formulate alongside a new aesthetics, let me move on from language-based discourses to the place of the image. Gallery exhibitions could be the first example here.¹²⁷ The artist argues that she does not believe in the representational act, in representing the outside – the public spaces, the participating publics – inside a gallery and especially by means of documentation like photographs or videos.¹²⁸ This position echoes ethical questions familiar to anthropologists, journalists, activists or documentary makers, who find themselves becoming spokesmen or lobbyists for groups to which they often do not belong themselves, but in the interest of which they choose to work.

Instead, Van Heeswijk tries to devise presentations in exhibitions that aim at functioning metaphorically for the *ideas* of projects that took place outside.¹²⁹ What is meant here as metaphor can be seen, for instance, in interactive installations like *Draw a Line* (Tokyo, 2000, presented also in Venice translated as *Conquest*, 2003, Fig. 14), a twenty-five square meter area filled with Dutch earth, where visitors could play a traditional Dutch game about gaining and losing land.¹³⁰ The means of a game were employed for this interactive installation, which represented the ideas behind the project called *The Future from the Sidelines* that had taken place in Gorinchem, in 2003. She chose to appropriate a traditional game, that is, an already existing and non-art related form of interactivity between people, to which she cannot claim artistic authority. This game functions as a metaphor for the artist’s ideas and practices of staging platforms of activity outside designated art spaces. While it can operate as reference to the specific project *The Future from the Sidelines* - the game neither represents any identity of particular groups involved, nor recounts the story of the project. It remains at a level of representing the idea of doing things with people as art, of seeking out as yet undesignated spaces between art and the everyday. What’s more, the installation did not seem to aim at a strong impact on the viewer whether as visual or as conceptual art work. Some viewers found it “sitting” somewhat uncomfortably in the environment of the high-profile Venice Biennial. For the artist herself, such reactions only testified to a most meaningful presentation of her work in such a context. She recalled with satisfaction an art critic in Venice saying: “Jeanne, for the first time I respect you. Because how can you be so unspectacular? How can you be so low present? I expect that you still are you, that you don’t work for expectations.”¹³¹

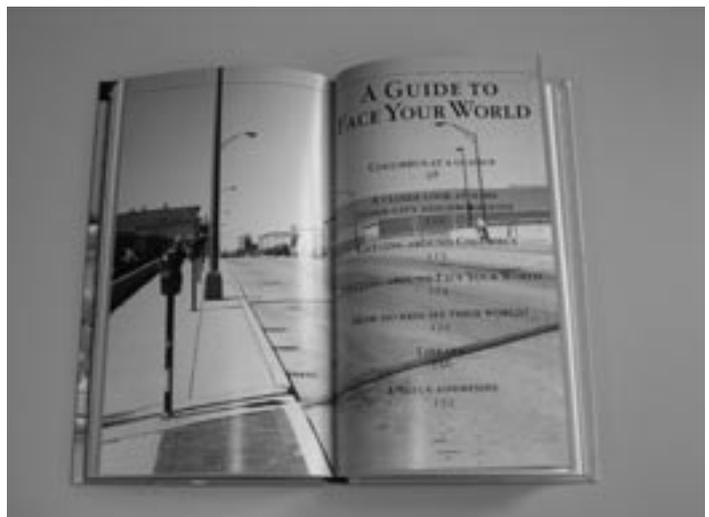
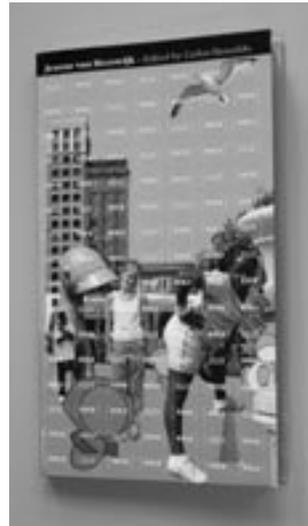


14 Jeanne van Heeswijk,
Draw a Line. Presentation at
La Biennale di Venezia,
Venice 2003.
Coutesy of the artist.

Moving from the presentation space of the gallery to the presentation space of the page, whether a printed or internet one, things become somewhat more complicated in terms of avoiding representation. Significantly, books and websites rather than exhibition spaces, constitute the artist's preferred media for communicating her projects. When looking at the pages of the *Face Your World* book (Columbus, Ohio, 2002, Fig. 15-17), or the *Face Your World* website (Slotervaart, Amsterdam, 2004-05, (<http://www.faceyourworld.nl/slotervaart.php>) it is difficult not to talk about representation of a neighborhood.¹³² Attention is drawn to the effective informative and - for the web design - the interactive character of these publications.

An interesting question that arises asks what the relation between the narrative of a project and the narrative or the myth of the artist might be. How can an artist, on the one hand, responsibly communicate ephemeral, collaborative art projects that are about the Other, without arbitrarily representing the Other? And, on the other, decide whether as an artist one wants to create a recognizable visual identity for oneself with graphic means? In the case of Van Heeswijk, she makes herself disappear as initiator by giving to each project a very specific visual identity that refers to issues reflected on in the projects. For instance the eye-catching green of *Dwaallicht's* graphics and various souvenir-like objects alludes to the expanded green areas within Nieuw Crooswijk - due to two old graveyards - that made the district appealing to developers (<http://www.dwaallicht.nl/>). Or the blood-red surfaces of the *Strip's* building façade, book and website that implied that the gentrification was not turning the area into a dead place (Fig. 10, 18-19 and <http://www.destrip-westwijk.net>).¹³³ Thus the visual vocabulary of the design is each time specific to the respective project. In that sense, priority is given to ethical and functional design choices, which, in turn, indicate, shape and "brand" her own chosen identity as an artist.¹³⁴

It was suggested at the beginning that images, meaning here *concrete* visual materials from projects, require some text if they are to communicate a project's content.



Images used for printed matter and websites include mainly photographs, drawings, cartoon-like and digitally designed images, maps and collages. Amongst these, it would be interesting to consider photographic images separately. They usually document activities, events and the respective places. They show the people, environments and objects referred to in the texts. There are plenty of images and visual materials used, but they always rely on an awful lot of text to communicate meaning. The books of the projects *A House for the Community* and *The Strip*, could be taken here as examples. More than any other book, the former is a celebration of colorful pictures (Fig. 20-21). Two thirds of the book are taken up with full-color photographic plates occupying the entire double-spreads. However, in the middle of every single one of these double spreads, there is a half-page sized, four-page long, monochrome brochure inserted that provides explanatory texts. Cutting the image half, the text does not just accompany, but simultaneously imposes itself upon and violates the image. Similarly, in the book of *The Strip*, where half the book consists of photographs in full A4-scale, there are titles and texts laid over every single photograph (Fig. 19). Again the text does not just frame or support the pictures, rather it sits over and within them, imposing itself physically as well as conceptually. Consequently, even there where whole series of photographs relating to a project are employed to support the narration of a project, they are not really trusted to do so.

To take a different, but supplementary to the above, perspective towards photographic images, one could further consider how an individual image functions. Forgetting about art for a second, any photograph from an event records what once took place. In a photograph the event is forever framed. Taking a snapshot already interprets an activity as potentially worthy of capture. Photographs selected for public presentation further contain the decision that these particular shots caught something significant for an interpretation and identity of the recorded event favored by the publishing agency. Bearing these characteristics, a photograph cannot be regarded as a neutral means of representation. It presents itself to us with significant interpretation, it carries its own aims within the borders of its frame.¹³⁵

Yet within an art project's book or website a photograph itself also becomes an aesthetic event. Even if per se it is not intended as art, its selection there reflects the art project's ideas and concepts, its placement complies to as much as it supports the priorities of that specific narration of the project. What's more, in Van Heeswijk's projects this exposure to a frame of aesthetics is in fact double. Not only does the



15 - 17 Jeanne van Heeswijk,
Face Your World.
Columbus-Ohio, 2002.
Project publication.
Photos by the author.

context in which the photograph appears – a book, a website etc. – place it in a domain of aesthetics. In most cases, the events themselves - dinners, lectures, walks, meetings, workshops etc. – were already activities that had been drawn into a domain of art from a repertoire of non-art professional or leisure activities. The staged event was already framed, before the picture came. Had that first exposure to aesthetics with its ephemeral character gone unrecorded, it would theoretically had been possible for the event, with its ambiguous space and time, to be returned to the “real,” everyday life of participants or collaborators in the form of an experience – personal, slippery and fugitive like any other. Nonetheless, the presentation of the photographic image will persistently testify to a double exposure to aesthetics, eliminating forever the possibility of the art event merging back into an undifferentiated space of personal experiences from everyday-life situations, which provided the prototypes for many of those events.

Moreover, this second framing, the turning of an event into an image, is something that the artist, regardless of whoever else worked with her, is herself returning to the domain where her practice originated from – to art. In fact, even the absence of documentary evidence from an ephemeral art project would simply be the other side of the same coin: in the logic of art since the appearance of conceptual and process-based art forms, the absence of documentation – if not accidental – has to be the artist’s intention, therefore by definition an aesthetic choice.

Physically present or absent by choice, photographic or other images within the narrative space of a project will forever attest the presence of the artist. In the end, the kind of latent iconoclasm at work *within* the very imagery of the projects’ narratives as in books or websites can be regarded as functioning similarly to the design decisions mentioned earlier. While they leave out traits of the artist’s individual identity in favor of accentuating each specific project’s identity, they eventually type-set and stamp a whole practice to be identifiable with the artist as her own. A practice in which concrete images are never left to function with their own means, but have to be textually interpreted in the name of an abstract notion of the “image.” To put it differently, the “image” becomes one of the concepts that are taken up and narrated within projects.

Transcendences If narration can be rendered on the space of a page by linguistic, visual and other
 Precedences means, there is another category of space, far more widely embracing as well as vague, that should be examined separately: public space. Whether seen simply as



publicly accessible physical spaces like squares, streets and public buildings, or conceived as the more abstract notions of the “public sphere” or the “public domain,” the concept of “public space” comprises a category that includes and defines roles. The artist, as well as art in general, also have their roles and histories in it. The perceptions that dominate in a society about the roles of groups and individuals within the public domain go part and parcel with the narratives, the myths, even the scenarios that a society produces for itself, and by the means of which it makes sense of itself and sustains its structures.

Van Heeswijk’s is one amongst numerous other international artists in the 1990s, who aimed at creating platforms and stages, where situations and activities could be acted out, outside the everyday, but not at a higher level than the everyday. Many of them allocated active or passive roles to a public within activities as simple as a party, a dinner, a game, a workshop, a guided museum or city tour.¹³⁶ The simultaneously increasing focus on “public space” as an issue in academic and political debates drew the aforementioned art practices in public, everyday-life spaces, into the middle of much broader discourses than one would, at first glance, have expected this art to raise.¹³⁷

By now these general observations are already clichés for European art of the 1990s. They have been partly pigeonholed within theoretical paradigms like “Relational Aesthetics” or “Kontext Kunst.”¹³⁸ Yet, as mentioned in the introduction about the Netherlands, one should always look back at significant historical particularities in the reception ground for artistic practices that deal with public spaces. As the carefully calculated production of physical space by planners, engineers and architects has been an inescapable reality for centuries, the imagining of physical and social spaces of everyday life by artists has functioned as a metaphor of an emancipatory practice throughout the 20th century.¹³⁹ One could follow the thread of this metaphor in ideas assigning to art tasks such as enlightening the public, uplifting it morally and spiritually, but also conceiving scenarios where art and life, utopia and reality would merge in imagined cities of the future. From the so-called “communal art” (“Gemeenschapskunst”) of the 1920s and de Stijl between ca. 1917-1931, to the Situationists in the 1950s, Constant’s “New Babylon” and later the Arnhem School’s Environmental Art of the 1970s, the line of this metaphor can be traced throughout Dutch modernism. What’s more, parallels can be drawn with the art-commissioning practice of non-art institutions, such as the Rijksgebouwendienst and the 1% for-the-arts legislation.¹⁴⁰ More details about this discussion will be given in Part II - chapter three of the



18 -19 Jeanne van Heeswijk, *The Strip*. Westwijk, Vlaardingen, 2002-2004.
Project publication.
Photos by the author.

thesis with reference to Hans Venhuizen and his Bureau in Rotterdam. What should be emphasized here is that the fields of urban - and generally spatial - planning and management with their policies and discourses play an important role in Dutch society and culture. Art in public spaces and in the public interest should be understood respectively, as a smaller discourse within the larger and interdisciplinary field of spatial planning. What is significant here is that due to the large number of public art commissions from public constructions moneys, the space planning sector has for many years been a significant source of finance for the professional art sector. And while the commissioned art follows its contemporary art-world tendencies, there are certain independent characteristics that artists working in the public domain are expected to have, if they are to perform their public role well. Not only are they expected to produce interesting art - whatever “interesting” might mean - but also to appear thoughtful, resourceful, well-articulated and responsible in their articulations towards both non-art commissioners and artworld peers.¹⁴¹ Especially when primarily engaging with a social context, it is difficult for artists working “in public” to escape the question of why they make the works they make by arguing for art’s autonomy of interests. Consequently, it is hard to avoid looking out for some theoretical framework and debate for the site-specific relevancy of their art.

With these last observations in mind, let me conclude with summing up what has been suggested in this section. The projects of Jeanne van Heeswijk have been seen to unfold in forms of concepts and narratives, employing means of theoretical discourse more than any concrete visual means. Still, in the entire narration of this artist’s work, the “image” is always there as an idea. It becomes a kind of vanishing point on the horizon of any project’s narration, just as the vanishing point in a painting with Renaissance perspective lays down a horizon for the visual narration, regardless what the represented theme is. In that respect, seeing the projects as narrative spaces, following Michel de Certeau’s notion of space as a practiced place, one can take all the other discourses referred to in this section – whether artistic, scholarly, public or other - to be other spaces drawn into the domain of art in order to shift previously given perspectives. Then this kind of “interaction” becomes constitutive of the artist’s practice.

Consequently, one might claim that it seems as if the discourses of the “Other,” of art as (re)presentation and the subsequent allegations about yielding prior-



ity to ethical over aesthetic questions, all fade in significance. This is not entirely so. The instability of overlapping discourses, the fugitiveness of mental images, the priority of the imaginative over the visual, the continuity of practice instead of the momentum of a final, concrete object, all these are representative of the current state of affairs in the aforementioned discourses. If we accept that today it is not possible to rely on standard models of relations and positions of partners whether in reality, in art or in discourse, then how could the artist be expected to represent any subject-matter as a matter of fact? Rather, she turns out to be both presenting and representing the negotiations thereof. What this last remark means shall be elucidated in the following section about the production of relations.

3 RELATIONS

The aim of this section is to present the art practice of Jeanne van Heeswijk as a production of relations and, subsequently, to show in what way these relations constitute a form of representation. Michel de Certeau's theory of *The Practice of Everyday Life* will be employed as a tool to explain the practice of relations produced by means of art projects. These are simultaneously relations of production and relations produced. Framed here as art, the practice in question cannot anymore belong merely to the domain of the everyday. Adapted by the artist, it is transformed into *a form of art*. It is by looking closely at the practice of producing relations as a form of art, that this section tries to investigate the respective implications and consequences with regard both to theory, as well as to the artist's agenda of social engagement.

Relations between complicity and everyday life tactics

How does a person relate to the surrounding world? Is this not something that may find expression, may take some form of representation in works of art? If at one level relations might be represented by means of art, at another level relations and negotiations exist also during art's production process. These are relations with different agents who directly or indirectly provide an artist with the tools, the support and a lot more that is necessary to produce work. This rough distinction seems reasonable for



20 - 21 Jeanne van Heeswijk,
A House for the Community.
Oud-Beijerland, 1996, 2003.
Project publication.
Photos by the author.

art forms such as painting or installation, but not quite sufficient for the process-based projects discussed here, in the process of which an artist at the same time makes the involvement of others a precondition, a method, material and target. As quite sharply conceived, but loosely and selectively presented by Nicolas Bourriaud, relations in the work of several artists during the 1990s became a matter of aesthetics. A positive effect of Bourriaud's proposal of relational aesthetics was that it gave the discussions a different tilt than before. Most discussions till then evolved around analyzing the engaged 1980s-1990s artist for instance as activist, ethnographer, social worker, unwilling instrument in city administration strategies, service provider, or just as wishful promoter of a 1960s-1970s revival.¹⁴² Those critical views had contributed key insights, often more substantially analyzed than Bourriaud's theoretical proposal. But in most cases, they did not offer any tools for getting closer to the artwork beyond the ethics of representing and empowering the "Other," the artist's stated intentions, his/her conscious or unconscious complicity with urban gentrification, and his/her adaptation of practices from other professions. In what follows, I will concentrate on aspects of relations being part of the project's process, which is both a process of production and an outcome thereof.

Working on, with, for and about people, means learning people, learning *through relating with* them, as well as learning *how to relate to* them. In their sequence, the works of Jeanne van Heeswijk move towards each new project acquiring increasing complexity in structuring relations between different parties, and with different functions and targets. Experience makes her more and more efficient in conceiving, developing and administrating ever more complicated small universes of relations.¹⁴³

What is emphasized in most positive writings about Van Heeswijk's interactive artistic practice is her creation of platforms where people meet, where a community can come into being. Ideally, a community realizes itself and its creative potential and through that process it can imagine itself changing.¹⁴⁴ In her projects she usually sees communities in the users of the same spaces, her preferred spaces starting from the basic unit of the neighborhood. In the previous section I discussed these approaches as constructions of narrations and I emphasized the production of narrative as almost the most wide-reaching aspect of this practice. But there is another significant parameter that cannot be reduced to narrative: the everyday. In most texts about Van Heeswijk one feels a preoccupation with the spaces of the everyday ever present. But the domain of everyday-life *practice* is usually given only a cursory glance. Art critics hover about it without really stepping right into it, where the artist develops her skills, like a painter or a sculptor improving their brush or chisel technique.

To be more precise, on the one hand the thematic core and the aims of a project give shape to the artist's vision of how a community could come into being. A guiding principle is that within a project room be provided for many different parties to relate to this vision: local residents, staff of municipal or cultural institutions, or anyone providing conceptual or technical services. But themes and aims don't tell us much about *how* things are done, about the relational grid in the making and the network in the use. One can think of Jeanne van Heeswijk like one of Michel de Certeau's users of everyday life: her practice does not have any proper place, as it is developed outside the formal spaces of art production.¹⁴⁵ Nonetheless, it does take advantage of opportunities from different fields, disciplines and structures, starting with the art

system. She sees a given situation and what to make of it. And there she tactically approaches the “x” or “y” institution, theoretical framework or network, knowing what their strategies and tactics are and temporarily drawing them into the terrain of the situation that she is building up at any given moment. It might be the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen brought over to Vlaardingen to open a temporary branch at an empty shopping strip (*The Strip*). Or the city mayor of Columbus, Ohio, having a bunch of colored kids coming from neighborhoods undergoing redevelopment into business districts to address him with formal enquiries (*Face Your World*). Size and status do not matter, as they enter the universe of the artist’s vision. She offers to all parties involved (e.g., the museum, the mayor, the children) the conceptual and in-between relational space of her art projects. She offers them a narration for what they could be. But as she is trained in tactics of hard-core everyday pragmatism, she does not only appropriate the strategies of different parties, but appears to adjust her own vision too to an attainable narrative. She does not seem interested in exiting the mundane everyday for a higher realm, or in envisioning a utopia, but in staging art within the spaces of the everyday. Therefore her projects are indeed always balancing on a thin rope, as it is never very clear if one should interpret the results of negotiations as compromises, or as achievements in putting across a positive vision that would otherwise meet with indifference or resistance by established structures.

It is never clear, because on the one hand, it is never really possible to measure what is spent and consumed for the production of a project against the value or even the nature of its outcomes. To remember de Certeau: “What is counted is *what* is used, not the *ways* of using. Paradoxically. The latter become invisible in the universe of codification and generalised transparency.”¹⁴⁶ On the other hand, the projects have an equalizing effect on everyone involved. Participants are encouraged to explore in public their creative potential. There is space for the temporary staging of a personal moment. But nobody is ever recorded as having exceeded an average. There is no place for exceptional individuals to stand out, as the resulting vision will always be the sum of its parts.¹⁴⁷ In the end, there is collective authorship and creativity is indeed generated, but it is difficult to imagine that such a democratic approach to creativity and performance coincides with visions of ambitious individuals. In creative workshops run by community centres, by social or medical institutions for specific population groups, or even by NGOs in non-Western countries, one can appreciate the immeasurable positive impact that amateur creative expression can bring to people’s lives. When such amateur collective creativity enters the artworld, framed by the initiative of an artist’s project, the balance changes considerably.¹⁴⁸

Thinking back to de Certeau’s user of the everyday, he or she is a poet of the everyday, subverting the institutions and structures by using them in his/her own individual way that hardly ever responds exactly to official blueprints or manuals. But this subversive power of everyday life lies in its lacking the intention either to change institutions and structures, to formally draw up new blueprints, or to diffuse one’s own ways to others. Moreover, practitioners of everyday life neither aspire to being acknowledged as such, nor need to imagine themselves as something different. In de Certeau’s view the subversive power of their practice lies in that it is all about creativity in individuals’ untraceable, uncodifiable patterns of using and consuming, rather than in producing measurable values.

But if an artist claims the practices of everyday life and goes back to an institutionalized and structured art scene, then the practice is instantly codified, it is broken down and analyzed if it is to be reproduced as art. Even when it goes out and mingles with the everyday life of a teenager, a shopkeeper, a company director, a kindergarten teacher, a philosopher and so on, still they will all, together with the artist's hired cameraman who documents activities and the volunteer who buys sandwiches, regard and eventually judge it all as art.

It sounds flattering nowadays for an artist to have people doubting whether what he or she makes can be called art. A late recognition by critics can be sweeter than their early enthusiasm. It is less flattering to have them questioning if it is good or bad art. What has bothered some critics is that the ways of realizing socio-politically engaged, participatory art projects have often relied on making use of art's cultural capital, commissioning framework and artworld P.R..¹⁴⁹ While also the relations produced between different groups involved in a project – target groups of citizens, commissioners, various service providers, sponsors – appeared so contaminated by tactics of everyday life speculations, as well as by strategies of professional networking and negotiations, that their relation to what the realm of art stands for looked almost opportunistic. In the end, professional circles still prefer to distinguish between the management of one's relations to advance an art production, and the content of that production.

Practising negotiations or (re)presenting simulations

Nonetheless, one might see things from a different perspective, one that eventually cares little about rebutting the above negative critique. In the constellation of relations between different participants and facilitators - relations that are formed, mutate and get consumed within a process that is at once an art production process and the product thereof, one can discern also a representational function. To explain what sort of form and structure of representation that is, I will use as an example a description given by Crimson Architectural Historians about the field of professional urban planning nowadays:¹⁵⁰

Near total exasperation about the state of the profession has given way to one of the most important new urbanistic concepts in a decade: an urbanism of negotiation. Dutch city planners complain that 99% of their time is spent meeting people: trying to get the highway people to talk with the sports centre people; trying to get the railway people to stop their vendetta against the vegetable-garden people; trying to convince the Shell refinery people that they should stop protesting against the McDonald's drive in being built in front of their installations; ... All the while he is dreaming about devising a beautiful urban plan, that would be usable ...¹⁵¹

Ankersmit offers an interesting perspective on the contemporary state of urbanism... . In urbanist discourse the third power is indeed seen as powerlessness, as an obstacle to the implementation of big ambitions; it is seen as an anonymous mass made up from abject market forces

and incomprehensible bureaucracy. It is a lowly presence, best to be avoided, hardly ever written about except in the most aversive tones: as something architecture and urbanism has to be saved from. The fact that the third power - orgware, bureaucracy, market forces (or however you want to call it) has meanwhile turned out to be the natural environment for building in any form or scale, is the trade's biggest public secret.

And a few paragraphs later they talk about their own contribution to the design of the new Vinex location of Leidsche Rijn.¹⁵²

Leidsche Rijn is an urbanism of negotiation, and proud of it. The negotiations were not done in order to get the design realized; the design was made to negotiate with, to get the city built. The most important ingredient of this story is that the urban designers who came up with the impossible idea of integrating the construction of the new highway into the construction of the new town, and succeeded in having it their way, had no real power at all. They did not even have a strong and stable power base to operate from. They were a young office hired by a big office, hired temporarily by the city. Their position was that of consultants, the plan they drew up had the shaky status of a "sketch masterplan." The power they were able to tap into came from the fact that they put forward one simple idea that upset all existing power relations, and then proceeded to try and influence these powers. Having no power themselves, their freedom of movement was not defined by the limits of their mandate.¹⁵³

What are Crimson suggesting here? Have the strategies and hierarchies in the professional fields of urban policy making and planning been taken over by practices of tactical speculation and maneuvering? Is the maker of blueprints meeting de Certeau's user of everyday life? Has the process of producing merged with processes of negotiating? The "real" profession of urban planning seems in Crimson's text to have become a simulacrum of itself. The professional planners exhaust themselves - that is, their energy, their time - in re-producing the background relational grid - orgware, bureaucracy, market forces, what Crimson identify as Ankersmit's third power - of their professional field, rather than be supported by it.

If things are so, if paradigms of professional practices have merged with de Certeau's practice of everyday life, then art projects like Van Heeswijk's can still be regarded as comprising representations of the world around us. Such an artwork does not represent relations by the means of another medium. But it directly adapts and reproduces their functioning structure, it simulates it, and as such it represents it. One could think back again to what was mentioned earlier about "...aspects of relations being part of the art project's process, which is both a process of production and an outcome thereof." What Crimson refer to as a current (dys-?)functioning state of urban planning, has in Van Heeswijk's projects been turned to a functioning of art projects. Crimson do not describe how an urban planner acts in producing as supposedly expected from an urban planner - see here also de Certeau's blueprints

of cities.¹⁵⁴ They describe the field's function within the thickened plot of "orgware," within which the planner is trapped on his/her way to eventually plan. Crimson's product for Leidsche Rijn was not a design either. They used their "position ... of consultants" that had "no real power at all" (Crimson), that is, no fixed "place of power" in de Certeau's terms and therefore no set limitations – "the limits of their mandate" (Crimson). They had "freedom of movement." What they claim they did, was a clever manoeuvre that influenced the field's function by disrupting it, and only that way was it efficacious. While they basically describe how they hijacked Frank Ankersmit's "third paradigm of power," they come close to Van Heeswijk's use of de Certeau's everyday life tactics. And from there, whether as urban planning or art, they both advance towards establishing a position that is a practice: a becoming produced of *pure movement* that has itself become *a place*...

What does art do, when producing relations as art?

It all boils down to a handling that resembles politics: "real" life politics. Whether by professional politicians or in everyday life situations, politics function between strategies – the rules of the professional arenas of politics, art or urban planning – and tactics – de Certeau's everyday-life practice, but also Ankersmit's paradigm hijacked by Crimson. Politics do not function only in pursuing set targets, but also in reproducing their very process.¹⁵⁵ That is also where relational aesthetics would lead, if brought to their ultimate consequences: organizing and coordinating groups of people in accordance with one's vision is a matter of politics, as it includes acquiring and exercising power within these groups.¹⁵⁶ Relations do not exist outside structures of power and the politics thereof.

Making a leap from Crimson's Leidsche Rijn example to an abstract model, one sees public, political and economic relations in today's Western societies advancing more by networking and by the skills of manoeuvring between situations and means available at any given moment, rather than by any de facto possession of concrete or symbolic capital.¹⁵⁷ Power is equalized with knowledge of what is there, combined with flexible creativity in using this knowledge. In our case one could say knowing the professional field's history and theory, the current state of affairs including institutions, agents and critical issues, but also knowing the content of cabinet papers, knowing how to deal with different people, and how to translate all this knowledge into strategies and tactics. This is also how webs of relations are woven, which make art projects like *The Strip* or *Face Your World* happen.

This over-flexibility in making use of means and situations - including people's participation - was possible as means and situations were themselves no longer regarded as having concrete and stable meanings. One might remember here how Fredric Jameson or Jean Baudrillard dragged the evacuation of signs from their meaning in writings that became very popular in the 1980s. They interpreted reality as a sea of free-flowing, self-referential signs.¹⁵⁸ Against such a backdrop, artists like Jeanne van Heeswijk who did care about the social relevancy of their art, tried to put art in the service of defining anew causes that would be meaningful for "real" life. While, at the same time, they adopted as their methods of making art this reality of free-flowing signs available for any use.¹⁵⁹ If a world à la Baudrillard was an impossible place

to live, this was not in terms of practice – reshuffling signs and symbols to achieve one’s goals in “real” life can be really fascinating. It was intolerable in terms of being: oneself not standing as a sign for anything.

Within a “real” world that dangerously started taking up art’s terrain, as a space where codes of signs were decoded in re-presentation and thus revealed and then subverted, art itself tried to become a place where new identities and relations could be realized, rather than just represented.¹⁶⁰ Nonetheless in doing so, the art project found itself becoming more contingent than ever: while aspiring to get closer to everyday life and become a simple event in its spaces, in conceiving and recounting itself as such, it actually lent itself a fluid existence as pure narrative. One can remember here the example of *Until we meet again*: the discrepancy between, on the one hand, its inspiring concepts of creativity and, on the other, the repetitive patterns of participatory events – partly due to which the project was confused with *The Strip* – coupled with the questionable existence of the project’s events as they appeared in Mirjam Westen’s account. As such, art actually did imitate the kind of free-flowing reality it originally set out to oppose. And only in doing so, imitating “real” life, the art did render possible the production of the means – vocabulary, argumentation – with which to articulate a critique against a reality accepted as empty, hijackable signs: the very criticism made on the art project.

Accordingly, such a process-based art is not a representation of a structure condensed to fit within the dimensions of a physical object that may trick us into believing that intentions and codes have become stabilized in its form, and might as such become subject to interpretation. Rather, the project is something between a re-production and a simulation of functions and relations. Thus also the determining agent, the artist, is rendered susceptible to continuous critique of political correctness when working with groups and institutions big and small, prestigious or disenfranchised, on the same social battlefields as community activists but claiming there an artistic function and without rejecting recognition and roles by prestigious cultural institutions (e.g., Venice Biennial, Wexner Center) or large-scale governmental programs (e.g., urban renewal of Crooswijk, Slotervaart).

The question that arises is who could possibly act and grow without leaving behind any traces of complicity? Or who knows complicity’s weighs and measures? Tricky enough, as the ways of being an artist in the professional arena have merged with the content of the process-based art project. As a result, both in the artworld, as well as in contexts of relations outside it (see here the various stakeholders involved, e.g., in *Dwaallicht*, *Face Your World*, *The Strip*, *The Blue House*) the aesthetics of relations appear at first sight to be swallowing up the ethics of relations. But this is exactly what is instantly reminding one of ethics for the groups of participants, against the projects’ initiating and framing persona of the artist. Ever returning to ethics, in a vicious cyclical movement, the more successful and widely known a “participatory art project by Jeanne van Heeswijk” is as “a participatory art project by Jeanne van Heeswijk,” the more the artist’s original vision of collective authorship and of the priority of the image against that of cultural theory is turned on its head. Even more so, as the artist was conscious of all different sorts of implications inherent in her practice – think back to websites, pages, texts etc., as in the analysis of “Concepts and narratives” – and did try to keep it all under the

sign of ethics, revisited by art.¹⁶¹ Eventually the failure of the artist's intentions to oppose standard representational acts *in* the "real" world becomes the success of the art project as representation *of* the "real" world of social relationships. Looking closer, a representation of the public domain of which she is a product, and which she constantly reproduces and simulates in the inherent contradictions of her practice.

4 EVENTS

This section is about the events that Jeanne van Heeswijk organizes during her projects. What role do they play? What is the relation between events, projects and the whole artistic practice? Herewith I will suggest a way of breaking them down into various aspects: discursive, performative and, foremost, play. As a significant resource for the latter, I will use the concept of play developed by Georg Gadamer.¹⁶² In his hermeneutics, Gadamer developed this concept to describe the event of interpretation that takes place every time a viewer encounters an artwork. But what would happen, if the event is the artwork?

On the "event"

One could describe the practice of Jeanne van Heeswijk like this:

*Jeanne van Heeswijk is an artist whose artistic practice consists in organizing **projects** that include the active involvement and contribution of people, whose social situation relates to the **projects'** theme.*

Alternatively, one could describe it like this:

*Jeanne van Heeswijk is an artist whose artistic practice consists in organizing **events** that include the active involvement and contribution of people, whose social situation relates to the **events'** theme.*

There are moments in most projects when something is happening that we could call an "event." These moments and what is happening in them *are not* the project. A meal during *The Dinner*, a lecture during *A Christmas Pudding for Henry*, the moment the artist hands out a "welcome package" in *Welcome Stranger*, the festival, the parade and all other monthly events of *Dwaallicht*, each tour in the specially equipped *Face Your World* bus in Columbus-Ohio during which children were redesigning their neighbourhoods and so on.

Considering how much in the previous sections the scope of what constitutes the art project has been stretched in terms of concepts, narratives and constellations of relations, one might wonder with good reason whether such staged moments of activity are anything more than a necessary excuse. Something like a showcase public moment that allows a scenario and a network to join together and mutate into an art project. Nonetheless, this *is* something that they do: their taking place usually determines the difference between a project proposed and a project realized.

If, say, rain spoiled a *Dwaallicht* day, if in the *Face Your World* bus a couple of computers crashed on the same day, or if a visit to an activity of *The Strip* proved

a boring afternoon, would that mean that the entire projects failed? Well, not really. There is still more to the projects than a strict implementation of plans or individual experiences of single events. Besides, one cannot control luck. Of course, having put so much energy into organizing these moments, these events, whatever takes place in them has to be significant, to have *some* significance.

What in the above I have called moments, have in fact a longer duration and a specific place and time. In essence they are time-based: fragments of time staged out of the flow of the everyday, but still very near to it. As activities, they usually have a model in some everyday-life, professional, social, leisure or other activity, which is partly a reason why their patterns and forms appear repetitive. But within the art project they are staged and framed differently, often undertaken by people different to those “normally” undertaking them in “real” life.

When they take place during a project they are indeed often called “events,” a term that also essentially describes time, as it refers to moments of a particular place, time and significance. As events, they have their models in social and professional events like visits and gatherings, or in cultural, festive or leisure ones such as festivals and parades (that might even have once had a religious character), or in artistic events like performances and happenings. Only to historical events would they not really bear a resemblance: historical moments that establish concrete or symbolic turning points in people’s collective consciousness. Besides, in our case, the term “events” is not always suitable to describe moments of, for instance, collectively designing and setting up the *Outside Livingroom*, or working as museum guard for *Acte de Présence – Sans Valeur*. Nonetheless, I will conventionally use it, for the lack of a more suitable word.

Thinking still in terms of time, and more specifically the time of the art project as a process- and thus time-based entity, these moments are the parts of the project that are distinct from all the period of preparing, since they are *what* is prepared. They are what draws de Certeau’s field of everyday-life into the field of art production, in the sense that in “how things are done,” they are (the) “things” that are “done.” But further than that, they do not exactly *serve* any purpose beyond their own taking place. Indeed, they activate the project beyond its being as a scenario and they are its public moments. But while they do bring art to a wider public than the usual exhibition audiences, they can be most exclusive in their selection of participants strictly related to their themes. This is even more the case, when the scheduled moments of activity literally feature the people who are thematized, for instance children from Columbus-Ohio and Slotervaart (*Face Your World*) or residents of Crooswijk (*Dwaallicht*). Thus they may not always be meant for a live audience, as they could render engagement a spectacle, parade the people they take as their subject, turn them to illustrations of their social situations.

In all their above characteristics, the events discussed here as part of longer, participatory/collaborative, engaged art projects indeed bear a resemblance to pre-existing forms of art events as we know them mainly from Fluxus. Fluxus events also transferred the everyday to the domain of art. And they often did so without either necessarily removing it from its routine times and spaces, or needing an audience to attend them live or documented to be acknowledged as art. Think, for instance, of Alison Knowles’ quite well known event *The Identical Lunch*.¹⁶³ It was a score

based on her habit of eating the same food at the same time each day: “a tunafish sandwich on wheat toast, with lettuce and butter, no mayo and a cup of soup or a glass of buttermilk.” Similarly to the flexibility of activating scenarios of projects like Van Heeswijk’s, Fluxus events were based on scores that gave them their simultaneously specific and open structure, only in much more minimal form than the events discussed here.¹⁶⁴ Yet for all possible similarities, the latter differ from their art historical predecessors foremost due to being parts of larger projects, the specific themes, intentions and structures of which directly configure the content and forms of the events’ activities.¹⁶⁵ Accordingly, the projects’ framework also determines their events’ relation to specific social sites and the significance of their occurrence. One could actually sum up the essence of their most important differences in the significance of the spatial dimensions of the events discussed here: the space of the art project within which the events’ occurrence derive their meanings (see also “Concepts and narratives”), and the space of the social or political context in which the artists’ socio-political initiatives derive their intentions and socio-political relevancy (see also “Relations”).

Now, let me herewith sum things up and see where they lead. There are staged and themed moments of activity that I conventionally called “events.” They are something that is produced within a project, situated at a particular place and time, planned and organized with a certain structure and not as spontaneous action. Even if, *in the event*, they simply happen without strictly performing a detailed script, and they are subject to chance, since their primary content for participants is their experience. Anyhow, for all their open-endedness they still give some form to the play of the project: a play between the flexible space of the project as scenario, narrative, as an operating field of relations, but anchored at the particular place selected each time: the neighborhood of Nieuw Crooswijk and the theme of its regeneration, the children of Columbus-Ohio and the theme of the run-down streets in their neighborhoods, but also the Amsterdam art fair of RAI with its galleries, artists and visitors in *Room with A View (Dependence)*.¹⁶⁶

On modes and forms

In what follows, I will try to investigate what forms and modes are employed within these events and how they relate to the projects as a whole. Ultimately, what do all the above say about the relation between art and the “real,” art and the everyday? What kind(s) of spaces do the art projects produce within, or between the two. And if these spaces do not merge – Van Heeswijk always organizes projects as art – then what exactly happens there?

The discursive mode The consideration of forms and modes is inherent in the consideration of art as long as we accept that the question of form is the bottom line of aesthetics. Yet as mentioned in the introduction, the immediacy of the socio-political themes and issues dealt with by engaged artists have led theorists of contemporary art to a consideration of the artists’ work using prominently tools from political theory and philosophy. This entails that questions and priorities from those fields have occasionally been transferred as such to art. This transfer often finds artists in agreement – especially some whose intention, admittedly or not, is aligned with social or politi-

cal activism. Consequently, this perspective indeed responds to developments in the field of contemporary art. Yet when it comes to the question of how participatory/collaborative social or political practices operate when re-produced as artistic ones, this approach more often than not submits awkward proposals. Towards the end of this section I will briefly return to this issue.

The question of theorizing forms and modes for process-based, interactive, socio-politically engaged art practices of the past couple of decades is not an innovation of this thesis. An interesting example would be Grant H. Kester's book *Conversation Pieces. Community and Communication in Modern Art*.¹⁶⁷ The significant element that Kester sees a number of such projects sharing and due to which he advocates the construction of a model for art theory, is that conversation is an integral part of the works per se, not just something provoked by the works. He defines them as "dialogical works" that "unfold through a process of performative interaction."¹⁶⁸ He mentions the art practice of Suzanne Lacy, WochenKlausur, Stephen Willats, Iñigo Mangalo-Ovalle and others, as examples of the paradigm he proposes. A central goal in his book is to understand this work "as a specific form of art practices, with its own characteristics and effects, related to, but different from, other forms of art and other forms of activism as well."¹⁶⁹

It is exactly this concern of Kester to investigate a form, a way of making art that interests us here. It relates closely to many projects by Jeanne van Heeswijk, in which interaction through discussion is at the heart of what is taking place within a project, such as in some versions of *Room with a View*, *NEStWORK*, *State of Mind*, *Break. Dance*, *Hotel New York PS.1* or *the Casco Mobile*. Nevertheless, there is a fundamental difference between Kester's approach and the approach suggested here. What Kester identifies as the discursive part in a project, from which the whole art practice derives its distinct "dialogical" form, is here regarded as the moment(s) of staged activity *within* a project. The project in its entirety unfolds equally in processes of preparing and framing such staged moments.¹⁷⁰ A further difference is also that discussions as understood in Kester are not the only pattern of discursive events. One could also add lectures (e.g., in *A Christmas Pudding for Henry*, in *The Strip*), debates, experts' meetings and roundtable discussions (e.g., in the Stedelijklab of *Face Your World*).¹⁷¹ Indeed, one could further include discussions between visitors to the KunstRai art fair of the exhibition *Grensvervaging* and the actresses who performed a different role in each case as part of the two versions of *Room with a View*, (*Dependence*) and (*Real Stories*).

Considering the last examples with the actresses in terms of their being staged moments of activity, one is likely to find the dialogical or discursive aspects of these events' forms and modes less weighty than performative aspects. The mere fact that we are all the time talking about activities that are *staged* at a particular place and time, as well as move within a kind of open-ended *scenario* between "real" life and an artist's vision, all these demonstrate close connections to performative acts.

The
performative
mode

However, one would not really call them art performances, even less link them to theatre. This is partly because they are not independent entities, but integral parts

of larger projects within which the events stage the projects, as much as the projects stage the events.¹⁷² Most significantly, it is also because the three aspects of the modes and structures of the performative which are of interest here, namely the *act of staging*, the *stage* and the *players* involved, all emerge and move within spaces where the borders of art and life are not transgressed once and for all for the creation of a new, discernible structure. Quite confusingly, they circulate back-and-forth between the two. In that sense we could probably say that they play some kind of game between art and the everyday.

The above relates to the *structure and patterns* of these activities – such as tours, meetings or workshops – the repetitive, everyday character of which is partly a reason for their resulting tedious character as art. One is unlikely to have the methexis of watching a “real” theatrical play. On the one hand, there is *no act of mimesis, no drama play, no art performance* on stage, just “real” life: a neighbourhood and its residents (e.g., *Dwaallicht*) or a museum with its staff and visitors (e.g., *Acte de Présence – Sans Valeur*). However, on the other hand, one is unlikely to take it seriously as “real” life either, since these staged activities remain outside the flow and expediency of a “real” everyday.

... acting in To see what all the above means, let me first consider examples of modes of the
and acting performative taken from various projects At Moderna Gallerija the artist was act-
out ... ing out the role of museum attendant. Just like in *Room with a View (Dependence)*
an actress was acting out a gallerist. Both were within situations of institutional
environments, where the presence of an exhibition guide and a gallerist respectively,
but also the presence of artists, were fully expected, but playing their “natural” pro-
fessional and social roles. Accordingly, the element of staged performance is inher-
ent in all situations where a given place is transformed by the artist into a particular
different one. Both the very act of transforming, as well as the new setting, frame
here the project’s events. That was the case when the galleries of Villa Alckmaer
were returned to their original, residential function, or when the art space PS1 was
transformed into a hotel room modeled after the Dutch “Hotel New York.” The trans-
forming act provided a loose scenario, supported by the new temporary setting. Both
conditioned a situation in-between art and ordinary moments of social interaction.
Furthermore, there are events that literally include performances, but Van Heeswijk
usually organizes the events as producer or host, staging performances by others.
These might be art, music or other types of performances, examples of which can be
found during *NEStWORK*, *A Christmas Pudding for Henry*, *The Strip*, *Dwaallicht*,
or even the *Valley Vibes*, where the multifunctional instrument of the Vibe Detector
was lent to whoever wished to use it as DJ booth, recording studio, karaoke machine
and so on.

There are two distinct levels in the above. Firstly, the events of, for instance, a music or theatre performance take place *within* and *as* the event of the art project. Consequently, someone who, at a first level, is performing something (e.g., music, a script) at a second level is performing him or herself in a wider range of his/her capacities. An example here could be *The Strip*. At one level, it was a shopping strip of ca. 3500 m², the various spaces of which were used by people for activities related to music, theatre, meetings, workshops for children and adults, studios for artists,

cooking sessions and much more. At another level, the variety and liveliness of *The Strip* demonstrated the potentials and capacities of the urban environment and the residents of the neighborhood of Westwijk in Vlaardingen. In the following extract the urban historian Michelle Provoost relates this second level also with the historical background of the neighborhood:

...the organizers of The Strip were able to gradually reveal that in such a neighborhood, albeit fairly unexpectedly, an urban potential exists and can be developed. ... without falling into politically correct ecstasy about the diversity of residents who partook in The Strip, it is undoubtedly a positive outcome of the project that the creativity and self-awareness of so many groups was uncovered. The meals that people took together, the tours and the en masse visits to cultural events were reminders of the fact that these neighborhoods were initially built as the ideal environment for the emancipation of working class and formerly rural families, where they would be “taught” how to become “urban citizens” and would “integrate” with the other city-dwellers.¹⁷³

This overlap of roles and capacities between art events and “real” life illustrates also some of the problems of the public of public art. If the public is present within the project acting out its real self, how can it not be turned into a spectacle if there is another audience? And if there is no audience – as often the case – can there be art without spectators? In a complex merging of roles, the events of art and life are fused and confused: *who is participant, performer, audience, organizer, who is staging and who is staged, whose story is it anyway (as author, as subject) and for which public?*¹⁷⁴

Similarly to the analysis of projects in the preceding sections (“Concepts & narratives,” “Relations”) so also here the analysis of events demonstrates confusion of roles and vagueness of interests. Yet, simultaneously, it also shows an awareness about this contingency being the event’s real essence. Nothing makes this more explicit than the performative events in the last two versions of *Room with a View*, namely *Room with a View (Positioning)* and *(Real Stories)* (Fig. 22-23). Literally and metaphorically, they were performances of self-awareness and -reflection of the *Room*’s contingent character and nature as art. To be more precise, in its previous versions the *Room* had always been a wooden box on wheels, which could be dismantled and re-erected. Beyond the theme and context of each one of its previous presentations, the very act of each time adjusting the *Room* in a different relation to the institutional spaces of art (e.g., in the artist’s studio, at KunstRAI), had been a continuous performative trying out of how to make room for new ways of making art within existing art institutional contexts.

In *Positioning* which took place three times in three different art institutions, a dancer pushed and pulled the “Room” around for the duration of one day within an exhibition space. Thus the “Room” itself literally performed in a performance that concretized its contingent condition *in* and *as* art: being an event staged and staging, a space transformable and transforming, transferable, transferred and itself a transfer (metaphor).¹⁷⁵ Finally, a work between the plastic and performing arts, emerging



22 Jeanne van Heeswijk, *Room with a View*. 1993-1998. Courtesy of the artist.

within the paradigm of the former, but adapting means and methods from the latter. *Real Stories* was presented at the group exhibition *Grensvervaging*, where documentation material of work by various artists was hung on the walls. The “Room” was left in its dismantled state and placed aside against the wall. In front of it there was a table, behind which an actress sat once per week to talk with visitors about the “Room” and the problem of documentation. Based on these conversations and all materials gathered through the journey of *Room with a View* and the life of an artist, Van Heeswijk wrote a twenty-minute long monologue to be played by the actress. Here the *Room* became a performative representation of its inherent tensions and contradictions: between the roles of one person collecting and editing contributions and the contributing participants, between presenting and representing (e.g., the artist was replaced by an actress), between experience and documentation. Besides, in *Real Stories*, the “Room” that in previous versions constituted an instrument for the setting up of an event, itself became the event. This was indeed accentuated by means of suspending its use: the “Room” was absent as a physical, functioning stage for the playing out of an event, only to be restored at the centre of attention as an object of study. One could go as far as to say: in order to restore the possibility of a theory of the art event, against multiple, temporary stagings and appropriations of its subjects. I use the term “theory” here in the sense that the concept had in its ancient Greek linguistic roots with regard to the sacred communion in festivals (and the so-called *dromena*, predecessors of ancient theatre) of religious character, where it was enough to simply be there present at the time of the event to be a participant. A spectator, a “*theoros*,” was already a participant just by being present, as part of a delegation watching the sacred, festive event.¹⁷⁶

Let me summarize briefly what has emerged as significant characteristics of the performative aspects within the staged moments of activity that I have conventionally called “events.” The space within which these events take place expands across on a field that stretches over either side of whatever is the line that separates acting from being, art from reality, representation from presentation. This space is created by the project itself, by its emerging and existing in the practicing of both sides, moving back-and-forth between, as well as simultaneously within the space of either side. Adopting such an understanding of *space-place relations*, I am actually spatializing all three parameters I earlier claimed important with regard to the performative: the

act of staging, those staging and those staged, as well as the stage itself. But at the same time, the very notion of presence as movement - in-between, back-and-fro – renders existence here *a temporal matter*: the moment of the event, that is, the moment when the intention of the artist’s scenario activates what she identifies as *a particular context* .

This last point reminds us also that it was exactly in response to a thematized context – an issue, a community, a region – that such projects came into existence in the first place and that they were usually called “public” art. Yet, when we now look closer at the modes of their participatory events, with their repetitive patterns and reified experience of being-what-one-plays and playing-what-one-is, the relation between the artwork and its public becomes confusing, whether regarded from an ethical (“real” life as context), or an aesthetical (forms of re-presentation) point of view. The mode of play

As a consequence of the above, it becomes advisable to search for another category as analytical tool to explain the projects’ events in their space and time existence, with the discursive, performative or any other modes they employ, as well as in relation to, but not dependent upon their themes and content. A category that could embrace all the above, as well as apply to those staged moments of activity where the term “events” seemed rather out of place. That would be a category of *play*.

One should not, of course, expect that a notion of play is meant to explain everything about the staged moments of activity and their role within projects by visual artists, such as in my example of the artist Jeanne van Heeswijk. That would equate practices of art with practices of play and games. What we see the art practices doing in this case, is *adapting and using forms, structures, patterns or methodologies of play*. Besides, a most significant difference remains between play and the moments



23 Jeanne van Heeswijk, *Room with a View (Real Stories)*. 1995-1997. Courtesy of the artist.

of activity that are here the object of study: following, for instance, Johan Huizinga's definition, play can be play, only if it is a free and voluntary activity, not subordinated to any other sphere of activity, and taken up on the initiative of the player, who subsequently loses him or herself in play.¹⁷⁷ This seems rather incompatible with events taking place in the sphere of art. *Forms and modes* of play and games can, nonetheless, be found operating in many different areas of "real" life. We could think, for instance, of sophistries or of any other language tricks one uses to dominate in discussion. Elsewhere, one is performing one's skills and plays with one's chances in exams, interviews or competitions.

In our case, modes of play and patterns of games are used in activities that are already framed by an art project and co-ordinated as such.¹⁷⁸ Therefore, even if there is fascination and engagement in the experience of participants involved that relates to their experience of playing (e.g., for children participating in *Face Your World* it might be like playing), still it is not to be regarded altogether as "real" play. It has all along foremost been something else – art. In its initial intentions and in its ever after - mediated through documentation and narrative – existence. Thus, it is more of a reified experience of play that one has here, as well as more a matter of operating with the terms of a project as the rules of a game, rather than playing for the sake of the game.¹⁷⁹

One could name one important exception here that can be considered playing proper, but that would be with regard to entire projects, if not to the entire art practice, rather than just to the staged moments of activity. This exception is the artist herself, including whoever might occasionally be seen as part of the artist's extended body, which here means partaking in the artist's role(s) within the whole process. Because the artist is the master of the game in each project, in as much as she is playing seriously with her chances that the whole "machinery" she has set up for or as a project, and which also depends on how others will perform their roles in it, will eventually work. Besides, the artist is also constantly in the game of "negotiating" with the world outside the projects – whether the artworld or the rest of the world – why and how her projects are art, and what sort of art are they.

But apart from this special role of the artist, for the rest the play-like character of the whole endeavor corresponds most essentially with the *form and structure of its processes and the space(s) it longs to create between art and the everyday*. Only this character is usually downplayed by the leading part that the rhetoric of social or political engagement plays or, to put it differently, the space it occupies in a project's narrative. Hence also the recurrent, played-out discussion of art's aesthetics dissolving in fluid ethics.

But let me take things from the beginning and look first for forms and elements of play and of games in examples of events in projects, and afterwards return to the analytical problems that could herewith be viewed in a different light.¹⁸⁰

Starting from Van Heeswijk's older projects, one could think of the *Outside Living-room* as a life-size dollhouse for grown-up children to play with designing, and then to be proud of how pretty it looks. Accordingly, every transformation of space I referred to as a kind of change of theatrical setting, such as in Villa Alckmaer (*State of Mind*) or the PS1 Studio (*Hotel New York PSI*), could be seen as inviting participants to play the Villa or play the Hotel. The same logic could apply in the artist acting as

museum guard at Moderna Gallerija, or the actress Anke van de Pluijm acting as gallerist in *Room With A View (Dependance)*. Furthermore, play as form, as structure or mode of doing something is quite explicit in cases when music is played as, for instance, in events of *A Christmas Pudding for Henry* and *The Strip*; or when music, sounds, recording of conversations are re-mixed as in *Break. Dance, Room With A View (Real Stories)* or *Krachschiagen*. Moreover, one could consider the different “gadgets” that were used for events in various ways, as similar in some respects to children’s toys that can be played with in different games. Examples would be the “Room,” the “Vibe Detector” or even the computer stations with special software used in urban design workshops during *Face Your World*. There is also the virtual game of interactive websites that often constitute autonomous parts of projects and not just their documentation or communication platforms. On the *Dwaallicht* website one can play a game of re-designing Crooswijk. Literally connected to the idea of games was the traditional Dutch Game *Draw A Line*, presented as exhibition display in Tokyo and Venice. Connections can easily be made between the Situationists’ psychogeographic games and the *Subway to the Outside* travels that the artist and Martin Lucas undertook around New York City, armed with a camera, microphone and questions for passers-by.

To end with – though there are still lots of examples – there is indeed a game “economy” in any themed debate, round-table discussion or experts’ meeting. These might represent the ideal of models for dialogue-based confrontations with serious issues, as long as one does not ultimately aim *primarily* for the sake of a social agenda, for a concrete application of the events’ outcomes in “real” life situations. A case of the latter seems to be the expected realization of the children’s park design of *Face Your World* in Slotervaart. As long as one does not strictly take the social agenda to play the prominent role, but, rather, takes the whole situation as a game: the game of children playing urban planners within the “real” planners’ playground.¹⁸¹ In that case, the space that the *Face Your World* design workshops and meetings created in excess of the everyday activities of the neighbourhood, of the children, the local schools and, of course, of the planners of the Staalmanplein area is regeneration, is injected as an *excess* to professional designers’ practices.

If the above suffice to exemplify how Van Heeswijk’s art projects connect to play and to games, then two questions still remain. Firstly, what is it that renders a concept of play *exceptionally relevant* as an analytical tool to understand forms and modes of what I have called “events” within these projects? And, subsequently, how will it help us in dealing with difficult issues deriving from projects, such as the overlapping of roles and identities or the social engineering rhetoric of community work, which often leave art critics at a loss?

For the former question, it would be useful to turn to a definition of play and its characteristics. Hans-Georg Gadamer’s concept of play, developed in the context of his aesthetic theory, could come in handy here.¹⁸² In his book *Truth and Method*, Gadamer developed a concept of play that he applied to explain the hermeneutic circle of communication taking place between an artwork and a viewer, each time the latter encounters the former. This hermeneutic circle constituted for him the event of interpretation of the artwork, outside of which the artwork does not exist for the world. In

... a concept of play as guide to the events’ mode of taking place ...

that sense, he saw play as “the mode of being of the work of art and its hermeneutic significance.” In what follows below here, I shall refer to Gadamer’s concept of play and relate it to art, but not in the sense of his hermeneutic model of art as play. By the end of this section, this differentiation should become explicit.¹⁸³ Let me herewith quote and discuss some relevant passages from Gadamer’s text:

... it seems to me characteristic of human play that it plays *something*. That means that the structure of movement to which it submits has a definite quality which the player “chooses.” First he expressly separates his playing behaviour from his other behaviour by *wanting* to play. ... Correlatively, the space in which the game’s movement takes place isone that is specially marked out and reserved for the movement of the game. Human play requires a playing field. Setting off the playing field, just like setting off sacred precincts - as Huizinga rightly points out – sets off the sphere of play as a closed world, one without transition and mediation to the world of aims.¹⁸⁴

In the above Gadamer gives us the characteristics of play (e.g., the conscious, targeted and structured character of the activity, the structure of movement, its set-apart space) that have a lot in common with the descriptions of the projects’ events and their spaces as I tried to delineate them, but for which I could not find a terminology. In a nutshell these were the notions of having certain modes applied to individual events, an awareness of the staged and set-apart character of the activity, existence in movement, a marked space and, eventually, the creation of a separate sphere where the outcomes of the events as such have mostly no concrete influence in respective activities of the outside world.

Reading further: “As we have seen, the self presentation of human play depends on the player’s conduct being tied to the make-believe of the game, *but the ‘meaning’ of these goals does not in fact depend on their being achieved*” (emphasis mine).¹⁸⁵ Which reminds one that if something were to spoil the day of an event, it would not mean that the whole art project failed and, furthermore, that the success of an event or project is unrelated to the creation of sustainable models for “real” life, based on the simulations of everyday activities that are the projects. Besides, in “Concepts and narratives” it was argued that when an event has finished, its story as narrated ever after becomes for it a new form of existence. In that new “life,” the event might even take on a new content and, thus, new meanings.¹⁸⁶

“Rather, in spending oneself on the task of the game, one is in fact playing oneself out.” Which also calls to mind that there can be no estimatable value of what is spent on the project (budget, energy, time...), measured against concrete outcomes. Particularly in “Relations” this impossibility of estimating was regarded as resulting from the nature of the spending (“what is counted is *what* is used, not the *ways* of using”). Here the impossibility is linked further to an excess of spending that renders the outcomes unreasonable to estimate in financial terms, but, rather, in the combined terms of art’s cultural capital and of play as excess of life.¹⁸⁷ Moving on in Gadamer’s text:

The self-presentation of the game involves the player’s achieving, as it were, his own self-presentation by playing – i.e. presenting something. Only

because play is always presentation is human play able to make representation itself the task of a game. Thus, there are games which must be called representation games, either because, in their use of meaningful allusion, they have something about them of representation (say “Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Sailor”) or because the game itself consists in representing something (e.g., when children play cars).

All presentation is potentially representation for someone. That this possibility is intended, is the characteristic feature of art as play.¹⁸⁸

In the above piece Gadamer shows that the overlapping of roles and of presentation and representation is inherent in the structure and logic of the playing of games. And it is exactly if we see the issue of inherent connections between presentation and representation and arrive at an approach of art representation from a point of view of *art as play* – that refers to the *structure* and not to the subject matter (e.g., urban regeneration) or the people-subjects (e.g., specific groups involved or affected) of representation in art – that we are likely to avoid finding ourselves running up against walls of practical and ethical impossibilities of re-presenting one-an-Other. Because play is in movement, while subject matter is more settled.

All this brings one back to de Certeau’s definition of space as a practiced place. But, also, to the question of how to approach and describe a space that is created by means of a circulation of movement in-between, and also simultaneously on either side of presentation and representation. Thus, taking my cues from the mode of play, it is possible to find there such a kind of space. A space, where also difference in repetition is an inherent quality as in when people play the same game many times over, or organize the same festival every year.¹⁸⁹ Whereas seen from the perspective of contemporary art, the repetition of a similar repertoire of forms of activities that bring people together (e.g., collective meals, festivals, discussions, workshops and so on) appeared tedious. Returning to my reading of Gadamer a few lines further:

In general, however much games are in essence representations and however much the players represent themselves in them, games are not presented for anyone – i.e., they are not aimed at an audience. Children play for themselves, even when they represent. And not even those games (e.g., sports) that are played before spectators are aimed at them. Indeed, contests are in danger of losing their real play character precisely by becoming shows. A procession as part of a religious rite is more than a spectacle, since its real meaning is to embrace the whole religious community. And yet a religious act is a genuine representation for the community; and likewise, a drama is a kind of playing that, by its nature, calls for an audience. The presentation of a god in a religious rite, the presentation of a myth in a play, are play not only in the sense that the participating players are wholly absorbed in the presentational play and find in it their heightened self-representation, but also in that the players represent a meaningful whole for an audience. Thus it is not really the absence of a fourth wall that turns the play into a show. Rather, openness towards the spectator is part of the closedness of the play. The audience only completes what the play as such is.

This point shows the importance of defining play as a process that take place 'in between'. We have seen that play does not have its being in the player's consciousness or attitude, but on the contrary play draws him into its dominion and fills him with its spirit.¹⁹⁰

This long passage goes to the heart of the questions of "publicness" of these events. It offers an interpretation applicable also to the events in order to express their character as public art without them necessarily having the public as audience. Thus, from the perspective of their forms, structures and modes as play we can see some coherence in what constitutes the public character for the whole spectrum of activities organized by Jeanne van Heeswijk within projects. Some projects that are meant for an audience (e.g., in *The Secret City*), others that appear not to (e.g., *Room with a View – Verlangen*), others yes and no and probably not for large audiences (e.g., the *Dwaallicht* event on September 18, 2004), while others completely exclude them (e.g., handing a "Welcome Package" to the residents of a new housing estate in *Welcome Stranger*).

Besides, Gadamer's passage contains references also to another significant connection between these events and public functions they seem to be expected to perform for people. It has often been pointed out that "identity," "authenticity" and "orientation" are tasks that public art of any kind is called upon to serve with regard to the places it is created for.¹⁹¹ Thinking about certain types of collective activities in events, principally parades and any festive events that include theatre or music performances, collective meals and so on, we could trace their origins back to religion-related events of earlier times. Events that provided the life of communities with common points of reference in space (e.g., churches, monasteries) and in time (e.g., the church calendar, annual festivals). In that way, such religious events provided the respective communities with significant characteristics and gave orientation to the course of daily life.

I am unfortunately unaware of more than one really insightful theoretical analysis of how certain social functions that contemporary public art is expected to perform for communities are, consciously or not, turning art to religious surrogate.¹⁹² What is of interest here, is that various religion-related festivities of the old days were amongst the most significant play forms in culture.¹⁹³ Viewed, in some manner, as a legacy of these practices, the events can be seen to re-emerge in the repertoires of contemporary art at the time when their original, religion-related, periodical taking place seems to be rather fading in people's lives. While, reversely, in art, it seems that repetitiveness and reproduction become more and more significant, compared to avant-garde priorities of originality and uniqueness.¹⁹⁴

On representations

A point that should, however, be made here, in expanding from categories of religion-related practices towards social and political ones, is that the above realizations recall the negative critique mentioned in the "Relations" section with regard to the art project as a sort of third-rate simulacrum of relations in society. Relations understood in forms they used to have, and which today remain rather in the sphere of ideals and

wishes, such as community self-realization and -expression. Yet, even if religious, social and political beliefs and ideas have ceased to find expression in traditional forms of collective events that once characterized the identity of communities (e.g., festivals), this does not mean that they have ceased to exist altogether. They have not vanished from interpretational narrations of life today. Rather, *we have seen them in their narrations*, or even *we have "seen" their narrations*. Turning narrative - their reformulation at every articulation - into object of study to understand the reshuffling of categories within. At that point, an event that once used to be a meaningful presentation for a community, representing its ideals and aspirations, has now been turned into a presentation of itself, representing to us the practice of its own taking place - from its internal operations and structures, to its external, symbolic functions.

Thus, returning to the concept of play as I drew it from Gadamer's theory and applied it to events in Jeanne van Heeswijk's projects, it could also help one see the projects as designating a new space within the field of visual arts. A space that bears relation to "real" life, but in the forms one sees the projects adopting here, did not exist before within the artistic field. What is exceptionally pertinent about grounding an interpretation of the projects' function on forms and modes of play is that, in their relation to an outside world and audience, the art projects can now accommodate a contingency and complicity that would appear incompatible with the projects' agenda of socio-political engagement. Now they bear within the very nature of their forms and modes the potentiality for all *positive and negative* implications of these concepts: the ambivalence of contingency that is pregnant with risks but also with possibilities; complicity, in the sense of betraying some right or order, but also entailing truly deep involvement. Indeed one should not overlook the fact that, in principle, the art projects are not celebrated as *public* for their pregnant forms and modes, but for social agendas and ideals connected to participation and collaboration that they are supposed to represent. In this latter case, the projects function in mediating some ideal models for "real" life, while in the former, they actually function in representing relations and mechanisms at work in "real" life. In that case, as already shown in "Relations," the art practice produces - indirectly, through complex negative dialectics and quite unexpectedly - a critique of "real" life relations in the form of the critique on the art project.

This last approach is actually in tune with the model of a pluralistic democratic public space of art proposed by Rosalyn Deutsche. As discussed in the introduction of this book, Deutsche maintained that most understandings of public space and the public sphere derived from the agendas of mainstream discourses in urban aesthetics - as well as from the most influential radical critiques of those discourses - promoted models of a consensus democracy. Those models relied on exclusions of whatever would not fit in as a way of achieving harmony and unity, as well as on erasing the traces of those exclusions. By contrast, Deutsche advocated a pluralistic democratic model, drawing from theorists of radical democracy who understood social and political relations as constructed upon constant encounters and frictions between different, often antithetic subject positions.

Translated into art critique for process-based and participatory, socio-politically engaged art projects, the above issue could be phrased as follows: should an art project represent and critically reflect on, or should it downplay the conflictual aspects of

societal living? Authors such as Claire Bishop, Simon Sheikh, Miwon Kwon or Oliver Marchart, taking their cues from Rosalyn Deutsche's references and line of thinking, have been in favor of the first option: the acknowledgment of the existence of conflicts in societal living. Following the analysis here, this corresponds to representations produced by the projects when regarded from the perspective of their forms and modes of taking place (even if it does not coincide with the ideal models in projects' official agendas).

Conclusions

To wind everything in, let me go back to some main threads of the whole of Part I, as well as of this section in particular. Let me remind the reader that this study focuses on projects of a certain kind of art: process-based, participatory, socio-politically engaged art of about the past fifteen years. It was maintained that the optimal approach here is to understand the art produced as a *practice*, rather than as *matter*. Based on this approach, I wanted to investigate how it functions as art in relation to the world. Or, to be more specific, what forms of presentation and representation it produces, and how it produces them. This way of producing a practice that is a way of producing art, exists in the state of the constant transformations of its ever re-interpreted (re-narrated) variations. Hence, I presented the art production as a production of "Concepts and narratives." Whereas in its operations and structures, it has been regarded as a production of relations.

This last section on "Events" began with the suggestion that events and projects should be understood as independent entities, yet interdependent on one another primarily in terms of operations (the events stage the projects, as much as the projects stage the events ... but an event ruined, does not mean a project failed). Thus events produced *in, by and as* the projects, basically have the function of creating a space where the projects take a place, a sphere where they happen, a platform where practice becomes event. In that sense, the participatory events have no other primary function, than their own taking place. As such, they should not be expected to mediate models to the "real" world: once one tries to set a foot there, the world betrays the projects as much as the projects betray the world.

To demonstrate the above I took the example of the art theory approach that draws from theories of democracy to analyze the participatory art practices in question, showing that this approach leads to contradictions. Because in their ways of taking place, the representations produced by the art projects contradict rather than coincide with the ideals and principles that the artists' statements mean to represent. However, in the perspective proposed here, it is precisely within the ways and modes in which the projects take place that one should look for the essence of this art. The contingency and complicity resulting from the overlapping of roles and the overlapping of presentations and representations belong to these forms, they are their most compelling aspects.

To formulate a concept for their in-between spaces and fluid existence, I drew tools from a concept of play and games, but keeping in mind that my primary question was to articulate in words and to interpret, what this art gives us through its abstract forms. On the one hand, what artworks do by means of their forms, is to interpret the world by representing it. While, at the same time, the work itself does not exist

for the world outside of its own interpretation. This is something that Gadamer tried to show how it works with his hermeneutic circle: the play back-and-fro that takes place between artwork and viewer, every time a viewer encounters an artwork. This was for Gadamer the mode of being of the work of art. To make himself understood he used a concept of play to describe this recurring event of interpretation that takes place between viewer and artwork.

However, what I have tried to show with regard to the contemporary practices studied here is that, what for Gadamer was the mode of interpretation of the artwork, i.e. the hermeneutic circle, *has here been adopted by the artwork as its own form* - not just as the form of the process of its interpretation. Therefore also, Gadamer's concept of play was relevant to refer to, but his theory of play as the mode of being of the work of art was not. Some three decades after Gadamer published his theory, the artwork confronts the viewer as audience, while it also contains the viewer as participant and as theme. It represents the world in the ways it presents itself to the world. The artwork exists *within* the interpretations that are the interpretations *of* it. It is its interpretations not in terms of its mode of being in relation to a viewer (i.e., the hermeneutic circle), but in terms of its own forms proper.

PART II



24 Martin Krenn & Oliver Ressler, *Border Crossing Services*. 2001. Video stills.
Courtesy of the artists.

Chapter 1
DOING LANGUAGE:
NARRATIVES FROM AN ACTIVIST WORLD
IN THE ART WORLD OF THE 1990s

INTRODUCTION

After the decade of the 1980s, during which the interest in social or political interventions was flagging on the West-European art scene, the next decade saw a general turn towards engagement and activism. Brooded among artistic circles, art institutions and new social and political movements, hybrid practices of artistic and cultural activism emerged. Their focus was on social and political issues of the day. These issues were linked, for instance, to political and socio-economic developments following the 1989 fall of the Berlin wall: the opening of East European borders to the West, the introduction of capitalism to national contexts previously under communism, the mobility of people and capital that followed. Beyond European terrains, issues of globalization, the environment, gay and lesbian rights, biotechnologies and much more, gave artists additional motives and spaces for socio-political interventions.

Around 2000 interest in engaged art practices, often with a predilection for collaborative or participatory working formats, had reached a culminating point. Such formats did not only symbolically subvert the authority of the One author, the charismatic artist also favored by the art market, in addition they also made things possible practically. Artists worked closely with activists' campaigns, with social and political NGOs, local authorities, individual specialists such as sociologists and political theorists and, last but not least, with groups of people directly affected by the issues at stake. In short, participatory and collaborative methods made it possible for artists to directly enter the discourses, developments and audiences of issues they were interested in.

There are numerous aspects one can discuss concerning this phenomenon of combining activist and/or social and political work practices with artistic practices.¹⁹⁵

My concerns in this chapter lie specifically with the *narrations* of art activism, of collaboration and participation. To be more precise, I am concerned with the articulation of the narrations of projects, narrations that transfer the practices of participatory activism to verbal, visual or other narrative forms. Thematically the focus is on art activism that dealt with immigration into the E.U. during the 1990s. The selected case studies are from Austria: two projects on migration by the artists' group WochenKlausur,²⁰⁴ one collaborative project by artists Martin Krenn and Oliver Ressler and narrations of the artistic output of maiz, a migrant women activists' organization (Autonomes Zentrum von und für Migrantinnen).

To my understanding, the artists' groups transfer political practices to art activism practices. Whereas the women activists transfer artistic practices to their political activism practices. Thus a movement back and forth between political choices informing aesthetic choices and the other way round, constantly takes place. This movement is expressed in, as well as by means of, the narrations of activist art projects and practices. By which I mean that the narrations operate in terms of content (e.g., articulated intentions) and form (e.g., the articulation of intentions). Two central analytical questions in this chapter refer, first, to the constitution of the subject of the narration (narrating subject) and in the narration (narrated subject). For the theme in question, migration, the subject at stake is the migrant as subject. What this generalization, the migrant subject, means here, I will clarify later in the text. The second question refers to whether and how in these narrations power structures (socio-economic, political) that lead to the marginalization of migrants in European societies - and, consequently, to the attention of activists - are eventually challenged or confirmed.

There is an important differentiation between the object of analysis in the respective section of Part I, "Concepts and narratives," and in this chapter. In Part I, I discussed the production of the art practice as a production of concepts and narratives, in the sense that the art practice is type-set by the artist's various projects, all of which exist in a state of constantly re-narrated variations of long-term, participatory or collaborative processes. That analysis took as case study the practice of artist Jeanne van Heeswijk in general. The materials used there encompassed narrations produced by the artist (e.g., projects' websites, flyers, publications) narrations by various other individuals involved (e.g., interviews and informal discussions with members of staff from commissioning bodies, participants in projects, etc.), as well as by art critics. Whereas in this chapter, I will limit myself on specific projects and their "official" narrations. By "official" I mean narrations produced either as part of the art projects (e.g., videos, publications) or with the specific purpose to communicate the artists' intentions and interpretations of their work (e.g., artists' interviews).

The reason for choosing art projects on migration in this chapter that deals with the use of language, is because especially since the early 1990s, when various EU countries introduced very strict immigrations laws, the migration discourse evolved to an important extent into a battle over definitions.¹⁹⁶ This has been manifested on many occasions. For instance, for non-EU citizens to obtain papers (residence permit, working permit etc) they needed to be recognized as "asylum seekers" or "refugees". The status definition of one's identity as foreigner became the A-Z prerequisite for one's definition as an "illegal" or "legal" person within the so-called Fortress Europe.

On the one hand, as illegal one would be persecuted and deported or detained, regardless whether one had any criminal record or not. On the other, obtaining the wished-for definition of being a “legal” - thus accepted, thus acceptable – foreigner, meant that existence within the EU was permitted on the condition of remaining *by definition* a foreigner, before society, authorities and the law.

But even before receiving one’s status definition, applying for papers in the first place presupposed that one would have information and linguistic access to the host country’s laws and application procedures. And that, despite the fact that a migration law in some countries officially proscribed language lessons for detained “illegal immigrants.” Thus in terms of political rights, but also literally, people were rendered voice-less in the political and juridical battles over the definition of their identity and their right to speak.

The prominence of the battle over definitions and the use of language was manifest in the names of the French movement of the *sans-papiers* (people without papers) and the German campaign *Kein Mensch ist illegal* (No One is Illegal).¹⁹⁷ The names of both reveal the importance of the problem of language for immigrants: through the definitions of immigration laws and further also through propaganda by Western governments and media, people without papers became illegal-ized people, often regarded by EU citizens and treated by EU authorities as equivalent to criminals.¹⁹⁸

In the case studies of this chapter, issues of language and interpretation are directly thematized in Ressler and Krenn’s project *Border Crossing Services*, and indirectly in WochenKlausur’s project *Intervention in a deportation detention center*.¹⁹⁹ Krenn and Ressler target the contingency of German terms used to describe people who bring migrants illegally over the borders: “The goal of the project ‘Border Crossing Services’ (‘Dienstleistung: Fluchthilfe’) is to redefine and highlight the positive aspects of terms such as ‘smuggler’ or ‘trafficker’ which have been given a negative connotation through the dominant medial discourse.”²⁰⁰ WochenKlausur touches upon connotations of the term “Schubhaft,” which means detention pending deportation. Featuring the word “Haft” that means “arrest,” the term “Schubhaft” brings to mind police persecution and imprisonment. Thus both in people’s consciousness, but also in some detention centers, people without papers were equated with criminals, despite only small numbers of them having criminal records.²⁰¹

The selection of case studies from Austria was made upon several initial observations. Firstly that there were (and still are) a number of Austrian artists who are actively in contact with activist organizations. Secondly, they often work in collectives, emphasizing participatory and collaborative practice formats. Thirdly, the artists chosen here as case studies have become visible both on the contemporary art scene, as well as in activists’ networks in and outside Austria.

A probably too subjective observation was that the language used in mixed art-activism discourses in Austria was stronger, more literal, direct and concrete than elsewhere in Western Europe. This is reflected already in the titles of projects. WochenKlausur has actually been changing the titles of its projects, according to the impact that the artists wished for their linguistic articulations to have on their audiences. For instance, at first they emphatically used the motto “concrete intervention” to communicate direct action. As “intervention” was over-used in the 1990s art world, and therefore it soon sounded banal rather than provoking, today

WochenKlausur has completely removed it from all (old and new) project titles on its website.²⁰² Reading through titles of WochenKlausur's and Krenn and Ressler's projects, one is often addressed with very direct and literal statements: *Medical care for homeless people*, *Shelter for drug-addicted women*, *Initiatives for unemployed people* (WochenKlausur), *Institutional Racisms* (Krenn and Ressler), *Anti-Gen Worlds. Oppositions to Genetic Engineering* (Ressler), *Power and Obedience – School Instructs* (Krenn). In all these titles, big and controversial issues such as homelessness, drug addiction, institutional racism and so on are directly thematized. Particularly in WochenKlausur's titles, there is an implication of something socially good (medical care, shelter, initiative) being done by the artists for some socially weak group of people (homeless people, drug-addicted women, unemployed people). While in titles of Martin Krenn and/or Oliver Ressler's projects there is a sense of oppositionality or resistance to power structures. In both cases, the titles seem to be one step before defining binary relations of justice-injustice, right-wrong, weak-strong.

Research following the above initial observations showed that collectivity, participation, collaboration and, indeed, the question of language were indeed concerns expressed within the Austrian engaged and activist art scene.²⁰³ In what follows, I will start with descriptions of the projects and practices of WochenKlausur, Martin Krenn/Oliver Ressler and maiz. Inbetween, some information about the Austrian political art-activism scene at the time will also be provided. It should be noted that as extensive as my analysis might appear, just like in all three chapters of Part II it is restricted to one aspect of the projects and practices selected as case studies. Here this aspect is specifically the narrations of projects in their various articulations. So also my conclusions refer to this aspect in particular, leaving aside other important ones of these extremely polymorphous projects.

WOCHENKLAUSUR

The beginning of the 1990s seem to have left some people on the contemporary art scene of Vienna with a sense that what was presented as new, young and contemporary in exhibitions showed symptoms of conservatism, deadlock and a detachment from the social and political reality.²⁰⁵ Such were also the feelings that art critics were left with after the 1991 edition of the biennial exhibition "Younge Szene Wien" ("Young Scene Vienna" my translation) at Vienna's Secession.²⁰⁶ This triggered the art historian and curator Wolfgang Zinggl to introduce a whole new approach with a project described as *11 Wochen Klausur* (11 weeks enclosure) in the following edition of 1993. Zinggl's idea was that art should cease to concern itself about problems of form and materials and engage in solving social ones.²⁰⁷ A motto of "concrete intervention" was introduced, and it constituted WochenKlausur's practice for years.²⁰⁸

For that first project at the Secession Zinggl recruited nine artists, students at the Vienna Academy of Applied Arts, where he was teaching. Most of them also had some other training in addition to art.²⁰⁹ They collectively decided to engage in an *Intervention to aid homeless people*. Indeed they succeeded in a double concrete outcome. Firstly, a bus was equipped with medical facilities and a doctor and was

put in the service of homeless people free of charge. Secondly, it was arranged with aid organizations, day centers and shelters for a total of 200 lockers to be supplied permanently to homeless people.²¹⁰ Thus the artists implemented their stated goal of literally improving a social problem by means of an art project and within the duration of an art exhibition. And they also made an impact on the Viennese art scene.²¹¹ Furthermore, a basic formula was introduced for the methods and principles of *WochenKlausur*, which they developed and adjusted in later projects. Wolfgang Zinggl remained the group's leader till 1997 and its theoretician, prominent figure and public face long after.²¹² Pascale Jeannée also played a central role between 1995 and 2001, when she suddenly passed away. In each project different artists were involved, sometimes also from the places where *WochenKlausur* was invited.²¹³

According to the formula established already from the Secession project, the group has always worked upon invitation of an art institution, "which provide[s] infrastructural framework as well as cultural capital."²¹⁴ Especially the institutions' cultural capital was crucial in the first projects for the recognition of *WochenKlausur*'s social interventions as art. Besides, it helped in approaching various agents, potentially useful for a project's implementation.²¹⁵ As their name indicates, the projects are implemented within a few weeks of intensive work. The members work exclusively on the project, so as to achieve a maximum concentration of energy. It is mostly the group, rather than the inviting institutions, that decides which social problem to work on (e.g., problems of the homeless, women drug-addicts etc.). Selection is based on research on issues that have recently surfaced in local public debates, wherever *WochenKlausur* is invited.

According to *WochenKlausur*, "many people have no lobby: on their own accord they can do little to make themselves heard or improve their situation."²¹⁶ *WochenKlausur* wants to show that "certain human living conditions do not necessarily have to be the way they are." The group developed and propagated a concept of concrete social interventions. Thus in each project they set for themselves concrete goals for specific, concrete improvements. Successful outcomes are then measurable against stated goals.

Central in their ways of thinking and working is the belief that artists are competent at finding creative solutions.²¹⁷ *WochenKlausur* claims that problems cannot always be "solved using conventional approaches and are thus suitable subjects for artistic projects." Therefore the group uses "unorthodox approaches," "clever maneuvering" and even – as for instance in the first project described below – "loopholes" in laws, so as to make possible what seems impossible.²¹⁸ Besides, to consider a project completed, the sustainability of its results should also be secured.²¹⁹

As the group's theoretician, Wolfgang Zinggl has supported the activist art example of *WochenKlausur*'s concrete interventions by giving it a place in a genealogy of 20th century activist art. In his text "From the object to the concrete intervention," published in the group's general publication *WochenKlausur. Sociopolitical Activism in Art* (2001) and on its website, Zinggl gives this genealogy starting with Russian Constructivism and reaching up to Krzysztof Wodisczko.²²⁰ In his text, he endows *WochenKlausur* with some highly esteemed historical predecessors, all of whom get somehow entrenched within an activist art paradigm. At the same time, he also distinguishes the group's practice that concentrates on modest contributions, on

“concrete strategies of effecting change,” instead of repeating their predecessors failed aspiration of changing the world.²²¹

During the 1990s WochenKlausur gained broad visibility within the Austrian and international contemporary art world. Indicative of their impact is that in 1997 Wolfgang Zinggl was appointed Bundeskurator (Federal Curator for Austria) and in 1999 WochenKlausur participated alongside other artists in Austria’s official representation at the Venice Biennial.²²² Till 2007, they developed interventions in Austria and abroad and worked on issues of migration, drug policy, schools, community development, the labor market and more. There were some skeptical voices about the integrity of their methodologies of, for instance, “want[ing] its political cake whilst eating it in the persisting institutional space of the gallery.”²²³

Projects on migration

Up to the time of my research in 2003-05 WochenKlausur had worked on the issue of immigrants in Austria in two projects, one in Graz in 1995 and one in Salzburg in 1996.²²⁴ The first one dealt with issues of integrating refugees in Austria. The second one focused on improving the living conditions of inmates of a detention centre pending deportation. This is apparent from the titles of the projects’ book publications, the first one being called *Eine konkrete Intervention zur Integration von Ausländern* (A concrete Intervention for the Integration of Foreigners) and the second one *Eine konkrete Intervention zur Schubhaft* (A concrete Intervention in Deportation Detention).²²⁵ The first project was commissioned by the annual festival Steirischer Herbst in 1995 and was presented during the following year’s festival, in 1996.²²⁶ (Fig. 25-27) The project’s short description on both WochenKlausur’s general book and their website (2008) reads as follows:

As a means of circumventing strict legislation concerning foreigners, seven immigrants were commissioned in Graz to produce Social Plastics. The project assured the participants’ legal residency in Austria.²²⁷

WochenKlausur engaged with problematic situations that Austrian immigration policy caused by separating residency and working rights.²²⁸ On the one hand, being granted a residence permit depended upon one’s showing proof of one’s means of subsistence. Nonetheless, the labor laws allowed for only up to a certain percentage of gainfully employed workers in Austria to be foreign, thus excluding everyone else regardless of any other criteria. On the other hand, “the right to pursue gainful employment depended upon the possession of a residency permit and a work permit with the latter being extremely difficult to obtain.” Therefore WochenKlausur decided to “loo[k] for loopholes in these extremely restrictive laws that could let us create new employment opportunities.”

Two possibilities were found. The one was based on the fact that the law did not cover freelance work. WochenKlausur’s idea was to set up an agency for self-employed foreigners. The idea was designed for unskilled workers’ jobs, such as cleaners, for which there was shortage in the market.²²⁹ Everything was planned and prepared down to detail by WochenKlausur. To establish the agency it was necessary

to secure authorization and start-up financing from certain entities including local and state authorities, the Chamber of Commerce and Graz's Labor Market Service. Eventually the attempt failed, because the Interior Ministry made the authorization of its contribution subject to "written confirmation from the Labor Market Service that WochenKlausur's project was in no way a circumvention of the laws regulating the employment of foreigners..." and "... predictably, the Labor Market Service refused to issue an official statement."²³⁰

The second idea was based on the exception that the immigration law made for artists. Artists were free to live and work in Austria, as long as they could show proof of adequate income in Austria solely from their artistic profession.²³¹ WochenKlausur succeeded in presenting seven refugees as artists creating "social sculptures" based on Joseph Beuys' related concept. The social sculptures were actually projects that produced aid such as baby food, children's clothing, toys and bicycles to be shipped to areas in urgent need such as Bosnia and Kurdistan. The idea's realization relied on the official acceptance of the refugees as professional artists by established art institutions. These arranged commissions and exhibitions of the "social sculptures." Additionally, several cultural, social, humanitarian or educational institutions and organizations undertook either the sponsoring, or the delivery of the "social sculptures" to their final recipients abroad.

The second project (Fig. 28-29) is summed up in the following lines in the group's 2001 publication:

A coordinating agency was created to provide social services to inmates detained pending deportation at the Salzburg Police Detention Center. It ensures basic standards of humane treatment.²³²

It was realized upon the invitation of the Kunstverein Salzburg, which in 1996 was showing different ways of making art with an emphasis on artistic research into social matters. WochenKlausur addressed itself to the detention conditions in Salzburg Police Detention Center, which were particularly degrading.

Austrian law was among the most restrictive in the E.U. towards refugees. Any foreigner without a valid residence permit or visa was subject to being put in detention. Detention was imposed even in cases of refugees who could or should not be deported according to law. Actually, for foreigners arriving to Austria by land, the Austrian refugee law that theoretically enabled them to apply for refugee status, was in practice made redundant by the so-called "third country clause" of the Alien Law, because Austria was surrounded by so-called "safe third countries."²³³

Beyond the above and many more complexities of the legal status of foreigners in Austria, the living conditions for detainees in the Police Detention Center in Salzburg were distinctly disgraceful. For instance, inmates were often not informed of their rights in time to apply for papers or in a language they could understand. Basic living needs and standards were either insufficient, dependent upon the judgment of guards, or often non-existent. That was the case with access to contact with relief organizations, basic hygiene, medical care, physical movement, open-air activities, contact with other inmates and with external agents, access to clothing,



25 - 27 WochenKlausur, *A concrete Intervention for the Integration of Foreigners*. Graz, 1995. © WochenKlausur.



28 - 29 WochenKlausur, *A concrete Intervention in Deportation Detention*. Salzburg, 1996. © WochenKlausur.

personal belongings, television or radio. WochenKlausur made contact with relief organizations, pastoral workers, attorneys, former guards and detainees, officers from the detention center, as well as with the initiative Hoffnung Konkret, an organization that showed substantial commitment to improving the conditions in Salzburg Police Detention Center.²³⁴

The intervention of WochenKlausur led to the establishment of a network of social services for the inmates, which was coordinated by a new agency set up for this purpose. WochenKlausur succeeded in securing financial and administrative support for the agency, in raising some media attention, in propagating against the broadly held assumption by locals that the detention was related to criminal activity. Most importantly, it succeeded in substantially improving detention conditions. Improvements related to both the inmates' access to information and external advice concerning their legal status and rights, as well as the quality of their everyday life inside the centre.

MARTIN KRENN & OLIVER RESSLER

Let me herewith turn to the second case study, the artists Martin Krenn and Oliver Ressler and, as example, their collaborative project *Border Crossing Services* from 2001. Both artists started working in the mid 1990s. Each has been following an individual career, but with an accentuated interest in collaborations mostly with other artists or activists. Together they have collaborated in numerous projects that focused primarily on issues of racism and migration.²³⁵ Their individual artists' statements, taken from their respective websites and reproduced here in Table I show some important similarities in their approaches to art-activism. Both start by referring to what kind of themes they work on, namely socio-political ones. Afterwards each refers to the media and forms of presentation they use, such as video, photography, exhibition making, the internet and projects in public spaces. Thus theme-specificity appears prioritized to forms and media. Ressler adds some of his themes of interest, such as racism, migration, genetic engineering etc.. Additionally, he points out the collaborative character of many of his projects, giving the names of his collaborators. While in WochenKlausur's case it seems that the specificity of the group's approach is what distinguishes their work, for Krenn and Ressler it is rather the specificity of the issues and the artists' political position towards them. More details on the artists' methodologies are usually given in interviews.²³⁶

For the interests of this thesis, I should emphasize that both artists quite often make works for public spaces, such as posters and banners. Almost always in their works verbal communication is at least as important as visual in conveying information, opinions, political messages etc.. For instance posters and banners mostly rely on text.²³⁷ Photographic projects by Martin Krenn come almost invariably with indispensable captions or texts. Ressler's videos, again almost invariably, feature interviews with specialists or activists on the socio-political issue at stake.

Since their projects result in videos, banners, books, installations etc., they are not ephemeral and process-based in the sense of, for instance, WochenKlausur's or Jeanne van Heeswijk's work. Nonetheless quite often, as also in *Border Crossing*

Services - at least as important as the produced video, book or exhibition are also the various types of participatory or collaborative processes of producing them in cooperation with students, migrants' organizations etc.. The same applies also to their reception by the public that the artists often monitor. Besides, many projects have more than one part or outcome, something that facilitates the staging of multiple approaches or angles of the same theme within the same project. To illuminate all the above I will turn here to the project *Border Crossing Services*.²³⁸ The statement of the project's goals, partly quoted already in the introduction to this chapter, reads:

The goal of the project *Border Crossing Services (Dienstleistung: Fluchhilfe)* is to redefine and highlight the positive aspects of terms such as "smuggler" or "trafficker," which have been given a negative connotation through the dominant medial discourse. In contrast to the widespread model for representation, the actual act of "smuggling" is not presented as a criminal exploitation of asylum seekers. Instead, we highlight the service character of this business made necessary by European policies of exclusion.²³⁹

The multiplicity of possible approaches and definitions of a certain action (Fluchhilfe) is expressed not only by means of words in the above statement, but also by means of the project's multiple forms of implementation. These function as stages for a multitude of voices.

The first part was an information brochure/magazine titled *Neues Grenzblatt* to which anti-racist groups and migrant organizations were invited to contribute.²⁴⁰ In these texts, the contributors inform the reader about conditions of contemporary migration and their own involvement in improving them. The brochure was distributed by direct mailing to households in Styria and in diverse events in cooperation with leftist groups. It can also be found on the project's website.

The second part of the project was the bilingual (German/English) video *Border Crossing Services*, subtitled *a four-part video on borders, migration and border crossing services*, which features long fragments of interviews.²⁴¹ (Fig. 24) On the one side, immigrants and persons involved in migrant activism are interviewed. On the other, three individuals working for the army and a border patrol officer represent the state and its anti-immigration policies and practices. Upon each interviewee's first appearance large letters on the screen give their names and the capacities for which they were approached for this video. The first interview is with Hirut Kiesel and Karim Duarte, free-lance journalists in Vienna. From their names and faces one can infer their migrant background. They initially talk about who has the right to migrate. Early in the video we also see a road shot by a border control station. A car waits behind a metal bar for passport control. Once done, the bar is lifted freeing the road. Driver and guards exchange papers through windows, so we see neither of them. The second interviewee is Grace Latigo, artist and political activist. She talks about her experience of being illegal until the point when a public statement she made during an activists' gathering brought her case to media attention. Thanks to the media, she and her brother were given papers within a week. The third interview is with Jean Jacques Effson Effa, activist of the self-organized refugee organization THE VOICE. Letters on the screen describe the organization as follows: "THE VOICE

fighters the residency requirement which says that asylum seekers are only allowed to leave their administrative district with an 'entitlement certificate'. Effa talks about the restrictions imposed by German law on foreigners who can neither obtain full residence and working permits, nor are they deported. They are allowed to live in specific areas, are given very little money and are prohibited from working, learning German, or travelling without an "entitlement certificate."

The following interview is staged at Vienna's Heldenplatz during the festivities of a national day celebration in which Austrian government members are participating and the national anthem is heard. Letters on the screen read: "Publicity for separation: on the national holiday the Austrian military advertises its newest war machinery and willingly distributes information." A helicopter pilot from the border security control forces is interviewed by the artists about high-tech detection systems. Additional information is given by a man inside a space with screens connected to detection cameras. He explains how air security systems function by means of heat-seeking devices, which detect living organisms on the ground through their body temperature. A second helicopter pilot specifies further that their hunting target are the "smugglers" rather than the "illegals," and explains the conditions of the patrol pilots' job. Furthermore, a German Federal border patrol officer called Bodo Kaping is interviewed in his office. He is asked to explain the meaning of "traffickers," "smugglers" and "Fluchthelfer." He distinguishes between "traffickers," who illegally and by risking people's lives, "capitalize on other people's misery and "Fluchthelfer," which is not a term applicable to the same matter, as it has positive connotations, historically referring to those who "at the time of the 'iron curtain' brought people from the East to the West." Asked whether there is a difference between those "Fluchthelfer" and today's "traffickers" in terms of placing refugees - that is, human lives - in danger, he refuses to comment on the matter.

Further on, a man called Dominique John, from the organization Forschungsgesellschaft Flucht und Migration in Berlin is interviewed. He nuances the topic considerably more than the previous speakers, outlining various routes and methods people follow to cross countries - a variety that reflects the differences between individual cases. A taxi driver, Hans Heim, from the taxistas-activist in Berlin, talks about the law imposed on German taxi drivers to check passengers' papers when the latter look as if they could be illegal migrants (e.g., dirty outfit). A man whose face we do not see describes areas by the borders and ways of fleeing hidden in cars or trains. Instead of announcing his name and capacity, the letters on the screen read: "The next person with whom we are talking will not be in the video in order to avoid possible criminalization of the person or surroundings." The cameraman walks along a borderline in the countryside, shooting at the soil and a border fence made of metal blocks and wires. Interestingly, the German version of the above cited text formulates the message differently: "Aufgrund von polizeilichen Ermittlungen bei Personen die der Linken Szene zugeordnet waren, wird die folgende Person im Video nicht gezeigt." Only in this version the person is described as classified by the police to belong to the Left political scene. The message points to a tension between the police and people classified as Leftist, which may evoke the tension between police and migrants. The video contains no other clear statement connecting the migrants with the political Left. Finally a foreign student in Vienna, Zinaida Skripic, is also briefly interviewed.

The interviews show an approach to art activism in which art, conventionally the domain of representations authored by artists, is turned into a podium for (self-) presentations staged by the artists. The artists themselves are heard or shown very few times as they ask questions and hold the microphone for the interviewees. The video was shown in an exhibition at the Kunstraum of the University of Lüneburg (see below), in numerous festivals, exhibitions or special screenings in Austria and abroad. Transcribed extracts are available on the project's website.

The third part of *Border Crossing Services* was an exhibition of the same title in the Kunstraum of the University of Lüneburg. It was put together collaboratively by Krenn, Ressler and students of the university, based on a seminar carried out by the artists.²⁴² To counteract hierarchical relations between artists and students, the exhibition included within a commonly created exhibition framework displays co-produced by everyone, independently by the artists, and independently by the students. The latter included a video, *Antiracist Perspectives*, based on interviews and conversations with other German students, as well as with representatives of migrant organizations in Germany.²⁴³ Further, the exhibition included a wall installation with texts, direct-mailings and flyers referring to the groups who wrote the articles in the *Neues Grenzblatt*. Quotes from literature used in a university seminar about racism were also added there.

From all the above it should have become clear that the various forms in which the project was realized relied primarily on text- and speech-based narrations. Through those narrations the project staged a multiplicity of voices and approaches to the issues of borders, migration and border crossings to EU states. Visual means such as the layout of *Neues Grenzblatt*, or the mostly fixed shots of the interviewees in middle portrait facilitate the audience in reading or listening without being distracted. Finally, the exhibition in Lüneburg seems also to have been an experience not of seeing, as much as of reading and listening to experiences and positions about border crossing.

The artists' position on the issue of border crossings becomes apparent as the activists' voices outnumber the voices representing state authorities. Besides, the staging of the latter is rather unflattering: the pilots talk in the middle of war machinery, describing its operational systems in a rather detached professional manner. The patrol officer sits in a discussion in which his arguments are easily brought to a dead-end. His final "no comment" reply is in strong contradiction to the eloquence of, for instance, Latigo or Effa.

One could claim that priority of linguistic communication and direct thematization of political issues characterizes the art activism of Krenn and Ressler in general. Additionally, in several projects they stage multiple voices on a theme, by means of collecting and presenting either interviews or short statements by individuals directly affected by, or involved in the issue at stake.²⁴⁴ These individuals can often be characterized as activists.

ABOUT THE AUSTRIAN POLITICAL ART SCENE IN THE 1990s

When in 1993 *WochenKlausur* and in 1994-95 Krenn and Ressler appeared on the Austrian contemporary art scene, they were not the only ones concerned with socio-

political issues and in search of new practices of collectivity and engagement, often at the borders between art and activism. One could name more art producers, even if they only comprised a segment of the scene.

Since the theme in focus is here immigration, one could start with Lisl Ponger for her project *Fremdes Wien* in 1992. This project consisted of a book and a series of photographs for exhibition. It dealt with the invisibility of migrant communities in Vienna. Migrants were already discussed as a “problem” in the Austrian media, but they were constantly talked about, rarely talking themselves.²⁴⁵ The same year the artists’ collective Klub Zwei was formed (Simone Bader, Jo Schmeiser). Up to the day of writing this chapter, they have been working at the borders of art, film, new media and theory with a socio-political thematology.²⁴⁶ By means of art works (e.g., *Willkommen in Wien*, video, 1992) and theoretical output (e.g., *Vor der Information. Staatsarchitektur*, edited volume, 1996) they have elaborated on questions of the representation of migrants and of racism. A further relevant example is the artists’ group gangart. They have been working in various media and ways (performance, video installations, architecture interventions, curating etc.) on related themes.²⁴⁷

Furthermore, one should mention Lukas Pusch for a public project in 1994. It consisted of photographic portraits of 36 members of the Austrian parliament and government. Over the photos a text was superimposed reading: “Wir haben es gesetzlich ermöglicht, J. Jafarzadeh zu verhaften und abzuschieben! (Im Iran droht ihm die Hinrichtung).” Below in smaller letters: “Danke für Ihr Vertrauen.”²⁴⁸ Pusch re-appropriated the aesthetics of election campaign posters, with which politicians advertised the public’s trust towards them.²⁴⁹

The phenomenon of art turning political during the 1990s was broadly evident in the entire German-speaking world.²⁵⁰ This is not the place to expand on German or Swiss artists, only the group Schleuser.net is particularly interesting. In their own words, Schleuser.net is “a lobby organisation for commercial enterprises active in the market segment of undocumented cross-border traffic in people. Schleuser.net was set up in 1998 – initially as schlepper.org – to ... and to work on improving the image of the people known as traffickers and smugglers’.”²⁵¹ The coincidence with the concept of *Border Crossing Services* is remarkable. Schleuser.net have also used the example of the positive connotations of “Fluchthelfer” in the BRD (Federal Republic of Germany) before 1989, versus the negative ones of “trafficker” and “smuggler” after 1989. They have developed projects in different directions to Krenn and Ressler’s aforementioned project in 2001. Yet the striking conceptual coincidence is indicative of the emphasis on migration activism in the German-speaking political art field.²⁵²

Something interesting for an external observer especially about the output of the politically engaged Austrian art scene is the quantity of text produced, whether printed or published online. This tendency becomes more obvious from the late 1990s onwards, when the internet became a broadly accessible platform and tool for the presentation, networking and publicity of some significant organizations and initiatives. One could name here the Public Netbase (Institute for New Culture Technologies), basis wien, IG Kultur Österreich, and, indeed, the European Institute for Progressive Cultural Policies (eipcp).²⁵³ Their output varied from online platforms, web and printed publications, research projects, conferences in Austria and abroad, to involvement in art projects production. They played an important role for the politically engaged

art scene by conceiving and trying out new forms of (self-)organization, collectivity, networking, production, communication and critique of political art.

At the end of the 1990s - early 2000 the interest in collective artistic and cultural projects dealing with migration and racisms culminated. One could mention further examples such as the projects of the temporary, project-based formations of *Dezentrale Kunst* (Eva Dertschei, Carlos Toledo, Ulrike Müller, 1999-2000) and *Dezentrale Medien* (Eva Dertschei, Carlos Toledo, Petja Dimitrova and Borjana Ventzislova in cooperation with the NGO Initiative Minderheiten, 2003), as well as projects in the frame of the *Soho in Ottakring* festival in Vienna, established in 1999.²⁵⁴

The national parliamentary elections of October 2000 gave the nationalist FPÖ party of Jörg Haider an impressive 27%. During the months right after, people from the cultural field engaged in direct political action protesting against official policies of xenophobia and racism. Such policies had been promoted by the extreme right already for years.²⁵⁵ It is interesting to refer here to a view expressed by art critic Christian Kravagna back in 1995. According to Kravagna, the problems of foreigners in Austria, of refugees' rights to asylum, of (il)legal refugee status – the entire “*Ausländerfrage*” – was kept at the centre of internal political discourses from the summer of 1993. That is, since the government had tightened the Austrian immigration laws. While these issues had preoccupied political life in most West European countries since 1989, Kravagna maintained that the severe immigration measures in Austria primarily served agendas of internal political balances. The governing parties' coalitions saw Haider's rising popularity as a threat. In responding they let themselves be dragged into more extreme right positions and policies in order to stop voters from leaking to Haider.

What one could infer from Kravagna's point is that for all the sincere engagement of art and cultural producers with anti-racist and migration issues, they were partly trapped in a vicious circle. Any public attention they could attract to those matters could unwittingly fuel a debate triggered and sustained by political opportunism, for which the “*Ausländerfrage*” was exploited. Eventually, if artists consciously addressed that aspect too, the discourse could anyway lean foremost towards the problems of Austrians, rather than of foreigners.

The 1990s had also seen an increasing activity from social and/or political activist initiatives and NGOs, old and new. Cultural programs and cooperation with artists constituted an ever more important part of the activities of many of them. For instance, *Wochenklausur* often turned to more or less broadly accepted social, humanitarian or Christian organizations such as Caritas or in the Salzburg project the initiative *Hoffnung Konkret*. Krenn and Ressler, working together or separately, sought their contacts mostly in self-organized and/or leftist initiatives, in some of which migrants played a central role.

MAIZ (AUTONOMOUS CENTER OF AND FOR MIGRANT WOMEN)

One of the latter is *maiz*, an organization formed by and for migrant women in Linz. In Table II one can read the description, mission statement, areas of interest and target groups, as they are given on the organization's website.²⁵⁶ It started in 1994-95 on the

initiative of three Brazilian women: Tania Araujo, a feminist theologian, Luzemir Caixeta, philosopher and feminist theologian, and Rubia Salgado, with an academic background in languages and literature.²⁵⁷ As determining conditions that led them to organized action they cite the following: on one side, their own personal experiences and positions as migrant women in Europe and, on the other, particularly in Austria, the migrant women's confrontation with racism and the exceptionally degrading living and working conditions.²⁵⁸ Many of them cleaners, sex-workers, babysitters or housewives, they seemed to have no better future prospects. Such restricted horizons originated in their limited rights whether as legal or illegal migrants, dependency on employers or spouses and often poor education. As women of color, many of these reasons linked to sexual and racial discrimination they experienced, both in their countries of origin and in Europe. Especially for sex-workers, on whom a great part of the work of maiz concentrates, their main problems stem from social discrimination and taboos around their work, which force them into social marginalization and invisibility.

Maiz started with informal meetings held with Latin American women and soon paid particular attention to migrant sex-workers. Within a few years their initiative expanded significantly, offering literacy and German language courses, legal advice and support, publicity work, workshops and courses including professional orientation and self-defense, activities for the second generation, research projects, lectures, discussions, networking and, very importantly, cultural work. Within Austria maiz has evolved into a vocal and vibrant autonomous activist organization for migration and feminism.

The term "cultural work" (Kulturarbeit) in maiz also encompasses art projects. It includes performances, exhibitions, a shop-window gallery in the old city of Linz and various collaborations with artists. In maiz cultural work is intended to contribute to political work. As Luzemir Caixeta writes:

Unsere Experimente verfolgen anti-rassistische und anti-sexistische Wirkungen und Ziele: Kulturarbeit bietet uns dabei eine „Vermittlungsform“ von politischen Forderungen. Letztendlich wollen wir die politischen und auch kulturpolitischen Rahmenbedingungen verändern: rechtliche Gleichstellung, Selbstvertretung statt Stellvertretung. Politische Bildungsarbeit steht in engem Zusammenhang mit unseren Tätigkeiten im Kulturbereich, *denn im Rahmen dieser Arbeit entwickeln wir die Konzepte und Prozesse, die wiederum als Kulturarbeit realisiert werden.*²⁵⁹ [my emphasis]

In maiz, participation of migrant women from the conceptualization down to the presentation of cultural projects is indispensable. A concept of "anthropophagischer Protagonismus" ("cannibalistic protagonism," my translation) encapsulates the perception and importance of participation in maiz's cultural work. It combines legacies of Latin American literary and artistic traditions surrounding cultural "anthropophagism," with the demands for equal social and political rights for foreign women in Europe.²⁶⁰ Projects in which art was employed for publicity and political education included, for instance, the exhibition-performance *PEEP-SHOW einmal*

anders (Linz, 1996-97), which confronted visitors with the situation of migrant sex workers in Austria.²⁶¹ MAIZ AIRLINES in 1996-97 was an exhibition designed as an interactive installation on the themes of international sex tourism, trafficking and forced prostitution of women.²⁶² A project in which the participation of migrant women was more explicitly visible in the production process and the presented outcomes was *Kartographische Eingriffe* in 2001, in collaboration with Klub Zwei. It dealt with migrant women in public spaces, included workshops, an exhibition and public discussions. Questions that were handled revolved around possibilities of and impediments to the participation, visibility, and transgression of barriers in public spaces. Eventually, the making of urban spaces one's own. Fictional city-plans were produced by workshop participants, which visualized their conceptions, desires and wishes, and were presented in the exhibition. The project was repeated with new participants in other Austrian cities and in Italy and Spain.

Generally speaking, there is rather little, if any, visual documentation and limited descriptive detail about individual projects on the organizations' website and in the numerous texts written by the organization's three initiators. However, in those texts, where ideas, principles, practices and goals of maiz are narrated, one can sometimes see how the authors get their accounts to enact, by its narrative and textual means, the "anthropophagischer Protagonismus" that the concepts and practices of participatory cultural work in maiz stand for.

Maiz as an organization and its initiators and members individually have cooperated or contributed in the production and/or presentation of projects by Martin Krenn (e.g., *Border Crossing Services*, *City Views*), Klub Zwei (*Kartographische Eingriffe*), Dezentrale Medien (presentation of *herein.at* at the shop-window gallery, 2001) and by other artists or artists-activists from various disciplines. Such contacts and cooperation are particularly significant for this chapter. They are indicative of a local environment of cultural activism, within which migration and anti-racism are prominent discourses, and co-operations a favored way of working. In this context it is easy to imagine that the practices of different agents inform one another, leading to mutual exchange and confrontation.

FROM POLITICS TO ART

In the introduction I mentioned that two major aspects in the "problem" of migrants in Austria (and other EU countries at the time to various manners and degrees) were, firstly, that migrants were not given access to social and political rights preserved for native Austrian citizens. Secondly, that they were denied the right to speak for themselves and present their cases in front of authorities, and in political and public debates.²⁶³ In that sense, the participatory or collaborative forms of activist art projects seemed to render possible in the domain of art or by means of art, what was not allowed to be possible in "real" life.

In Part I I maintained that in long-term and process-based art projects the articulation of the process (say, the construction and sequence of concepts, relations and events that together comprise the project) remain in time in the form of narrations. These would include verbal and visual narrations articulated by the artists or others

involved, whether in “official” narrations as in projects’ publications, or in any secondary, “unofficial” renderings as in conversations, art reviews and so on. Here I am limiting the object of analysis only to “official” narrations.

For the discussion of art activism on migration in this chapter a central question regarding the narrative form of projects refers to the formation of subjects: subjects articulating the project’s narrations, but also subjects formed in, and/or by means of, the narrated projects. In other words, who, in what capacity and by what means becomes an acting and speaking subject? Who is talking and who is talked about in projects? Eventually, these questions go part and parcel with the object of enquiry: is it about the problem of foreigners (Ausländerfrage) or about the foreigners’ problems? How are participation and collaboration processes articulated structurally in artistic projects, and how are the participatory/collaborative projects of art activism articulated in their narrations? Do the structures of participation and/or collaboration proposed by activist art projects produce concepts and narratives in which power structures of “real” life are challenged and reinterpreted?²⁶⁴

In the last question stakes and priorities from political life are transferred to art. By which I mean that the demand for the participation of migrant subjects in political discourses was transferred to art, in the form of the migrants’ participation as subjects both in production processes and resulting re-presentations of art projects. Stakes and criteria from political life became regulatory criteria for both artists structuring their projects, as well as for art critics and theorists. Consequently, a certain activist “political correctness” (participation as the manifestation of inclusion) was emphasized as a criterion for re-presentations produced in art projects. A “political correctness” that was counter or compensatory to the unjust or missing re-presentations of migrant minorities in political life.

This movement from the political to the artistic, with reference mostly to how subject positions are formed and power structures addressed, has played an important role in the field of activist art theory and critique. It has opened a great terrain of discourse, where political and philosophical ideas by theorists such as Hardt and Negri, Deleuze and Guattari, Mouffe, Laclau and others have been processed and reworked.²⁶⁵ In this context it sometimes seemed that attention to conceptual and theoretical analysis of artistic projects pushed aside the consideration that form itself operates in its own ways on the audience’s perception. So an artistic decision that might appear as politically just – and in that sense “politically correct” – may not really operate as intended when rendered into visual, verbal or other forms in projects. Or it may not resonate with other meanings that the same, selected form itself might produce.

In what follows, I will approach the three case studies by examining the formation of subject positions and confrontation with power structures, as I see them derived from structural, visual or verbal articulations of their projects’ narrations. Eventually, the discussion will conclude with using aesthetic criteria or, to put it differently, aesthetic effects as criteria to consider the effects of political art activism.

THE ARTICULATION OF PARTICIPATION

According to WochenKlausur's approach to art-activism, the artists' skills in finding new and unorthodox ways to deal with problems is a response to dead ends to which the orthodox, professional approaches of social workers and politicians often come up against. Thus WochenKlausur emphatically calls artists to turn from formalist questions and art objects, towards socio-political questions and interventions. In terms of intentions and content, this proposal seems to aim at shifting attention away from self-absorbed aesthetics and autonomous art, towards a socio-political arena. Interestingly enough, in the reception of WochenKlausur especially during its early years, discussions constantly returned to questions of what was the art in their practices. This is testified to not only when reading critical reviews about WochenKlausur. It is most strongly evident in texts written by the group's most central figures, Wolfgang Zinggl and Pascalle Jeannée. It also covers eight out of nine of the F.A.Q. on the group's website and in their general publication.²⁶⁶ By and large, in any presentation of WochenKlausur especially during the 1990s, elaboration on their philosophy and methodology of *art-activism* played a protagonist role.²⁶⁷

The effectiveness of WochenKlausur's projects relied on the creative thinking of artists especially when they work together. Consequently, the protagonists in the interventions collaboratively produced as art are above all else the artists themselves. They are the central acting subjects in the projects' implementation. They are also the speaking and writing subjects recounting the projects' stories. These stories provide WochenKlausur's perspective on the confrontation with each project's issue at stake.

As for target groups worked for and about, these are chosen by the artists' team. In Graz these were the refugees seeking possibility of work and in Salzburg the foreigners in the deportation-detention centre. WochenKlausur persistently lobbied for them and effectively helped them within the framework of each project's planned interventions. During the Salzburg project WochenKlausur's decisions about what improvements should be targeted regarding the detention conditions were based primarily on past and present inmates' recommendations. However, in the projects' "official narrations," members of the target groups themselves hardly ever appear as team participants or anyhow as acting subjects beyond activities delegated to them by WochenKlausur, such as the production of "social sculptures" in Graz. In WochenKlausur's general methodology and practice of art activism the target groups are implicitly positioned as *de facto* socially weak and politically dependant upon help from Austrians. Of course in cases like the Salzburg detainees, active participation in the art project would be probably too much to ask.

The above approach to target groups sometimes leads to paradoxical situations. For instance in the Salzburg project, amongst the most crucial improvements for inmates was that contact possibilities with external social services and relief organizations were made possible. Inmates could hence receive adequate information about their legal and political rights, and in a language they could understand. In that sense, the intervention provided detainees with the means to communicate their positions to external organizations and authorities, as well as tackle the language barrier problem. This means that, while the project enabled the detainees' official speech in "real" life

practices, members of the target group are nowhere mentioned as being given the symbolical or practical initiative or voice in the enabling process.²⁶⁸

In order to speedily achieve the projects' target, WochenKlausur's approach to art activism strategies has been to exploit systematically, but in that way also *to confirm*, the status and hierarchies of existing structures. The latter varied from the cultural capital of art institutions, the established status of Christian or social relief organizations, to the politicians' decision-making power and the media's pressure power.²⁶⁹ Thus the hierarchies and conditions under which socio-political deficiencies and the marginalization of social groups have come about in the first place are neither questioned, nor re-imagined. Therefore, also, the success of some interventions as single cases – e.g., creating possibilities of work in Graz for seven out of thousands of migrants – are likely to operate as exceptions again confirming the rule. They might even facilitate the political and legal authorities in closing their loopholes, rather than setting examples for possible alternatives. This is a critique WochenKlausur has heard before.²⁷⁰ It is met in critics' writings, and is given a response in WochenKlausur's F.A.Q.. There, the group acknowledges the above criticism. It responds by arguing, firstly, that eventually it is the state that enables the improvements, since the art institutions that invite WochenKlausur are state funded. Secondly, that it is better to do a little something instead of nothing, with the excuse of one's powerlessness against the deep and complicated roots of socio-political problems.²⁷¹

Critical and self-critical voices in the discourse of engagement with anti-racism, minorities and migrants were anyway heard on the German-speaking, political art scene.²⁷² While soon after the mid-1990s the above critical reflections were spreading, new groupings and networks of activists were simultaneously developing. They were involved in anti-globalization, anti-racist, environmental and other campaigns. Not surprisingly, the perspectives and practices developed by younger artists and activists responded both to state policies, as well as to what was considered by some as problematic aspects either in earlier or in other art-activist approaches.²⁷³ Martin Krenn and Oliver Ressler, and their project *Border Crossing Services*, could be considered examples here.

Martin Krenn & Oliver Ressler In publications, websites, brochures and other resources where their projects are made public, the content focuses exclusively on the social or political issue at stake. Presentation or explanation of their personal approaches and strategies to political art or art-activism are provided separately, for instance, in interviews. Even though they are not a permanent artists' duo and their approaches are not identical, they seem to share some common perspectives. Art forms and methods they choose for each project are meant to be tailor-made to the particularities of the selected issue.²⁷⁴ Both tend to address huge issues such as capitalism, state ideologies, globalization. In other words, issues that underlie the socio-economic and political interests and structures that lead, amongst others, to the marginalization of minorities such as migrants.²⁷⁵ They are also self-conscious about hierarchies produced during the process of making participatory/collaborative art projects, as well as in the (re-)presentations of such projects' presented outcomes.²⁷⁶ The consideration of all the above points can be seen in *Border Crossing Services*.

As the project aimed at opening up terms such as “smuggler” or “trafficker” to positive interpretations, the various forms in which the project was realized staged the voices - and hence interpretations - of individuals or organizations on the theme of crossing the EU borders - German and Austrian in particular. This is evident in the juxtaposition of opinions by various agents, the participatory or collaborative approach during the production process and in the project’s concrete outcomes - brochure, video and exhibition. As said earlier, the artists operate largely as editors and microphone holders. They set the theme and decide on the format that serves best to stage invited contributors. This is the case with the texts contributed by anti-racist groups and migrant organizations in *Neues Grenzblatt*.²⁷⁷ Accordingly, the video is structured by alternating extracts from interviews from both “camps”: representatives of migrant and German activists, as well as of military and border police forces. The former are clearly favored in terms of the time allocated to them, yet extensive pieces from all interviews are featured. One may notice the emphasis on featuring individuals who are migrants and activists. For the exhibition in Lüneburg, the intention was that the artists’ and the students’ contributions should be as horizontally structured as possible.

The organizations and initiatives approached and staged are mostly autonomous, “alternative” ones to those featured in WochenKlausur’s Graz and Salzburg interventions. They are not the established social or Christian relief organizations like Caritas. Rather they are the smaller, self-organized and mostly leftist activist formations that made their presence more strongly felt from the mid-1990s onwards. Hence, the selection of participants and/or collaborators also expressed the intention of organizing oneself on “alternative” terrains to those provided by existing social and political institutions.²⁷⁸ While in *Neues Grenzblatt* the narrations contained collective perspectives and goals, in the video it is the narrations of personal experiences and perspectives of individuals, who are connected to related activist groupings.

Summing up the above points about *Border Crossing Services*, one can say that the organization and structures of the project’s participatory/collaborative methods brought members of the groups concerned (migrants, Fluchthelfern, Austrian authorities) in juxtaposition to one another. They are presented as speaking and acting subjects, with an emphasis on providing a platform mainly for those usually not heard and seen in public discourses. At the same time, social and political organizations that were invited to contribute to the project represented an alternative to mainstream socio-political institutions.

Let me remind us here of the departure point of this discussion: namely the transfer of models of participation from political practices to art activist practices, so as to render possible in the domain of art or by using art, something barred in the domain of political life. In the two case studies so far, WochenKlausur and Krenn and Ressler, one could observe the following: on the one hand, WochenKlausur opted for taking advantage of the capital and status of established hierarchies and capitals, as it found them already constituted in cultural, social and political institutions and the media. In this way, it managed to make possible specific practical improvements that otherwise seemed impossible. On the other hand, Krenn and Ressler did not render possible any practical changes previously regarded as impossible. However, by staging the marginalized voices and self-organized groupings, they rendered possible *the thinking of the possibility* of another process, other institutions, other structures

and hierarchies. Ideally, they rendered possible the thought of rendering possible today's impossibilities as a rule, rather than as exception.

Nevertheless, if one takes some more time to look at the migrant subjects, as they are presented to be presenting themselves, the aesthetic articulations of the artists' political intentions may lead to representations at more than one level, sometimes with an impact diverging from that most likely intended by Krenn and Ressler. I take here as example particularly the video of *Border Crossing Services*. The artists invited those people usually not heard in mainstream political and public discourses on migration. These people are given subject positions, they speak for themselves and present how they act for themselves (activists) in "real" life. The story of Grace Latigo summarizes a central point that seems to underlie some important formal decisions about the presentation of narratives in the video. Latigo recounts how in a gathering of the campaign *Kein Mensch Ist Illegal*, run back then by the Evangelical diocese, someone came to her and said: "we will speak for you." She was sitting there and thought, "you don't have to speak for me, I can speak for myself, but you simply don't let me speak." So she stood up and said, "Good evening, my name is Grace Latigo and I can speak for myself! I have been illegal for seven years." And further she explains, "naturally that set off a huge chaos and I had to explain to the people why it was important that they let me speak. So first I did it for myself, but when I make my case public then I am thinking of others who are affected, as I can better relate to their position." Watching Latigo speaking to the camera, she definitely seems capable of speaking. She is dynamic, eloquent and fluent in German.

The artists present the individuals by their name and the capacity in which they are interviewed – thus participate – in the video. Their private names, real stories, real fears, experiences, claims and struggles are made public. On the one hand, this is a "politically corrective," almost compensatory movement for official Austrian politics. The politics that leave foreigners invisible and voiceless, through policies that illegalize them, keep them financially weak and bar them from German language classes. These are the very policies that consequently feed the public's prejudice against foreigners, as the latter hide from the police, look poor and uneducated. However, on the other hand, in the video, by standing up as private subjects for their social and political rights in a public discourse, they are also brought to a position that exposes and renders them vulnerable. This remains the case, even if the artists may wish to show processes of individual empowerment (Latigo, Effson Effa) and to address the partial interpretation of "traffickers" as criminals. By bringing the private individuals to the foreground regarding a collective, social problem, they turn them into representative figures on the issue (migrants' legal, social, political condition in the EU). While the persons talk about private facts, they become examples for a broad socio-political issue and, thus, operate as public symbols.²⁷⁹ Indeed, the interviewees are most likely conscious of that, as Latigo's words quoted earlier demonstrate. Anyhow, brought to this position, the private individual that becomes a public symbol, becomes something that exceeds itself, the private self. Thus it is once again submitted to the same public, socio-political discourse.

Now let me return to where I started, the transfer of participation models from political practices to artistic practices, and the formation of subject positions. The

political activists' "politically correct" movement seemed to grant the members of the disenfranchised minority visibility and a voice to speak for themselves, so as to turn external representation and determination to self-presentation and self-empowerment. Nonetheless, following the aforementioned track of thought, the presentation of the self might easily slip into the exposition of private individuals' operating as symbols. This serves a larger cause. But as private persons renders them vulnerable, not least because they appear as individuals to oppose something as enormous as governments and state apparatuses, elected and run by the local majorities.

Still, these individuals do not stand for helplessness. They embody and represent self-empowerment. They are also associated with organized activism groups represented in *Neues Grenzblatt* and in printed materials available in the Lüneburg exhibition. As the artists' framework hosts the narratives of their real stories of migration, real facts and figures, real claims, the language used is direct and literal. Like the language conventionally expected from official political discourse about public issues, rather than from the realm of metaphors, fiction and symbolic language conventionally attributed to artists. This is actually quite interesting, as at the centre of *Border Crossing Services* stand the various positive and negative connotations of the terms "Fluchthelfer," "trafficker" and "smuggler," for which the artists maintain that the state cultivates prejudices through partiality and undeclared interests. For instance, authorities requiring of taxi drivers to check papers of foreigners who board their vehicles in dirty clothes, because they look as if they could be illegal migrants who have just arrived from across some border.²⁸⁰ Or personal documents of non-Western-looking foreigners on public transport are often scrutinized, conveying the impression to other passengers that non-Western-looking foreigners are more often than others likely to be suspects of some sort.

Now, regardless whether one subscribes fullheartedly to the content of the artists' criticism against state authorities, policies and ways of treating people, there is something problematic about the formal means, about the aesthetics of fact and fiction there, about how the critique is performed in the narrative formats of *Border Crossing Services*. Namely, the artists seem to mobilize fact to counter fiction - or narratives of facts to counter fictional narratives. To be more precise, they mobilize factual narratives – such as people with their real names, witnesses of their own lives, real stories, real problems. And they employ a language drawing heavily from documentary (in the video), from news media (direct mailing brochure) and from political protest (direct mailing, flyers and brochures of activist organizations in the exhibition) - thus a language standing for truth. They do that to counter partial narratives cultivated in real-time politics – most notably the constructed negative image of illegalized migrants and their helpers. Even more, it becomes manifest how partial, contingent and manipulative institutional interpretations can be, thus very close to fictionally constructed (e.g., "Fluchthelfer" vs. "trafficker"). However, in this way they risk rendering their own argumentation and position problematic in a twofold manner.

On the one hand, I see a vicious circle being created: if the narrative formats and language of fact from a depository of political and news media are mobilized by the artists to demonstrate that politicians in real-time politics and media are in fact cultivating partial narratives, then the artists put their own argumentation at the

risk of being turned on its head. This is because they employ in their argumentation the very narrative means and ways of those – politicians, news media – whose argumentational content they have proven unreliable. In doing so, they undermine, in turn, the reliability of their own argumentation.

On the other, there seems to be an underlying identification and equalization of a series of binary oppositions: fact and fiction, with truth and lie, with justice and injustice. It runs through the narrative construction of the entire *Border Crossing Services* project. The binary oppositions are given articulation in a narrative context and the language of activism in the 1990s. The speaking and acting migrant subject is identified as an “activist.” Processes of self-empowerment, understood as processes of assuming control over one’s being as a self-presented in speech and act subject, are channeled into political protests formatted in schemata of an alternative political scene - Western leftist activism. After 1989, the political Left urgently needed to re-conceptualize and reorganize itself, its causes and targets. In laying down some common transnational causes, leftist activists in EU countries derived the argumentation, inter alia, from supporting the rights of the new classes of the socio-politically suppressed and disenfranchised. In some cases referred to as a precariat due to the precarious conditions of, for instance, their legal existence and subsistence, these classes included also the new immigrants.²⁸¹ That was a very important step, as left politics stand for social justice. However, at the level of the representation of socio-political struggle, which in a wide sense is what art activism does, a danger lies in formatting “other” people’s struggles to fit “local” people’s political thinking. In *Border Crossing Services* the conceptualization schemata and aesthetics of resistance and oppositionality – into which the struggles of migrant subjects are inserted - appear somewhat narrowly formatted to the local leftist alternatives. These subjects are different in many ways to the migrant subjects. This is not least because for the latter the Western states and their governments were not necessarily ideological political opponents from the outset. For many they represented the wished-for lands of economic opportunity or political shelter.

As a consequence, while the intention might be to nuance the local political activist movement, in order to adjust their causes to the representation of new subjects, a danger lies in unwittingly adjusting the represented subject instead. By which I mean leaving unattended cultural and conceptual nuances within what becomes a generalized migrant (activist) subject. Such nuances, as I will soon try to show in the example of maiz, might produce different articulations of protest, as well as of individual participations in protest. Articulations that may express an-Other logic of existence, Other subject positions and ways of assuming them. To my understanding, activism and participation in maiz re-present such a fundamentally different perspective on protest and self-empowerment, articulated in, and by means of, artistic projects and narrations.

Let me still remain briefly at *Border Crossing Services*, and particularly at the artists as subjects-authors and their central goal of rethinking the terms “smuggler” and “trafficker.” Juxtaposing them to the positive connotations of “Flunchthelfer,” they proved the official state interpretations that legitimize or il-legitimize the same activity to be dependent upon governments’ interests.²⁸² I would view this issue as belonging to the issue of foreigners in a West-European state, an issue perceived by

the authorities as a problem, leading to strict policies and institutional racisms that cause, in turn, problems to foreigners. The decision to pose as the project's central goal a question, i.e. the "Ausländerfrage," which represents the Austrian majority's problem rather than the migrants' problems, can in a certain sense be regarded as "politically correct" and "corrective." It could be viewed as "politically correct" in terms of political art-activism, because the representation of minorities and their problems by members of the dominant majority and on the latter's initiative, could lead to patronizing representation politics. It would be "politically corrective" for Austrian/EU internal state policies, compensating for unjust and discriminatory, immigration policies.²⁸³

Now, if one combines the above point regarding which subject's problem (the Austrian majority/the migrants' minorities) is represented in the art project's goal, with the point made earlier about dangers lurking in formatting the migrant protests into the local leftist movements' oppositionality protest, one might come to some disconcerting thoughts. Namely, that the political activists' practices, as presented in the art projects' choices and aesthetics of representations, may unwittingly be enacting a parallel operation to that described by Christian Kravagna in 1995 with respect to Austrian politicians and the internal political reasons underlying the great emphasis and strictness that the government was showing in the *Ausländerfrage*.²⁸⁴ To be more precise, to some extent, the strategies and handling of the problem of immigration both by the government and leftist activists operated partly as a catalyst or a vehicle for addressing their own internal political and organizational needs. In the first case, by adjusting Austrian immigration policies, politicians tried to keep voters from leaking into Jorg Haider's nationalist party. In the second case, by adjusting their programs and targets to the existence and needs of new suppressed classes – amongst which, the precariat of the *sans papiers* - the leftist activists tried to reinvent the causes, justification and argumentation of leftist ideologies in post-1989 Europe.

To my understanding, this redirection of the leftist movement was only to be applauded. Yet the produced narratives of an activist world in the art world of the 1990s could easily run the risk of turning on its head the aesthetics of their politics, when transferring political practices to art activism practices. By which I mean that participation, presentation, and relations of fact and fiction, do not operate in the same or equivalent ways in the domains of art and of political life. Rather, their impact on subjects, objects, audiences and "left-overs" of the produced narratives in art and in politics might prove to operate in importantly different ways.

Ja. Und wir nehmen immer mehr Platz in Anspruch. Zwischen Vernunft und einer anthropophagischen, lachenden Haltung schaffen wir uns Räume der Bewegung und des Widerstandes. (Caixeta and Salgado)²⁸⁵

Während das System unsere Sprache einnimmt und die Ästhetik (Form) von der Ethik (Inhalt) und den inhaltlichen Strategien trennt, integrieren wir und machen den Zusammenhang zwischen Ästhetik, Ethik und Strategien sichtbar. Wir durchbrechen Stereotype, bringen das Element des Grotesken ein, der Provokation, des Ungehorsams, des Aus-dem-Rahmen-Fallens, des konstanten Bruchs. Als Mittel verwenden wir Performance, Ironie, Parodie, Satire und Fiktion. Ästhetik und Sprache, die sich permanent außerhalb des

Maiz

Rahmens und der Vorgaben stellen. (Caixeta, 2000) (English translation, app. III.3) ²⁸⁶

Art, politics, anthropophagism. What kind of logic brings these three together? Art in maiz is used for political work. As part of their cultural work it provides a space within which concepts and processes for the transgression of political and social barriers can be refined and tried out in projects.²⁸⁷ For instance in *Kartographische Eingriffe* ideas and processes concerning the conception and occupation of public spaces by migrant women were developed during workshops and given visual form for the exhibition. Through the exhibition presentation of their fictional city maps in several gallery spaces, the women symbolically also occupied these public spaces of culture.²⁸⁸ According to performance theorist Marty Huber, sceptical critics who characterized the women's works "artistically uninteresting" were missing the point: "...geht es in diesem Fall überhaupt um Kunst, oder handelt es nicht vielmehr um eine Penetration des Kunstraumes?"²⁸⁹ (English translation, app. III.4)

Various forms of artistic expression are employed, whether performative, visual or literary. As Caixeta writes in the second quote used above here as epigraph, they apply "irony, parody, satire, fiction." As, for example, when in 2000 the maiz Samba School demonstrated against the Austrian government. The women were marching, drumming and dancing, wearing grotesque pink hearts on their chests reading: "Österreich wir lieben dich!" And on their backs: "Und wir werden dich nie verlassen!"²⁹⁰ (English translation, app.III.5) Or like in the cooking performances they made in the project space Transpublic and in the old market of Linz.²⁹¹ The women cooked under the motto of Anthropophagism.²⁹² Representation, metaphor and parody are chosen over mere direct presentation of factual information, when the migrant women themselves participate in such public manifestations. A justification given for this choice sounds close to what I maintained earlier regarding the vulnerable positions that persons are brought into, when they expose themselves as private individuals exemplifying political, public issues:

Die Ergebnisse [i.e. of maiz cultural work], die nicht als Endprodukte, sondern als Teil eines Prozesses gesehen werden, können dann in der Öffentlichkeit präsentiert werden. Hier können auch wir auftreten. Nicht als einzelne Personen, sondern als Figuren, als „Personae“ einer fiktionalen Darstellung. Hier können wir unsere Anliegen thematisieren... . *Es ist eine Öffentlichkeitsarbeit, die als kulturelle Betätigung realisiert wird und die aus der politischen Bildungsarbeit entspringt. Eine Arbeit, die uns sichtbar macht, ohne uns persönlich zu exponieren.*²⁹³ (my emphasis; English translation, app.III.6)

Participation and "protagonism" of migrant women in artistic and cultural projects are central concepts in maiz. According to Rubia Salgado, process-based, participatory work serves in twofold ways: "... we are convinced that within this type of process we can also carry out work on political education. On the other hand, we want to position ourselves as creative subjects in the field of symbolisms."²⁹⁴ "Protagonism" means that the women – be they cleaners, sex-workers, housewives or academics – are not

given a stand by “members of the dominant society” to express themselves.²⁹⁵ Rather, they find the ways to conceptualize and construct their own subject position, and strategically select collaborations with artists, provided they can co-determine their roles.

Following all the above, maiz’ approach to the use of participatory practices in political art activism enacts a reverse movement to the approach of WochenKlausur and Krenn and Ressler. While the latter transferred forms of participation from political practices to art-activism practices (e.g., active participation in public discourses about their rights), maiz transfers forms of participation from artistic and cultural practices to its political activism practices. This is done through both form and content, and in this respect brings to mind Caixeta’s quote in the epigraph. To paraphrase her sayings, the dominant “system” that they find themselves both within, and confronted with, as migrant women, weakens them by taking their language and disintegrating the coherence of aesthetics, ethics and strategies expressed in the content. Indeed, in maiz the point seems to be not only to express their demands and to find an appropriate stand to express them from. More than that, the aesthetics of performing the claims’ utterance, the language in which the claim is articulated, all these seem to be consciously and culturally integrated. In the following I will try to show how indeed also in the narrative of protagonist participation in cultural work, one can see how by means of art a coherence is being created between aesthetics, ethics and strategies. Thus “in the field of symbolisms,” they create a language of protest that has their own distinct aesthetics corresponding to their political work. The concept of “anthropophagischer Protagonismus” encapsulates this strategy: “Wir fressen euch schon seit sehr langer Zeit. Jetzt bist du dran. Schon meine indianischen Vorfahren haben euch verspeist, nicht viele von euch, aber doch einige: die braven kämpferischen bewundernswerten unter euch. Anthropophagie. Ja, das Fressen von Menschen. ... Um sich das Bewunderte anzueignen.”²⁹⁶ (English translation, app. III.7)

The concept of cannibalistic protagonism is taken from the so-called Movimento Antropofágico (Anthropophagic Movement) and the Manifesto Antropofágico written by the Brazilian author Oswald de Andrade in 1928. Andrade thought of the adaptations of African and Polynesian art by Picasso and other European artists as a distortion of the “exotic.”²⁹⁷ He confronted this distortion by his own “anthropophagic” concept. He proposed the absorption of various influences of European modernism by Brazilian culture, incorporating their strengths and resulting in a mixture that would correspond to a Brazilian hybrid culture. This concept was inspired by Francis Picabia, temporary editor of the French magazine *Cannibale*. While the term “cannibale” had been used before with reference to the European avant-gardes, for example to describe that “Surrealism ha[d] eaten Dada and ha[d] digested it” ... and “the qualities of the devoured had entered into the strengthened body of the survivor.”²⁹⁸

Andrade’s anthropophagic concept has been taken up by the Brazilian initiators of maiz and transformed into “anthropophagischer Protagonismus.” This is not the first time that Andrade’s concept resurfaces in Brazilian culture. Most notably in the 1960s it was taken as conceptual departure point in Lygia Clark and Hélio Oiticica’s work.²⁹⁹ By turning to Andrade the maiz women draw from the depository of their own culture. Not, however, in search of distinct, non-Western cultural elements. Rather, in

search of a way of assimilating Western elements as their own. Producing a synthesis that is “ethically” based on strategically returning to the West what the latter had made out of the aesthetics and politics of the “exotic.” Thus cultural assimilation, which is a permanent expectation of migrants in Europe whether officially admitted or not – not, when it sounds “politically incorrect” for those Western societies that propagate multiculturalism – is acted out in reverse. It is not the other’s culture that gets absorbed by the dominant. To the contrary, reading Salgado and Caixeta: “Diesmal haben *wir* jedoch die Rolle der Protagonistinnen übernommen: *wir* assimilieren euch, *wir* drohen euch, *wir* fressen euch.” And elsewhere: “Migrantinnen als Protagonistinnen bedeutet eine ethisch-politische Positionierung, die sich in einer angemessenen, aber dissonanten Ethik ausdrückt.”³⁰⁰ (English translation, app. III.8)

In the production process and the performative events of participatory projects, the ethics and aesthetics of cannibalistic protagonism are expressed in the structure of participation, when, for instance, migrant women remap the city. And simultaneously they are expressed visually and performatively, for instance, in the satire and parody of the visuals of sex- and housework as in the demonstration and cooking events. As already mentioned earlier, in the narrations of their cultural work the maiz authors do not usually provide detailed documentation of projects. Instead, the ethics, aesthetics and strategies of “cannibalistic protagonism” are transferred and enacted on the page by literary, narrative and linguistic means.

Anthropo- A most pertinent example for this is the text “Anthropophagischer Protagonismus”
phagischer by Rubia Salgado and Luzenir Caixeta. The text is included here in Appendix IV.
Protagonismus The concept and strategies of cannibalistic protagonism are presented by Salgado and Caixeta in the text, as well as by means of the text. Throughout, the authors enact their “cannibalistic protagonism” on the reader in multiple ways. Let me start with some literary means and then move to textual and linguistic ones. They explicitly declare Andrade’s “Manifesto Antropofágo” as their source of inspiration. What this cultural anthropophagism is all about, they do not only explain, but they enact it in the ways in which they appropriate Kafka and his literature. Their text opens with a brothel scene, where men meet women. One woman is of colour. She is referred to as “Äffin” (female ape) and initially dismissed by a client. Hovering around him more than the others, she eventually convinces him to take her into a separee. Seducing him like this, she seems to confirm his racist and sexist stereotypes of exotic females: a cycle of degradation and fascination is set forth. The non-human creature of the Äffin is not Salgado or Caixeta’s literary construction. They appropriated the male ape from Kafka’s text “Ein Bericht für eine Akademie” (“A report for an academy”).³⁰¹ Thus they did not construct their own original parable. Rather, they appropriate a European one, the story, the characters, the words of it, but also the cultural weight of the author as both a classic and an “other” in European culture. They take all that and turn them into their own device.

Kafka is amongst the classics of German literature. But he himself was a Jew living in Prague, where German was the dominant language under the Austro-Hungarian empire. Thus Kafka was bilingual and basically wrote in German. Actually a characteristic of his literary style is that he sometimes used German words in equivocal ways, puzzling translators who have later tried to transfer his meanings to

other languages. Thus he plays with and within the dominance of German language. Furthermore, according to one interpretation of “Ein Bericht für eine Akademie” the ape is a symbol for Jewish people feeling like the “others” of Europe. Though not a confirmed interpretation, an argument employed for it is that Kafka’s text was first published in the German monthly *Der Jude* (*The Jew*), along with another story, “Schakale und Araber” (“Jackals and Arabs”), which can also be given interpretations relating to prejudices.³⁰² Whereas according to another interpretation, the ape shows that “identity is performance,” a constantly re-enacted self-presentation.³⁰³ Both interpretations of the parable, whether about European racism and the “other” as the other side of the self (Jewish-Christian traditions), or about identity being constructed in performance, fit into the cultural activism concepts and strategies of maiz’ women migrants in Europe.

To leave the author and the potential interpretations of his cultural identity and literary intentions, the ape in Kafka’s story is an animal caught in an exotic African country and brought to Europe. His report to an academy is about his transformation to human-being. To survive in Europe as “free ape,” he saw two possibilities: “Zoologischer Garten oder Varieté. Exotisches Tier oder bewundernswert assimiliertes und angepasstes Tier” (see app. III.9 for all English translations in this paragraph). The ape learned to imitate humans so well that he claims to have forgotten what it used to be like, when he used to be an ape. Nonetheless, it is for his “äffisches Vorleben“ and his admirable assimilation into human culture that he has been invited by the academy to talk. His speech perfectly imitates an academic style. Salgado and Caixeta appropriate his speech, his subject-voice, his protagonist character, his talk’s meanings and wording (direct citation). Most significantly, Salgado and Caixeta draw the parallel between the ape’s parable and the exotic migrant woman’s reality: “Anpassung und Prädestinierung, Stereotypen zu entsprechen ... Rassismus und Exotismus ... Degradation und Faszination ... exotisches Tier oder bewundernswert assimiliertes und angepasstes Tier.” This way or the other, “Prädikat ändert sich je nach Situation. Das Subjekt bleibt jedoch gleich: ein Wesen nicht menschlicher Natur.” For the exotic animal or woman, the dominant criteria remain the same: “Hier herrschen zwei Maximen: Anpassung und Prädestinierung, Stereotypen zu entsprechen.”

One could extract two key words here: “stereotypes” and “assimilation.” But in Salgado and Caixeta’s text these concepts do not work in the ways of Kafka and his ape. Rather, Kafka’s classic literary status, and the meanings and ways of his text are eaten up and digested by the maiz women (“Wir fressen euch...der braven, kämpferischen, bewunderten Eigenschaften wegen. Um sich das Bewunderte anzueignen.” Just as in Andrade’s cannibalistic concept: after European avant-garde art had adapted and distorted the “Exotic” of African and Polynesian art, Brazilian hybrid culture in turn absorbed the thereof derived European cultural constructions. It incorporated their strengths and resulted into a mixed art tailored to Brazilian hybrid culture. So also in Salgado and Caixeta’s digestion of Kafka, “the qualities of the devoured ente[r] the body of the survivor.”³⁰⁴

Now let me leave Kafka and the cannibalistic literary appropriations of him that are quite performatively enacted in Salgado and Caixeta’s text. Furthermore, there

are also textual tricks and constructions. The authors start abruptly with the place, laid bare to its absolute basics: “Ein Bordell, nichts besonders, ein Bordell eben. Im Bordell einige Frauen. Einige Männer, Gäste.” (English translation, app. III.10) At first they use short and simple phrases with nouns, verbs, adverbs, without any adjectives or attributive adjectives. No nuanced characters or detailed descriptions are offered, apart from one particular elaboration that lasts some 8-9 lines: the distinction between people we know, with whom we feel more or less familiar, and guests in a brothel paying for services. Additionally, there are no good and bad characters in this story. No victimizers and victims as there seemed to be from the start in the art activism narratives of WochenKlausur or Krenn and Ressler. And no clear-cut, universal conceptions of humanitarian or socio-political justice.

But this is where the point lies in Caixeta and Salgado's story. In situations like this, things are given expression in reverse formulations. Which is what the ape's story manifests. The woman who is different, the ape, is not wanted. So she has to try for the client more than the others (“Alle versuchen, den Kunden zu beeindrucken. Nichts Besonderes: Wettbewerb ist überall. ... Doch nach dem (wahrscheinlich) anstrengenden Umherrennen, geht er mit der von ihm als Äffin bezeichneten Frau ins Separee” (app. III.11 for all English translations in this paragraph). However, the hierarchies of dominance operate in reverse ways to their appearance. Degradation and fascination operate in supplementary rather than antithetical ways. When the authors explain this, the articulation of their text becomes more complex than before, with longer and compound words and syntax: “Die Ver-körperung der nur schein-bar wider-sprüchlichen Ver-bindung zwischen De-gradation und Faszination wird fort-gesetzt”.

And then without any introduction Kafka's extract is inserted. A free ape presents himself (“ich, freier Affe”), revealing his secret (“fügte mich”) in front of a public of male academics (see app. III.12 for all English translations in this paragraph). First person, direct speech, an un-introduced new context, and the previous object of degradation and desire (“die von ihm als Äffin bezeichneten Frau”) the only link with the present speaking subject (“Ich, freier Affe”). From the “Separee” to the “Akademie.” In the next three paragraphs (“*Rassismus und Exotismus*,” “*Möglichkeiten*,” “*Überraschung!*”) the authors introduce the binary pairs that appear contradictory, but in essence constitute mutually complimentary conditions of existence in Kafka's sarcastic parable and the migrants' real situation: “Anpassung und Prädestinierung Stereotypen zu entsprechen... Rassismus und Exotismus... Degradation und Faszination... exotisches Tier oder bewundernswert assimiliertes und angepasstes Tier.” The text simultaneously confuses and enlightens the reader. Towards the end, the binary pairs boil down to their common denominator, the subject (“Das Subjekt bleibt jedoch gleich”), and its survival strategy - “anthropophagy.”

The following two paragraphs (“*Feststellungen*,” “*Strategien*”) operate as a kind of illocutionary speech. (app. III.13 for all English translations in this paragraph) As direct speech (“wir fressen euch...”) that in a certain way enacts performatively on the reader what it says at the moment of saying it.³⁰⁵ By which I mean that the authors seem to want to linguistically affect on their addressees the unpleasant and discomfiting feeling of being aggressively and degradingly treated, threatened and hitting back. This is performed by means of the direct address (“wir fressen euch ...

Jetzt bist du dran...”), the parading terminology of sex, pain, violence and bodily parts (“Die Schmerzen, die Verwaltungen, die vorgespielten Orgasmen”), even by the metaphoric mix of the migrant women’s penetrated bodily parts with geographical terms (“Und der Boden unter meinen Füßen, alle Böden, die sie schon berührt haben, alle Wege und Stürze, Kurven und Berge”). Besides, the use of direct speech (“wir/euch”) unjustified and irritatingly identifies the reader and the women’s addressee.

To make the above point more clear about how the illocutionary speech acts enact and affect on the reader the women’s unpleasant feelings, one could juxtapose their speech to the speech of the migrants interviewed in the *Border Crossing Services* video. There, the interviewed subjects explained their situation, experiences, claims and practices to the audience in perlocutionary speech. Meaning that the intentions of the speakers, the effects they wished to cause by their utterance, would be the indirect influence on their audience after the latter had watched the film. In that sense, the speaking subjects’ intentions are placed outside the moment of their utterance. The same could be maintained generally about the narrations of participatory art practices produced by WochenKlausur and Krenn and Ressler, to the extent that some of those narrations can be characterized as speech.³⁰⁶

Let me return to Salgado and Caixeta’s text. One could go on explaining ways in which, paragraph by paragraph, they play with and attack their reader. The reader who is invariably addressed in the second person (“euch”) as the “dominant,” male, Western subject. Somewhere between parody, irony and self-sarcasm, they demonstrate the “anthropophagic” strategy with which they symbolically subvert hierarchies of cultural dominance by performing their identities: who is “eating” whom, who is hosting and who is hosted, white men, black women in the E.U.’s brothels.

Now, after doing all that, after having snared the reader with narrative and textual means and tricks, the style of the text becomes more and more sober, literal rather than literary in referring to the situation of migrant women in Europe. They describe their organization’s character, aims and practices. In the very last paragraph (“*Kämpferischer Schluss*,” see app. III.14 for all English translations in this paragraph), when they conclude with the claim for subject positions in the own struggles (“als Protagonistinnen unserer eigenen Geschichte”), and for the removal of social prejudices, racism and exploitative structures, they come quite close to the ethical principles and political claims of Krenn and Ressler (“... der ethischen Notwendigkeit, sich gegenüber ungerechten Strukturen zu empören”). However, until then, the text has manifested by means of content and form, the important differentiations between their approaches to art-activism. The concepts and forms of their participatory art practices have been transferred to a performative practice of narration and speech. Thus, they have articulated a strategy and simultaneously constructed an aesthetics that nuance and empower the subject of political protest, by making it its own. This is something that the politics of protest articulated as aesthetic strategies in the projects and narratives of the artists’ participatory activism ran the risk of missing (e.g., the activist “political correctness” of the migrant subject presenting its real self). Tending, rather, towards a cultural generalization and political narrowness of the migrant subject as political activist.

Conclusions

In conclusion, in this chapter I have tried to investigate visual and verbal forms in which narrations are rendered in art projects. This was an investigation in the articulations by means of which, as well as in which, the projects communicate their message. Firstly, it examined the constitution of the migrant as subject of the narration (narrating subject) and in the narration (narrated subject). Secondly, it looked at the question of whether and how in these narrations power structures that lead to the marginalization of migrant minorities are challenged or confirmed. Each case study represents a different approach, that to an extent may be considered as responding – consciously or not – to one another. *WochenKlausur*'s approach brings about specific concrete changes in the lives of target groups. But these groups hardly ever become subjects of and in their stories in *WochenKlausur*'s projects. Moreover the social, political and economic structures that have led to their marginalization are opportunistically exploited rather than challenged. In the case of Krenn and Ressler's project, the artists do indeed create platforms (the video, the exhibition etc.) in which migrant subjects and organizations may themselves articulate their stories and positions. At the same time, the selection of collaborators approached by the artists expresses the latter's search for affiliation with alternative organizational structures and formats of action. Nonetheless, looking more closely at the narrations themselves, one might find the narrative forms and means producing further effects and interpretations, which might even counteract the artists' agenda. The mechanisms of this double effect I have tried to connect to the artists' attempts to transfer a set of activist "politically correct" agendas and priorities from political practices (democratic equality and participation) to art activism practices. In the last example, the maize women enact the reverse movement. They inform their political work with the outcomes of artistic experimentation, and with no moral imperative towards a mistreated "Other" at work in the aesthetics and politics of their artistic activist practices. Something that emancipates them to explore possible spaces for their articulations and protests as subjects at the borders of what is conventionally considered aesthetically and ethically righteous or acceptable (see "anthropophagischer Protagonismus").

What should not go unnoticed in the above juxtaposition of case studies is that they are all constituted in discourse. The one articulation has directly or indirectly been informing the other. In this way the one renders visible or legible for the other the elements that differentiate their positions and approaches, and thus provide them with the tools to articulate this differentiation. Something that is, in essence, an aesthetic process of nuancing cultural and political subjects' identities.

Chapter 2

A UNIVERSE OF RELATIONS: (UN)DOING PRACTICE.

COMMUNITY PRACTICES AS ART

INTRODUCTION

The making of relations in community-based art

What kinds of relations are produced within or by means of long-term, socio-politically engaged, participatory projects initiated by artists with regard to a particular group of people? What kinds of relations are presented and represented there and how? How do projects that focus on specific communities relate to the wider context of the social or political issues, for which the selected communities could be considered case studies? And what is the connection between relations produced as art and relations of art production? What does one assume to belong to the produced content, and what to the context of production, what to be art and what not in such participatory/collaborative projects? These are all questions at the core of this chapter.

Two case studies will be considered. The first one is the process-based, public art project TAMA by Greek artist Maria Papadimitriou. TAMA was developed between 1998 and 2002 in Avliza, an unknown location on the outskirts of Athens in Greece, occupied by nomadic populations of Roma and Vlach-Rumanian Greeks. TAMA stands for *Temporary Autonomous Museum for All*, a title that refers to the proposal of taking the space and images of relations with and within the Avliza community as departure point for imagining how relations could be between art and life in today's world. Papadimitriou set out to initiate communication networks between Avliza inhabitants, herself and people involved mostly in art and architecture. Simultaneously, a proposal was put together for an infrastructural plan tailored to the needs and lifestyle of nomadic populations.

The second case study is the (on-going since 2001) project *Gudran for Art and Development* in a small and socially isolated fishing village called El Max, outside the

city of Alexandria in Egypt. Even though initiated by a group of Egyptian artists, they do not consider Gudran as an art project. Rather, they view it as a project where art is used for the social, infrastructural and economic development of El Max. Gudran combines the development of relations between the village inhabitants, the Gudran team and the outside world, with development of the infrastructure, as well as with the development of creative and professional skills of the villagers. Central figures in the group are Sameh El Halawany and Aliaa El Gready.

As in the pilot case study of Jeanne van Heeswijk, so also in this chapter, the question of art refers to the aesthetic or representational operation of certain practices adapted by artists. In the case of Van Heeswijk, practices of everyday life were re-produced as practices of art. Here, practices of community-based, mostly social work are re-produced by artists, sometimes calling it art (TAMA) and sometimes not (Gudran). But in both cases the content and operational structure of the artists' practices bear important similarities. It seems partly to be a question of which field (art or other) the artists operate within, whether they call their practice art or not. So for TAMA and Gudran I will be looking into the formation and operational structure of the artists' practice of producing relations, in order to show how, when re-produced as art, these practices re-present the formation and operation of relations in the "real" world. Consequently, the critique on the artistic practice of producing relations as art, can be re-produced back as a critique of relations – social, political or other - in the "real" world. Having said that, I am practically repeating the conclusions of the section "Relations" in Part I, as well as anticipating those of this chapter. My target here is to turn into a method of analysis what was suggested in Part I.

There are a number of reasons for choosing TAMA and Gudran as case studies here. For both projects the establishment of relations constitutes an aim (e.g., relations between the communities and the outside world), method (collaborative/participatory) and content (relations between particular agents). The relation of art to life, narrowly understood as the priority of images versus action, or of aesthetic autonomy versus social relevance, determines in each project whether the artists call their practices "art" (as in TAMA) or "social work" (as in Gudran). In both cases partnerships are negotiated at multiple levels: with and within the communities of Avliza and El Max, regarded as location- and culture-specific; with and within the expanding urban centers of Athens and Alexandria; with and within the changing landscapes of national and international contemporary art production; with and within national and international politico-economic developments that affect the communities as much as they affect the artists. Furthermore, as I will try to analyze, each project is constituted by an inherent discrepancy between an image of relations that the projects aim at presenting (e.g., ideal partnerships between artists and disenfranchised communities) and representations produced by the operation of relations (production partnerships supporting the projects' implementation). What I will try to show is that this discrepancy should not be narrowly considered as a contradiction between art (e.g., images, ideals of relations) and "real" life (artworld relations). Rather, It should lead to a reconsideration of what new forms of making art have been configured within a domain of art, and what they "formulate" about the world.

Especially in the case of TAMA, by inviting art people (artists, curators, collectors etc.) to contribute to the creation of the art project, the artist consciously

causes from the outset a merging of relations of art production with relations produced as art. However, in TAMA's official narrations the consequences of what this merging means whether for art theory, or for the institutional legitimization of practices that fall within a domain of art are not addressed.

Before closing this introduction let me indicate some practical points regarding research and analysis in this chapter. Firstly, issues such as globalization, peripheral modernities, identity construction, notions of "community" and discourses of the "Other," which usually dominate in discussions about community-based art from so-called peripheral countries, are here only a background feature. The focus is on the production and operation of relations as art. Secondly, the research carried out for both case studies dates back to 2003-2005. This is the time-frame of my analysis. TAMA was regarded as complete project already in 2002. Which means that all official and unofficial narrations used refer to something officially finished. Whereas Gudran is continuing still today. Consequently, whatever I propose about Gudran in 2004 may not be applicable later. To emphasize this time-frame I will be using past tense in my discussion of Gudran. Thirdly, an amount of information that significantly shaped my views and interpretations of the projects came from informal discussions - as opposed to set meetings and recorded interviews particularly for my PhD research - which cannot be retrieved here as concrete references. This was inevitable. The projects developed within art field networks that I have myself had contact with. However, even in informal discussions, all of my interlocutors were aware of my PhD research on engaged and participatory public art.³⁰⁷ Fourthly and finally, in my analysis I am sometimes quite skeptical regarding discrepancies between the stated agendas and intentions of the artists' initiatives and what seems to have taken place during the projects' implementation. This skepticism was not amongst the reasons for selecting these case studies. To the contrary, they were picked out because they were becoming increasingly visible within art and art-related networks I was interested in, as innovative and successful cases of participatory/collaborative community-based practices. The discovery of problematic aspects came later during research. To my approach, they comprise important aspects in the phenomenon of the spread and the positive artworld reception of community-based, collaborative/participatory practices of artists during the past about fifteen years. But they do not constitute the ultimate criterion of the projects' evaluation as art.

Notes on theory

At first glance both TAMA and Gudran could fit into the most widespread theoretical paradigms of usually American origin for community-based, site-specific art. Yet they simultaneously fall outside the scope of the social, cultural, political and artistic conditions and traditions that gave rise to those approaches. For instance, the case studies could be discussed in terms of Suzanne Lacy's "new genre public art," because they engage in the art making process diverse audiences, whose lives are directly affected by the social or political issues handled in the projects.³⁰⁸ Yet Lacy's approach to artistic activism is connected to the conservative Reagan administration of the 1980s in the United States,

Community-based, ethnographic or site-specific art: Models of critique and theory from the United States

which provoked a backlash of organized activism on feminist, gender, racial, AIDS, environmental and other issues. These political and social conditions are very different to those of Greece or Egypt in the 1980s (or later in the 1990s).³⁰⁹ Furthermore, TAMA reminds one of the “Artist as Ethnographer” model of Hal Foster.³¹⁰ Yet again, the notion of autonomy as a condition of critical art discussed by Foster with reference to Walter Benjamin’s essay “The Artist as Producer” and to the critique of “bourgeois capitalist institutions of art (the museum, the academy, the market and the media),” does not necessarily correspond to notions of art’s autonomy and criticality in a Greek context.³¹¹ Besides, in that context, the ethnography of a postcolonial “Other,” as well as the notion of the artist as social activist are historically and culturally also not very relevant. The same also goes for the ethics and aesthetics in Miwon Kwon’s critique regarding community-based art by artists making international careers with site-specific projects.³¹² On the one hand, Kwon’s claims about the discovery or production of “sited” or “invented” communities, and their potential social re-marginalization and aesthetic objectification instead of emancipation and political subjectivization, could be relevant to the projects in this chapter.³¹³ However on the other, the genealogy of site-specificity since the 1960s that Kwon suggests – phenomenological or experiential, social/institutional and discursive – is itself too specific to a Western European and North American canon.³¹⁴ In the historical-political conditions of, for instance, the post-civil war 1950s in Greece and the 1967-1974 dictatorship, the content and priorities of social and political movements differed considerably to those in other Western states, and so did the art.

Artists’ I believe that the *contextualizing* problems that the aforementioned examples
 initiatives. of theoretical models cannot cater for, are more aptly addressed in approaches
 Approaches to by authors such as, for instance, Gerardo Mosquera, Charles Esche or Reinaldo
 a global Laddaga.³¹⁵ These authors approached the appearance of collective artists’
 phenomenon initiatives (often in collaboration with other disciplines), which occurred around
 the globe during the 1990s, critically but without proposing theoretical models.³¹⁶
 The initiatives I have in mind combine a local initial focus with a global perspective
 of the conditions and issues at stake. For instance, the specific local focus in TAMA
 and Gudran is on Avliza and El Max, but regarded with a wider perspective of the
 viability of communities living at the fringes of booming urban centers – here Athens
 and Alexandria – and globalized economies.³¹⁷ A strong language of activism and
 oppositionality has retreated from the artists’ vocabulary. This occurred partly in
 recognition that the monster to confront – here the local and global economic and
 cultural conditions affecting specific communities – is also the source of the artists’
 initiatives’ potentiality of existence and operation.³¹⁸ Because their work too, depends
 on their involvement with local and global actions and networks of similarly specialized
 and similarly-minded groups.³¹⁹ The artists are still concerned about issues such
 as art’s autonomy, criticality and its potential for political and social intervention.
 However, the handling of these issues is set on new grounds when artists, as well
 as art critics and theorists, realize that processes of politico-economic globalization
 and its local specificities decisively configure the conditions and potential of artists’
 social interventions.³²⁰

To an important extent, my approach to the operation of artists' practices, whether called art (*TAMA*) or not (Gudran), calls up Jacques Rancière's understanding of "artistic practices." For Rancière, "artistic practices" are "'ways of doing and making' that intervene in the general distribution of ways of doing and making", as well as in the relationships they maintain to forms of being and modes of visibility."³²¹ Which in the case of my object of study resonates with "ways of doing and making" from the depository of everyday life practices, of activists' practices, or of NGOs' community work practices that are re-produced here as artistic practices, i.e. as "ways of doing and making" art. By and large they retain (re-produce) their original forms, despite entering a different domain, the domain of art. In that sense, my question regarding the operation of these practices when re-produced as art, reminds one of Rancière's theory about the relation between art and life in the "aesthetic regime" of the arts. Where the notion of *the aesthetic* "strictly refers to the specific mode of being of whatever falls within the domain of art, the mode of being of the objects of art."³²² This mode in Rancière's aesthetic regime of the arts is "a sensible mode of being specific to artistic products." So if I take here the community projects of my case studies to be "artistic products," based on the condition of a transition of certain "ways of doing and making" from a domain of "real" life, as it were, to a domain of art, then my question is: what is their *aesthetic* operation?

If we follow Rancière, their operation as artistic products should relate to what they render sensible, i.e. visible, audible, thinkable, about the world. And their capacity to do that relates directly to what *can* be seen, heard, thought, made or done at a certain point in time. It relates to forms of being and modes of visibility that are possible in a certain community at a certain time. And these depend on the distribution of the occupations, of times and places amongst groups, the divisions between those who are considered as belonging to the community and those who are not, those who act and those who are acted upon.³²³

Anyhow in my conclusions to this chapter I will also return to the operation of art as representation, which in Rancière's theoretical approach to art would lead to combining the "aesthetic regime" of the arts with the "representational regime" of the arts. Formally, these two regimes stand in contrast in Rancière's theoretical model, because they present two different systems of understanding art, i.e. of understanding what makes art and what art makes. Nonetheless, as the possibility of each system of understanding art is historically constituted, Rancière maintains that in practice the two regimes may occasionally overlap.³²⁴

Now I have taken a whole detour to talk about the philosopher Jacques Rancière, though I do not intend in this chapter to either apply, or rely on his concepts. The focus will be on elaborating on the specificity of certain forms and practices of art, rather than on applying more general theories of art. Nonetheless, placing attention to Rancière's approach from the outset is useful particularly in this chapter from at least three perspectives. Firstly, it serves to remind us that the question of *art* with regard to any kind of practice, is essentially a question of form ("ways of doing and making"), rather than of theme, agenda or theory. These three will be approached here through the question of form. Secondly, it opens up possibilities of thinking about aesthetic capacities and operations in objects and

practices (here the community-based projects) that *may or may not* be produced as art. Because Rancière's thinking about the aesthetic regime is very much connected to the phenomenon of the re-production by artists of non-art objects and practices as art, but without changing their formal characteristics (i.e. without representing them in other forms or media).³²⁵ Thirdly, Rancière's proposal of how aesthetic products may give comprehensible form to the distribution of the sensible at a given point in time, a distribution that is directly linked to the distribution of occupations "that upholds the apportionment of domains of activity" within a community, is particularly interesting for this chapter.³²⁶ Because this chapter discusses precisely the aesthetic operation of relations produced as art.

1 THE TEMPORARY AUTONOMOUS MUSEUM FOR ALL AN ART PROJECT BY MARIA PAPADIMITRIOU

The artist and her project

TAMA is located in Avliza, a run-down area in western Athens, 10 km away from the center of the capital and very close to the new Olympic village. Itinerant populations such as Gypsies and Vlach Romanians from north of Greece use this area as a pied-à-terre. My discovery was accidental, but my involvement was intentional. It came as a natural sequence of my attitude as an artist. I visited the place for the first time in 1998 with my friends Catherine and Michel, looking for old furniture at good prices. But when I found myself there, it was not the antiques that attracted me but the place itself; haphazardous layout, unexpected events, unplanned art works, strange people. What I saw there is the concept of a makeshift settlement, a kind of mobile post-urban city which serves its inhabitants' temporary housing needs and economic activities. Everything forms part of this small town. Landscape-clothes-interiors-unfinished buildings-streets-cars-the sky-the people. I started to visit Avliza everyday – I became an addicted visitor. The observation of place and people became my foremost duty. I wanted to become friends with them, to participate in their fiestas, to share their problems, to listen to their thoughts and needs; after a long time I had it, and a strong relationship started. The nomadic way of living and the particularities of the community gave me the idea of setting a system of communication and exchange among the inhabitants, myself, the art people and the public. In a very short time I realized that all my friends and associates wanted to participate in this story which I call the temporary autonomous museum for all.³²⁷ (Maria Papadimitriou)

In the above Maria Papadimitriou explains how she became acquainted with the settlement in Avliza (municipality of Menidi, Athens) in 1998, and how from that personal relationship the art project TAMA came about. In an interview for this study the artist further explained that what she initially "saw" in Avliza were *images*, which immediately reminded her of works by contemporary artists like Thomas Schütte, Martin Kippenberger, Thomas Hirschhorn or Vanessa Beecroft (for images

see www.tama.gr).³²⁸ The residents of Avliza lived in improvised constructions, tents and ISO Boxes, without proper electricity and water supply and without paved streets.³²⁹ However, the place had a tremendous effect on her, aesthetically as well as emotionally.³³⁰ In her mind it started giving shape to what a contemporary art museum could be like today: a site of aesthetic and social interaction in progress between the art world and the public. In 1998 Athens still lacked a national museum for modern or contemporary art.³³¹

In the same interview Papadimitriou explains that for a long time after her first visit she did not consider the personal relationship she started to cultivate with people in Avliza as art.³³² Feeling that it was a disgrace for people of such strong and old traditions to live under unacceptable conditions, she started helping the children with their lessons, bringing clothes, food, her own doctors and certain friends and acquaintances including professionals across the arts, architects and sociologists to share her experiences there and arouse their interest. She encouraged them to create and contribute something. For example, the architects Andreas Angelidakis and Eleni Kostika offered a design for a playground. Others like the writer Sissi Tax and the anthropologist Maria Karamitsopoulou reflected on their visit in texts. Artists such as DeAnna Maganias, Apostolos Georgiou or Katerina Würthle contributed a painting or drawing, and so on. Contributions were later gathered in the project's book. Additionally, she started investigating what the Roma of Avliza, as a socially disenfranchised minority group, were officially eligible to from the European Union and the Greek State in terms of financial support, infrastructure, education and medical care.³³³ No surprise, most approved subsidies ended up in the pockets of officials, with the collaboration of some Romani leaders. Thus most social and development projects were remaining frozen.³³⁴

Officially TAMA lasted between 1998 and 2002. It is not clear when and how the initial personal contacts and activities of Papadimitriou in Avliza were turned into an art project. Once they were, the project developed mainly in two, interwoven directions. On the one hand, by inviting people to Avliza, the artist became a liaison for "setting up," as she explained, "a system of communication and exchange among inhabitants, myself, the art people and the public."³³⁵ On the other hand, these relations led to the development of a plan of primary architectural constructions tailored to the particularities of the Roma's nomadic lifestyle. The artist in collaboration with the architects Dora Papadimitriou (Maria's sister) and Hariklia Hari (collaborator of Maria also in an earlier project, *Kiss from Greece*) observed and studied the everyday life, the needs, the ways of living etc. of the Roma in the context also of the Greek state. In consultation with community members they designed a series of flexible buildings. The architects' leading principle was that they should design primary structures combining the provision of basic living quality standards with the special needs of itinerant population around the globe. The infrastructure plan included models for a private family house and for public buildings catering for the community's social, cultural and economic needs.³³⁶

Such an experimental collaboration between artists and architects with a social activist character might seem commonplace in many Western countries. However, in Greece it was not. There had been some examples of artists' interventions in public spaces, of interactive art projects, as well as of exchanges between artists,

architects and urban planners.³³⁷ But these have never led, for instance, to systematic models of applying art to architecture like in part of Dutch public art or the German Kunst am Bau, or of activist art like the American new genre public art, or even to “ethnographic” artistic practices as Hal Foster has discussed them for international artists.³³⁸

To return to TAMA, the initial circle of private individuals sharing individual experiences started opening up when from approximately 2001 the project started attracting the interest of Greek and foreign art critics and curators. Its selection as the official participation of Greece in the 25th Sao Paulo Biennial was a culminating point. TAMA saw its book published and the construction in Avliza of an open-air pavilion, the *Periptero de Cultur*, designed as a contribution by the artist Fabiana de Barros, all funded by the Greek Ministry of Culture. TAMA traveled further to the Tirana Biennial, the Manifesta 4 in Frankfurt, the Fridericianum in Kassel and so on. The project’s international career in Biennials and thematic exhibitions took off beyond any other project by a Greece-based artist in years. In 2003 Maria Papadimitriou won the prestigious Greek contemporary art prize of the DESTE Foundation.³³⁹

The project was proposed for Sao Paulo by art curator and critic Efi Strousa, pioneer and respected figure on the Greek art scene.³⁴⁰ Strousa and, before her, the architect and independent curator Yorghos Tzirtzilakis (architecture lecturer in the same department of Architecture, University of Thessaly, where Papadimitriou teaches art), formulated TAMA’s theoretical framework. Their texts practically brought together all the activities, connecting the images and themes derived from the artist’s initiatives in Avliza into a coherent narration documented in the project’s book.³⁴¹ TAMA was theoretically contextualized within timely issues in art world and academic discourses: nomadism and displacement; minorities and refugees; urbanization and the postmodern city (Athens as an urban conglomerate); artistic utopianism and smart design for experimental architecture; notions of “local” and “global,” “private” and “public,” “space” and “place” and - especially for the arts - the concepts of “institutions” and “autonomy,” “participation,” “engagement” and “open-endedness.” TAMA embraced them all. And even with a resourceful metaphoric character in the ways that issues, categories and concepts were presented in sets of somehow unequal equivalents: a nomad Roma community in a postmodern world of nomad citizens (e.g., artists, students, the managerial class); Avliza’s “free settlement as an anomaly within an equally anomalous suburban growth,” to quote Strousa; the images of Roma life as containing “worlds and myths (like the spectre of Carmen), ...which we love and hate at the same time... which provide a recognizable (exotic) identity as much as they perpetuate exclusions and marginalizations,” according to Tzirtzilakis; a juxtaposition of art institutions and Hakim Bey’s T.A.Z., the *Temporary Autonomous Zone*.³⁴² In art exhibitions, displays took the form of series of photographs, installations and environments. These displays seemed to function either as metaphors for TAMA as an experience of Avliza and for the Romani’s itinerant life style and makeshift shelters, or they communicated the idea of “seeing” in images of Avliza images of art.³⁴³

In the last couple of months before the Sao Paulo Biennial and especially during the press conference at the Ministry of Culture, some art collectors agreed to undertake

costs for implementing the proposed constructions, provided the state would allot the land.³⁴⁴ In fact Avliza - and Menidi in general - were already contested terrains: plans for the 2004 Olympic Games village placed it in Menidi and very close, potentially even over the location of Avliza.³⁴⁵ According to the artist, a legal case for land expropriation driving Romani inhabitants out was suspended.³⁴⁶ Suspended was apparently also – or “soon to be announced,” as the minister was reported to have explained during the press conference – a series of measures to upgrade rundown districts close by the Olympic village, including Avliza.³⁴⁷ In that respect, the support of TAMA could be said to have closely matched governmental program statements about cultural and social actions accompanying the 2004 Olympiad. No state initiatives were eventually realized for the Roma.³⁴⁸

No other TAMA construction was realized either after the *Periptero de Cultur*, which was actually destroyed by locals who, according to Papadimitriou, wanted the wood for heating.³⁴⁹ When asked about her aspired state of TAMA's completion, the artist responded that she considered it a finished project (1998-2002), as it formed a complete architectural proposal responding to the needs of itinerant populations. Ideally, she would have liked to see the model house built especially for the family that had supported her the most.³⁵⁰ Interestingly, in discussions I had with two individuals actively involved in TAMA, one maintained that the intention had been for the constructions to *be* realized. Therefore a budget was calculated and Papadimitriou had seriously pursued a strategic combination of collectors' and state support.³⁵¹ Whereas according to the other, TAMA was completed at the level of a proposal. Not only would the constructions' realization not add anything to TAMA as an art project, but this prospect would lead to the artist being exploited by the Roma. This contradiction of opinions manifests the ever-recurring question of engaged art's relation to society and “real” life. Should art remain a realm of utopian representations, presenting the world with ideals like the partnership between Roma and art people, while itself remaining autonomous from the expediency of “real” world relations that include a possible “exploitation by the Roma”? Or should art seek to instigate change all the way to tangible results?

In the following pages I will argue that for process-based, participatory/collaborative, public art projects like TAMA or Gudran, as examples of community art initiatives that emerged in the 1990s around the globe, the terms of the above approach should be reconsidered. The first question to ask is: what is understood as the important part of the art practice? Is it the *ideal* of relations proposed and the *expected outcomes* of the project? This would mean that the form of participation/collaboration as an art form is understood foremost for what it stands for as a democratic or social ideal. If this is what is at stake, then neither the form of the participatory/collaborative process as the form of the process-based art project's operation is addressed, nor what the art project does precisely by being produced as such (i.e. as a process-based, participatory/collaborative, public art project).

To elucidate what I mean, I will rather try to approach the questions of what comprises the artists' practice and how it functions, by breaking down various relations operating in the conceptualization, creation and production of the projects. In TAMA these relations included the artist as initiator, organizer and mediator, the Avliza inhabitants and various people connected to the field of contemporary cultural

production - mainly artists, architects, curators, collectors and even cultural policy makers. It was Maria Papadimitirou's aim to establish all these relations as part of the art project. This entails that relations with Avliza residents, artists, curators etc. in their capacities, roles and interests precisely as Avliza residents, artists or curators, operate simultaneously as personal relations, professional artworld relations, *and* as relations produced as art. Consequently, the autonomy of the art as a question concerning the autonomy of the artist's creation from external – e.g., artworld – interests is not applicable in these terms.³⁵² Besides, closer inspection also shows several other ways in which a notion of autonomy as a condition of art's relation to “real” life presents important problematic aspects. If it is still a meaningful notion, its contours should be reconfigured.

The Roma community of Avliza

The Romani people in Greece belong to a number of different tribes with different names (e.g. Tziganes, Vlach-Romanians, Chalkidaioi), dialects, religions, as well as with varying levels of integration within wider Greek society.³⁵³ This cultural and social diversity within the Roma is unknown to most people in Greece.³⁵⁴ Common to the different groups are various strong traditions visible in their everyday life, as well as a certain insularity towards outsiders. This isolation tendency is also linked to Greek society's prejudices against the Roma.³⁵⁵ Prejudices and racism are occasionally reported to be reproduced even by local authorities or the police.³⁵⁶

In TAMA's formal narratives the Avliza Romani are regarded as one community. A community that pre-existed the artist's discovery of it, is location-specific (Avliza) and culture-specific (described for instance, as Gypsies and Vlach Romanians from the north of Greece).³⁵⁷ For all the emphasis on participation and collaboration, the artist never pretended that TAMA was not foremost derived from her own, personal fascination with, and interpretation of, the image of Avliza.³⁵⁸ Consequently, it seems fair to say that the artist's questions of aesthetics, of images, of the concept of art in contemporary society were given priority. While the pragmatic social and political issues (e.g., infrastructure, minorities' rights) were addressed within the above frame.

In this section I will elaborate on the participation and representation of the Roma community of Avliza in the process of producing and presenting TAMA as an art project. To start with, the Avliza inhabitants were the initial source of inspiration, and ever since the constant point of reference in the process of encouraging contributions from various agents with the artist acting as liaison. Following the artist's frequent visits, in particular one family opened up their house to her, offering her space as an “office.” Avliza residents participated in the design of TAMA's architecture as consultants. The known in Greece Roma musician Yorghos Mangas played for the video TAMA *Sentimental* and he also traveled to Sao Paulo. Further, Avliza residents were invited to public presentations of TAMA such as the Sao Paulo press conference in Athens, where one family showed up.

Looking at the development of the project, one gains the impression that the role of Avliza residents as participating subjects in the process must have been more active when friends and acquaintances of the artist were invited to Avliza, and when

ideas about infrastructure for nomads were produced by the artist and the architects in consultation with inhabitants. One could talk about a stage of more personal relations, for which Papadimitriou's friendship with Avliza inhabitants was crucial. In the curator's text the autonomy of the artist's gesture is explained as derived from the independency of intimate relationships, especially with a couple of families.³⁵⁹ This is important, because when TAMA as a *public* art project embraced the involvement of major art world agents and even cultural policy makers, it still relied on a rhetoric of autonomy based on the artist's intimate relations as private motive. Which means that a concept of art as an autonomous domain, justified on an alleged autonomy of intimacy (the privacy and disinterestedness of friendship) seems to have been fundamental for TAMA's theoretical and narrative construction and legitimization as a public art project. Even when, in the process of the project's expansion towards institutional agents and away from grassroots experiences, these foundations of the concept of autonomy were essentially deconstructed.

With respect to representations of relations among and with the Avliza Romani, there are several viewpoints one could take. Starting with a rather pragmatic one, Avliza is in fact occupied by various groups of Roma. In discussions with individuals actively involved in TAMA I heard that the project was developed in collaboration with just one group, which sells furniture, is more welcoming than others and not involved in serious illegal business like other groups must be. The artist gained access to Avliza through her acquaintance with 2-3 families and the friendship and support of one in particular.³⁶⁰ Even with them, amongst TAMA's team it was basically the artist who could communicate more intimately. Neither the existence of diverse groups, nor the collaboration with members of just one, are mentioned anywhere in TAMA.

Furthermore, in discussions I was strongly discouraged from visiting Avliza, especially alone. The community could be quite unwelcoming to strangers.³⁶¹ A justification was that the Roma used the spaces between their homes like their own living rooms and disliked strangers entering them. This explanation sounded like a contradiction to TAMA's identity as a *public* art project. Eventually, as challenging as conceptual ambiguities of categories such as private-public might be for artists, architects, theorists or curators (e.g., Avliza's streets as private spaces, personal relations turned to public art) the conceptual challenge does not necessarily suffice to justify the interference into "other" peoples' "public" spaces.

The installations and environments of TAMA presented in art exhibitions comprised, for instance, makeshift dwellings, pieces of furniture, photographs and videos. These displays were created by the artist to represent the project as an experience of Avliza.³⁶² The community was thus represented in, rather than co-presenting TAMA. As should become clearer in the following section, the same could be said more generally about the Avliza community being represented rather than co-presenting the project and itself in it, especially from the point on that TAMA opened up to stronger agents in the artworld.

As already mentioned, the artist's initiative was triggered by her own fascination with and interpretation of the *different* image of Avliza ("unexpected events," "strange people"). Thus indicating their different culture, but always in the eyes of the beholder and without attention to internal differentiations (e.g., various groups,

with varying degrees of integration into Greek society).³⁶³ Consequently, despite the artist's honesty of intentions, respect and commitment towards Avliza's inhabitants, the project essentially reproduced the aestheticization of Roma people as fascinating, exotic "Other," and their marginalization as a social minority dependent upon a mediating agency to represent their interests to Greek society.³⁶⁴

In conclusion, one could say that the portrait of Avliza as eventually rendered in TAMA expressed the artist's vision and the project's needs, more than the details of its subject-matter. Additionally, the position of the community in the process of the creation, presentation, evaluation and discourse of the project raises various questions. More often than not they were framed and represented by the artist, rather than co-presenting themselves, even when some of them were present. Their own agency was limited, limiting their cultural identity within the shells of stereotypes and their aesthetic agency within their image as rendered by the artist. In this respect, one might eventually wonder what would have been different with regard to agency, had the project not been a participatory one.

The art world

In the premises of TAMA's proposal of juxtaposing the socially marginalized Roma people and the art people as equivalent "others" and partners in an "Autonomous Museum," there were a couple of important points that went conspicuously unnoticed. In a country full of cultural heritage sites and museums, there was no national museum for modern and contemporary art. Especially avant-garde expressions have for decades been treated by officials as less important or unfit compared to a glorious national cultural past. Up until the 1990s contemporary art producers were a bit like the "disenfranchised other" on the Greek cultural scene. For Greek artists, cultural institutions were an object of desire at times when elsewhere they were an object of critique.³⁶⁵ Under these conditions, art's autonomy was partly connected with its entrance into public institutions - as opposed to only private support - rather than to its independence thereof. These points about the status of contemporary art production and the notion of autonomy in a Greek context indicate how categories and concepts might have a different content in peripheral modernities, even Western ones, compared to an originally theorized canon. Even if it appears as if we are all talking about the same thing - here, the condition of autonomy for critical art.

Looking into the content of TAMA, the relations that the artist set out to establish with Avliza as source of inspiration and constant point of reference included also, as she explained, "myself, the art people and the public."³⁶⁶ In Efi Strousa's words they included individuals from amongst "her [i.e. the artist's] own circle of friends: architects, artists and others."³⁶⁷ This circle expanded, the more known the project became:

Over the last two months before the project's official presentation at the Biennale of Sao Paulo, her action plan was embraced by an increasing number of supporters, from individual enthusiasts to major forces in the art world, which will sponsor/donate the specific building, services and other parts of the infrastructure proposed by the TAMA for the community of Avliza.³⁶⁸

In their overwhelming majority, the involved agents are connected to the Greek contemporary art and architecture scenes. As explained at the end of the section on “The artist and her project” agents from the art field were invited to contribute to TAMA’s process in art-related capacities (e.g., critics, collectors). This involvement constituted an aim (establishment of relations) as well as method and content (particular collaborators or contributors) of the project. In that respect, the practice of professional relations coincides with the artistic practice. This leads to a situation where relations of production in the professional artistic field operate within the realm of art, formally perceived as an aesthetic realm, or a realm of representations. At the same time and in the same capacity they also operate in the realm of art world relations through which the artwork is also presented to the world, and where art’s relation with the world (e.g., as representation or intervention) is constantly negotiated and legitimized (e.g., by means of art’s critique, consumption or institutional support).

If relations with the Avliza community raised doubts regarding the inhabitants’ presentation and representation as subjects or objects in TAMA, the same cannot be maintained about contributors from the field of art production. Here I will try to show that the latter’s positions, roles and interests as both participants in TAMA and as art field agents, coincided. Consequently, they co-operated much more smoothly as subjects in the production and presentation of the art project. Hence, also, it can be argued that the project was more representative of practices and interests of these agents, than of the Avliza community. But do not let me run ahead of the text. Below I will first briefly provide a theoretical background of the understanding of the “art field” for this case study. Afterwards, I will discuss the formation and operation of art world relations in TAMA.

It has probably become apparent through the terminology employed (the field of artistic production, agents, objective relations) that I understand here the structure and mechanisms of relations between artists, curators, collectors etc. in terms of Pierre Bourdieu’s sociological approach to the field of cultural production.³⁶⁹ As part of his study of cultural practices in general, Bourdieu developed the concept of the “field” (e.g., economic, political, cultural) within which different agents act. In Bourdieu’s social theory:

Pierre
Pourdieu.
The field of
cultural
production

Agents do not act in a vacuum, but rather in concrete social situations governed by a set of objective social relations. To account for these situations or contexts, ... Bourdieu developed the concept of field (*champ*). According to Bourdieu’s theoretical model, any social formation is structured by way of a hierarchically organized series of fields (the economic field, the educational field, the political field, the cultural field etc.), each defined as a structured space with its own laws of functioning and its own laws of force independent of those of politics and the economy... . Each field is relatively autonomous but structurally homologous with the others. Its structure, at any given moment, is determined by the relations between the positions agents occupy in the field. A field is a dynamic concept in that a change in agent’s positions necessarily entails a change in the field’s structure.³⁷⁰

Applying his theoretical model of the field to the production of culture, Bourdieu comes up with the so-called “field of cultural production” (or the cultural field), which he analyzes in the examples of the fields of artistic and literary production. For Bourdieu, the understanding of conditions and mechanisms of the cultural field’s structures is crucial for the interpretation of artistic or literary works:

...the full explanation of artistic works is to be found neither in the text itself, nor in some form of determinant social structure. Rather, it is found in the history and structure of the field itself, with its multiple components, and in the relationship between that field and the field of power.³⁷¹

To make the connection with what was said about our case study, TAMA practically speaking drew agents from the field of art production to the process of the artistic work’s creation. So their roles, operations and practices within the former field were also incorporated into the latter process.³⁷²

Bourdieu’s concept of the art field is relevant but not homologous to the term “art world.” The latter conveys a meaning of belonging to a group with common activities or interests. Bourdieu’s term by contrast, refers to internal structures, positions and functions of agents. Both terms are useful here. Furthermore, I also use the term “art scene” to designate a specific part of the Greek contemporary art field (or world), a “young generation” of art producers, to which I consider Papadimitriou to belong.

The agents among whom Papadimitriou moved as a professional artist, and whom she tried to mobilize by her artistic practice, belonged mainly to the Greek field of art production. A field with internal and external (in relation to the economic, social and political fields) formal and informal relations, hierarchies and norms. As I will explain in the following pages, the contemporary art world in the Greek cultural field had been regarded as poor relation. As such, it had received very little in terms of attention and investment from the political and economic fields until the past 15-20 years. It has been largely dependent upon private initiatives and support - means which could never compensate for the deficiencies of the public institutional sector. At the same time, the structural paradigms that agents had in mind reflected their education and connections to traditional European centers of modern art, such as Paris, Berlin or Rome. Consequently, Bourdieu’s model, though in need of revision for today’s globalized art world, may still maintain stronger relevancy for some local art fields. Nonetheless, to return to Papadimitriou’s case, by appropriating and transforming into art the system of relations, hierarchies and norms of the art field, she proved this field also to be subject to appropriations and transformations into a completely different order, art, even if only for the duration of her Temporary Museum.

With the above in mind, it is time to turn to the agents and to analyze their positions, roles and agendas in TAMA, how these re-present the artistic field, and what consequences this merging entails for art.

At the beginning of the TAMA book and under the title “Up to this point the contributors to the projects are:... ” there is a list of names, featuring also each person’s capacity, in which their contribution should be considered.³⁷³ The list names ten residents of Avliza, thirteen artists, twenty architects, seven curators, art critics

or art historians, a galerist, a film director, a dermatologist, a singer, a writer, a set designer, two clarinet players, a lawyer. There is a separate list of those who were also “Participants in the catalogue” as well as one list of the six “Sponsors of the Avliza TAMA.”

The contributors’ list equalizes and homogenizes individuals. Considering, however, the importance of the architectural plan for TAMA I would suggest calling the architects Dora Papadimitriou and Hariclia Hari *collaborators*, rather than contributors. Similarly, the same characterization, collaborators, I would apply to Yorghos Tzirtzilakis and Efi Strousa.³⁷⁴ Their role appears instrumental and multifaceted. Not only did they wind the activities initiated by Papadimitriou in Avliza into a coherent project, but their theoretical framework also tuned TAMA to timely global discourses of urbanization, migration, nomadism, and hybrid art and architecture interventions. Additionally, I believe that the professional expertise and prestige of the collaborators involved had a special function in legitimizing TAMA’s artistic status and special value within the local artistic field.³⁷⁵ This function was crucial, considering that in Greece there were no recorded precedents of community, participatory/collaborative art practices, and that the contemporary art field and market had a rather local bourgeois character. Besides, in the absence of strong organized structures and discourses in the contemporary art field, individuals may assume strong “institutional” roles or power, legitimizing people, practices and discourses. In the case of curators and theoreticians this may occur by virtue of their symbolic capital and prestige. In other cases, it is social, economic or political capital that play a role. This is a very important point, because it brings us to the prominent role of private initiative for Greek art and its relation to governmental policies and practices. This relation is accurately represented in TAMA.

To be more concrete, until approximately twenty years ago, almost any initiative (e.g., a curator making an exhibition or a collector establishing a museum) was supported by the private sector.³⁷⁶ This was not because, as occurred in the United States, the Greek state had given its blessings to the private sector to run and fund cultural institutions. But simply because the state ignored modern and contemporary art production. Unless it manifestly related either to certain interpretations of ancient and mediaeval (Byzantine) national cultural heritage, or to a modern ideology of “Greekness” in culture, often constructed between nationalism and folklore. Such approaches to national culture have for decades also been embraced by Greek society at large.

Thus it was private initiative that organized the bulk of activity within the contemporary art field, legitimizing people, practices and discourses. The stronger private initiatives have traditionally been dependent upon bourgeois social and economic elites and the local art market. Under these circumstances neither the private bourgeois patrons, nor Greek society and political life ever came to regard artists so much as social actors, but, much more as national and ideological figures. Consequently, avant-garde practices, including social interventions by artists and any relevant discourses, were paid insufficient attention to, or were scantily recorded as such.³⁷⁷

As artistic education was rather weak, generations of Greek artists have studied and pursued individual careers abroad.³⁷⁸ For many, returning to Greece meant

taking several steps backwards artistically and professionally. A conviction of a de-facto superiority of Western art centers has been a perennial spring of inferiority complexes, discontent and self-pity, “formatting” the minds and works of generations of Greek contemporary art producers.³⁷⁹

This mentality seems to have started changing from approximately the early 1990s, with the emergence of a younger art scene. This scene was increasingly vibrant, ambitious and oriented towards an international mainstream of art Biennials and magazines, and away from anything considered as outdated Greek-centered parochialism and inferiority complexes. Even if this distance-taking constituted in essence a latent determining parameter in their artistic directions. I would consider Papadimitriou, as well as the majority of invited contributors to TAMA as connected to this scene. In fact Papadimitriou and her project TAMA could be considered as exemplary cases. After graduating in Paris, the artist claimed that she had decided not to stay abroad. She was curious to find out why in Greece things seemed to be “stuck” in the arts, and she wanted to become “an international artist, but based in Greece. ... We have a beautiful country, why should I live, for instance, in Berlin?” Accordingly, TAMA was an exemplary project in that it contextualized a timely Greek social issue (ethnic minorities) within international artistic tendencies (open-ended art forms, artistic engagement) and theoretical discourses (urbanization, nomadism, globalization etc).

The increasing activities of this younger art scene met with support from private collectors, to whom sponsors of TAMA also belong.³⁸⁰ The most active amongst these collectors have been aligning up the focus of their private collecting and other art-related activities (exhibitions, publications, establishment of art foundations) with an interest in international mainstream art (here Dakis Joannou), and/or with a role of patron for the local art field (here Alpha Bank/Costopoulos Foundation, Prodromos Emfietzoglou). Their activities supplement those of the quite young public art institutions (museums, art centers) in recording, processing and presenting a history of local avant-garde art.³⁸¹ The involvement of these collectors has played a crucial role in backing financially as well as in rearranging power structures within the art field. Their support of a promising art project like TAMA should not be narrowly considered as financially and symbolically beneficial exclusively for the project. When artists from a peripheral scene advance with international careers, their success might add generally to the international prestige and capital of the local scene to which they are attached, including the private collectors and their collections.

Cultural heritage understood as national culture is considered probably the greatest national asset of Greece, in the name of which all national liberation and even civil wars were fought. However important private initiatives and patronage might be, the official decision-making, financing and implementation of cultural policies are supposed to emanate and be managed from within the Ministry of Culture. Therefore the general expectation has always been that the state would eventually be the main patron of contemporary culture as well. The question of establishing a national modern or contemporary art museum, which had preoccupied generations in the field of artistic production until it was realized in 1997 for Thessaloniki and 2000 for Athens, had always had the state through the Ministry of Culture as its final addressee.

In recent years, official policies have shown a shift of interest and support towards contemporary artistic production. Indeed, the case of the Ministry of Culture supporting a project that was exposing the backyard of the proud Greek culture - the disenfranchised Roma minority, the lack of institutional provision for contemporary art – can count symbolically as an exceptional achievement. This would be the achievement of the artist and, indirectly, of the entire set of contemporary art producers presented as contributors to and eventually represented as an art field in TAMA. Of course nothing is for free. TAMA functioned as flagship project for the face of a culturally and socially progressive state hosting the 2004 Olympic Games. Once the artist's practice of a strategic promotion of partnerships for the implementation of the art project's infrastructure reached the practice of professional Greek politicians, the politics of aesthetics were attuned to the aesthetics of politics – in the sense of temporary illusions of promises serving other ends.³⁸²

To sum things up, in all the aforementioned examples of relations produced by TAMA with art field agents as part of the art practice, one sees that the agendas, roles and positions of these agents in the art project and in “real” life appear to coincide. Taking the production process of these relations as well as those with the Avliza community as constituting the form and operation of the process-based art project, then the project indeed constitutes a form of representation of relations - cultural, social and political - in the “real” (art)world.

Conclusions about TAMA

Let me herewith try to bring together what I have tried to show with the production of relations as art in TAMA. From the moment the artist herself became involved with the images and community of Avliza, to the point when “higher ranks” in the local and international art world were reached, the very same questions were constantly negotiated: What is the relation of art to life? What constitutes the art work? And how does it function? These questions were obvious already in the title of *The Temporary Autonomous Museum for All* and in the proposal of taking images of relations from the social and cultural “Other” at home (Roma in Greece), but also taking the image of the “Self” in and out of home (Greek art in national and international social and cultural contexts) to reconsider the relation between art and life.

I have tried to show that these negotiations were staged in or through the process of producing relations as art. And that agents engaged at any given moment and the “politics” of power relations between them each time re-configured the relations produced, and thus also the aesthetic outcome of the project.

For these negotiations the Roma settlement in Avliza was the trigger for the artist to set it all in motion. However, their position and role in the process of making TAMA seems to have been gradually moving from being close to and co-presenting with the author-subject, to becoming represented. In the end, and despite whatever intentions the artist might have had, their image as a culturally exotic and socially marginalized “Other” seems essentially not to have been challenged but preserved.

As for the involvement of other agents, in early stages, when invited artists, writers, sociologists and so on were drawing, writing or offering some other creative contribution, the project functioned as a laboratory of images and ideas for the

redistribution of meanings by the means of art, and of the meanings of art itself. At the point when TAMA drew contributions from agents with various kinds of power in the circulation and distribution of the value of artworks - such as Biennial curators, collectors and cultural policy makers - the redistribution of the meanings of art was played out at symbolic, economic and political levels: consecration by the establishment, attribution of both market value and national representation status.

It should not be underestimated that the above relations and processes (i.e. of production, circulation and legitimization) contribute to the redistribution of what makes art and what art makes. Especially as they simultaneously operated for the art work externally (as relations of production) and internally (as relations of creation, collective authorship initiated and framed by the artist). And it is interesting that while these simultaneous processes were already taking place and were even openly stated (see establishment of relations as an aim of the art project) their operation remained publicly invisible or undebated. Instead a rhetorical use of notions of utopia, autonomy, criticality and community-based public art was persistently sustained, even though the conditions of these notions were already subverted since the practice had entered a different aesthetic order of how forms from life might be rendered into forms of art. This was an aesthetic order in which relations from “real” life were not as accurately rendered and represented in the intentions and visions of relations expressed in TAMA’s formal narrations, as they were in the project’s operational structure of relations. The relations that simultaneously produced TAMA as art, and were themselves produced by TAMA as art.



31 View of El Max (Alexandria), Egypt. 2004. Photo by the author.

2 GUDRAN FOR ART AND DEVELOPMENT

The artists and their project

Who we are

A group of artists: plastic artists, a filmmaker, a graphics designer, a musician and a fisherman from the Max. We are interested in using art as a method for development. Our aim is to improve the aesthetic taste and quality of marginalized communities while retaining their own individuality and uniqueness. ...

We dream of a community that enjoys a better cultural and artistic life, whose individuals live in a better aesthetic environment, that can invest its own individuality and its potentials, and that believes in art, appreciates aesthetics and is capable of expanding this concept and sustaining it.

Our mission

To initiate a link between art and development in order to improve marginalized communities by making use of their beauty and individuality; and to build on and improve them in order to create inspirational and replicable models.

Location

El Max is a suburb of Alexandria. Most of its population are fishermen. It is located between El-Werdéyan district – a very populated area of Alexandria; full of industries and leather factories – and El-Agami – an old suburb previously regarded as a summer resort and now a very populated district. It overlooks one of the Alexandria harbour gates.

The place has its own type. It looks as if it were a “Venice of the East”. The houses are built on the banks of an agricultural sewage canal. The banks are high forming a hill upon which the houses are built. The fishing boats are all docked in front of the houses and move from there to the sea.

The uniqueness of the place reflects the uniqueness of the people. It is a closed community with its own history and culture and heritage. However, it has seen hard times, for food is scarce and depends on the weather and whatever the sea brings. There are lots of other problems too; mainly, sewage, rubbish, healthcare, education, poverty, work and play hazards because of the rough nature of the area. ...

During the initial period we conducted research... We also focused on establishing relations with the residents of the neighbourhood to encourage their participation. ... The area suffers from a lack of cultural, environmental and social services.³⁸³

The artists who formed Gudran seemed much less preoccupied with contemporary aesthetics than Maria Papadimitriou.³⁸⁴ In the sense that their initiative was triggered by the impoverished life of population groups in Egypt, for which they put forward an understanding of art as tool. Being artists, they emphasized cultural and aesthetic characteristics of El Max and its people. In all the activities organized by Gudran in El Max for locals and guests - such as artistic workshops for locals or workcamps

with international artists and youths - Gudran members have been using their skills and contacts as artists, but with the primary target of community development.

Accordingly, the context within which Gudran operated as an artists' initiative with a social agenda could not be represented in Bourdieu's model of the field of art production. Gudran operated and gradually acquired visibility not only amongst art producers, but also within a wider context of cultural, humanitarian and development organizations active in Egypt. These had their attention, strategies and networks focused on Egypt as a country of the Middle East, the African developing world or the Mediterranean region, depending on each organization's particular focus.

For the question of the production of relations as art in process-based and participatory community projects, the two case studies of Gudran and TAMA complement one another. Even if Gudran prioritizes social change over artistic concerns, looking closer at the process of forming relations between the villagers, the Gudran artists and external agents as the project's operating structure back in 2004-05, there were interesting analogies with TAMA. Such analogies regard the formation of relations, as well as the representation of relations, roles and agendas of all involved agents that were produced in the process.

From TAMA it is important to bear in mind the idea that the formation of relations with the entire horizon of involved agents (i.e. the artworld for TAMA, the art and NGO networks for Gudran) comprises part of the project, not just of its production context. In what follows, I will argue both for the application of this perspective in Gudran, as well as for exploring for the consequences thereof. In my opinion, considering Gudran from the perspective of aesthetical consequences of the



31 View of El Max (Alexandria), Egypt. 2004. Photo by the author.

production of relations – meaning here the form of the operational structure of the production of relations, as well as the form of relations produced - these aesthetic outcomes outweigh the community development outcomes.

But this does not mean that aesthetic consequences are unrelated to social or political aspects. Again in a somewhat Rancièrian way, looking at the formation process of the projects from an aesthetical perspective, they give a form to and thus render sensible processes of wider social and political transformations.³⁸⁵ Consequently, by rendering them sensible they also render these transformations subject to critique, a critique that can partly take its forms of argumentation from the critique on the artistic projects. This is why Gudran, with its complex glo-cal context to which I will refer extensively below, may touch upon wider socio-political issues than TAMA and the often self-absorbed artworld context.

But let me not run ahead of the text and start first with a description of the project. *Gudran for Art and Development* was officially set up in El Max in 2001 and initially registered as NGO (Fig. 30-31, 35).³⁸⁶ As mentioned in the introduction, Gudran was principally the initiative of visual artists Sameh El Halawany and Aliaa El Gready, with the more or less temporary contribution of other individuals, most of them related to the art scene of Alexandria. Sameh and Aliaa had previous experience elsewhere in Egypt, where art was used in community development initiatives especially focused on children.

At first sight, the presentation of El Max in Gudran's official narrations as on their website (quoted here at the beginning), bore similarities to that of Avliza in TAMA. It was presented as a socially isolated ("closed") and economically weak community ("it has seen hard times"), situated at the fringes of an expanding city, Alexandria. Its special value was derived from what was regarded as a unique culture reflected in its image ("The uniqueness of the place reflects the uniqueness of the people," "A Venice of the East"). The social, economic and infrastructural problems described ("sewage, rubbish, healthcare, education, poverty") also echo the description of Avliza in TAMA, but are expressed in a more patronizing style (e.g., "Our aim is to improve the aesthetic taste and quality of marginalized communities").

However, art and aesthetics were understood as something missing in El Max. These were to be brought in thanks to the vision ("we dream of a community that enjoys better cultural and aesthetic life") and support of external agents, the artists (see: "our mission"). It is promoted by means of renovating and beautifying the village, educating the people. Whereas in TAMA, art and aesthetics were considered as inherent in the Roma's tactical ways of living and of inhabiting the place, including their settlement's makeshift character. Improvements addressed basic social and hygienic provisions (e.g., water and electricity supply), not touching the aesthetics of Avliza.

El Max's economy relied on fishing and Alexandria relied on El Max for almost half of its fish. In discussions with Gudran artists, they explained that the growing development of the surrounding industry was causing marine pollution, while industrial interests also threatened El Max with land expropriation. Besides, according to descriptions I gathered from a guest to El Max, military units based nearby controlled the gates to the sea, occasionally preventing fishermen from going

to work.³⁸⁷ Therefore a concrete but not officially stated aim, was to empower the community and save the village by showing to the world that El Max had a very individual and therefore significant local culture. So Gudran set out to accentuate qualities of this unique culture, shape up the derelict infrastructure and establish communication channels with the outside world.

The various activities organized by Gudran included, for example, artistic and skills training workshops for local children and adults (e.g., drawing, clay, dressmaking), literacy classes for adults and dropouts, and work camps for international artists and youth. (Fig. 32-33) The Gudran artists functioned as intermediaries of relations and facilitators of activities. A building was renovated and brightly painted to serve as Gudran's headquarters, where also a video room, a library and a café/restaurant were situated. (Fig. 34-35) However, the most important activity was to renovate and "beautify" the place. They took motives traditionally painted on fishing boats and transferred them to walls.³⁸⁸ (Fig. 36-37)

This is the principle activity of the place. All other projects and activities flow from and into it. The idea is to re-structure the houses and the sewage system, and to renovate the houses by painting and drawing on them. This is done in an artistic manner by the locals and ourselves with the help of a team trained through the other arts workshops.³⁸⁹

In what follows the analysis of Gudran is structured on a similar pattern to that of TAMA, but in reverse order. For reasons of convenience, I will start with the supporting basis of art production in Egypt and then move on to relations at community level.



32 - 34 Gudran. El Max (Alexandria), 2001 ongoing. Video, drawing and dressmaking rooms. 2004. Photo by the author.



An artworld in the expanded field

Being an artists' initiative with a social program and NGO status, Gudran existed within a field comprised, on the one hand, of the local artworld and, on the other, of a system of Egyptian and international organizations and foundations that promote human rights, cultural diversity and sustainable development.³⁹⁰

Part of the art production is supported by the Fine Arts Sector, an arm of the Ministry of Culture.³⁹¹ It runs, for instance, some galleries, the museums, the Cairo and Alexandria art biennials, the so-called "cultural palaces" in various towns and the art academies.³⁹² This is the official face of contemporary cultural production that also represents the country abroad on official occasions such as the national participation in the Venice Biennial. This scene has access mostly to state funding and institutional positions (e.g., art professors or administrators). Generally speaking, the art included rather academic painting, sometimes handcrafts; rather uninteresting for the international contemporary mainstream. However, from approximately the late 1990s and as the Egyptian state has been under neo-liberalization pressures by the IMF and the United States, there have been attempts to also "update" the cultural face of the country. I believe that it must have been under these conditions that a project that proposed an art-for-development model quite similar to Gudran's, but of much larger scale and entirely backed by the Ministry of Tourism, started in Cairo in 1999. The so-called *Old Cairo Development Project* combined the restoration of the very touristic but also run-down area of Old Cairo, with a program for the sustainable social and economic development for the existing population.³⁹³

For artists who had more interest in relating to developments abroad an alternative way was to organize autonomous collaborative initiatives bringing together artists, curators, filmmakers, writers etc. This phenomenon became more visible from the late 1990s and in conjunction with the emergence of a private, commercial and non-commercial, art sector.³⁹⁴ Egyptian artists with careers in Biennials and exhibitions in contemporary art centers in Europe could be found here, but without this necessarily excluding their also maintaining contact with the state sector. This serves as a reminder again of the necessity not to take as generally applicable notions developed in Western art centers about "autonomy" or "criticality" of alternative art initiatives. In

her extensive sociological study of the Egyptian field of contemporary art production, Jessica Winegar emphasizes this point.³⁹⁵

Whether one saw oneself as more attached to the official or to the relatively autonomous art scene, with the one not excluding the other, practically everywhere there were aspirations for international recognition and collaborations. When support was needed for projects of any scale, there was a whole system of non-Egyptian organizations and foundations to





35 - 37 Gudran. El Max (Alexandria), 2001 ongoing. View of Gudran building and painted houses, 2004. Photos by the author.

approach. Gudran's status as NGO for a multifaceted cultural and environmental community development should be understood within this professional landscape.

More specifically, for decades organizations like UNESCO, Caritas and smaller humanitarian NGOs have officially operated for the stimulation and development of sustainable social services, emphasizing local collaborations and initiatives.³⁹⁶ A project that includes art within a social development frame might come under the umbrella of different NGOs not necessarily for financial, but also for administrative or logistic support, or just for reasons of networking, communication and the publicity of its activities.³⁹⁷ For instance in Table III there is information about Gudran's 2005 workcamp from the Unesco listings of Youth Volunteer Workcamps in the Middle East region. Table IV includes a selection of strategic objectives for 2002-07 from the mission statement of Unesco's cultural sector. The emphasis placed on standard-setting instruments, cultural diversity and dialogue, as well as on linkages between culture and development reminds one of Gudran's emphasis on replicable models, establishment of communication channels and the motto of art for development.

Significant support for cultural activities in Egypt is provided by the Ford Foundation (USA) and some also through EU schemes for the economic development of, as well as for cross-cultural communication between, Mediterranean countries. Table V contains the Ford's mission statement, which again reminds one of concerns emphasized by Gudran, such as poverty, international cooperation, human achievement. Gudran has been generously supported by the Ford, as shown on Tables VI-VII from the Foundation's 2003 and 2005 annual reports. On Table VIII from the European Union's open call for applications for community programs I have selected samples of calls specific to Mediterranean projects. Gudran's organization profile could fit into the "domains concerned," the legal status of "who can apply," the "regions" as well as the types of "financed activities."³⁹⁸ Despite the official political neutrality of large organizations like the Ford or the Mediterranean E.U. programs, they have important links to American and European financial and foreign policy interests, even if not directly visible ones. This is especially significant for the United States. Frances Stonor Saunders has presented in detail connections between U.S. foreign interests and the funding strategies of large philanthropic organizations including the Ford Foundation.³⁹⁹ Egypt, in particular, has since the 1970s been officially amongst the largest recipients of U.S. humanitarian and development assistance, especially through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The latter has during the 1990s paid special attention to the growth of the local NGOs sector, to which Gudran also belongs.⁴⁰⁰

Local NGOs constitute in fact an immense sector. According to Mervat Tellawi, Minister of Social Affairs and Insurance, in 1999 there were some 14,600 NGOs, about 60% of which she estimated as active.⁴⁰¹ NGOs in the Middle East in general have played an extremely important, but also problematic role during the 1990s. In the words of Lauri King Irani, editor of the *Middle East Report*: "In much of the Middle East NGOs have been to the 1990s what resistance groups and popular unions of students, workers and professionals were to the 1970s: the defining organizational form of the period."⁴⁰² NGOs have provided services in domains such as human rights, environmental education, rural development, women's rights, literacy training and legal reform. While according to Krista Masonis El-Gawhary referring in particular

to Egypt: “Nowhere in the Middle East have expectations of NGOs been as high as in Egypt. And nowhere else do they command such vast resources and prestige.”⁴⁰³ All this is quite important here, since the Gudran team also opted for NGO status. The above described operational framework of NGOs demonstrates that this status has for a period been the most accommodating for various kinds of initiatives wishing to have relative autonomy from state control. But it drew them into the mechanisms of another system of dependency relations, often as opaque as those of the state.

Furthermore, there are different foreign Schools and Institutes with varying degrees of activity and potential to support, such as the Goethe Institute, the Swedish Institute, the French school, Prins Claus Fund, Prohelvetia, the Foundation for Hellenic Culture. The cultural role of at least some of these is somewhat schizophrenic, as their origins relate to colonialism and the continuation of their presence is partly due to their respective countries intention of maintaining a foothold in the developing world. Nonetheless, nowadays any politically acceptable mission and rhetoric, in accordance with postcolonial sensitivities in the West and many people’s true intentions, is more likely to emphasize the stimulation and reinforcement of cross-national communication and cultural production, rather than a one-way dissemination of any given Western country’s culture in Africa or the Middle East. This is translated into collaborative projects between local (Egyptian) cultural producers and producers from the respective institution’s country. The model of the Gudran international workcamps bears similarities to this tradition of collaborations and exchanges.

Late 20th century developments in communication and transport have greatly facilitated contacts and exchanges around the globe between individuals or groups with similar interests. It is really impossible to keep up with the number and types of networks and meeting events organized among artists’ initiatives. To stick to my case study, in 2002 Aliaa El Geady participated in a meeting in the Cameroon organized by the art group Kapsiki Circle, in collaboration with the French group “Urban Scenography.”⁴⁰⁴ The idea for Gudran artists’ workcamps came about as a follow-up to that meeting. Furthermore, Gudran can be found amongst participants in projects organized with some connection to the Amsterdam-based European Cultural Foundation (ECF). ECF is an independent organization promoting cultural production and exchange especially in Europe’s periphery and the Mediterranean rim.⁴⁰⁵ Furthermore, Gudran was included also in the 6th sequence of the project *Going Public* titled “Atlante Mediterraneo” in 2006. *Going Public* is based in Modena, Italy, and functions as a platform for meetings, discussions, publications and collaborative projects between artists and collectives working in a wide range of engaged public art. TAMA was included in *Going Public 3*: “Soggetti, Luoghi e Politiche.”⁴⁰⁶ To add one last, interesting example, albeit again later than my research time-frame, Gudran participated in a workshop organized by PPC_T, a Greek site-specific program of participatory activities with a community of Repatriated Greek-Pontics living in a place called Farkadona. PPC_T started in 2005 as an initiative of architect Hariclia Hari, one of Maria Papadimitriou’s collaborators in TAMA.⁴⁰⁷

Now, there are two important things to say here about networks in general and art networks since the 1990s in particular. Firstly, according to network theory approaches (social network theory) “reality should be primarily conceived and investigated

from the view of the properties of relations between and within units instead of the properties of these units themselves. It is a relational approach.³⁴⁰⁸ Which in our case means that the distinctive local content of each artists' organization's work is not as important for its role as a node in the network, as is its practice of keeping active within the network. Secondly, especially for artists' organizations the practice of entering into more or less temporary alliances has, on the one hand, been incorporated into the artistic practice of numerous individuals or collectives. This practically speaking is what this chapter is all about: considering the production of whatever relations were formerly understood as relations of production or context, as becoming part of the art, and analyzing them as such. While, on the other, this practice has also at the same time caused a restructuring of the institutional sector of art. Networks themselves have given rise to new forms of institutionalization. Hence, also, visibility, partnerships, affiliations and activity within networks tend to be regarded as criteria for an organization's character and success. These are often becoming more visible and determining parameters in an organization's assessment than the actual content of its distinctive, site-specific work. In our case, that would be Gudran's community work in El Max.

To conclude this section, it would not be an exaggeration to claim that for a collective artists' initiative like Gudran, the support from or involvement with particular partners and networks can be determining in many respects. Keeping the necessary activity going for maintaining contacts with Egyptian or foreign institutions, organizations or other networks of all the aforementioned sorts can be a full-time job. And it may indeed influence choices of official legal status (e.g., as NGO), typology of activities (e.g., literacy classes, infrastructural development) and rhetoric (e.g., as in missions statement). This is important. In a developing country like Egypt that is also part of a politically sensitive region, here the Middle East, there are constellations of local and global organizations and networks, which may have an important influence in local cultural production. In practice, one can consider them in terms of an artworld in the expanded field. It can be regarded as such, even if art production claims a really minimal share compared to the large interests sustaining the activities in this mixed sector. Therefore it must be emphasized that the continuity and density of the constellation of organizations and networks in any given region depend primarily on the region's specific geopolitical significance or state of development, rather than on its art.⁴⁰⁹

Looking into artistic grassroots practices

For the previous case study I touched upon problematic aspects in the re-presentations of the Avliza Romani in TAMA in the project's narrations. It is fair to say that TAMA's narrations stated that it was all primarily about Avliza in the eyes of the artist, and thus also any social or even political issues were touched upon through the aesthetic questions. Nonetheless, the more successful the project became in circles of mainstream art, the more the Avliza inhabitants seemed to move from the position of subjects-participants in the making of TAMA, to that of subject-matter. Moreover, the final image of relations rendered in the project allowed their aesthetic exoticism and social marginalization to remain unchallenged, regardless of the artist's initial vision.

Here I will take advantage of the availability on internet of narrations by individuals involved in community activities by Gudran in El Max. I have selected extracts from an interview and from a diary, which express positive responses, but also include points that may raise skepticism.

My first source is a 2004 interview published in Al Ahram Weekly with two of Gudran's volunteers: Damien, a Belgian who taught photography, and Rami Fawzi, an Egyptian/Jordanian who worked as Social Affairs Manager. Extracts are reproduced here in Table IX. They start by explaining what triggered Sameh and Aliaa to take action in El Max. The combination of aesthetic qualities of the village's culture and external appearance, with its precarious socioeconomic situation, are reminiscent of motives put forward also for TAMA. However, as noted there as well, the parameter of indigenous aesthetic qualities can easily slip into the trap of limiting the representation and development models of the local community to assumptions of authenticity based on traditions. And as art curator and critic Gerardo Mosquera has signaled regarding the shaping of identities in the post-colony:

To affirm cultural identity in tradition, understood in a sense of "purity," is a colonial heritage. It led to disastrous cults of "authenticity," "roots," and "origins," above all in the postcolonial era when the new countries attempted to affirm their identities and interests against the metropolises and their imposed westernizations.⁴¹⁰

Both in policy statements of international humanitarian and development organizations, as well as in personal statements by individuals (Damien b, Table IX) one sees the ex-colonizers' concern that their help should not re-colonize the addressee. Sometimes, communities in the developing world may appear to maintain in their daily life aspects of social or production relations from traditional societies. It might therefore be difficult to distinguish between, on the one hand, the contemporary cultural moment and, on the other, assumptions of cultural traditions when dealing with such communities. However this should not be used as easy excuse. For instance, the curatorial expeditions to discover art from peripheral countries, especially after the 1989 Paris exhibition *Magiciens de la Terre*, often did not care for nuanced readings of contemporary non-Western cultures. Or, once again pointed out by Mosquera, they consciously opted to place value on art that "explicitly manifests difference, or that better satisfies the expectations of otherness held by postmodern neoexoticism."⁴¹¹

To move along with analyzing elements in the interview, Damien mentioned problems of drug abuse and crime (Damien a), which were nowhere to be found in Gudran's descriptions of El Max. Problems such as these, as symptoms of the village's socioeconomic degradation, are essentially caused by what led to that degradation. In this case, significant causal factors appear to have been the threat of the villagers' living environment and the obstruction of their daily work, posed by the presence of the industry and the military basis. There seems to have been a disregard of the rights of El Max inhabitants not to be see their living and working environment threatened. These would be basic civil, i.e., political rights. Nonetheless, it was not political rights that were registered and addressed in the development program for El Max, but, rather, some of the social and economic symptoms of the

infringement of these political rights (e.g., poverty, lack of education). There are reasons that could, I assume, explain why Gudran would not openly address issues of either political rights, or drug abuse and crime in El Max. On the one hand, by choosing to officially address the problems of El Max by using art as development tool - a cultural-social perspective - I believe that they had to include problems that can be accepted as addressable by the means of art. This would be difficult for actions prosecuted by law, such as drug abuse and crime. On the other hand, not all oppositional political debate is tolerated by Egyptian state authorities. Presenting the problems of El Max as a political issue would have probably condemned from the outset any activist initiative the Gudran initiators would have attempted to take. Arguments such as these can indeed justify the artists' choices. But at the same time they also indicate the limitations of their initiative, which might in the worse scenario even unwittingly help keep some foundational political issues unchallenged and undebated.

The numerous activities organized by Gudran enriched life in the village and opened up new horizons especially for the younger. Nonetheless, it is striking to read that in a project so much emphasizing local cultural heritage, the selected development tool, art, was alien to the village (Ramy a). It follows that an entire new horizon of cultural, educational and leisure activities was imbued, restructuring practices and conceptions of everyday life, including the distribution of time (e.g., introduction of leisure time) and spaces (e.g., introduction of a designated meeting place, Gudran's building). As we read further down, the Gudran building and activities offered women for the first time with a place and occasions to meet creating "a sense of community," all of which, as presumed, they lacked (Ramy c). However, if Ramy's sayings reflect Gudran's presumptions, then this lack of a sense of community is defined as a lack of *visible* manifestations *in public* of community practices (e.g., organized occasions in designated public spaces), for which the Gudran building and activities such as workshops, collective renovation work on buildings, attendance of the art festival etc. compensated for. Consequently, a particular conception and practice of a category of public seems to have been introduced to the community and credited cultural priority. As discussed further down with regard to the second source, there are instances when interventions "in public" by invited artists participating to workcamps seemed to collide against mentalities in the village. All these processes entail an amount of presumptions or assumptions on the side of the Gudran team of what is "good" and what is "bad" in culture. Or, to be more fair probably, what is "good" and what is "bad" for the position of a small group within a larger socio-political and economic context, since the ultimate point of Gudran's cultural program was the viability of El Max altogether in contemporary Egypt. Nonetheless, the thoughts I have expressed in this paragraph seem to contradict the premises of Gudran's rhetoric regarding the value of El Max' "unique culture."⁴¹²

Finally, Damien and Ramy referred to a "big event coming up," which was the artists' workcamp Boustachy 01 and the exhibition planned for its closure (Damien d, Ramy d). They emphasized the size of the event, its international character, impressive presentation setting (theater on boats) and the collaborative and interactive working format of the whole endeavor. Below, I will turn to this workcamp and exhibition event through the diary of one of the participating artists, Sue Williamson.

On Table X I have taken extracts of Sue's diary as published online. She recorded and reflected upon her experiences from the encounter between the artists, the villagers and the Gudran team. Sue is a South Africa-based artist with an international career. Reading her diary, she is throughout disarmingly honest about what she thought regarding the practical and qualitative limitations of the art produced during the workcamp. Both ethically, as "certain topics should not be broached... for fear of causing offence" (Wed., Sept. 15), as well as artistically, since "this is not an arena for sophisticated conceptual work" (Sat., Sept. 18). The result only confirms that, as not everything could "go forwards as it would in Europe or the States, or *even* South Africa" (emphasis mine, Wed., Sept. 29, last day of Boustachy 01). Her thoughts reflected the situation in which NGO and community art had become for some Western art critics a synonym – even if often arrogantly – for art of good intentions and poor quality.⁴¹³ This critique mostly overlooked the importance of the creative working process, which Sue also accentuated in her warm words about her communication and exchange experiences in El Max (Sun., Sept. 19, Fri., Sept. 24, Mon. Sept. 27, Wed. Sept. 29). Nonetheless, the question remains of why should communities be collectively represented by something evaluated as second-rate, let alone not theirs, since "art has not figured amongst customs and traditions" in El Max.

Sue's diary was also quite revealing about problems the artists faced during their work. For them the projects moved too slowly (Sun., Sept. 19), while strong misgivings regarding the hosting organization and the integrity of its aims were expressed in Hicham Benohoud's criticisms of "MADE MAX" (Mon. Sept. 20). In the days after Hicham's departure, artists were continuously facing problems and resistance by locals. The prominent example was Jean Christophe Lanquetin's adventures with his rooftop installation (Fri., Sept. 24 & Wed. Sept. 22 - Tue Sept. 28). Initially it took a bit of time to find a house for which he would be given permission to erect an installation with local materials. A couple of days after he found one, the father of the man who granted him permission expressed fears of the structure being against the Koran and withdrew permission. Once his fears were removed, he was picked up by the police for complaining, but was thankfully released the day after. And when finally Jean Christophe managed to build up his installation, the nets he had used disappeared in the night. This sequence of events revealed the difficult symbiosis of contemporary public art with the combination of Islamic law, state policing, but also small-scale crimes that together played a role in the daily life of locals. Sue recounts also difficulties that Francois Duconseile (Sat., Sept. 25) and Gilles Touyard (Tue., Sept. 28) encountered. Altogether, despite Gudran's warnings of local conservative ethics and the artists' compliance (Wed, Sept. 15), the presence and projects of the artists crashed against religious fears (Jean-Christophe), authorities' restrictions (Jean-Christophe and Francois) and local codes of private-public differentiations (Gilles). It seems as if it was all about the villagers getting used to all those new things, because that was the way to development, whether they understood it or not. Finally, what Damien had described as an up-coming "big event," an "international exhibition" with an open air theatre on boats, filmed for "audiences from all over the world" (Table IX) resulted to an exhibition opening where "there is not all that much to see" and "the mood is subdued" (Table X, Wed., Sept. 29).

Taking into account all the above, there seem to have been inconsistencies

between the stated agendas of Gudran and community level practices. Various assumptions, external additions, a slightly patronizing and officially a-political character, all manifest problematic aspects in the grassroots process of realizing Gudran. Similarly to TAMA, the obvious question is whether these process-based projects as participatory/collaborative processes of relations' formation led the communities to becoming subjects or not of their own re-presentations.

Conclusions about Gudran

To sum things up for Gudran, on the one hand, I have tried to show the relations between Gudran as an artists' organization and the institutional fields and networks that supported cultural production in Egypt. Especially with respect to socially engaged art, this field was comprised not only of art institutions, but also, quite importantly, of a system of foreign humanitarian and development organizations and programs, foreign cultural institutions as well as international art and art-related networks.

In essence it is the second category that had the capital and status to support any local initiatives that opted for exchanging relative autonomy from the government cultural sector for relative dependency from the NGOs sector. While at the same time, the emergence and growth since the 1990s of a private art sector, but most importantly the growth of networks of art or other group initiatives sharing similar concerns, were all indicative of relations between the production of new forms of communication and exchange, and new forms of both artistic practices as well as art institutional practices. Within this context, Gudran's organizational profile, as well as partnerships it pursued, seemed to function very well.

On the other hand, looking closer at Gudran's relations in El Max through the narrations of Ramy, Damien and Sue one finds problems between Gudran's stated agendas and the process of their realization. For instance, fundamental to the village's future development was the use of a set of selected, if not invented elements of traditional culture (e.g., transferring the symbolic motives painted on boats onto walls, intervening in forms of socialization and into categories of private-public). Further problematic aspects were the patronizing and neo-exoticization effects that such external interventions might entail, and, indeed, the gaps between stated aspirations (e.g., infrastructural development, ambitious art events) and what was realized till 2005 (painting facades, the workcamp's outcomes as narrated by Sue).

In view of all the above it seems fair, but also far too easy, to say that Gudran's supporting context – the art scene, the various organizations and networks – determined the form of its practices. Which would include the form of involvement of El Max locals in activities such as workshops, literacy classes, restoration of the infrastructure, voluntary international work camps and any other activities that echoed their benefactors' strategies and programs. That would mean that Gudran simply fulfilled expectations. Instead of stopping at the easy conclusions, I would rather suggest considering Gudran with the same terms as TAMA. Thus all parameters of the support, production-process and reception of the Gudran organization, including the interdependency of their complicated and often opaque relations, should be seen *together* to comprise the project. To constitute its art form. Then the art project, as

it were, takes back a representational function, representing wider structures in the society within which, and in response to which, it was produced. Rather than just representing the culture of the community of El Max. To explain what exactly I mean by that, let me interpret how I see everything I discussed linking together.

In Sue's diary, it seemed that being present, experiencing and relating to the place and people involved in Gudran were more significant aspects than the individual artists' works and their final big exhibition. Between the lines one could discern what "implementing a project" meant: it meant that events *did* take place, people *were* there, interviews *were* given. That the whole structure set up by Gudran in El Max *did* function. It functioned as a shell within which one could develop smaller, individual initiatives of social, environmental or artistic character. As such, the Gudran project itself reproduced in smaller scale the shell-function and respective structure of the organizations and networks that supported and framed it. It was only in the explicit or implicit misgivings of Sue and Damien - the foreign grassroots work volunteers - that we saw reference to the concrete content of what was produced by Gudran, as well as to the ethical and aesthetic standards thereof.

Nonetheless, regarded from the outside, the Gudran project as a shell structured by a site-specific application of the existing system of relations between the art scene and the constellation of further organizations, it actually performed and functioned very well. For artists in Egypt and Alexandria in particular, Gudran created a platform that could bring to them the latest of the international socially engaged or activist art scene. They became nodes in international networks with their very own, large-scale project. Even better, Gudran drew inspiration from the cultural background of Egypt, but neither from the tourist face of antiquity, nor from the nostalgia for Lawrence Durrell's or Kavafis' colonial era. In all that Gudran was much closer to the motives, practices and symptoms of engaged, site-specific initiatives from the periphery, as these have surfaced since the 1990s in international art or activism scenes and networks.

Furthermore, Gudran could be seen to represent both the best and the worst of policies and intentions on the side of the non-Egyptian organizations supporting it. Because it was too complex and difficult to discern what it all added up to: one could see it as a small-scale, focused initiative that did enrich, improve and protect certain aspects of everyday life in El Max. But, reversely, one could also argue that it eventually supported a consensus of accepting the pretension of humanitarian causes applied as rhetoric (see aims, mission statement) as well as the intervention of foreign interests (U.S, E.U.) against meager results (painted walls, temporary, if not problematic collaboration experiences during work camps, etc.). While it also used rather than challenged the neo-exoticization of local communities. As such, Gudran was but a representation of the contribution to development that the different cultural and humanitarian organizations active in the region could offer against, on the one hand, the huge needs of a developing ex-colony in the tense Middle East region and, on the other, the professional, economic and diplomatic relations that also sustain the cultural sector.

Final conclusions: from models for the real world to models of the real world

Let me herewith pull the strings together and return to the initial question of what

forms of art practices are produced when producing relations as art. One could say that in each case the artists set out to present the world with an ideal model of relations. But they eventually gave form to ideal representations of “real” world relations. They appropriated formal and informal practices from various fields as their artistic practices. Artistic, because regardless whether they termed the outcomes of their work art or not, in both cases they set out to work with their capacities and skills as artists. Which brings us back to an investigation, recalling Rancière, of what new forms of doing and making have been reconfigured within a domain of art, and what they “formulate” about the world.

To be more precise, for all the shortcomings in the participation, collaboration and representation of the communities, one cannot help noticing that the projects’ operated quite successfully in relation to their supporting structures (i.e. artworld or other). However, the latter relations are also part of the artists’ practice of setting up community-oriented initiatives with a local focus and global connections, as these have surfaced from the 1990s onwards around the globe. So a tactical incorporation of practices of formal or informal relations into artistic projects came to belong to the artists’ “ways of doing and making,” to artistic practices in an expanded field.

The structure and operation of the practice of producing relations as art is seldom analyzed for its possible functions as art. This is often due to the persistence of a rhetoric of the autonomy and utopianism of art from interests external to a pure creation process (e.g., artworld interests or the artists’ social commitment), while the artists’ practice has already invalidated those – rather modernistic – notions of artistic autonomy and utopia. The inherent contradictions between stated agendas and what eventually takes place, between globalization in the daily experience with local communities especially outside the West and the daily experience of global networking with similarly-minded groups are at the core of the artists’ practice. By reproducing everyday-life, professional or other practices as art, it is inevitable that they also re-produce the contradictions and frictions inherent in those practices. By doing so, as much as the artists “fail” to formulate ideals, they nonetheless did give form to social realities in transformation, rendering their processes “sensible” again in a kind of Rancièrian way. Processes that were otherwise difficult to capture, as they moved and changed at overlapping levels and speeds.

As a result, and despite this not being the artists’ intention, the criticism that seems so easy to make on the shortcomings of their projects can actually be re-produced back as a critique on the social or other practices that the artists initially re-produced as art.

One could probably even say that a parameter of autonomy and utopianism remains in the persistence of the artists to continue their endeavors even as trial and error, if they themselves suspect the discrepancies and frictions threatening to take over their initial intentions and ideals.

Finally, one might argue that this approach of producing relations as an artistic practice ends up overemphasizing form over content, which for relations also means networking over identity. This is not completely arbitrary. When a post-modern frenzy of seeing identities dissolved into simulacra and signs started receding in the face of the rapidly expanding social and economic globalization processes of the 1990s, giving rise to the prominent question of what Manuel Castels described as

“the bipolar opposition between the Net and the Self,” around which “[o]ur societies are increasingly structured.”⁴¹⁴ While, on the one hand,

[p]eople increasingly organize their meaning ... on the basis of what they are, or believe they are ... on the other hand, global networks switch on and off individuals, groups, regions, and even countries, according to their relevance in fulfilling the goals processes in the network, in a relentless flow of strategic decisions. It follows a fundamental split between abstract, universal instrumentalism, and historically rooted, particularistic identities.⁴¹⁵

On a micro-scale, this is what artists’ projects like TAMA and Gudran give form to. Not by means of what they say they do, but rather, by how their structures and operations develop and function.

Bureau Venhuizen, Brochure, pages 1-2, © 2003.

Bureau Venhuizen is a project management and research bureau active in the field of culture-based planning. The bureau focuses on settlement and planning processes in the context of spatial planning, taking culture as the point of departure. In this context, culture is broadly defined as cultural history, heritage and art, and also includes the collected contemporary cultures of a region’s residents. The bureau was founded by Hans Venhuizen, who acts as concept manager in these processes.

It is best to approach every context with your eyes peeled and with an inquisitive mind. Then you have the greatest chance of encountering surprising phenomena. The photographs ‘A to Z’ were taken by Hans Venhuizen. They are not directly linked with the projects managed by Bureau Venhuizen, but sooner provide an insight into Hans Venhuizen’s perspective as concept manager. Rather than exclusively taking photographs of attractively designed urban space or landscapes, Venhuizen focuses primarily on situations where the concept that was the point of departure for a specific result – whether an accidental or planned success or a fantastic failure – is clearly evident in the end result. The subjects include hybrid forms of historic culture applied in new ways with varying degrees of success; lies in which there is such a strong belief that they have pass for the truth; grotesque details of distinctiveness based on the conviction that it should be something else; and phenomenal situations that have resulted from a sometimes almost absurd logic.

Chapter 3
IN THE EVENT: PLAY.
A “JEUX SANS FRONTIÈRES”
BETWEEN ART AND LIFE

PROLOGUE

Bureau Venhuizen is a project management and research bureau active in the field of culture-based planning. The bureau focuses on settlement and planning processes of spatial planning, taking culture as the point of departure. In this context, culture is broadly defined as cultural history, heritage and art, and also includes the contemporary cultures of a region's residents. The bureau was founded by Hans Venhuizen, who acts as concept manager in these processes.

(front cover / page 1, Bureau Venhuizen brochure, Fig. 38)⁴¹⁶

In 1995 an exhibition entitled *The Netherlands as Structural Work of Art* was held at the Netherlands Architecture Institute (NAi) in Rotterdam. At the beginning of an extensive review of the exhibition in the architecture magazine *ARCHIS* Koos Bosma characterized it as “an important experiment in that it covers many centuries and gives a broad interpretation to the term ‘structural work of art’.”⁴¹⁷ Further down the author quotes the “architectural historian and spiritual father of the exhibition and the book,” Toon Lauwen, in his definition of the “structural artwork.” It is regarded as an accomplishment that includes “defences made on earth and water, polders and other land reclamation works, harbors, canals and river improvements; in short, all those works that have artificially changed the look of this country during the last five centuries.”⁴¹⁸

With Lauwen's exhibition and Bosma's review in mind, let me turn now to the text quoted at the beginning. It occupies the whole cover of the informational brochure of the Rotterdam-based Bureau Venhuizen. The text makes a statement about taking a region's cultural history, heritage and art as the point of departure in spatial

planning. Such a statement sounds like a common-sense, if not commonplace approach. What appears less simple to grasp, is the meaning of the capacity of Hans Venhuizen himself, who “acts” as “concept manager in these processes.” If the text is implying an art practice - Venhuizen’s formal training and professional background is indeed the arts - what does art have in a bureau, instead of an atelier, gallery or public space? Or, if it is about a professional planning bureau, what exactly is it commissioned to produce?

Turning to pages three to five (Fig. 39), one sees a number of photographs with captions indicating the locations (e.g., Sao Paulo, Berlin, New York) and themes captured. On page two the last sentence of a text accompanying all photos reads:

The subjects include hybrid forms of historic culture applied in new ways with varying degrees of success; lies in which there is such strong belief that they pass for the truth; grotesque denials of distinctiveness based on the conviction that it should be something else; and phenomenal situations that have resulted from a sometimes almost absurd logic.

A short text on page five encapsulates in very condensed form a description of their expertise: “Bureau Venhuizen culture-based planning and concept management.” One would probably have expected to find this short description on the cover/page

Bureau Venhuizen, Brochure, pages 3-4, © 2003.



one of the brochure, and to find the earlier quoted text from cover-page/page one placed here on page five, rather than the other way round. Nonetheless by page five, one should already have an inkling that it must all have to do with peculiar encounters, with re-visiting the familiar and, for some strange reason, with spatial planning. Page six is black. The double-spread on pages seven and eight reads (Fig. 40):

This brochure is about the methodology applied by Bureau Venhuizen and its background. After introducing the concept of culture-based planning and Bureau Venhuizen's interpretation of it, we move on to an examination of the organization of the process of spatial planning and the concept manager's role in this. The underlying convictions, choices and methods are illustrated using three projects, which show Bureau Venhuizen's methodology in practice. ...

Now, the only thing clear is that the Bureau's methodology will be explained in this brochure. The rest is likely to remain somewhat resistant to attempts at rational interpretation, unless one is acquainted with the "structural work of art" that is the Bureau's home and playground – The Netherlands. A unique case that combines, on the one hand, years of expertise in integrating the professional fields of urban planning, architecture, public constructions and art with, on the other hand, an eclectic range of ideas that might at first sight strike one as strange or peculiar.

Bureau Venhuizen, Brochure, pages 5-6, © 2003.

This brochure is about the methodology applied by Bureau Venhuizen and its background.

After introducing the concept of culture-based planning and Bureau Venhuizen's interpretation of it, we move on to an examination of the organization of the process of spatial design and the concept manager's role in this. The underlying convictions, choices and methods are illustrated using three projects, which show Bureau Venhuizen's methodology in practice.

Amphibious Living, a design competition about housing in which the many qualities of water had to be

utilized optimally; **The making of**, in which a game functions as a generator of ideas, prompting residents and administrators to formulate innovative ideas for spatial planning issues; **Geest en Grond (Soul and Soil)**, culture-based planning in the Dune and Flowerbulb Region, a project spanning a two-year period which gives cultural-historical heritage a key role in spatial planning.

INTRODUCTION

With this last chapter I return to the field of public art in the Netherlands that has already been the background to the analysis of Jeanne van Heeswijk's artistic practice in Part I. The case study here will be Hans Venhuizen and his Bureau, founded in 1999 in Rotterdam. In previous years, he had been working as artist interested in art's relation to urban planning and architecture.⁴¹⁹ By 1999 he was already repositioning his work from the field of art to spatial planning. The Bureau has no other member as permanent as its founder. But certain members also stay for years, such as Francien van Westrenen (2002-07) and Mariette Maaskant (2003-05).⁴²⁰

Venhuizen has developed a methodology with which he investigates cultural elements in regions for which spatial plans are due to be drawn. It should be specified here that spatial planning is the wider professional field containing urban planning. The Netherlands more than anywhere else in the world, is a country where every last inch of land is subject to spatial planning. This is not only because the country is small, but above all because a great part of it consists of artificially made land (polderland), reclaimed from the sea. The outcomes of Bureau Venhuizen projects aim at informing the work of spatial planners and designers. Central to the Bureau's methodology and to my interests here is a group game invented by Venhuizen, entitled *The Making of*.⁴²¹ Participants in the Game are various stakeholders of any given planning case, such as residents, local authority employees, architects, planners and so on.

With Venhuizen's Game as departure point, this chapter also returns to the third proposal of this thesis. Namely that next to concepts, narratives and relations, the projects of engaged, long-term process-based and participatory/collaborative art of the 1990s also produce various kinds of events. The term "events" refers here to various kinds of activities. The forms of these events relate to forms of play and games, as I have elaborated in Part I.4 drawing from Georg Gadamer's concept of play. That discussion evolved around a triangle relation between art-play-reality, which I will pick up again in this chapter. The approach in Part I was based on seeing in this triangle three different domains. The idea of domains relates to the abstract spaces of our conceptualizations of what is art, what is play and what is reality. Perceiving them as domains means regarding them in a kind of spatial relation to one another. With the borders between them and the conditions of each one's autonomy being in constant negotiation. Taking as starting point events organized during projects, the discussion evolved around the idea that the event is something that happens, something that takes place as part of an art project. However the event itself is not considered art in the sense of, for instance, an art performance or happening. Consequently the question was which domain does it belong to? What is its mode of taking place? Why? How? Finally, what role does an event play for the art project as a whole?

As practices are drawn from various fields (e.g., social work, activism) to the domain of art, the same kind of social, cultural, professional or other event like a dinner or a festival, might or might not be taking place as art. Or indeed, it might simultaneously take place on either side of whatever might be that supposed border separating the domain of art from reality, as it were. This idea essentially introduces to the discussion a dimension of time: when is it this, and when is it the other? When and how does it transit from the one to the other - if that is what it does? Or how can

it simultaneously be [in] both?

In what follows, these questions will be channeled into constructing a conceptual category of the event: the event of a transformation that takes place when an activity affects the relations between what were conventionally described as the domains of art and “real” life. Such a category and understanding of the event in art history and theory has no obvious antecedent except in Fluxus events. Fluxus events also turned moments of everyday life into art. However for reasons already briefly given in Part I, Fluxus events comprise a quite different category to that of the events in the participatory/collaborative, public art projects studied here. The concept of the event proposed in this book also has a genealogy in the field of art, only it has to be searched in quite different directions. Part of this chapter is dedicated to demonstrating this genealogy.

I will trace this genealogy by looking back at art and art-related practices that developed during the 20th century in the Netherlands and for which space - especially urban space - has functioned as a trigger of ideas for alternative, utopian models of life and society. These practices can be found, most notably, in the Situationists, Constant (Nieuwenhuis) or even the Provos. These expressions could all be characterized as avant-gardes, as they all proclaimed the absolute necessity of a radical transformation of life and society and developed conceptual models of their envisioned, quite utopian, worlds. However, the paradigm of space functioning as trigger of ideas for what was regarded as *directly applicable* improvements in life – i.e. not envisioned for a distant future - can be found earlier in the century, for example, in the Amsterdam School of Architecture with its attached “communal art” (“gemeenschapskunst”). Later it can be traced in the Arnhem School of Environmental Art. I deliberately chose examples from amongst the most celebrated avant-garde moments of Dutch modernist culture in the 20th century. Not coincidentally, as I will maintain later, they have all played a pivotal role in the development of a genealogy of concepts and practices, which led to the institutionalization of the involvement of artists in architecture and urbanism. This institutionalization resulted, on the one hand, in the birth of a flexible field of public art connected to the sectors of architecture, spatial planning and public constructions in the Netherlands. A field to which I view both Jeanne van Heeswijk and Hans Venhuizen as belonging. Consequently, on the other hand, it also relates to a hybridization of the artist’s role as social agent, symptomatic of which (among other reasons) are cases like Venhuizen’s switch of professional status.

Now, let me sum things up by providing the aims, structure and main theoretical references of this chapter. This chapter aims at demonstrating that forms of play and games have existed throughout the 20th century in Dutch art, where they have had a specific role, and that this role has been inherently linked to certain social roles attributed to art. Most importantly for my interests here, they can be detected in art and art-related avant-garde practices that took space as springboard for ideas of alternative models of life and society. And as I will argue, these practices constitute integral parts in the conceptual and institutional history of the emergence of the hybrid field of public art in the Netherlands. In the first section, “The practice of Venhuizen and the Dutch field of spatial planning,” I will introduce the case study of Hans and Bureau Venhuizen. Two interconnected projects will be provided as example, *The Discovery of the Washlands Model* (Beuningen, 2000-2002) and *New Heritage /*

The Making of H1 (Winssen, Beuningen region, 2001).⁴²² Section two, “Space as a trigger of ideas for alternative models,” is dedicated to drawing a genealogy of art and art-related practices during the 20th century in the Netherlands, which found inspiration in concepts and ideas about space in order to conceive of new models of life and society. The relation of this genealogy to play and events is the object of analysis in section three, “Play forms in art.” Taking a close look at the aforementioned 20th century practices, one can see that they employed play and games-related forms. More specifically, they employed these forms as, say, a kind of interface for experimentations with the application of utopian ideas in their present-day reality. Most obvious examples could be found in situationist games and détournements, in models of Constant’s New Babylon, or in provo games and street events. However, related elements may also be traced in artistic forms developed in earlier 20th century modernist architecture and design, namely in the arrangement of visual and plastic elements on facades of Amsterdam School architecture. The application of play- and games-related forms in artistic experimentations with utopian ideas produced the “event,” in which art temporarily infiltrated into life. In presenting all the above, I will employ several theoretical references in this chapter. In a nutshell: in explaining the conception of play and games I use and its relation to art, I will turn to three theoretical propositions made by Steven Connor about conceptions of play in Modernity and up to the present day.⁴²³ Further down, in explaining the “mechanics” of artistic experimentations with utopian ideas about society, and the abstract category of “events” that is so derived, I will refer foremost to theories about play and games in Johan Huizinga, Marschal McLuhan and Giorgio Agamben.⁴²⁴ All the above will illuminate and give a content to the triangle relation of art-play-reality, especially for art(-related) practices in relation to urban space and its shaping, roughly up to the end of the 1960s. Section four, “The diffusion of play in the administered world” will bring this discussion to the last 10-15 years. While still being at work as evident in Bureau Venhuizen’s game-based methodology, the triangle art-play-reality and its operation seem to have undergone some kind of transformation: a transformation relating to changes within what is (or was) perceived as each one’s separate, autonomous domain. Using Connor’s ideas as departure point, I will examine the role of play and games in Bureau Venhuizen’s practice, in juxtaposition to some recent developments observed by specialists in the professional field of Dutch spatial planning. This last section will conclude with an attempt to investigate and propose possible roles of art and play under the transformed conditions of contemporary culture. Before closing, I should add a note to help the reader in following this long chapter. For reasons of coherence with the structure of all previous chapters in this book, I start in the first section with a presentation of my case study: the practice of Hans and Bureau Venhuizen, including two projects. Then in sections two and three that take a rather historical perspective, the case study appears rather rarely. I return to it and consider it extensively again in section four.

1 THE PRACTICE OF BUREAU VENHUIZEN IN THE DUTCH FIELD OF SPATIAL PLANNING

Bureau Venhuizen

Hans Venhuizen describes the sphere of his Bureau's expertise as "culture-based planning" (culturele planologie). This term was actually introduced in 1998 by Rick van de Ploeg, economist and at the time State Secretary of the Dutch Ministry of Culture. In 2000 the Dutch Government officially employed the term in its four-year cultural policy plan entitled *Culture as Confrontation – Principles on Cultural Policy 2001-2004* (*Cultuur als Confrontatie. Uitgangspunten voor het Cultuurbeleid 2001-2004*).⁴²⁵ According to Hans Venhuizen, five years later "many of those involved still cannot provide a concrete definition of culture-based planning." Nonetheless, "it has become a familiar and accepted term that sparks interest, opens doors and opens budgetary purse strings."⁴²⁶

In Bureau Venhuizen culture-based planning is interpreted as a method applicable in processes of spatial planning. It comprises a careful investigation into existing cultural elements of a region, for which a spatial plan is expected to be drawn up. The usefulness of this method arises partly as a result of commissioners and planners lacking time to adequately contextualize their plans within the existing culture of any region to which they are called to work. Consequently, while a plan or design might look brilliant, the failure of planners to attend to actual local circumstances means that, once a design is inserted into the physical, social and cultural body of a region, it is likely to be rejected, transformed or misused.

In contrast, the first step in the Bureau's method is to research and create an inventory of cultural elements – e.g., physical, architectural or technological – that they call *phenomena*. These elements constitute opportunities, potential springboards for design ideas. Which leads to the second step of *translating*, as Venhuizen explains, the selected phenomena into concepts applicable to the pre-design phase as *tasks*. Hence, based on these concepts and tasks, the third step of the method is elaborating on design *solutions and constraints* for the site-specific case.

A central parameter in Bureau Venhuizen's rating of phenomena is that problems should be regarded as opportunities. Venhuizen all but ignores aspects that appear as problematic in the local circumstances in favour of more promising ones. This is an attitude he had already developed from the early 1990s, before re-conceptualizing himself professionally from "artist" to "concept manager." Back then he used to call it "opportimism:" an opportunistic reinterpretation of problems based on an optimistic view of what is possible. At the Bureau this "opportimistic" attitude seems to have been turned into a practice.⁴²⁷

The specific focus of Bureau Venhuizen is to optimize spatial planning processes. The Bureau is neither involved in the initial stage of deciding to plan, nor in the making or delivery of concrete plans. Rather, it imbues with its methodology planning processes that are already underway, preferably during their early stages. The outcomes of the Bureau's work mainly inform the designers' brief. This is also what concept management is all about, elaborating on concepts derived from "real"-life situations of planning in progress, in order to inform the brief for the final design.⁴²⁸

Throughout their various phases the projects of Bureau Venhuizen include consultation and participatory team work with members of the local population, external professional experts, as well as any other stakeholders of the final plan. There, the Bureau's role is to advocate or lobby for the most widely agreed upon plan, rather than for any of the interested parties, no matter who might have the fairest agenda. To accomplish this impartial advocacy of an optimal plan, teamwork takes various forms: brainstorming and discussion sessions with stakeholders, experts meetings, workshops, opinion polls, interviews. In cases of public, participatory/collaborative art projects – though Bureau Venhuizen does not regard its output as art – some of these activities would fall into what I called “events” in projects. Besides these forms, the central and most original aspect of the Bureau's practice is the game *The Making of* that Hans Venhuizen has devised as a method of examining the best conditions possible for a plan (Fig. 41-43: the Game). The Game is applied during the second and third steps. Representatives of all interested parties are invited to participate in mixed groups of players. Venhuizen himself might or might not function as referee. The game constitutes a method of discovering the best conditions possible for a plan. Participants are split into groups. Each group is given all related information gathered around the case in question, as well as a role. Each group is then called upon to come up with and lobby for a plan proposal on the basis of rational argumentation, regardless of what their personal interests might be. The Game has several rounds and out of each round a proposal is chosen, which is the one that meets the least effective resistance, even if it is not the most inspiring one. *The Making of* essentially gives shape to what is most widely accepted or desirable. Its dynamics are such that dominating depends on the power of argumentation rather than on any positions of power the players might have in the actual planning process. Venhuizen explains:

The game constitutes a methodology, applicable at the stage when decisions about spatial issues have to be made, but it is also essentially an abbreviated



41 - 43 Bureau Venhuizen, The Game “The Making of”
Courtesy of Bureau Venhuizen.



course in design... [that] goes further than simply endeavouring to reach consensus, instead hinging on the process of creation, precipitation and rooting of relevant concepts ... all the people involved are detached from their rigidly defined ideas about the form in which they perceive quality and are made more aware of the constraints within which quality can be realized in their living environment.⁴²⁹

At the moment of writing this paper, the bureau has played the Game some twenty times in different projects. At the same time as aiming at optimizing the different planning processes, the Game should also gradually improve as a process thereby. Thus improving also the effectiveness of Bureau Venhuizen's methodology. The Bureau still does not interfere in the final design and, as Hans Venhuizen himself maintains: "You find the best conditions, but you don't make the best design. What I notice with all the projects we do, as soon as it comes to design I only check if the conditions are met and hope to be interested in the design."⁴³⁰ From his position as concept manager, Hans Venhuizen himself has no real saying on the actual, final plan. The concept manager's authority and autonomy are limited to decisions taken during the investigation of phenomena and the choice of which phenomena are worth translating into tasks for the second and third steps. This limited autonomy and authority, in combination with the "shared authorship" derived from constantly testing out ideas with experts and stakeholders throughout his working process, were determining parameters in redefining his status from artist to concept manager.

According to Hans Venhuizen, the transition he made from producing ideas, models and objects that expressed his personal utopian visions into managing concepts was a natural step, if he wanted to deal with real-life situations.⁴³¹ In "real" life, drawing a plan is a difficult task limited to professional planners. But the early investigation of a planning concept's potential within its real context needs a different expertise. This is found in the creative capacity of artists. Whereas if artists get involved only in later stages when central decisions have already been made, they cannot be

more than inspiration or amateur consultants to professional planners. Nonetheless, as the projects I will describe right below show, that what Bureau Venhuizen's methodology offers can still match the aspirations of public art commissioning bodies. This is because commissioners' aspirations from art might themselves be quite vague.



Two projects in Gelderland:***The Discovery of the Washland Model and New Heritage / The Making of H1***

In 1996 the artists Lon Pennock and Roos Theuws put together the *Beeldende Kunstplan Beuningen (Visual Arts Plan Beuningen)* upon a commission by Beuningen local authorities.⁴³² The commission aimed at introducing art to the washlands area near the village of Beuningen in the province of Gelderland, East Netherlands. Deviating from the commissioner's initial idea of just placing sculptures along the dike, the two artists laid the emphasis not so much on what art to place there, but on how to conceive of art in relation to the washlands landscape. They seemed preoccupied with combining the region's existing – thus understood as authentic - cultural heritage with the man-made landscape and with their own interests as artists in process-based approaches. They saw the region's cultural heritage incorporated mainly in two decaying buildings belonging to former brickworks. Taking these as starting point, they suggested including a project comprised of activities or events like workshops and lectures by visual artists, art students and local residents (amateurs). The art should be derived from these activities in the form of sculpture, video, drawing, text or whatever else. For the co-ordination of all the above, the Foundation From Weurt to Deest (Stichting Van Weurt tot Deest) was created. In 1997 the Foundation commissioned the curator Eveline Vermeulen for a pilot-project based on the *Beeldende Kunstplan Beuningen*.⁴³³ After Vermeulen finished her project in 1998 the Foundation looked for somebody else. Amongst proposals sent mainly by artists, they selected Hans Venhuizen.

There was in the 1996 plan by Pennock and Roos Theuws a sense of order. They understood Beuningen's landscape and industrial heritage as themes and potential settings for the art. Process was their favored approach to art making. Workshops and lectures constituted the method and, finally, works like sculptures or film were the expected final artistic products. When Hans Venhuizen came into play in 1999, his proposal was at once responding to, as well as canceling the above understanding of the commission as an *art* commission.

To be more precise, Venhuizen proposed to leave the washlands untouched as either landscape or theme. Rather, the process through which the washlands' landscape came into being was turned to a conceptual springboard, a *metaphor*. Throughout the country man has intervened in nature to gain land from the water. Especially in polderlands, man has artificially shaped the natural landscapes we see today. Thus, the washlands were metaphorically seen as a typical example of changing attitudes in man's intervention into nature. Initially an intervention full of shortcomings, when people sought to plan the landscape's development down to detail, but were of course unable to predict all imponderable factors affecting nature. Especially significant were changes in the soil, occurring each time that water would inundate the washlands and then recede. Later when planners started leaving "room" for this natural dynamism to unfold, such shortcomings were minimized. Hans Venhuizen saw a "washland model" in this landscape's story that could be translated into a new approach to planning. It could even replace the already dysfunctional Poldermodel, the well-known metaphor of the Dutch landscape applied to the Dutch state's model of consensus:⁴³⁴

Whereas the origins of the Polder Model lie in the struggle against the water, the complete mastery of nature, the *Washland Model* treats nature as a fertile basis that can be used constructively. In this model it is not a case of a resultant form, of the landscape, but on the way in which it has evolved, the process.⁴³⁵

The project that Hans Venhuizen organized lasted about three years and had three phases that included interactive, process-based activities, quite close to the spirit of the 1996 *Beuningen Visual Arts Plan*. Some of the activities such as workshops, meetings, the Game, involving the project's working groups, invited experts, locals etc. fall within the category of events as introduced in Part I. The first phase was preliminary research.⁴³⁶ Thousands of cards were distributed in Beuningen, asking people what they liked, what they did not like and what they missed around their homes, the Beuningen region, and Holland altogether. (Fig. 44) Filling in personal details was optional. Around 500 cards, some 2% of the total number, were returned.⁴³⁷ Symbolic prizes were awarded for the best answers: a KLIKO-bokaal to a woman who complained about garbage (1st prize); a photograph of Leonardo di Caprio visiting From Weurt to Deest to a twelve years old girl who replied that di Caprio is what



45 Bureau Venhuizen, De Uitvinding van het Uiterwaardenmodel. Unpublished report, August 2001. Photo by the author.

she missed the most in Beuningen (2nd prize); participation in the project session to a woman who complained about finding dog shit everywhere (3rd prize); a cheque for 50 guilders to an anonymous person who wished for the growing number of foreigners in the area to leave (4th prize, the money was sent to a local foundation that helped refugees); participation in the sessions for a woman who replied that she had nothing to complain about, being happy with her life (5th prize).⁴³⁸

Hans Venhuizen himself spent time getting to know the area, for instance talking with people in the Saturday market.⁴³⁹ In situ workshops with art and architecture students from the Netherlands, Norway, Poland and Switzerland took place. Groups of students carried out research on themes that Hans Venhuizen had formulated out of the grounding's results. These themes also informed the themes of sessions during the second phase, when the game *The Making of* was also played.⁴⁴⁰ Later, some students spent one day interviewing young people on the street, reaching the conclusion

that the area's youth appeared sufficiently pleased with their lives (Fig. 45). Finally, the sociologist Heitor Frugoli Junior from the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil, was invited to write an essay after spending an intensive week in the area.

The second phase of the project was developed mainly around three sessions: i. innovative living, or empowerment through impoverishment; ii. from dirt to waste; iii. identity versus Image.⁴⁴¹ Participants in the sessions included two Dutch and two foreign experts, two local residents, representatives of the students groups and of the mirror groups.⁴⁴² Texts, photographs, a project by *Recyclicity* (2012 Architects) and the game *The Making of* came out of this phase.

For the region of Beuningen the Game was applied twice. The first time it aimed at "broadly generating ideas for a number of existing situations and future developments in the municipality of Beuningen."⁴⁴³ Its general title was *The Making of Weurt to Deest* and it drew its content from the aforementioned three sessions. There was no concrete planning situation at stake, for which the conditions were investigated in this game. With its culture-based planning approach and its proposal of the washland-model metaphor, the project was not really developed in response to a specific spatial development case in progress. Rather, it was investigating the significant conditions to be taken into account, had there been one. There were spatial developments pending realization – such as a sand mining plan in the village of Winnsen. But Hans Venhuizen was officially involved in the Beuningen washlands' art commission, not in spatial planning.⁴⁴⁴ Thus, Venhuizen's first project, *De Uitvinding van...* ended with a planning conditions brief for Beuningen, formally suspended without a planning case.

Things became more concrete when later Venhuizen was commissioned by Beuningen's municipal council to develop a project linked to Winnsen's pending sand extraction. This project, *New Heritage (Nieuw Erfgoed, 2001)*, was not an art commission. The game *The Making of H1* was played several times over five days, informed also by the previous project. Bureau Venhuizen was called upon to apply their methodology, alongside the washlands' metaphor and their Beuningen experience gained during the previous project. The purpose was to collect as much information as possible about the sand extraction in Winnsen. This information should then be applied to reach decisions about the most practical structural plan for the area.⁴⁴⁵

According to Piet Snellaars, then "Directeur Sector Grondgebied Gemeente Beuningen" and keen advocate of Venhuizen in the local council, Venhuizen's contribution was meant to offset the financial pragmatism of planners. Their landscape design after the sand mining was expected to downgrade the landscape's aesthetic qualities and hence also the residents' quality of life.⁴⁴⁶ Interestingly, the traditional inhabitants of the region, mainly farmers, had already sold land for the extraction and generally cared less than the newer inhabitants. The latter had paid to move there for the landscape qualities that were now under threat.⁴⁴⁷

New Heritage took two weeks of intensive work. During the first one, various experts put on the table the existing situation, discussed it and finally played the ideas generating game *The Making of H1*. During the second week, inhabitants were given all existing information and the opportunity to develop their own proposals, again culminating in the application of the game methodology.

Let me herewith sum up some central points about Bureau and Hans Venhuizen's practice. Hans Venhuizen has developed a self-invented area of professional

expertise, concept management, with which his creative skills and expertise as artist become applicable to spatial planning processes. Although it is a somewhat vague expertise in its content and difficult to disseminate beyond Bureau Venhuizen, concept management resonates with the so-called field of culture-based planning, officially introduced in the Dutch governmental 2000-04 cultural policy plan. Culture-based planning refers to a practice at the verge of spatial planning and cultural production. While similarly vague in its content as Venhuizen's expertise, both are clearly conceived as filling up gaps in the work of spatial planners and designers. Venhuizen has officially abandoned his artistic status, as his approach is oriented foremost towards applicability. Even if, in practice, concept management can still respond or adjust to art commissioning calls. His methodology is based on the Game *The Making of*. In the final analysis, I would maintain that what Bureau Venhuizen's unorthodox methodology produces is thinking about the relation between contemporary spatial planning and society, particularly the Dutch. As the *Washland Model* project shows, ideas derived from the centuries-long practice of human intervention in nature in the Netherlands are metaphorically transferred to the thinking and organization of Dutch societal and political life.

2 SPACE AS A TRIGGER OF IDEAS FOR ALTERNATIVE MODELS

There is nothing exceptionally new about Hans Venhuizen having a somewhat vague professional identity, constructed at the verges of art and spatial planning. In fact hybrid and fluid capacities emerging between art and professions relating to the shaping of man's living environment have a tradition built up throughout Dutch modernism of the 20th century and still continue today. It has not in all cases been necessary to negotiate whether one should be called an artist or something different, such as concept manager. Nonetheless, one sees a consistency in developing a theoretical background to support the necessity of imbuing the fields of architecture and environmental planning with art. There are two aspects of this Dutch tradition of art in architecture and planning that are of interest here. The first one is theoretical, the second rather practical.

On the one hand, at an abstract, conceptual level art has been useful in exploring the limits of what was possible or desirable and producing alternative ideas and models. In theory these touched the ground – their inspirers would meticulously work out the details of their ideas and models - but their full realization was aiming at the skies. Examples of what is meant here can be found already in the idealism of the so-called communal art of the Amsterdam School of Architecture (mainly 1914-1923), but most importantly in the utopianism of art and art-related avant-gardes that followed the 1939-1945 war, namely in Situationism International (1957-1972), Constant's *New Babylon* (1965-1974) and even in the Provo movement (1965-1967). These were neither exclusively nor explicitly art or art-related phenomena. The full realization of the ideal models of life that they proposed would render art redundant. What art did in the existing, not very ideal world, was to mediate between reality and utopian visions. If visions were to become reality, there would be no need for intermediary agents. In the above context, the support of art or art-related commissions

within the architecture and spatial planning sectors had at various times served as an embracing - honest or showcase - of experimentation and innovation. These are two qualities for which these professions in the Netherlands have during the 20th century built up their own international reputation.

From an organizational and administrative point of view the inclusion of art in architecture and planning gave birth to institutional structures that I will henceforth call the public art sector. While the foundations were laid in the 1950s, it was the 1970s that saw the institutionalization of public art, the heyday of the so-called Arnhem School of Environmental Art. The aims, operational structures, policies and strategies of this hybrid and light institutional apparatus have depended upon, as much as they have mirrored, tendencies and priorities of the larger professional fields of art, architecture and urbanism. These being the fields, to which the public art sector has been attached to up to today.

So in the context of the birth of concepts and institutional structures established between art, architecture and urbanism during the 20th century in the Netherlands, I will herewith elaborate on how space has functioned as a trigger of ideas for alternative models of life and society. The elaboration below will take the form of a twofold reflection focusing on specific moments in the history of modernism and avant-gardes in the Netherlands. Later in section four I will bring this discussion to the present, returning also to Venhuizen's example.

Looking back in time - concepts

At the level of ideas one should not limit oneself to researching public art, but more widely consider *art and art-related movements and practices* where space has functioned as a trigger of ideas for alternative models of life and society. There is a tradition of them in the Netherlands during the 20th century. They offered models of life as a whole, the full realization of the most radical of which was mostly located in a utopian future. No matter how revolutionary or extreme in their ideas and manifestations, these tendencies have all but a marginal place in Dutch history. The examples chosen here have all met with local and/or international interest within the fields of culture, architecture and urban planning during their time. Besides, the fact that in their origins they have all had a group character and occasionally even an international one (e.g., Situationism International) also attests to them being expressions of shared, rather than individual, visions. The following examples are taken from some of the internationally most celebrated moments of Dutch modernism.

Still closer to 19th century ideas than the 20th century avant-gardes, the Amsterdam School of Architecture and its communal art gave their most characteristic works in the 1920s.⁴⁴⁸ In the best, mostly early examples, artistic elements were extensively used on facades of buildings, as well as on bridges and street furniture to provide each one with a rather expressionistic character.⁴⁴⁹ Facades were complete with decorative elements ranging from allegorical or mythological sculptural figures, projecting stairwells and balconies, parabolic or truncated gables, windows of various shapes and sizes, surface patterning of brick walls and much more.⁴⁵⁰ These elements organized rhythmically the architectural surfaces of entire building blocks and even neighborhoods, rather than single buildings. Art in architecture was important

for one particular function: to accentuate the architects' ideals. Deceptively irregular, the orchestration of shapes, sizes, textures and colors was made with both the building's residents and the random passer-by in mind.⁴⁵¹ The architects believed that the environment within which people lived could influence their spiritual and social development. They attributed especially to art the power to uplift people spiritually, to bestow goodness on anyone encountering it and to create a sense of community. Therefore it was important that people's entire living environment – the home, the street, the city – should be imbued with art, even made into art. Quite importantly, their architecture was part of a larger social program in Amsterdam: it was designed in response to the pressing housing needs of accommodating the large numbers of workers coming from the countryside to work in the city.⁴⁵²

Less preoccupied with bricks and mortar of architectural public or private environments and more with a more abstract perspective of urban atmospheres and psychologies, were the Situationists (1957-ca.1972).⁴⁵³ But they too took the spaces of cities as the sites where a utopian application of new principles would lead to a new life. Their principles came under the concept of "Unitary Urbanism," meant as antidote to a city-born monster, the monster of the spectacle that disintegrated reality for the consumption of its parts. The Situationists rejected the construction or manipulation of visual or material forms in space as a reaction to the inescapable commodification of any object- or image-based production. For them, the way in which artists could be instrumental in changing the world would be by "converting art from a precious, consumable object to a principle permeating everyday life. Transformations would take place in quotidian, everyday uses of the city and its buildings, revitalization of art through a negation of its traditional values."⁴⁵⁴ Part of the Situationists practices consisted in experimental investigation of how to map out the psychogeography of cities, how to manipulate atmospheres and ambiances or to construct "concrete situations." Experiments took the form of urban games, psychogeographic walks with walkie-talkies, methods of detournement applied in painting, maps and collages.

The Situationists' vision shared similar grounds with Constant's city of New Babylon, the city of mobility, fluidity, transience and play. In New Babylon the architecture was the direct expression of a new man, the *Homo Ludens*.⁴⁵⁵ The man whose life could become play: machines would substitute human labor so that people would have the time to freely nurture the full potential of their imagination and creativity. In the urban and architectural designs of New Babylon space and social life were seen as one. According to Constant: "Spatiality is social. In New Babylon social space is social spatiality. Space as a psychic dimension (abstract space) cannot be separated from the space of action (concrete space)."⁴⁵⁶ In the models of New Babylon desires were turned to daily life, habitation to a game. For Constant architecture and urban planning affected human behavior.⁴⁵⁷

Furthermore, one should add here the Provos who appeared in the early to mid-1960s in the city of Amsterdam.⁴⁵⁸ The subversive lucidity and absurdness of their performative public manifestations appears at first glance as the complete opposite to the intellectual seriousness and philosophical systematicity of all aforementioned examples. Besides, just like other groupings and movements such as the *Kabouters* and the *Krakers* that succeeded them, the Provos did not emerge as an artistic or cultural movement: rather, they had a social and political character. They were revolutionary

youth cultures expressing resentment of bourgeois lifestyles and a love for city life. In the character of their public happenings and statements there were lots of Dadaistic artistic elements. In essence, they turned to stages of their performative appearances not only the streets and squares of Amsterdam, but also political events such as the wedding of princess Beatrix to the German Claus von Amsberg in 1966, or social issues such as anti-smoking campaigns. What interests us here about the Provos is that all the aspects of their interests and actions had a common denominator: they were both derived from as well as inscribed within the space of Dutch cities. This could be maintained about their provocative attacks against the increasingly consumerist and boringly petit-bourgeois Dutch society of the early 1960s. It could also be said of their peaceful White Plans devised not only for a playful and creative, but also socially and environmentally more sensitive society.⁴⁵⁹

To conclude, what all the aforementioned examples share is that their conceptualizations of innovative or alternative models of everyday life were articulated as models for the formation, habitation, organization and use of space - especially urban space. Especially for those emerging after the 1939-1945 war these models were concise expressions of visions about society's emancipation of post-war social dead ends. But they also reacted to emerging phenomena like mass consumerism, the commodification of culture, the society of the spectacle, the anonymity of the city. The most radical utopians were mostly aware that a total transformation of life and society - both the fundamental precondition for the realization of their ideas as much as their ultimate aspiration - would never come about.⁴⁶⁰ Nevertheless, they did elaborate in full seriousness the details of their projects not only conceptually, but also with experiments or single project applications of their models in "real" life.

Looking back in time – structures

A historical context For all the utopian, over-ambitious or however else one might characterize the aspirations of the above visionaries, they did meet with interest. Today they count as landmarks in 20th century Dutch culture. Amsterdam School architects were central in the implementation of Amsterdam's transformation as a walk today around the districts of Spaardammerbuurt, Rivierenbuurt or the Mercatoplein will still attest to. The Situationists and Constant influenced ideas especially of later generations of architects and urban planners. Even some Provo ideas like legalizing marijuana were adopted by Dutch state authorities.

The concrete application of utopian models that were triggered by ideas relating to space, even if mostly in small-scale and short-lived versions (Amsterdam School is an exception here) on the terrains of "real" life, indicates that the respective professional fields or disciplines saw some potential there. The interest of urban planners, architects, but also policy makers and administrators in the applicability of artistic creativity as inspiration or solution provider to concerns of their own, created opportunities and places for artists to enter the processes of professional architecture and spatial planning. A number of artists were anyway keen to serve society. Many saw such opportunities as an optimal way to integrate their work and skills in the reconstruction of the built environment, the formation of the new cityscapes.

Organizations promoting the integration of art into architecture and construction were set up as early as the early 1950s.⁴⁶¹ In the following decades they supported

a wide range and number – in comparison to other Western countries at the time – of activities and commissions for public art. In this field of public art, the philosophical or theoretical substratum of art's relevancy for the spatial planning disciplines was more than a mere reflection of acknowledgment by architects and planners of the conceptual strength of new ideas in art: from the perspective of today, there were processes underway at a social, cultural but also economic and political level in Dutch society for which the philosophical underpinnings of art's role in public space met concerns of political decision-makers.⁴⁶²

This is not the place for extensive historical analysis, however some developments specific to the post-war Netherlands should be mentioned briefly, in order to illuminate how political parameters related to art's relevancy for architecture and urban planning. The 1939-1945 war had left various places, including almost the entire city of Rotterdam, in ruins. This destruction of the infrastructure, coupled with rising post-war birth-rates and the gradual arrival of immigrant workers (*gastarbeiders*) created in the subsequent decades a pressing demand for new housing.⁴⁶³ The shortage of land and the threat of floods that occasionally caused major disasters – as in 1953 when almost 2,000 people drowned – had in any case been plaguing the area for centuries. Consequently, as it has become a cliché to say about the Dutch, they were forced to invent ways of mastering nature, as well as to develop a mentality where the primacy of the collective over the individual was understood as survival strategy. In the 20th century the spectacular development of technology rendered possible engineering undertakings of unprecedented size, such as the *Zuiderzee* and *Delta* projects (1958-1996), and the large-scale draining of polders.⁴⁶⁴ The positive consequences of these projects – for example in agriculture – coupled with the boom of the national economy from the late 1950s, led to a sense of civic pride.

However, people's attitude towards the above developments changed during the 1960s.⁴⁶⁵ The impersonal, concrete architecture, the artificiality of the new urban as well as natural landscape (mainly in polderlands), coupled with the advent of mass culture and individualism in city life, became a source of concern. This concern evolved around people's alienation from their living environment, from nature and from each other.⁴⁶⁶ In this context the integration of art into architecture was increasingly seen by architects, planners and policy makers as a way to imbue the designed environment with elements of variety, points of reference and orientation. So as to somehow make up for the loss of authenticity in people's living spaces.⁴⁶⁷ Besides, according to Camiel van Winkel, conceptions about the capacity of art to perform such social and cultural roles should be considered also in the light of Dutch society's secularization. As secularization accelerated from the 1960s onwards, it was the environmental artists of the 1970s who most concretely became recipients of the above as expectations:

The environmental artist can in some sense be seen as an instrument that Dutch society made use of to fill a particular gap. In a nutshell the programme of the welfare state boils down to mitigating and alleviating the negative effects on society of the capitalist system; to adjusting a modernization process perceived as blind. In the face of progressive secularization this programme acquired something of the character of spiritual surrogate.⁴⁶⁸

Introducing structures Under these circumstances, already in the early 1950s there were initiatives both from artists as well as from the Dutch state promoting the integration of art into architecture. The Association of Practitioners of Monumental Art (Vereniging van Beoefenaars der Monumentale Kunsten, VbMK, my translation) was founded in 1952. The term “monumental art” (“monumentale kunst”), extensively used at the time, referred to art that was created for a specific place or building. Such public art was regarded as the most appropriate for bringing art close to the people.⁴⁶⁹ VbMK was behind numerous cases during the 1950s, in which architects, as well as commissioners from the business world took interest in the work of monumental artists.⁴⁷⁰ In 1955 another body was formed, the Liga Nieuwe Beelden, that expressed a broader vision than the VbMK of the synthesis of the arts and their integration into architecture. From 1956 architects were also accepted as members. During the 1950s the Liga drew inspiration also from the pre-war artistic ideas of the Bauhaus and De Stijl. Later, in the 1960s, their ideals took a more social turn, aspiring at improving the quality of people’s life by means of improving their living environment.

On the side of state-promoted post-war initiatives, the cultural policy agendas for art in public spaces concentrated on the art’s alleged power to educate and enlighten a nation facing a post-war moral crisis. The establishment of the 1%-for-the-arts law (percentageregeling) in 1951 - which meant that 1% of the budget for any public construction project would be allocated to visual art - was partly legitimized on such morality-oriented, educational convictions about the role of art.⁴⁷¹ Henceforward, the Government Buildings Agency (Rijksgebouwendienst) created within its projects and structures more or less permanent hubs for art, which continue to exist in changing formats up to today.⁴⁷²

By the early 1970s the ground was fertile for the institutionalization of the public art sector. Institutionalization in the sense of its both becoming ideologically accepted and absorbed by the establishment, as well as seeing the establishment of its own organizational structures. That was partly due to the pre-existence of organizational structures like those mentioned above. At the same time it seems that Dutch political, social and religious elites came to believe that a partial embracement of the ideas and spirit of the 1960s social and artistic movements would be in the best interests of society’s internal renewal and international image.⁴⁷³

In the context of these developments the importance of the artist’s role in the shaping of man’s living environment - my specific interest here - was also established institutionally during the 1970s. This happened most notably in the shape of the so-called Arnhem School of Environmental Art. Theirs was a completely abstract geometrical art, focused principally on sculptural forms designed site-specifically for particular buildings, architectural complexes, squares and other public spaces. The ideas of environmental artists met with a very positive reception towards the end of the 1960s and up to the second half of the 1970s. These artists took a phenomenological approach, according to which people’s living environment - especially the built environment - had a determining influence on the shaping of people’s personality and behavior. Therefore it was essential to offer people a stimulating environment, imbued with elements that could provide points of identification and orientation within space. Such elements seemed to be painfully lacking in the artificiality of the recently

drained landscapes of the polders, as much as in the changing cityscapes, especially wherever new districts had emerged.

Schools, universities, health institutions, squares, playgrounds, practically any place that counted as public space was potential recipient of art. Characteristically, these were abstract, geometrical art works, preferably integrated into the specific architectural design of a place, rather than autonomous sculptures plugged into already designed architectural environments.

The ideas of environmental artists about the artist's role in the formation of the environment had a great impact on official policies for culture. This impact is evident, for instance, in the increasing number of public art commissions, as well as of the artists' growing professional prestige within the Government Buildings Agency.⁴⁷⁴

Accordingly, the Ministry of Welfare, Public Health and Culture (Ministerie van Welzijn, Volksgezondheid en Cultuur, my translation) supported the involvement of artists in an impressively broad range of architecture and planning work. In retrospect, the political expectations placed on art in ministerial papers appear quite wild, especially when measured against the rather modest results of realized projects. The extract below from a ministerial report refers to two committees that coordinated the involvement of artists in the fields of architecture and spatial planning. It speaks volumes about the excessively broad scope and number of areas the artists were asked to contribute.

POBK ("Practical Research Support-group for the Visual Arts") was in comparison with RAC ("Governmental advisory committee for the visual environment in relation to architecture and spatial organization") more multifaceted from the outset. It also included an advisory committee for projects. The difference to RAC was that POBK str6ed to provide artists with a place not only in construction processes, but also in six more "areas of work." The altogether seven areas of work were: 1. *architecture and spatial organization*, 2. *techniques of visual assignments*, 3. *forms of cultural work for scholastic and extracurricular education and their supervision*, 4. *recreation services*, 5. *activities for working situations*, 6. *forms of service provision and*, 7. *advising and coaching*.⁴⁷⁵ [My emphasis]

The involvement of artists in all these areas of architecture and spatial planning needed to have some ideological legitimization. This was epitomized in the form of umbrella philosophical concepts such as "alienation," "identification," "orientation," "use" and "experience."⁴⁷⁶ These concepts were presented as conditions or criteria for the quality of man's living environment. Artists were considered exceptionally skilled for imbuing the work of planners with those qualities.⁴⁷⁷ Consequently, the involvement of artists in the space shaping processes counted as quality improvement agent. The reasoning on what was to be the content of these concepts was rather vague. This vagueness was partly due to the diversity of agents involved in processes of architecture and environmental planning, in the work of all of whom some artistic contributions could potentially be injected.⁴⁷⁸ Inevitably, for each one of these agents the content of "alienation," "identification," "orientation," "use" and "experience" varied significantly.

The realization of this as a problem is clearly communicated in a report titled *The Care for Design (De Zorg voor de Vormgeving, my translation)*, delivered to and published by the Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social Affairs (Ministerie van Cultuur, Recreatie en Maatschappelijke Werk, CRM) in 1978. The following extract from the introduction to this publication gives a taste of the variety and diversity of professional specializations and organizations, within the work of which artistic contributions were diffused.

Out of the demand for the creation of more connections in policies within the field, the Minister of CRM appointed in 1977 a committee (overleg ingesteld) to consider ways in which to coordinate more effectively the tasks of several services, all of which were busy with the visual arts in relation to the built environment. Participants in the committee were representatives of the *Foundation Wonen, The Committee Artworks in Schools, the National Committee (Overleg) Regional Culture, The State Committee for the Design in relation to Architecture and Spatial Organization, the Support group for practical research in the Visual Arts, the Department of the Aesthetic Environment of the PTT, the Government Building Agency, the Arts Directorate of the Ministry of CRM and the Department of Cultural Policy Preparation of the Ministry of CRM.*⁴⁷⁹ [My emphasis]

The commission that was formed on the above ministerial initiative came to exactly the conclusion I reached above. There was lack of clarity with regard to criteria of quality, because each service had its own interpretation of what the terms “alienation,” “identification” etc. meant. Therefore the commission saw it as its task to try to clarify these terms.⁴⁸⁰

Conclusions: losses, gains and conclusions for the coming generations

The institutionalization of vagueness By the end of the 1970s it was realized that the artists’ contribution in all aforementioned sectors, as well as the presence of artworks within the spaces of people’s everyday life, could by no means fulfill the qualitative and quantitative goals laid down by policy makers and artists alike. One of the reasons behind the failure of Environmental Art in particular, was the difficulty for most people in comprehending the artworks’ abstract and geometrical shapes and forms - let alone comprehending the connections between the art works’ forms and the public role they were meant to perform as art. This art was seriously expected to have a concrete function: to create an enlivening and stimulating for the senses architectural environment, by means of “form and color, space and movement, material and texture.”⁴⁸¹ With this phenomenological understanding of human perception and of the shaping of human behavior, the environmental artists wanted to provoke an interplay of variety and coherence at a spatial and formal level. Such an enrichment of the (architectural) environment should subsequently be enriching of people’s experience. Environmental art should open up opportunities for them to find points of orientation and identification within their rapidly changing urban surroundings.⁴⁸² Nonetheless, as people had difficulties comprehending the abstract forms of this art in the first place, the assimilation of the

world around them through these forms was highly unlikely.

When later in the 1990s social engagement made a dynamic reappearance in Dutch public art a similar difficulty of incomprehensibility seemed to be intrinsic to it. The amount of text that has accompanied all forms of public art – whether object- or process-based – attests to the two principal factors of public art’s inherent difficulty in making itself understood by a general public: the difficulty of comprehending the artistic intention in the form it was given in the artwork, as well as the imperative to justify the public role of art for all parties involved in its realization.

Despite a rapid decline of interest in environmental and generally in socially oriented public art during the 1980s, the institutionalization of the artist’s role in the shaping of the environment was already officially established in the Netherlands. This is what interests me here. Together with the diversity of disciplines and institutional structures (e.g., in urban planning) that the artist had officially entered, came also the de-facto hybridization of the artist’s role. In the understanding of the content, context and aims of the artist’s role in organizations as diverse as, for instance, those mentioned in the report *De Zorg voor de Vormgeving* quoted above (Stichting Wonen, Commissie Kunstwerken aan Scholen and so on), the only common denominator was the artist him- or herself as contributing agent.

The question of clarifying and justifying the content of the artist’s roles, skills and contribution in all those sectors (see again *De Zorg voor de Vormgeving*) should at a meta-level be understood as a rhetorical one. The institutionalization of the artist’s role was in essence the institutionalization of vagueness and ambiguity, the official acknowledgment of their necessity in the shaping of man’s living environment. The elements that art had since the postwar years and throughout the 1970s been asked to contribute to public spaces were by definition vague: to tackle people’s alienation from their living and working environment; to help them adjust to technological advances in automation, communication and the energy sector that were changing people’s patterns of habitation and the use and perception of space in everyday life; to bring a sense of community and human scale to the rapidly expanding and thoroughly planned and programmed urban environments; to compensate for the loss of nature’s mystery and wildness in the artificial landscapes of the polders; to maintain spiritual reference points, to help retain a sense of the sublime in space after society’s secularization. All in all, the artist’s role had to be ambiguous and hybrid by definition. The diffusion of artists in various sectors facilitated the performance of this role.

For their part the environmental artists during the 1970s were in fact willing to give up the autonomy and even the individual artistic authority of their works for the sake of integrating art into architecture and spatial planning.⁴⁸³ From this perspective artists were only one step away from trading their artistic capacity for a different name. Actually, the more seriously and willingly an artist would take any of the aforementioned roles of art in public spaces and try to *really do* something there, the more understandable becomes a change, a disregard for, or a strategic use of the connotations of the word “artist” as a means to one’s ends. However, a discrepancy could be created by a complete denouncement of one’s artistic capacity: the conception of art as an autonomous field, and by definition elusive in its parameters, had been a precondition of the technocrats’ initial interest in it.

Anyhow from the mid-1990s onwards some artists like Hans Venhuizen did change the name of their profession (here to “concept manager”). Others declared themselves disinterested in whether they are called artists or not. It also became common to see artists taking up jobs as intermediaries in public art commissioning in addition to their “autonomous” art production.⁴⁸⁴ The number of similar cases reveal that some transformation in conceptions about art must have taken place. It was a transition that the institutionalization of the artist’s hybridity had prepared the ground for, and the environmental artists occupied exactly this transitional terrain.

An as yet a-topian shift By and large, the above observations especially from the 1970s to the present are symptomatic of a transition away from Modernism’s utopian visions and ideas about art towards a subsequent situation. A situation, where utopias appear not to be relevant anymore.⁴⁸⁵ Environmental art could be regarded here as the epiphenomenon of this transition. It indicates the point when a paradigm shifts. The phenomenon of institutionalizing the seemingly monumental naiveté of artists convinced of their ideas’ direct applicability to “real” life situations (that artistic forms could have the power to [re]shape people’s mentalities and behaviors), should be understood as indicative of a paradigm shift in conceptions about the relations and roles within the triangle vision-art-reality.

For Situationism International, Constant’s *New Babylon* and even for the Provos the real implementation of their visions could only go part and parcel with a thorough transformation of the world into a brand new place, where art would be rendered redundant. What art was offering in their present world were models for what everyday life would be like in the utopian cities of the future. However, in the here and the now it was within the domain of art that visions could take shape beyond the constraints of what was possible and realizable. One could quote here Constant to illuminate this point. Talking about *New Babylon* in 1980, six years after the complete project was exhibited in the Gemeentemuseum in the Hague, Constant formulated in a most insightful way what was feasible and what was not from his project.

Utopia in the true sense of the word ceases to exist, for nothing is a priori unreal unless, like eternal life, it contravenes the laws of science. *New Babylon* is based on facts that do not contravene the law of science: automation of production, disappearance of human production work, free disposal of the major part of lifetime for virtually everyone, activation of that time by inventive behaviour, the creation of life. These facts prompt several conclusions: freedom of movement, no need of a fixed abode, a built environment with variable functions, movable construction of a micro-structure.

Up to this point, it is possible to form a fairly clear idea of an as yet uninhabitable world. It is more difficult to populate this world with people who live so very differently from ourselves: we can neither dictate nor design their playful or inventive behaviour in advance. We can only invoke our fantasy and switch from science to art. It was this insight that prompted me to stop working on the models and to attempt in paintings and drawings, however approximately, to create some new Babylonian life.⁴⁸⁶

Scientifically or technologically speaking, New Babylon was a feasible plan to realize. Planning people's behavior was the utopian endeavor. One could only speculate and envision it. Consequently the domain of art was better suited than architecture for allowing imagination to take off.

But there is another aspect why the most radical of the avant-garde plans like *New Babylon*, Unitary Urbanism or the White Plans ought to remain unrealizable. This is something that Constant, the Situationists and the Provos occasionally appear to be aware of in their writings. And due to which the absurd cost of *New Babylon*, or the ludicrousness of the provo happenings and statements could be seen as guerilla tactics persistently keeping their projects at the level of the unrealizable. Namely, stripped of the precondition of a new world, a fully transformed place, single ideas could be manipulated and hijacked by the cycle of capitalist production and see their realization as products for bourgeois consumption. They would be assimilated by that, which their inspirers had set out to oppose: a society of consumerism, artificiality and the spectacle.

In fact this did happen after not too long. Visions became reality in reified versions, which is a major reason why utopias appear naïve and not relevant anymore. Concepts of cities introduced by Situationists such as the urban atmospheres can be traced in how the tourist industry conceptualizes and markets the uniqueness of cities. Think of, for instance, Amsterdam as the city of alternative spaces and cultures. The character of cultural and social movements of the 1960s and '70s has been turned into clichés exploited to attract tourism.⁴⁸⁷ Ideas of Constant about architectural complexes for New Babylon's play-spaces have been realized in the non-places of shopping malls, airports and leisure centers configured to the game of consumption.⁴⁸⁸ While some of the Provo White Plans and other social campaigns such as the free marijuana have been successfully assimilated by policy makers to tame locals and attract foreigners.

3 PLAY FORMS IN ART

In Part I.4 about the production of Events in the practice of Jeanne van Heeswijk I drew extensively from Georg Gadamer's notion of play, in order to analyze the relation between projects and their events, as well as to demonstrate how this relation functions in art and what forms of representation are produced there. Gadamer formulated a notion of play to explain "the mode of being of the work of art and its hermeneutic significance."⁴⁸⁹ In other words, a play back-en-fro between viewer and artwork is what takes place, what happens, every time a viewer encounters a work of art. In that sense, in Gadamer's theory play is there to describe the event of the encounter and, subsequently, the interpretation of artworks, the event of aesthetic experience. Play constitutes the hermeneutic significance of this encounter. Gadamer's theory of play as the mode of being of the work of art and its hermeneutic significance could no longer be applicable in interpreting the encounter with projects like those of Van Heeswijk. The reason is that the events organized within such projects are not set apart from the viewer who encounters them, as happens with the forms of painting, sculpture or drama theatre before the 1960s. Rather, the viewer participates

in the form of the art project itself. However, Gadamer's notion of play per se is still very relevant.

Gadamer was not the first in modern Western thought to introduce the relation between art and play. The relation is rooted in modern Western thought. Kant, formally the "engineer" of modern Western thinking who divided the domains of Reason, Ethics and Aesthetics, had originally included play together with art in the latter domain.⁴⁹⁰ In the evolution of Kantian thought by most of his followers, art took over. Art was serious, significant, could express the Higher and the Idealistic. Play was the opposite. It was fun, designated to children, good for stimulating the imagination, but not for the development of higher beliefs and ideals and surely not for rational thinking. Yet at the heart of the form of *judgment* that Kant had called *aesthetic*, there was the notion of free play.

In this section I will try to show that the avant-gardes discussed above employed play and game-related forms in their experimentations with infiltrating art into life. This means that the triangle art-play-reality that Venuizen employs in his professional practice has a genealogy behind it. In this genealogy forms of play and games functioned as interfaces for temporary experimentations with the envisioned utopian ideas. Investigating a genealogy of forms is important here, since the target of this thesis is to analyze the forms produced by a certain kind of public art. And through that analysis, to examine how this art relates to its social and political context. Forms of play and games are central in the practice of Bureau Venhuizen. Utilizing skills from his artistic background, Hans Venhuizen has devised the Game as a method optimizing spatial planning processes. Moreover, a certain playfulness is inherent in the humor and the "opportunism" of his whole attitude.

In discussing the genealogy of avant-garde practices in relation to the use of forms of play and games I will leave Gadamer behind. Instead I will take as guide, three propositions about the conception of play in modernity and up to the present day introduced by Steven Connor in a keynote talk given in 2005 under the title "Playstations. Or, Playing in Earnest."⁴⁹¹ I will argue that the conceptions of play proposed by Connor are inherently linked to conceptions of art as discussed in the previous section. That is, in cases where space functioned as trigger of ideas for alternative models articulated by the means of art.

Now, in the midst of all the above it should not be forgotten that this chapter is about the events produced within projects. At a first level, the term "events" refers to meetings, workshops and other group activities that Bureau Venhuizen organizes in its projects. In accordance to what was also suggested about Jeanne van Heeswijk, these events "activate" a project's ideas and scenarios into something happening, something taking place with a certain theme and at a particular place and time. Various people participate usually in these events, which is partly a reason why this art is characterized as public and participatory. In Venhuizen projects the models for these events originate in professional (e.g., opinion polls), educational (e.g., students' workshops) or leisure-time (e.g., the Game) activities. Unlike Jeanne van Heeswijk, in Bureau Venhuizen's practice they are formally presented as furnishing the concept manager's professional methodology, rather than an art project.

At a more theoretical level, that what happens when forms of play and games are used as interfaces for temporary experimental transitions from reality to utopia

through art can be called an “event.” Notions of “event” connected to notions of play can be found in some theories about play (e.g., Gadamer, about the event of the encounter between viewer and art work, see here Part I.4). In such theories, a category of the event sometimes refers to collective activities and it comes part and parcel with the domain and function of play. In my area of interest, the “event” that is found in hybrid practices that attempt to infiltrate art into “real” life, will become itself a theoretical tool. To explain how this works, I will go through theoretical approaches of play and games provided by Marshall McLuhan and, principally, Giorgio Agamben, both of whom draw heavily from ethnology.⁴⁹²

With regard to the structure of this section, I will start with Connor’s three propositions about play starting with his presentation of play and art in Kant. Then I will move on briefly to Huizinga, McLuhan and Agamben’s approaches, where play and games are taken as clues for the analysis of culture. With this theoretical framework in mind, I will subsequently return to explain how forms of play and games are present in the examples of Dutch 20th century art and art-related avant-gardes referred to earlier. Finally, in the last section Connor’s third proposition about the present situation - in which the modern paradigm seems to have entered a transformation - will be linked to the example of the practice of Bureau Venhuizen.

Looking back in time – play in modern thought

In his keynote lecture given for the opening of the European School on *Playtime! The Cultures of Play, Gaming and Sport* (ICA, London, 2005), Steven Connor suggested that there are three broad propositions, to which he would try to recruit his audience. The propositions were as follows:

The first is that there is a distinctively modern conception of play, formed from a configuration of law and freedom. Secondly, this conception of play powerfully informs a modern sense of the powers and limits of the human subject, especially as that subject is itself held to be formative of modernity. Thirdly, contemporary conditions of play have tended both to generalise it, removing it from its specialised place and function and dissolving the bond between play and the human. This should make us wonder what a general diffusion of play, throughout and beyond the sphere of human action, a play that no longer knows its place, might entail or portend.⁴⁹³

One could describe Connor’s lecture altogether as a concise journey through a history of Western thought about play from classical antiquity to the present, preoccupied mostly with modernity. A couple of pages after the above quoted paragraph he refers to the crucial point of late Enlightenment-early Romantic thought. He underlines the role of Kant and Schiller there, who first paid serious attention to play and formed a conception of it that remained at work throughout modern thought. Kant’s conception of play, as formulated in his 1790 *Critique of Judgment*, relates to his category of aesthetic judgment. This is a form of judgment based on the free play of the imagination and connected to man’s encounter with art.⁴⁹⁴ Connor explains:

Kant emphasises the importance of a form of reflection exercised in the absence of rules or preexisting concepts. It is a form of judgement he calls aesthetic, and that would come to be associated with reflection on works of art, though this was not Kant's exclusive focus. At the heart of Kant's theory of aesthetic judgement is the notion of the "free play" of imagination and judgement.⁴⁹⁵

Further on Connor distinguishes two most prominent features of the power of imagination, that is, the power of nonconceptual thought that lies at the heart of aesthetic judgment:

The real importance here lies in the word which modifies the notion of play. What matters for Kant is not so much the playfulness, as the *freedom* of nonconceptual thought. This thought is free, not because, as Aristotle and Aquinas feared, it was insubordinate or licentious, and therefore conducted to chaos, but because it was unconstrained by the cramping structures of human thought. This is a notion that would have had no meaning before the reflexive alertness to the nature of thinking itself which arose in and characterizes the Enlightenment. If systematic doubt was the way in which the mind achieved access to itself for Descartes, for Kant it is free play that allows the mind to elude itself. ...The other important feature of this play of the imagination is its *mobility*: it is inconstant, regularly irregular, well expressed in the oscillations, or, as we say, the play of light and shadow.⁴⁹⁶ [my emphasis]

Yet the freedom of play has its conditions: to be free, play needs to be separate and autonomous from interests and constraints of reality. In the development of the notion of play since Kant and Schiller a configuration of law and freedom characterizes the autonomous domain of play and this is actually Connor's first proposition:

What joins Kant and Schiller, and runs through those who follow them, is an historically new conception of play, in which freedom and constraint uniquely, paradoxically cooperate. When one plays, one is free, and the act of choosing to play is a free choice, and a choice of freedom. This principle of play is emphasised in nearly all theories of play from the early 19th century onwards.

And yet play is far from unregulated. This is in fact the new development in play philosophy that distinguishes it from the reflections on idleness, folly, frolic and lewdness (a word that derives from *ludere*) that had obtained for almost two thousand years, from the classical world onwards. Play is no longer conceived as formless effervescence. For play to be disinterested means for it to be set apart from ordinary life. What is more, this setting apart must be regulated, by boundaries, rules. The freedom of play must be policed. So play is not free in the medieval sense: it is free in the sense that it gives itself its own law.⁴⁹⁷

Connor goes on to demonstrate how this configuration of law and freedom is at the basis of all subsequent understandings of play. Especially from the 19th century on-

wards, conceptions about play move alongside the formation of another category: the notion of free time. With the industrial revolution work became increasingly standardized and synchronized, thus also requiring less time:

Increasing efficiency, along with specialisation and coordination of labour, produced surplus, not only of goods, but also of time, though this surplus was not made available to all equally. Nevertheless, surplus is sufficiently diffused through the system to allow the formation of a notion... of “free time,” not in the sense of holiday, but in the sense of empty or unassigned time. The distinctively modern experience of boredom comes into being at the same historical moment.⁴⁹⁸

In the subsequent pages Connor shows how under these conditions play became increasingly idealized and cherished for its autonomy and freedom from the rational domain of work. To instrumentalize play was to violate its autonomy. All these elements lie at the bottom of the understanding of the category of play and its roles in culture as one finds them in all authors who dealt with this theme.

Amongst the 20th century authors mentioned by Connor, Johan Huizinga should be singled out here, as he gave play its most famous definition.⁴⁹⁹ He emphasized and fleshed out the importance of play as a free activity with its own rules, its time and space boundaries, “stepping out of ‘real life’ into a temporary sphere of activity with a disposition all of its own.”⁵⁰⁰ Huizinga idealized play: “play presents itself as an intermezzo, an interlude in our daily lives ... it adorns life, amplifies it.” He acknowledged only disinterested play and exempted profit making games or professional sport as expressions of a degenerated culture.⁵⁰¹ And what is interesting for play’s relation to visual forms in Huizinga, is his fascination with the beauty of play, its harmony, rhythm and order.⁵⁰²

Connor refers to numerous other authors of theory and fiction, but it would be unnecessary to repeat all his references.⁵⁰³ Rather, what is particularly relevant to investigate here is *how play and games are considered to perform their special roles in culture, and how that could be linked to participatory public art.*

To start with the first question, ethnologists and anthropologists especially of non-Western cultures - Claude Lévi-Strauss being the most broadly known amongst them – have demonstrated functions of play and games across cultures.⁵⁰⁴ They have shown that play has an operative role when transitions in religious, social or economic practices take place. For instance, when objects or practices change or lose their original meanings and functions, or during festivals and religious rites. Beyond non-Western studies, these theoretical models have resonated also with studies of theorists much more preoccupied with modern and even post-modern Western societies. Such an example is Marshall McLuhan. In his book *Understanding Media. The Extensions of Man* he dedicates a chapter to games, the title of which repeats the subtitle of the entire book: “Games: The Extensions of Man.”⁵⁰⁵ He starts with ethnological approaches to tribal cultures, to move on to the 20th century world of mass media. For McLuhan games are “media of interpersonal communication ... extensions of our immediate inner lives.”⁵⁰⁶ He discusses games as models of a culture, of

an entire population as well as games as models of our psychological life, providing in both cases release from particular tensions.⁵⁰⁷ Especially for modern societies, games function as a release from stress and pressures derived from the conditions of work. Besides, their group character is also important as compensation for a lost collectivity.

For fun or games to be welcome, they must convey an echo of a workaday life. On the other hand, a man or society without games is one sunk in the zombie trance of the automation. ... Games as popular art forms offer to all an immediate means of participation in the full life of a society, such as no single job can offer to any man.⁵⁰⁸

Yet participation presupposes subordination to rules and conditions: “A game is a machine that can get into action only if the players consent to become puppets for a time.”⁵⁰⁹ As I will explain later, McLuhan is particularly interesting to juxtapose to Constant’s *New Babylon*. In the latter, automation is seen as a condition for man’s release from work and thus a condition of free play, rather than as a negative condition of life that play offers a release from. But beyond that, McLuhan’s conception of games as media and simultaneously as models of a culture is extremely relevant for the idea of forms of play and games as interfaces for experiments with utopian ideas. Besides that, the idea of games as substitutes for a lost collectivity, links to social roles shouldered on public art, and especially on participatory/collaborative art.

Finally, the last issue to raise is the connection between play and event. The most useful analysis that explains this connection - in the example of a reflection on the structured calendar time and the operation of play that collapses its structures - is found in Agamben’s text “In Playland. Reflections on History and Play.”⁵¹⁰ What interests me from his analysis is how the aforementioned operation of play takes place. Agamben’s elaboration of the relation between time and play is the relation between process (structure) and event. He starts his text with an extract from the story of Pinocchio when he arrives in Playland.⁵¹¹ Playland is the country of boys playing: playing games, playing with toys, or on stages, laughing, clapping, singing, running, hiding, shouting, making all kinds of sounds and noises - a real pandemonium. In Pinocchio’s Playland play has invaded life. An outcome thereof is that time, in the sense of structured calendar time based on repetition and rhythm, has also been overturned: “the hours, the days and the weeks passed like lightning.”⁵¹² While also every week has only six Thursdays and one Sunday. Further on, Agamben explains how transformations occur, when from its original function something enters the realm of play. The transition has consequences on the very “temporality” of that what enters the realm of play (i.e. its relation to time). Agamben uses as example the toy and the miniature:

Everything which is old, independent of its sacred origins is liable to become a toy. What is more, the same appropriation and transformation in play (the same *illusion*, one could say, restoring to the word its etymological meaning, form *in-ludere*) can be achieved - for example, by means of miniaturization - in relation to objects which still belong in the sphere of use: a car, a pistol,

an electric cooker ...

What the toy preserves of its sacred or economic model, what survives of this after its dismemberment or miniaturization, is nothing other than the human temporality that was contained therein: its pure historical essence. ... the toy, dismembering and distorting the past or miniaturizing the present – playing as much on *diachrony* as on *synchrony* – makes present and renders tangible human temporality in itself, the pure differential margin between the “once” and the “no longer.”⁵¹³

In his text Agamben refers to the above also as a basis for a further relevant relation that he is more explicitly interested in: the relation between ritual and play, in which the concept of “event” is prominent. As was previously suggested about time in Playland, where play overturns and paralyzes the structured time of the calendar, so also the relation between ritual and play is one referring to a relation of structure and the event that collapses it. The basic formula Agamben draws here from Lévi-Strauss.⁵¹⁴ Namely, play, which starts off with a certain structure of rules or patterns, moves towards unexpected events, which means to outcomes completely due to chance. While rite, which operates by staging and repeating the same event time and again absorbing all differences, consequently turns events into structure. In that sense, there exists an inverse relation where “ritual fixes and *structures* the calendar; play ... changes and *destroys* it.”⁵¹⁵

The function of rites is to adjust the contradiction between mythic past and present, annulling the interval separating them and reabsorbing all events into the synchronic structure. Play, on the other hand, furnishes a symmetrically opposed operation: it tends to break the connection between past and present, and to break down and crumble the whole structure into events.⁵¹⁶

And furthermore, to remember the initial example of Pinocchio’s Playland, “Playland is the country whose inhabitants are busy celebrating rituals and manipulating objects and sacred words, whose sense and purpose they have, however, forgotten.”⁵¹⁷ Which means that they repeat the form of the ritual, but the content, the particular myth from which the origins and meaning of the ritual were derived, have been forgotten. In this perspective, as structure and event are constitutive of both ritual and play, but in an inverse order, “every game ... contains a ritual aspect and every rite an aspect of play.”⁵¹⁸

McLuhan and Agamben make reference to art to remind us that in different cultures art and play have functions parallel or supplementary to one another. These are formed in a sphere set apart from, but in correlation with the spheres of the sacred and the economic-practical life. Here I will not enter McLuhan and Agamben’s references to art and play, because their concerns take very different directions to this text. Instead, I will return to the art and art-related movements and practices in the Netherlands, for which space has functioned as a trigger of ideas for alternative models. As already said, looking closer one may detect forms of play and games dispersed in the methods and ways each one devised or adopted to experiment with their visions. This is indeed the case foremost for those who had a more radical avant-garde character

- the Situationists, Constant, the Provos - and whose experimentations took forms of games, hyper-real models of future life, performances and happenings. That is, forms that could only conceptually translate to applications in real life situations, compared to the application of the Amsterdam School's principles in architecture. Nonetheless, even in the case of the Amsterdam School one could attempt a link between the visual artistic forms and their attributed spiritual power, with Huizinga's idealism about the importance of beauty found in the harmonious, rhythmical patterns of games.

Visions of utopia – agents in transformation

To be more precise, the architects of the Amsterdam School were busy with the pragmatic implementation of architectural and urban planning schemes for this world (Amsterdam), rather than for a utopian other.⁵¹⁹ Nonetheless, there was a utopian element in their conviction that the external appearance of architecture – as in facades, bridges or street furniture – would influence people's character, education or morals.⁵²⁰ This utopian element was indeed derived also from their belief of the spiritual power of art.⁵²¹ A belief coming down from 19th century idealism and cultural traditions in the Netherlands that influenced important figures in the early 20th not only of the Amsterdam School, but also of those associated with the *De Stijl* periodical.⁵²² Interestingly, the artistic touch on architecture was prescribed to serve exactly this goal.⁵²³ At the same time, the carefully devised rhythmic variety of patterns, shapes, colors, textures and forms, which was meant to enliven the architectural surfaces, seems to materialize what Kant (as in Connor) described as the mobility of the free play of the imagination. The description of mobility as “inconstant, regularly irregular, well expressed in the oscillations or, as we say, the play of light and shadow,” that also evokes Huizinga's elaboration on beautiful patterns. The following description of a characteristic facade treatment by Amsterdam School architects bears elements found in both of the above citations:

Dramatic effects were produced through controlled emphasis and juxtaposition of basic components and details of buildings. Even biomorphic images were suggested by the size, scale and placement of windows and doors, and underlined by the use of projecting forms. Surprising variations in scale occur where small relief decoration is placed on large smooth surfaces and where tiny windows are set in otherwise unrelieved walls and roofs. Finally, jagged shapes of angular masses and curves of balconies, turrets, and brick-faced concrete projections set up contrapuntal rhythms and underscore the play of light and shadow.⁵²⁴

In that sense, for the artistic touch on Amsterdam School Architecture play refers mostly to a formal style, a spatial interplay of forms, and the spiritual dimensions in people's living environment rendered by means of these forms. In the case of Situationism International, Constant and the Provos one sees them inventing games as methods, designing spaces for play, as well as themselves adopting a playful attitude tending towards the parodic or the ludicrous.⁵²⁵

Situationist methodologies of experimentation relied predominantly on forms of games. The technique of the *derive* “entail[ed] playful constructive behavior” (Debord), while the *detournement* was “a game made possible by the capacity of devaluation” (Jorn).⁵²⁶ These games were not simply fun. Their use aimed at a critical transformation of culture:

It is necessary to conceive of a parodic-serious stage, where the accumulation of detoured elements, far from aiming at arousing indignation or laughter by alluding to some original work, will express our indifference towards a meaningless and forgotten original, and concern itself with rendering a certain sublimity.⁵²⁷

Besides, the programmatic importance of the “construction of situations” as expressed by Debord, seems born out of the conditions of the “free, unassigned time” (see Connor) as well as the idea of the necessity of compensating for a “workaday life” (McLuhan). Debord states in the “Report on the construction of situations:”

The most general goal must be to extend the nonmediocre part of life, to reduce the empty moments of life as much as possible The situationist game is not distinct from a moral choice, the taking of one’s stand in favor of what will ensure the future reign of freedom and play. This perspective is obviously linked to the inevitable continual and rapid increase of leisure time resulting from the level productive forces our era has attained.⁵²⁸

This concern with the qualitative use of the quantitatively increasing free time, and everything that had to do with the construction of situations, atmospheres and ambiances as experimentations towards the program of Unitary Urbanism, resonated with ideas to which Constant gave form in *New Babylon*. Constant believed that since technology had set man, the Homo Sapiens free from the constraints of basic survival (food, clothing), the freedom to be pursued now should be that of the free-unfolding of man, the Homo Ludens’ creativity into everyday life.⁵²⁹ *New Babylon* as an infrastructure for Play was in essence a way of living and a way of thinking. Play was to become the everyday. Thanks to the advance of automation, man would be released from the need to work.⁵³⁰ Free time, play time, would be all time. Technology would also provide the mobile and transformable infrastructure for people to play with. One could claim that Constant’s appropriation of automation in the service of Homo Ludens’ play-land produced a reverse image to McLuhan’s nightmarish “society without games ... one sunk in the zombie trance of automation.”⁵³¹

Constant employed all kinds of architectural models and other media to represent *New Babylon’s* urban sections and living units, both as architectural structures as well as ambiances. For example in slideshows for lectures that he gave in highly performative style he used sketches, drawings, three-dimensional models, as well as photographs of models. Music, sound, smell, dim lighting created an evocative atmosphere turning the attendance of a lecture to a ritual.⁵³² Furthermore, the various media and models that Constant employed in presenting the world with his visions of *New Babylon* constituted various kinds of simulations of present and future (utopian)

realities. And simulations are themselves game-realities or, to put it differently, gaming approaches to reality.

To come to the Provos, inspired by Huizinga and even more by Constant's *Homo Ludens*, they literally turned the city into a playground and stage for performances and happenings.⁵³³ They turned games into tactics causing police to overreact and make themselves ridiculous in the process. For the Provos a society of petit-bourgeois order defended by the police and other institutional establishments was wrong, absurd, not to mention boring. They had to make people see that, to release them from their illusions. Games were tactically used to this end. The normative provo logic of the tactical use of games is best exemplified in the so-called "Marihuettegame" that aimed at:

...demonstrat[ing] the establishment's complete ignorance on the subject of cannabis. The players were supposed to have fun, fool the police and, of course, smoke pot. Other than that there were no rules. Anything that looked remotely like pot was called "marihu": tea, hay, catfood, spices and herbs included. Bonus points were collected when a smoker got busted for consuming a legal substance. The players often called the police on themselves. A raid by blue-uniformed nicotine addicts, looking for something that didn't exist, was considered the ultimate jackpot.⁵³⁴

One could say that the Provos incorporated the parodic-serious principle of the detournement into their behavior and attitude. They "detourned" all possible organizational elements of everyday life – social roles, laws and regulations, common objects, actions and habits - to release the everyday from its self-imposed constraints. For this overturning of reality, ritual was necessary. The cult-leading figure of Robert Jasper Grootveld was described as High Priest. His scheduled Saturday-night happenings on Amsterdam's Spui square, attended by small crowds, were described as Magic circles.

Finally, it seems tempting to suggest that the ways in which environmental artists used the arrangement of forms and shapes to create a stimulating variety and points of reference and identification in people's urban environment met the logic of the artistic touch in Amsterdam School. They too used as means "form and color, space and movement, material and texture."⁵³⁵ Yet there is a substantial mismatch in the way that environmental artists were seriously trying to somehow improve art to the standards of a scientific, phenomenological discourse, rather than the other way round. While the avant-gardes were bringing to science and technology a logic from art – most explicitly manifested in Constant's *New Babylon* project.

On art and il-lusion

To wind everything in, the above mainly avant-garde visionaries were conscious of the unattainability of their ultimate aspirations for a world as a fully transformed place. Nonetheless, they did devise models of that world and experimentation methodologies for temporary illusionary transitions from here to utopia. Entertaining utopias where imagination and creativity – see here also the form of non-rational reflection Kant

had called aesthetic – would be infiltrated into the everyday, was a necessity for the modern world of the 20th century. Scientific and technological achievements secured people their basic needs, freeing them from want. Yet in return, they had made them captive of other discontents: alienation in human relations and in people's relation to their living environment within the rapidly expanding urban centers; alienation in the working environment, where automation took over and humans functioned like machines; the growing phenomena of consumerism and the spectacle.

Illusions were only permitted within the domain of art, the domain of imagination that was allowed and expected to operate as counterweight to the imbalances brought about by rational thought. In this, conceptions of the role of art and of play in culture prove to coincide, as I maintained at the beginning of this section. Particularly for art, one can see the manifestation of this role in the official expectations of subsidized public art (see above here, section 2). Art was there to season with elements of ambiguity and vagueness the rationality of professional planning and construction processes for public spaces and public life. These were the conceptions about, and expectations of art, which during the 1970s were crystallized as public art's institutional and institutionalized role.

Bearing in mind also Connor's proposals about conceptions of play in modern thought, the first and second ones show some concordance with conceptions regarding the role of art. In the sense of allowing man the freedom to escape from the constraints of reason, but also of determining the extent to which modern man could escape his civilization, his own self. Thus were designated the domains where escapes and escapades were tolerated – the domains of art and play. Under these circumstances, it should be no surprise that the domain of art came to contain play, as explained earlier: whether expressed as an interplay of patterns (an arrangement of forms, where "form" could entail shapes and colors in space, or rules and conditions in a game) as "playful" attitudes (parodic, ludicrous or hyper-real), or as gaming-realities (see simulations), one sees that the art and art-related avant-gardes drew from a depository of forms of play and games to devise their experimentations. The situationist games including detournements and derives, the models of *New Babylon*, the ludicrous provo happenings and behavior, all these functioned as means of transit from here to utopia, as media for illusions. This is where McLuhan's concept of the capacity and function of games as both medium and mirror models of a culture is most pertinent in approaching the role of forms of play and games in our examples. As the latter's ultimate target was the transformation not just of art, but of culture altogether. Therefore the capacity of forms of play and games to "engineer" transformation processes within any sphere of culture (remember here the ethnologists and Agamben), rendered them most useful for these avant-gardes.

For the moments that the forms of play and games would perform their role, imagination would take over from reality. They would become the means for participation in the vision, interfaces between imagination and reality, turning illusion to an event - to something happening. At this point the formula that Agamben drew from Lévi-Strauss could be applied to show how this operation takes place. According to that formula: "while rites transform events into structures, play transforms structures into events."⁵³⁶ Bringing this formula to the questions of this chapter, one could maintain the following: that what was happening when forms of play and games - say in

a representation of New Babylon or in a happening – were put to work in the service of experimentations with modeling utopias, was precisely the operation of “breaking down and crumbling the connections structuring reality, as it were, into events.” For instance, in the case of the detournement, signifieds of a culture would become signifiers; matter would be reduced to form so as to take on new meanings. By the same logic, an Amsterdam School façade, a situationist collage, as much as a provo happening – using artistic media but drawing their ways and methods of modeling utopias from depositories of forms of play and games - would all function in producing an equivalent effect: the activation of temporary, transitory events. So the art set in motion the events of applying and experiencing the illusion of utopias in the here and now.

To achieve this, they offered the highly regulated environment, the strictly conditioned situation that was necessary for the illusion to take place, for the event to happen. As mentioned, play starts with a structure of rules or patterns and leads to unpredictable events. And for this process to take place play must have its own, separate place. So one could argue that this structure was provided for instance by the extravagant conditions that Guy Debord demanded for participation, while in this world, in the situationist vision of another.⁵³⁷ Or the proposal delivered to the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam for an exhibition of situationism. According to that proposal, the museum galleries should be transformed into a labyrinth of spaces with different artificial atmospheres, complete with rain, wind and mist and accessed through a hole in the wall. Meanwhile, the situationists themselves would be taking their derives around the “real” city of Amsterdam.⁵³⁸ Such rules and conditions that rendered a realization of their programs essentially incompatible with reality, as it were, comprised, however, the necessary conditions for the freedom that the avant-garde visions were offering. As indispensable as they were impossible, these conditions express a configuration of law and freedom equivalent to that of play. The freedom of play that was the freedom of having its own law and the freedom of the player in choosing to play.⁵³⁹ One could also consider here the ritualistic character of Constant’s presentations of *New Babylon*, or of the performativity of the entrance and artificial atmospheres of the unrealized Situationists’ exhibition, or of being present at a provo happening as such “conditioning” processes. In that sense, one sees that “every game ... contains a ritual aspect and every rite an aspect of play” (Agamben).⁵⁴⁰

To sum up, what I have done in this section is to infer from theories about play in culture (mainly Agamben, McLuhan) a concept of play and a notion of the event that are relevant for art. Still Connor’s set of three propositions remains my compass in thinking about play in relation to a genealogy of art for which space has functioned as a springboard for ideas about life and society. Having elaborated above on his first and second propositions about conceptions of play in Modernity, I will take his third proposition as departure point in the following sections.

4 THE DIFFUSION OF PLAY IN THE ADMINISTERED WORLD

Connor’s third proposition is a rather open-ended suggestion about how earlier terms of the role of play in human culture have been dissolved. As a consequence, a paradigm break was caused that was symptomatic of a cultural transition to a new situa-

tion. In that new situation it seems difficult to discern the contours of a specific place and role for play in culture:

Thirdly, contemporary conditions of play have tended both to generalise it, removing it from its specialised place and function and dissolving the bond between play and the human. This should make us wonder what a general diffusion of play, throughout and beyond the sphere of human action, a play that no longer knows its place, might entail or portend.⁵⁴¹

As the widespread – at least since Adorno and Horkheimer – pessimistic interpretation would have it, the previously autonomous worlds of art and play have been colonized by the cultural industry. Their forms have thus been put at the service of market, rather than of human relations. While acknowledging this view on contemporary culture, Connor wants to give nonetheless the analysis a different tilt to the one-way lament that the above pessimism usually leads to. He provides a quite broad assumption about where the operations and functions of play have been channeled in contemporary culture, and what the consequences of their displacement might be:

It is possible to give a rather different tilt to this analysis. What if, rather than the realm of play being annexed by the administered world, a certain principle of play had been diffused through the system, such that play constituted the rule rather than exception? In such a set-up we might have to imagine in earnest what the effects would be of a play that played itself out in earnest, without a governing subject. ... I have said that, for the few hundred years that play has been seriously considered, or been considered to be serious, play has always functioned as excess, exception or anomaly. But ours is a world built around and governed by the production of play and the consumption of leisure and pleasure. Perhaps in such a world the free play of the faculties has become the fluctuation of desires that nobody can be quite sure any more belong to them, and the interior purposiveness of game has become the immanent dynamic of self-replication of our systematicity as such. Furthermore, ours is a world in which the operations of game have become more and more separated from the conditions of play. Money, science, war, pedagogy, sex, are all being configured as forms of strategy or game-theory, in the sense marked out by Gadamer, governed by the ludic principle, that which gives itself its own rules and purpose.

It is not that the play principle has lost its meaning or effectiveness. But perhaps play is becoming more ambivalent than ever before. ... In a condition of *jeux sans frontières*, when the empire of play can no longer be clearly demarcated, play can no longer be reliably or decisively claimed for the principle of free self-unfolding on the one hand, or for the grim clinching of systematicity on the other. When every instance of play deepens the reach of organised complexity, simultaneously loosening and consolidating, when the place of play is no longer self-evident, the effects of play are themselves put into play.⁵⁴²

With the above in mind, let me herewith return to the practice of Bureau Venhuizen and afterwards to a consideration of contemporary practices in spatial planning. If Connor's last proposition has some resonance in this field of study, this should entail that play must have found its way into professional planning somehow without the need of art, and with as yet unclear effects.

The legacy of Homo Ludens in public art

As extensively discussed in section one, Bureau Venhuizen aims at optimizing processes of spatial planning, taking the so-called culture-based planning approach. Hans Venhuizen started his career as artist. Yet he shifted into the self-invented profession of *concept-manager* in order to participate more concretely than as artist in the "dirty realism" of the professional field of planning.⁵⁴³ His Bureau has devised a methodology applicable to any spatial planning process. It systematizes the artist's creative thinking for the production of site-specific recipes, i.e. of the tasks' brief delivered to designers. At the core of this methodology is the group game *The Making of*.

Despite Hans Venhuizen's renunciation of his artistic status, I would still argue that his work falls within the field of public art. As demonstrated earlier, when public art became institutionalized with the environmental artists (1970s), the latter were inclined to renunciation of their artistic autonomy for the sake of integrating their work into architecture and urban planning. Hence, it should come as no surprise if two–three decades later an artist interested in the shaping of public space decides to give up his/her artistic status. Even if he/she continues to receive commissions within an expanded field of public art.

For all its dirty realism, from many different perspectives Bureau Venhuizen opts for a gaming approach and playful attitude towards reality. Think, for instance, of the first commission in Beuningen. Commissioners had art in mind and there was no spatial planning project running, to which their commission was attached. Yet Bureau Venhuizen developed a project applying its methodology of investigating for optimal planning conditions, as if there had been one.

Furthermore, Bureau Venhuizen is more interested in the process than in the outcomes: "With all the projects we do, as soon as it comes to design I only check if the conditions are met and hope to be interested in the design."⁵⁴⁴ From her perspective, one of the Game's winners in *New Heritage*, a resident of Winssen, expressed a similar view: "Participating in *The Making of H1* was for me more important than winning the game."⁵⁴⁵ For her this was because she and other fellow-villagers could come up with ideas about their future in a creative way.⁵⁴⁶ Both statements are reminiscent of the priority that Gadamer attributed to playing the game over both players and results.⁵⁴⁷ Consequently, it seems that Venhuizen's methodology causes ambivalence as to whether it is the Game (as process, as method) or the designed space (the outcome) that is eventually more important (i.e. not for him personally). If it is the former, brought to somewhat far-fetched ultimate consequences, one could see there some disquieting implications. Participants who have something at stake in "real" life and opt for the above view somehow "consent with becoming puppets for a time," to remember McLuhan.⁵⁴⁸ Letting the rules of the Game lead to decisions about their

“real” lives, they authorize a decision-making process, the objectivity of which is based on the elimination of their human subjectivity. Such an observation that stands in sharp contrast to the humanizing effect that we saw art (using forms of play) being expected to have on people’s living environments (the environments that with the advance of technology had been transformed to rationalized, anonymous spaces).

Another important aspect of play inherent in the objectivity–generating methods of Venhuizen is the use of rhetoric.⁵⁴⁹ Rhetoric being a form from philosophy that can overturn reality by playing with the ambivalence of language as well as by means of reshuffling of logical patterns in argumentation and discourse. If decision-making by means of the Game depends on a best-argument competition between teams of players, the Game might be taken over by players talented in handling language and discourse. Venhuizen himself is a good example for the tricks of discourse, when, for instance, he talks distrustful people into his game-methodology:

Now we have played it 15 times I think, and every time we invite and every evening a couple of people react by saying ... “this is much too serious to play a game about.” Then we explain that it is not a game, but a creative workshop method with a gaming approach. And then people relax...⁵⁵⁰

Besides, the whole idea of “opportimism” is based on a language game. A playful, tricky combination of the words opportunism and optimism, a simultaneously negative and positive term for a person’s attitude towards the future.

Based on the above, one could claim that there seems to exist an element of playful humor in Venhuizen’s attitude. It could even be interpreted as ironical sometimes, if somebody takes his playful ways (as in the above quote on the “gaming approach to reality,” too seriously at face value. Representations of the Beuningen population within the projects are a good additional example. In a project report from 2001, the photographs of Beuningen girls and boys taken by students during their research should be regarded with humor by the depicted youngsters, if they are to appreciate their representations there.⁵⁵¹ (Fig. 45) The same could be said of the entire Beuningen community, considering that “dog shit” and “identity” were accorded equal attention as important local themes in experts’ sessions. Not to mention that a KLIKO-bokaal and a photograph of Leonardo de Caprio visiting From Weurt to Deest were amongst prizes awarded to locals for the best answers.

Furthermore, the Bureau’s practice relies extensively on the use of models that simulate or experiment with reality. There is, for instance, the washland model, a model of thinking about spatial planning, transferred to political and social theory. And of course maps, ground plans, collages, and the computer design program used while the Game is played to show in virtual reality how participants’ suggestions would look, if applied as design solutions.

One could go on naming further aspects of play and games in Venhuizen’s practice. Consequently, from the perspective of his interests in combining the space shaping disciplines with art, in using space as a trigger of ideas for socio-political models (washland model), and from his playful attitude, Hans Venhuizen could comfortably be given a place in the ranks of the visionaries discussed earlier. Yet there is a stum-

bling block: Bureau Venhuizen really does not envision instigating any social change. For all the parodic exaggerations of Beuningen's provinciality, with his culture-based approach Bureau Venhuizen Game's ultimate aim was to give people what they seemed to collectively agree upon. In a sense, Venhuizen gave them what they wanted. The conditions' brief for prospective spatial designs reproduces and represents the local mentalities in all their banality. From that perspective, and contrary to what I maintained in the previous section about the 20th century avant-gardes, play and games in Venhuizen's practices seem to become a vehicle for overcoming possible differences and for reproducing and consolidating existing structures. So while "events" are produced in the sense of the Game - workshops, gatherings, meetings etc. - what is missing is the production of the abstract concept of the "event." The event of transformation that was once manifested only within the domain of art, is activated by forms of play and games. Under these conditions, art and play appear here to be losing what previously demarcated their specialized place and function. While at the same time, if Bureau Venhuizen is accepted as hybrid professional agent in spatial planning, the implications would be that the contribution of play and aesthetics in general has a different content and role. But this should somehow have to do with what is happening within the professional field of the space shaping disciplines – the reception horizons of Venhuizen's practice. Some principle of play seems to have penetrated the aesthetics of structural relations in the field of these disciplines, thereby also affecting the role expected of art.

A "jeux sans frontières" in the Dutch field of spatial planning

In an academic paper written in 1998 and published in 2000 under the title "Spatial planning in the network society – rethinking the principles of planning in the Netherlands," Maarten Hajer and Wil Zonneveld explain that nowadays one should revisit one's assumptions about the spatial planning system of the Netherlands.⁵⁵² The authors set out by stating that "The Dutch system of spatial planning can rejoice in an almost mythical reputation in the international academic literature."⁵⁵³ Amongst the main reasons behind this reputation are the system's alleged institutional comprehensiveness, creativity, long history and, despite a staggering amount and complexity of involved agents, the effective coordination of their interests.⁵⁵⁴ Nonetheless, Hajer and Zonneveld put forth how conditions both in the institutional (professional, governmental) and the societal context of planning have changed, disempowering the traditional Dutch system of planning. The authors' ultimate aim is to propose possible directions in which a revision of the system could be sought.⁵⁵⁵

The parts of their positions that interest me here are those concerning the Dutch spatial planning system's internal operation and governance, and certain directions in recent changes therein. Therefore, I will selectively sum up parts of their respective argumentation. The authors maintain that "the density of discourse is probably the most fundamental characteristic of spatial planning in the Netherlands."⁵⁵⁶ Dutch planners were traditionally kept outside both economic interests as well as legal power in policy-making, so as to concentrate on communicating, consulting and negotiating expert concepts, plans and visions:

Planning is persuasive story telling about the future, according to the American theorist

Jim Throgmorton (1992). This most certainly holds true for the Dutch system. ... much of the essential work of the planner is discursive: listening to people, making an inventory of problems and wishes, scanning preferences, developing concepts that can guide thinking about spatial development, assessing the possibilities of building coalitions amongst actors and thus in essence persuading actors of various kinds to think about the future developments in one and the same language.⁵⁵⁷

For all its institutional intricacy with multiple players at all governance levels, there used to exist a balance and coordination in the decision-making and implementation of spatial plans.⁵⁵⁸ A crucial parameter in achieving this was that spatial planning managed to align itself with prevailing interests of the housing and agriculture sectors.⁵⁵⁹ However, in recent years the control over spatial developments and the function of aligning interests have gradually fallen back due to fundamental changes at various levels. National housing policies have shifted towards a direction favorable for market forces. Agriculture has changed, for instance, because of advanced technologies in industrialized agriculture. Moreover, the accentuation in national spatial strategies on fostering the competitive position of the Netherlands has led to prioritizing economically-oriented spatial developments, such as the expansions of Rotterdam harbor and Schiphol airport. Alongside the above reshuffling of priorities and powers, Hajer and Zonneveld mention also an excessive production of planning documents published across all sector departments (e.g., various ministries) and mostly with an informal status.⁵⁶⁰ The authors maintain that all those documents “presented new policy approaches incongruent to the official planning policy.” Despite their lack of legal official status, they “were often effective in occupying the minds of policy makers and stakeholders.”⁵⁶¹ Finally, one could add the introduction by the government of the so-called Interdepartmental Commission for the Strengthening of the Economic Structure (ICES).⁵⁶² This commission was set up to play an inter-departmental coordinating role with a view to optimizing economic efficiency across the sector, which means that the spatial strategies it promotes are aligned with market interests. Inevitably, and despite it actually having unofficial status, the ICES “*de facto* started to overlap more and more with the official planning circuits.”⁵⁶³

The authors link all the aforementioned developments in the institutional context of Dutch spatial planning with macro-societal changes that one could put under an interpretational concept of the “network society.” What characterizes the spatial planning system under these conditions is the lack of central co-ordination and supervision over the activities of involved agents, and over the realization of plans. For instance, “there is no built-in check that guarantees a selectivity in development. In various regions the planning induced a delay in construction activity leading to building activity elsewhere.”⁵⁶⁴

Let me herewith give a résumé of the above characteristics of contemporary planning practices. Traditionally, the dynamics of persuasion and discourse played a central role in the work of planners, who had restricted access to financial or policy-making power. With the excess of structures and interests in the field they both appear much less aligned with each other than in the past. New actors (e.g., ICES) and policy documents appear with variable official validity and expressing incongruous interests, amongst which it is unclear what matters and what does not. Under these

circumstances, the professional field of planning is more and more sliding towards a condition where operations are significantly determined by the internal dynamics of its system as such, rather than by a coherent and reflective decision-making, concerned with what is important for the world outside.

These thoughts bring to mind Crimson Architectural Historians' approach to the Dutch planning system referred to in Part I. They drew from Frank Ankersmit's concept of "'third power' – orgware, bureaucracy, market forces (or whatever you want to call it)" – to explain how contemporary urbanist discourse has become an "urbanism of negotiations."⁵⁶⁵ Crimson maintained that this third power is a dominant yet resented force within the planners' profession. Resented, because planners spend almost their entire time negotiating with all possible agents and compromising their ideas, instead of drawing expert plans. Nevertheless, by using as example their own involvement in planning for the new Vinex area of Leidse Rijn, Crimson demonstrated that one might as well cleverly manoeuvre and use this "urbanism of negotiations," rather than condemn it.⁵⁶⁶ Their office was invited as external consultant to a secondary player in the big game of the planning Utrecht's satellite city of Leidse Rijn. They claim that they introduced a simple idea that nonetheless "upset all power relations, and then proceeded to try and influence these powers."⁵⁶⁷ Crimsons' strength in the game was that they had nothing to lose. Having no power position whatsoever, they could move freely. This was rendered possible exactly due to the "urbanism of negotiations" that allowed for various actors, big and small, to join the stage.

One could argue that this "urbanism of negotiations," which Crimsons present as both a contemporary and resented state of profession, sounds like an amplified version of Hajer and Zonneveld's traditional discursivity typical for Dutch planners. The kind of "opportunistic" handling of Crimson might start to appear somewhat less original then, though well in accord with the recent excess of actors in the field. Moreover, whether old or new, accepted or resented, the logic and operation of the urbanism of negotiations as the actual professional practice of planners, alongside their limited access to economic and policymaking power seem to resonate surprisingly much with the concept manager's claimed role and practice. As the example of Crimson testifies, an "opportunistic" approach despite one's status in the system and despite social, political or other principles external to the system as such, constitutes a most effective handling for professional planners. Then the sophisticated intricacy of the field seems to have been taken over by a reproduction of its own systematicity. The immanent dynamics have assumed governance over the system.

If we accept all the above, then arguably some logic of play seems to have been diffused within the administered world. In Crimsons' story the power structures in Leidsche Rijn's planning broke down into unexpected events. For Hajer and Zonneveld's model of a disintegrated coherence, where "delay of activity in one region leads to construction activity elsewhere" without any in check selectivity, one could claim the same.

If the above speak of an intrusion of a certain play principle into the institutional operations of the Dutch planning system, a look into certain recent concepts and directions in spatial planning seem to echo the same view. Not too long after Rick van de Ploeg introduced the term culture-based planning (1998), further documents of policy making for the Dutch landscape resonated with his priorities. Most notably,

the Rijksnota Belvédère (1999) lay down the prioritization of accentuating the cultural-historical identity of the Netherlands in the formation of the landscape, whether built or natural.⁵⁶⁸ Of course culture-based planning and Belvédère could just be seen as attempts to care more about tradition. Yet their implementation looks rather like the invention of tradition: in the name of “authenticity,” it is negotiated which elements of a local cultural or natural identity should in essentially artificial ways be accentuated. One could add here also the so-called Ecological Main Structure (EHS) introduced in the government’s Policy Plan in 1990.⁵⁶⁹ Some 730 000 hectares of formerly agricultural land was to “return to nature.” As agriculture has been industrialized, and in line with ecological lobbying for a revitalization of biodiversity, the state decided that selected parts of the Dutch landscape should be given back to nature. Wherever necessary, it bought land from farmers and set out with bulldozers to make it look wilder.⁵⁷⁰ Interestingly, artists have also been invited to contribute with projects that should support this return to the authentic. To the already paradoxical situation of restoring authentic wilderness by landscape design, another oxymoron is added. As observed by art historian Jeroen Boomgaard: “While the constructed nature experience can pose as pure nature, art adds an unmistakable cultural element to nature.”⁵⁷¹

To some extent the above strategies for the return to authentic local identities, whether cultural or natural, come under what has been characterized as “amusement-parkification.”⁵⁷² The term brings to mind Agamben’s formula about toys: something that loses its original function, regardless of what domain of culture, falls into a sphere of play. One can relate Agamben’s formula to any urban monument, archaeological or agricultural site, which is shaped up to be handed over to amusement-parkification, that is, to “play” at the service of the cultural and leisure industries. Then the transformation into play is inherently linked to the “consumption of leisure and pleasure” (Connor). This same path of thought, which has come to include also whatever roles artists are invited to perform, brings one straight to the arms of Adorno and Horkheimer’s pessimistic critique of culture under capitalism.⁵⁷³

Conclusions

To conclude, taking into consideration everything that has been said about the institutional, conceptual and policymaking context of the Dutch spatial planning system, it seems reasonable to agree with Connor that “a certain principle of play has been diffused through the system, such that it constitute[s] the rule rather than the exception.” So much so, that the amusement-parkification of the country has become the contemporary cultural reality that Hans Venhuizen takes as the cultural background of his work, as architect Paul Meurs has observed.⁵⁷⁴ It would take a future author, or at least a differently specialized one, to formulate concrete proposals for a new conception of play in its relation to contemporary people and the worlds they inhabit. Yet there is something to observe about the triangle art-play-reality, with regard to the role and content of art and play in the example of Dutch public art.

As commissions and institutions for public art were flourishing when Bureau Venhuizen emerged in the late 1990s, it seems that political decision-makers and professionals in the space shaping disciplines saw some role that art seemed capable

of fulfilling. The critique of EHS policy, of amusement parkification and of the artists' role there could also lead to some observations besides the Frankfurt School's pessimism (though without denying its validity). The call for return of the landscape to a more authentic version came at the moment when there were hardly any visible traces remaining in nature for the so-called "authenticity" to be based on. Even more if it were polderlands, where authenticity was in invention and construction. So the return appears to have been based on conceptual, cultural, probably historical traces and wishes discovered or invented, amongst others, also by artists. This situation indicates that the "reality," as it were, of the Dutch landscape was in essence the existence of overlapping layers of human intervention. Layers, each one of which may indicate overlapping logics, without necessarily a very obvious coherence between them. The outcomes of their intersection could be similar to the strange "phenomena" collected in Bureau Venhuizen's brochure (Fig. 38-40). And such outcomes or phenomena could be described as resulting from the event of the encounter of different logics, interests and times. More interesting than the alleged strangeness of these phenomena – against which standards, after all? – is probably the interest in their systematic identification, collection and presentation as such. Venhuizen's practice manifests that the "reality" of the landscape is inscribed in layers of construction and intervention that represent different, sometimes incompatible, rationalities. So the actual "unrealistic" aspect – for all the absurdity of this formulation – would be to maintain that today's or yesterday's planners have been too rational compared to some recognizably "natural" preceding situation, and in need for art to counterbalance their excessive rationality.

Nonetheless, EHS partly indicates the wish to return to some kind of order, or to bring some order to disparate events even if technologically and economically it may simply indicate that agriculture requires less physical space. Connecting the above with what has been suggested about dynamics of relations within the planning sector, then art is called upon to offer something missing, as it also was in earlier times. Only, instead of collapsing the existing structures into temporary events, it is rather called upon to draw up a structure out of existing situations regarded as phenomenal.

Venhuizen's Game as a methodology of taking, on the one hand, selected social cultural phenomena translated into tasks, and, on the other, different stakeholders opinions represented by the players, and collapsing them all into a design brief, does just that. If reality seems to be constituted by paradoxical events, then it seems that Venhuizen's practice does not react to structures by turning them into events. Rather, he takes "events" he finds ready in reality, whether these are "lies in which there is such strong belief that they pass for the truth," (Bureau Venhuizen brochure, Fig. 39), or the excessive number of stakeholders and structures of planning. He channels them all into the logic of his practice with its culture-based planning and game-based methodology. Through that process, the events turn into a structured outcome that seems to offer the maximum degree of rationality and objectivity: the most widely accepted amongst stakeholders, conditions for a plan.

In the example of art in relation to urban spaces, earlier practices of artists, regardless how successful they proved, responded to an ideal of showing to planners some ways to overcome the constraints of their professional practices. However the practice of Bureau Venhuizen, implanted by its inspirer as part of professional plan-

ning processes rather than as an addition to them, is directed towards introspection, rather than utopia. - i.e. towards taking the varieties of irrationality existing within the assumingly rational system as departure point.

So in conclusion, the triangle of art-play-reality is still at work in the case of public art, as long as the role of the artists remains to contribute insights that professionals in the field seek an external agent to give shape to. What seems to have changed are conceptions of the content and internal operation of each one, and thus also of the relations between them. As art in the example of Venhuizen, or also of Jeanne van Heeswijk, selects and coordinates among existing layers and players, it is performing a temporary postproduction rather than producing something totally new. So the role remains, the content changes. Which is also a reason why, when narrowly thinking of art in terms of autonomy or innovation without examining the relations that structure conceptions of the content of these two terms, it often becomes difficult to justify the content of such projects as art. The content of what is taking place, of what is happening within these projects, i.e. the events that they produce, as art. All the while their proposals do match commissioners wishes, as was the case with Venhuizen's selection by the Foundation From Weurt to Deest.

EPILOGUE

Ways of doing and making, ways of saying, articulating, formulating, asking, responding, ways of conceptualizing and narrating ... ways of connecting, engaging, communicating, coordinating, organizing and framing, ways of relating, collaborating and delegating ... ways of moving between a domain of images and imagination and a domain of “real” actions, positions of subjects and ways of co-existing. Ways of reflecting back onto all the above what is perceivable, thinkable, sayable or audible about them by means of a practice that simultaneously re-produces them as what they are, and as what they are like. Continuously negotiating on what differentiates the two, but also on what triggers the necessity of negotiating their differentiation.

By looking into engaged, participatory/collaborative, public art practices in this dissertation, I have tried to explore transformations in art production over the past couple of decades that have influenced our perception of what constitutes an art project and how it operates. This perspective turns attention to aesthetics very close to Rancière’s. In his understanding of the distribution of the sensible, of “what is *aestheton* or capable of being apprehended by the senses,” Rancière maintained that the aesthetic regime of the arts “did not begin with decisions to initiate an artistic rupture. It began with decisions to reinterpret what makes art and what art makes.”⁵⁷⁵ In this book I took into account the socio-political issues dealt with by artists and respective discourses that have permeated the artistic field. What I have tried to show about them is that these have influenced not only the thematic interests of artists, but also artistic practices in profound ways: what previously was not considered as part of the art product - such as ways of communicating its content or relations of its production - have been reconfigured into forms produced as part of the art.

This approach is not judgmental as such. It does not aim at providing criteria for assessment of the artistic value of projects or their social and political relevancy. But it does point to the necessity of reconsidering the concept of criticality for art,

as it investigates possible changes in the role and operation of art, artists and art institutions on the wider horizons of their reception. That was made most explicit in the discussion about “Relations.” There I maintained that, at a first level, it is the artists who take a critical perspective on socio-political conditions that - for instance in cases such as the situations addressed in TAMA and Gudran - force groups of people to marginalization. At the same time, as the artists draw to their practice various strategies, tactics and relations from the “real” world, the projects become more and more complicit with interests of “real” world relations. Thus their projects tend to reproduce and re-present in their own internal operations and structures, problematic aspects of “real-world” relations, something that renders them susceptible to negative criticism. However in this way, from the very criticism made on problematic aspects of the projects, one could draw tools – concepts, arguments, a language - to articulate a critique on socio-political “real-world” relations that the projects re-produce and re-present in the internal operation of relations that are simultaneously producing them, and produced by them (see here also relations of production merging with relations produced). Consequently, in an indirect, or rather in a reverse way, the projects of the artists do provide tools for a critical perspective on the socio-political realities they engage with. But these tools come more in the form of the critique made on the art projects themselves.

Even though the above was a conclusion particularly of the discussion around “Relations,” the very idea that the art critique could be transformed to a critique of social or political realities falls within the wider frame of thinking proposed about “Concepts and narratives.” According to that discussion, in the fluid, ephemeral, but also long-term existence of the projects, something important that takes place is the production and elaboration of a number of concepts and narrations. At a first level, these refer to ideas about the role of the specific art project, as well as generally of art and the artist in today’s world. In that context, ideas about today’s world are also formulated and examined. In addition to that, I have maintained also that distinctions between artists, audiences, participants, curators, critics and theorists as producers often become quite blurry (as, for instance, in the case where an art critic’s approach may enter the narrative domain of an art project, and become fused with its narrations). Within this frame of thinking the collectively produced, process-based, public art project becomes a platform of transfers, of both practices as well as concepts, between various “producers” besides the artists. And exactly in this conception of the art project as a domain where such metaphors and exchanges take place between the art and the non-art, it is that one can also perceive of the aforementioned (in the conclusions of “Relations”) transfer between art critique and social and political critique as a way of reconsidering our concepts of the criticality of art.

Last but not least, all the above revolve around what art “does” - or at least what I maintain that the projects analyzed in this book “do” as art - with regard to the specific contexts they derive from, and issues the artists deal with. What is not explained in the above is the question of how these metaphors and exchanges take place, of what is the form of this to-and-fro movement between art and non-art, its mechanics if you like. For this question, theories of play and games proved most apt for providing a theoretical model for the operation of these “mechanics.”

At the time of finishing this dissertation everyone discussed in this book is still working. While also the discourses especially on notions regarding collectivity in art and transfers of practices between fields and disciplines are growing. All phenomena and processes investigated in this book are still underway, a fact that renders any final conclusions irrelevant. Instead, this study was intended as a contribution to expanding the ways of viewing them and thinking about them. It derived from the observation that some ways of making art have changed, thus influencing also what art makes “aestheton” to us and how. In closing I would like to thank the artists who afforded me their time and materials, and who later patiently read my analysis of their practices, an analysis that often deviated from how they themselves see their work.

NOTES

- 1 Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another. Site Specific Art and Locational Identity*, esp. chap. 1, "Genealogy of site-specificity," (Cambridge, Mass. And London: The MIT Press, 2002), 11-31. The genealogy Kwon proposes is not strictly chronological.
- 2 For rather dismissive voices regarding repetitions of forms and ideas from the 1960s and 1970s see, e.g., Camiel van Winkel, *Moderne Leege: Over Kunst en Openbaarheid* (Nijmegen: Sun, 1999), 142-166; Van Winkel, "Publicness and recognizability," in *Conventions in Contemporary Art. Lectures and Debates*, ed. Valentijn Byvanck (Rotterdam: Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, 2001), 19-28; J.J. Charlesworth, "Art's Agency," in *Art Monthly*, 261 (2002): 7-10; Charlesworth, "Mayday! Mayday! Art in the age of no alternatives," <http://www.jjcharlesworth.com/>. For investigations in possible different meanings and functions in repetitions see, e.g., Sven Lütticken, "Secrecy and publicity. Reactivating the avant-garde," in *New Left Review*, 17, (2002), on <http://newleftreview.org/A2414>.
- 3 Collectivity in art has a completely different background in former communist countries, which I do not touch at all in this book. Accordingly, there are contemporary engaged, process-based, participatory/collaborative practices in Latin American countries, which are also not studied here.
- 4 It should be noted that, regarding local discourses, I can speak only about the linguistic environments to which I have access, i.e. the English, German, Dutch and Greek.
- 5 Rosalyn Deutsche, *Evictions. Art and Spatial Politics* (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 1996), xi.
- 6 Marius Babias, "Vorwort," in *Im Zentrum der Peripherie. Kunstvermittlung und Vermittlungskunst in den 90er Jahren*, ed. Babias (Vienna: Fundus, 1995), 17. Translated by the author, original in German, app. II, 1.
- 7 Jacques Rancière, "The distribution of the sensible," in Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics*, trans. and ed. by Gabriel Rockhill (London: Continuum, 2004), 13.
- 8 See, for instance, Holger Kube Ventura, "Zum Einfluss politisch-künstlerischer Praxis aus den USA," in *Politische Kunst Begriffe in den 1990er Jahren im deutschsprachigen Raum* (Vienna: Selene, 2002), 155-157. Accordingly, in their introduction to the collection of articles published after the conference *Dürfen Die Das? Kunst Als Sozialer Raum* the organizers/editors maintained that: "Beginning in the early nineties, an understanding of art as a space of social exchange and political articulation became accepted not only among artists and theorists, but finally also by leading institutions. In Europe this was more clearly received as a change of paradigms than in the USA, where collective, participatory and activist ways of working had been continuously present in art since the civil rights movement of the sixties." Stella Rollig and Eva Sturm, "Introduction," in *Dürfen Die Das? Kunst Als Sozialer Raum*, eds. Rollig and Sturm (Wien: Turia und Kant, 2002), 25-35.
- 9 For the time-frame in the USA see, Nina Felshin, ed., *But is it Art? The Spirit of Art as Activism* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1995), 9; Brian Wallis ed., *Democracy. A Project by Group Material* (Seattle: Bay/New Press, 1990), 10-11; Wallis (ed.), *If You Lived Here. The City in Art, Theory and Social Activism. A Project by Martha Rosler*, DIA Art Foundation (Seattle: Bay/New Press, 1991; Richard Bolton "Enlightenment and self-interest: The avant-garde in the '80s," in *Art Activism and Oppositionality. Essays from Afterimage*, ed. Grant H. Kester (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 23-51; Suzanne Lacy, "Introduction. Cultural pilgrimages and metaphoric journeys," Lucy Lippard "Looking around: where we are, where we could be" and Lacy, "Editor's introduction," all in *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*, ed. Lacy (Seattle: Bay Press, 1995), 19-49 (21), 114-130 (120-121) and 189-192 (190-191) respectively.

- 10 Arlene Raven, ed., *Art in the Public Interest* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989). See also Miwon Kwon "Kunst im öffentlichen Interesse" glossary entry, *Skulptur Projekte Münster 07*, ex. cat., eds. Brigitte Franzen, Kasper König and Carina Plath (Cologne: Verlag Walther König, 2007), 395.
- 11 Raven's notion is picked up, e.g., by Suzanne Lacy who discusses extensively the different characteristics of "art in public spaces" and "art in the public interest." See, Lacy, "Introduction," 21-28. Miwon Kwon also uses the division, adding also a third category of "art as public spaces" in her essay "Public art and urban identities," on www.eipcp.net/diskurs/d07/text/kwon_public_en.html, first published as "For Hamburg: public art and urban identities," in *Public Art is Everywhere*, ex. cat. (Hamburg: Kunstverein Hamburg und Kunstbehoerde Hamburg, 1997), and later in "Sittings of public art: integration versus intervention," in *One Place After Another*, 57-99.
- 12 For art in public spaces commissioned by art institutions, see, e.g., National Endowments for the Arts (NEA), *Art in Public Places* (Washington, DC: Partners for Liveable Places, 1981); John Beardsley, *Art in Public Places* (Washington D.C.: Partners for Livable Places, 1981); Beardsley, *Earthworks and Beyond: Contemporary Art in the Landscape* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1984).
- 13 Lacy, "Introduction," 28-29. These issues were addressed also in, e.g., Wallis, *If You Lived Here*; Wallis, *Democracy*; Felshin, *But is it Art?*; Laura Cottingham, "Whitney Biennale 1993," in Babias, *Im Zentrum der Peripherie*, 235-250; Deutsche, *Evictions*; Kester, *Art Activism and Oppositionality*; Tom Finkelpearl, *Dialogues in Public Art* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2000).
- 14 Felshin, "Introduction," *But is it Art?*, 9-30 (10)
- 15 Ibid., 12.
- 16 Lacy, "Introduction," 19.
- 17 Ibid., 28.
- 18 Steven Binger, "The McArthur park experiment, 1984-1987," in *Critical Issues in Public Art. Content, Context and Controversy*, eds. Harriet F. Senie and Sally Webster (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 270-279 (277).
- 19 Deutsche, *Evictions*, xii-xiii
- 20 Deutsche, "Agoraphobia," in *Evictions*, 269-328. This analysis is made mainly in the last chapter, "Agoraphobia," which was not been published before, while all other chapters are revised versions of articles published between 1985 and 1993.
- 21 Ibid, xxii, see also "Agoraphobia."
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 Ibid, 272-275.
- 24 See, e.g., Oliver Marchart, "Art, Space and the Public Sphere(s). Some basic observations on the difficult relation of public art, urbanism and political theory," (10/1998) on <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0102/marchart/en>, published also in *Stadtmotiv*, eds. Adreas Lechner and Petra Maier (Vienna: Selene, 1999); Kwon, *One Place after Another*; Simon Sheikh, "In the place of the public sphere? Or, the world in fragments," (2004), <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0605/sheikh/en>; Simon Sheikh ed., *In the Place of the Public Sphere?* (Berlin: b_books, 2005); Claire Bishop, "Antagonism and relational aesthetics," in *October*, 110 (2004): 51-80;
- 25 Hal Foster, "The Artist as Ethnographer," in *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1996), 170-203.
- 26 Ibid., 172.
- 27 Ibid., 173-174.
- 28 Ibid., 174.
- 29 Ibid., 177-180.
- 30 Ibid., 196.

- 31 Lacy, "Introduction," 28.
- 32 Kwon, *One Place After Another*, for earlier publications see, e.g., "The Three Rivers Art Festival," Documents, no. 7, (1996): 31; "One place after another: Notes on site specificity," *October*, 80, 1997): 85-110; "Public Art and Urban Identities" also from 1997.
- 33 For Kwon's connection to Rosalyn Deutsche' see, *One Place After Another*, 2-3.
- 34 Ibid., 3 and chap. 1, "Genealogy of site-specificity," 11-34.
- 35 Ibid., 4 and chap. 2, "Unhings of site-specificity," 35-55.
- 36 Ibid., 6.
- 37 Ibid., 118-136.
- 38 See especially chap. 5, "The (Un)sitings of community," in *ibid.*, 138-155.
- 39 See, Andrea Fraser, "Services: A working-group exhibition," in eds. Beatrice von Bismarck, Diethelm Stoller and Ulf Wuggening, *Games, Fights, Collaborations. Das Spiel von Grenze und Überschreitung* (Stuttgart: Cantz, 1996), 210-213; Andrea Fraser, "What is intangible, transitory, mediating, participatory and rendered in the public sphere?," and " Services: Working group discussions: Serving institutions, serving communities, serving audiences," *October*, 80 (1997): 111-116 and 117-148.
- 40 Services started from the Kunstraum der Universität Lüneburg and toured to Stuttgart, Munich, Geneva, Vienna and Hasselt, Belgium. Participants in the exhibition and working group included Judith Barry, Ute-Meta Bauer, Ulrich Bischoff, Iwona Blazwick, Büro Bert, Susan Cahan, Clegg & Guttman, Stefan Dilleuth, Helmut Draxler, Andrea Fraser, Renée Green, Christian Philipp Müller, Fritz Rahmann and Fred Wilson. Fraser spent much of the 1990s travelling between United States and Europe. It is interesting to note here that Helmut Draxler and Hedwig Sachsenhuber took over the Munich Kunstverein in 1993 and changed its directions. From market-centred artists, they turned to artists working site-specifically, often process-based, and also laid emphasis in new ways of addressing the public. See Helmut Draxler, "Munich Kunstverein 1992-1995," in *Beyond Ethics and Aesthetics*, eds. Ine Gevers and Jeanne van Heeswijk (Nijmegen: SUN, 1997), 125-145.
- 41 Grant H. Kester, *Conversation Pieces. Community and Communication in Western Art* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: California University Press, 2004).
- 42 For these genealogies see, e.g., Felshin, "Introduction;" Lacy, "Introduction," (25-30). Interesting to compare also is Allan Kaprow, *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, ed. by Jeff Kelley (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, expanded edition 2003, first published 1993).
- 43 Deutsche, *Evictions*, 290.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 Foster, "Introduction," in *The Return of the Real*, ix-xix (x).
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 For the time frame, see, e.g., Rollig and Sturm, "Introduction;" Babias, "Vorwort;" Fraser, "What is intangible, transitory, mediating, participatory...."
- 48 For the concentration and significance of these exhibition events in 1993 see, e.g., Ventura, *Politische Kunst Begriffe*, 69; Fraser, "Services: A working-group exhibition," 210; Peter Weibel, ed., *Kontext Kunst* (Cologne: DuMont, 1994), xiii; Isabelle Graw, "Jugend forscht (Armally, Dion, Fraser, Müller)," *Texte zur Kunst*, no.1 (2000): 166 - the last three references from Ventura, 255.
- 49 Fraser, "Services: A working-group exhibition," 210. Furthermore, for conferences and symposia particularly on public, engaged art, emphasizing participatory/collaborative methods see, e.g., "Dürfen Die Das? Kunst Als Sozialer Raum," O.K. Centre for Contemporary Art, Linz, 2000; "Diffusion: Collaborative Practice in Contemporary Art," Tate Modern, London, 2003; "Dispositive

- Workshop” and “Colloquium on Collaborative Practices,” München Kunstverein, 2003-04; Collaborative Practices Part 2, Schedhalle Zurich, 2005; “Collective Creativity,” Fridericianum, Kassel, 2005; “Taking the Matter into Common Hands,” Iaspis, Stockholm, 2005; “Artists Strategies in Public Spaces,” Stedelijk Museum CS, Amsterdam, 2005.
- 50 For more events that influenced transformation in art production and institutional practices of the time, see, e.g., Babias, “Vorwort,” 9-28.
- 51 See, e.g., reclaiming the streets, rebel clowning, urban climbing, carnival resistance, pranksters, squatters etc.
- 52 See here also Marius Babias, ed., *Das Neue Europa. Kultur des Vermischens und Politik der Representation* (Vienna and Cologne: Generali Foundation & Walter König Verlag, 2005).
- 53 See, for instance, Malcolm Miles, ed., *Art for Public Places* (Winchester: Winchester School of Art Press, 1989); Malcolm Miles, ed., *Art and the City* (Portsmouth: University of Portsmouth, 1995); Malcolm Miles, *Art Space and the City: Public Art and Urban Futures* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997); Sara Selwood, *The Benefits of Public Art* (London: PSI, 1995); For conferences, see, e.g., “Art – City – Practice,” OK Centre for Contemporary Art, Linz; “Kunst im Stadtraum. Hegemonie und Öffentlichkeit,” Kunsthaus Dresden, 2003, and the publication with the same title edited by Ralph Lindner, Christianne Mennicke and Silke Wagler (Berlin: DRESDENpostplatz & b_books, 2004); “Art and the City” and “Suburban Scenarios” Stedelijk Museum CS, Amsterdam, 2006.
- 54 For influential scholars in social geography, see, e.g., Doreen Massey, Edward Soja, Saskia Sassen, Manuel Castells.
- 55 For the development of Mouffe’s “agonistic” approach see, Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox* (London: Verso, 2000); in relation to art see Mouffe, “Art and democracy. Art as an agonistic intervention in public space,” in *Open 14*: “Art as Public Issue,” 14 (2008): 6-15. About the Habermasian model and its reworkings see, Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge, *Public Sphere and Experience – Toward an Analysis of the Bourgeois and Proletarian Public Sphere* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993, originally publ. in German, 1972); Craig Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press, 1992); Peter Uwe Hohendahl, “Recasting the public sphere,” *October*, 73 (1995): 27-54. About the relation between art and the notion of the public sphere see, e.g., Marchart, , “Art, Space and the Public Sphere(s),” Sheikh, “In the Place of the Public Sphere?,” Sheikh, *In the Place of the Public Sphere?*.
- 56 See, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy at the Age of Empire* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2004). In relation to art see, e.g., Notes from Nowhere, eds., *We Are Everywhere. The Irresistible Rise of Global Anticapitalism* (London: Verso, 2003); Michael Hirsch, “Multitude,” glossary entry, in *Skulptur Projekte Münster 07*, eds. Franzen et al., 403.
- 57 For instance in Britain the rhetoric of social inclusion and accessibility on the cultural agenda of Creative Britain under the Tony Blair administration. For British debates, see, e.g., J.J. Charlesworth, “The art of the third way,” in *Art Monthly* no. 241 (2000). In the Netherlands see, e.g., projects in districts undergoing gentrification, where community-based art is directly or indirectly supported financially (among other sponsors) by local municipalities or housing corporations, while part of the local community is forced to move out due to increased rents. See, e.g., Transvaal in de Hague, <http://www.optrektransvaal.nl/>, Overvecht in Utrecht, <http://www.inovervecht.nl/>.
- 58 Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, trans. by Simon Pleasance and Fronza Woods (Dijon: Les presses du réel, 2002, 1998 for the French original). The book contains texts published since 1992. Bourriaud’s second book, *Postproduction* (New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2002) along related lines, caught much less attention. He curated also some influential relevant exhibitions, e.g., “Traffic”

- (Cape Bordeaux, 1996). Claire Bishop, one of Bourriaud's most known critics, sees the "laboratory paradigm" of curating "relational" art as promoted also by curators Maria Lind, Hans-Ulrich Obrist, Barbara Vanderlinden and Hou Hanrou. Bishop, "Antagonism and relational aesthetics."
- 59 Maria Lind, "The collaborative turn," in *Taking the Matter into Common Hands. On Contemporary Art and Collaborative Practices*, eds. Johanna Billing, Maria Lind and Lars Nilsson (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007), 15-31 (21).
- 60 Ibid., 14.
- 61 Ibid., 19.
- 62 Ibid., 20.
- 63 Ibid., 22.
- 64 Lind, "The collaborative turn," 17.
- 65 "Art and Collaboration," eds. John Roberts and Stephen Wright, special issue, *Third Text*, 71, 18:6 (2004).
- 66 "Introduction," in *ibid.*, 531-532 (531).
- 67 Rancière, "The distribution of the sensible," 13.
- 68 Claire Bishop, ed., *Participation. Documents of contemporary art* (London and Cambridge, Mass: Whitechapel & The MIT Press, 2006). See also Claire Bishop, "The social turn: Collaboration and its discontents," in *Right About Now. Art and Theory since the 1990s*, eds. Margriet Schavemaker and Mischa Rakier, (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2007), 58-68.
- 69 Bishop, "Introduction," in *Participation*, 10.
- 70 Ibid.
- 71 Ibid., 12.
- 72 Ibid.
- 73 Ibid.
- 74 See, e.g., Oliver Grau, ed., *MediaArtHistories* (Cambridge, Mass. & London: The MIT Press, 2007).
- 75 Kontext Kunst, Neue Galerie, Graz, Austria. See Weibel, *Kontext Kunst*. According to Maria Lind: "Many of the relevant discussions around the work of these artists had, previous to the exhibition and the catalogue, been published in the journal *Texte zur Kunst* and a number of those involved felt that Peter Weibel as well as some other curators had hijacked their project." See, for instance, Stefan Germer, "Unter Geiern – Kontext – Kunst im Kontext" in *Texte zur Kunst*, no.19, 1995. Lind, "The collaborative turn," 31.
- 76 The artist had brought cooking ingredients, including eggs. Visitors started throwing the eggs against the walls instead of cooked them, which most likely means that that first dinner event was not enthusiastically embraced, whether as cosy cooking evening, or as art event. Erik Hagoort, *Good Intentions. Judging the Art of Encounter* (Amsterdam: Foundation for Visual Arts, Design and Architecture, 2005), 12.
- 77 Ibid. Culture in Action was also the main case study of new genre public art treated by Miwon Kwon with scepticism regarding the understandings of community derived from the various invited artists' projects. See, "From site to community in new genre public art: the case of 'Culture in Action,'" in *One Place After Another*, 100-137.
- 78 Hagoort, *Good Intentions*, 13.
- 79 Ibid.
- 80 So also Hagoort closes his introduction with the diplomatic/ironic (?) comment: "... one thing is for sure: the artists who feature in this essay all mean well." Ibid., 10.
- 81 The *Dwaallicht* event was intentionally scheduled on a day that was also a kind of neighbourhood information day organized by the city council. Local residents receive information about other districts where they could move in, as the regenerated Nieuw Crooswijk is not expected to be

- available for its entire old population anymore. Jeanne van Heeswijk, e-mail to the author January 11, 2008.
- 82 All English translations of titles are mine.
- 83 Titles of Jeanne van Heeswijk's projects are given in English as long as they are in English in the original, or an English translation is provided on the artist's website. Accordingly, the initials letters of words within projects' titles are in capital or small caps following the artist's preferred form.
- 84 When a city or area is mentioned in this chapter without indicating the country, the country is the Netherlands. Opportunities for projects are not necessarily connected to official invitations or commissions.
- 85 Appendix I is reproducing without editing the projects' descriptions as given on the artist's website www.jeannetworks.net at the time of writing this text. Later, in 2006, a new version of the website was launched. Any descriptions of projects given further in the text are based on the old website, unless otherwise indicated.
- 86 For the significance of emphasizing the particularities of the Netherlands when discussing issues of public space and artistic engagement see, for instance, landscape architect Adriaan Geuze: "Yes, precisely. It has very much to do with that. Therefore in the discussion I want to always put a comma and 'in the Netherlands', instead of just 'about kunst', or 'about public spaces'. Rather, public spaces in the Netherlands, engagement in the Netherlands, context in the Netherlands, urban renewal in the Netherlands. It is about a very small, a really awfully small area" (my translation, original in Dutch, app. II. 2). Recorded discussion during the project Grootstedelijke Reflecties, Rotterdam, 1999, published in Henk Oosterling and Siebe Thissen, eds., *Interakta 5. Grootstedelijke Reflecties. Over Kunst en Openbare Ruimte* (Rotterdam: Faculteit der Wijsbegeerte, 2002), 50. See also, Van Winkel, *Moderne Leegte*.
- 87 Dominiek Ruyters, "De Ander en Ik," Interview with Jeanne van Heeswijk, *Metropolis M*, 1998/5: 33-34. My translation, original in Dutch, app. II.3.
- 88 *Ibid.*, 34.
- 89 For more on Opzomen see <http://www.opzomen.nl/html/opzomen.html>. CBK Rotterdam collaborated with Opzomen that year for the first time.
- 90 Camiel van Winkel, "Art in exchange for dignity," *Archis*, 8 (1994): 6-7; see also Paul Groot, "Ik en de Ander," *Metropolis M*, 1994/4: 48-49; Elly Stegeman "Babbelbox. 'Ik + de Ander' en de autonomie van het kunstwerk," *Metropolis M*, 1994/4: 7-9. One could claim here that a mixing of ethics and aesthetics was evident in the art making and curating practices of, for instance, Martha Rosler or Group Material in the United States already during the 1980s. Yet one would not be able to trace in Dutch public debates back in 1994 an urgency to alert the public to socio-political justice as intense, as in Ronald Reagan's 1980s in the United States.
- 91 See here also, Hagoort, *Good Intentions*.
- 92 See, e.g., Fraser, "Services;" Fraser, "What is intangible, transitory, mediating, participatory..."
- 93 Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*.
- 94 See, for instance, the contributions to the project *Until we meet again* by Jan Hein van Melis, Engelen & Engelen and Kamiel Verschuren.
- 95 Kwon, "The Three Rivers Art Festival," 31.
- 96 For "trust" see Jeanne van Heeswijk, workshop discussion, Mobility-Stability Conference, organized by Showroom MAMA, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, 2004 (unpublished). For "accountability," see roundtable discussion between invited guests to the presentation of the project *Architecture of Interaction*, Veenvloer, Amsterdam, November 4-10, 2005 (recorded, unpublished).
- 97 See also Van Winkel, *Moderne Leegte*. For early discussions about the role of artists in urban gentrification process in the United States from the early 1980s onwards, see Deutsche, *Evictions*.

- Later, with regard to community art and ethical issues of the 1990s see Kwon, “One place after another;” Kwon “Public art and urban identities.”
- 98 See, for instance, the criticism of Claire Bishop on Bourriaud’s relational aesthetics, in “Antagonism and relational aesthetics.” Eric Hagoort also refers in various places in his essay *Good Intentions to art critics’ misgivings towards what he calls “the art of encounter.”*
- 99 Rolf and Maaïke Engelen in about ten projects as a duo or separately, Wapke Feenstra in seven, Marcel Wanders in four, Irene Hohenbüchler in three.
- 100 For *The Strip* see also <http://www.destrip-westwijk.net> and Maartje Berendsen and Jeanne van Heeswijk, eds., *De Strip 2002-2004 Westwijk, Vlaardingen* (Amsterdam: Artimo, 2004).
- 101 The Foundation Waterweg Wonen is the owner of most of the district’s building hardware, including the shopping strip. Priority was officially granted to people from the district, the community of Vlaardingen’s Westwijk. This is made explicit in various documents held at the archives of the local authorities of Vlaardingen. For instance: “The working group for art has the task to contribute by the means of visual arts to the life climate of Westwijk,” letter signed by J.J. de Kramer, director of the Welfare Service (Dienst Welzijn), Municipality of Vlaardingen, to Jeanne van Heeswijk, 27 October 1995 (my translation, see app. II.4 for all original Dutch citations in this note). “In the coming years the entire district of Westwijk will undergo a thorough face-lift. The Municipality of Vlaardingen has commissioned Jeanne van Heeswijk (visual artist in Rotterdam) to consider how visual art could be involved there.” *Nieuwsbrief Beeldende Kunst, Vlaardingen*, 1, 1996.
- 102 Randstad is the general name for the wide area that includes the urban centres of Amsterdam, Utrecht, de Hague and Rotterdam.
- 103 See Michelle Provoost, “Where exactly are we? Post-war neighbourhoods: unexploited territory” in *De Strip*, Berendsen and Van Heeswijk, 267-272 (for the English translation). Other roughly simultaneous long-term project initiatives by artists (occasionally also architects) in the Netherlands, which were developed with the intention of accompanying urban regeneration processes, include *Op Trek* in de Hague by Sabrina Lindemann and Annechien Meier, *Art Walk* in Amsterdam by Holger Nickisch, *Zenith in Motion (ZiM)* in Rotterdam by Daniela Zwarowsky, *WiMBY! (Welcome into My Backyard !)* in Rotterdam by Crimson Architectural Historians and Felix Rottenberg.
- 104 SKOR: Stichting Kunst en Openbare Ruimte.
- 105 Asked about the expectations an artist is faced with when invited to the Venice Biennial, regardless whether one’s art was principally in public spaces and at grass-roots community level rather than in institutional spaces, Van Heeswijk replied: “It is very problematic in more ways. They cannot accommodate this art. . . . But on the other hand I say also let’s not be naïve. Let’s never be naïve. The moment I got the invitation for Venice, I got 200,000 euro more for the Strip.” Jeanne van Heeswijk, interview by the author, tape recording, Rotterdam, June 16, 2004.
- 106 Jeanne van Heeswijk, presentation at the symposium Artists Strategies in Public Spaces, organized by the Professorship of Art and Public Space and Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, December 2, 2005 (unpublished).
- 107 Accordingly, none of the artists’ initiatives/projects developed mentioned earlier in the context of urban regeneration processes (*Op Trek, Art Walk, ZiM, WiMBY!*) had a stated agenda of community activism or political protest against regeneration processes.
- 108 Felshin, *But is it Art?*; Finkelpearl, *Dialogues in Public Art*; Kwon, *One Place after Another*.
- 109 See, e.g., Van Heeswijk’s specific reference to philosophers Emmanuel Levinas, Hannah Arendt or the sociologist Scott Lash, to mention only widely known ones. Van Heeswijk, interview by the author.
- 110 See, e.g., Hagoort, *Good Intentions*.
- 111 *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, A. S. Hornby and Crowther, Jonathan, eds., fifth edition

- (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).
- 112 I am paraphrasing Michel de Certeau in his distinction between space and place: “In short, space is a practiced place.” *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Esp. “Chapter IX. Spatial Stories,” (Berkeley etc.: University of California Press, 1984), 115-130 (117).
- 113 Jeanne van Heeswijk, “Fleeting images of community,” in *Exploding Aesthetics*, Annete W. Balkema and Henk Slager, eds. (Amsterdam/Atlanta: Rodopi, 2001), 175-179 (178).
- 114 The project’s “content” is understood here to include both activities that take place during a project, as well as its driving ideas and concepts.
- 115 Maaïke Engelen, “Creative Urge. Annex a zeal for improvement,” www.jeannetworks.net. The preface to the dialogue reads: “The text was written for the presentation of the MAMA Cash Prize 2000 to Jeanne van Heeswijk. The text tries to give insights into the work and method of the artist.”
- 116 Mama Cash Prize, an award for women who contribute to culture.
- 117 For the museum attendant see *Acte de Présence – Sans Valeur*, for the chambermaid see *Hotel New York P.S.1*, for the critic see *NEStWORK* or *State of Mind*, for the dancer see *Room with a View (positioning)*, for the poet see *Until We Meet Again*.
- 118 Van Winkel, “Art in exchange for dignity,” 7.
- 119 Mirjam Westen, “Jeanne van Heeswijk: The Artist as versatile infiltrator of public space. Urban curating in the 21st century,” <http://mail.sarai.net/pipermail/atelier/2004-July/000075.html>.
- 120 Esther Didden, interview by the author, tape recording, de Hague, November 21, 2005.
- 121 The *Dahlia Race Show* by Jan Hein van Melis, a one-weekend event of team races with miniature cars that aimed at making the first acquaintance between the local community and Until we meet again, met with various problems and limited attendance. Bik Van der Pol’s, Crimson’s and Edwin Janssen’s assignments were not realized by 2005. Besides *The Strip*, the assignments to Engelen&Engelen, who organized weekly meetings relating to poetry-making with children, seems to have been the only assigned project that was vibrant, well-attended and lasting a long period.
- At the time of correcting the final draft of this text in 2008, all but one assignments were either realized or underway. Van Heeswijk, e-mail to the author, January 11, 2008.
- 122 Samples of publicity for *Until we meet again* are basically found in local press. E.g., “Westwijkers verbreederen en racen in postkantoor,” *Rotterdamse Dagblad*, October 20, 1997; Ger van Veen “‘Until we meet again’ laat sociale aspecten in de beeldende kunst zien,” *Groot Vlaardingse*, May, 2000.
- 123 Two interesting examples on the extreme negative side of how contingent the narrative of process-based projects can be when they are formed on the basis of agendas (socio-political engagement), scenarios (a narrative framework) and a participatory/collaborative practice (as the agenda’s translation into a method) were the Culture in Action (Sculpture Chicago, USA, 1992-93) and Going Public. Politics, Subjects and Places (Sassuolo, Modena, Italy, 2003). The first one, a community-based art show, is haunted by Miwon Kwon’s critique on the curator’s agenda and perception of community art she favoured, but also by the withdrawal of the invited artist Renée Green. Green maintained that the curators would not accept from her anything but a project on women of ethnic origin, because Green was one herself, and was known for her related art works. Kwon, chap. 4, ‘From site to community in new genre public art: the case of ‘Culture in Action’,’ in *One Place After Another*, 1000-137. For Going Public, one of the invited artists, Rainer Ganahl, wrote an extensive article on his irritation about the circumstances under which he was hosted by the project’s curator, in order to work in situ in relation to Arabs in Italy. See “Sassuolo - going public. A text and diary on this city and this project,” http://www.ganahl.info/sassuolo_txt.html. About the entire exhibition see Marco Scotini and Claudia Zanfi, eds., *Going Public. Soggetti, Luoghi e Politiche. Politics, Subjects and Places*, ex. cat. (Milano: Silvana Editoriale, 2003).
- 124 Van Heeswijk, “Fleeting images,” 175.

125 Ibid., 177.

126 See also van Heeswijk, interview by the author.

127 With regard to what is “properly artistic” about the projects of Jeanne van Heeswijk, see the curator’s introduction by Carlos Basualdo in the book of *Face Your World* in Columbus-Ohio. Basualdo expands on the idea that understanding the role of “images” in Van Heeswijk’s work is crucial in understanding it as art. His way of approaching the theme of images is not the same as the one I propose here. Basualdo, “Introduction. Face It!,” in Jeanne van Heeswijk, ed, *Face Your World* (Amsterdam: Artimo & Wexner Center for the Arts, the Ohio State University, 2002), 11-17.

128 Van Heeswijk, interview by the author.

129 In fact whenever possible Van Heeswijk tries to turn invitations for exhibitions, commissions or other possibilities for collaborations with art institutions, into opportunities to realize either a project outside, or a temporary, interactive, event-based project inside the gallery space. See, for instance, the projects with P.S.1 (New York, 1998-99), with the Henry Moore Foundation (Leeds, 1999), her participation to the exhibition *Worthless at Moderna Galerija* (Ljubljana, 2000) or the project with the Wexner Center for the Arts (Columbus-Ohio, 2002).

130 *Draw a Line* was first displayed at the Tokyo City Opera Gallery in 2000, in the context of the exhibition *Territory: Contemporary Art from the Netherlands*. In 2003 it was part of Van Heeswijk’s presentation *The Future from the Sidelines* in Venice, and in 2006 it was exhibited at the Cobra Museum, Amstelveen, in the exhibition *Speel! De Kunst van het Spel*. Van Heeswijk’s installation was added to the Cobra Museum version of this traveling exhibition, which was originally organized and presented as *Faites vos Jeux! Kunst und Spiel seit Dada*, at Kunstmuseum Lichtenstein, Vaduz, Akademie der Künste, Berlin, and Museum für Gegenwartskunst Siegen, 2005-06.

131 Van Heeswijk, interview by the author.

132 The publication of *Face Your World* for Columbus, Ohio, is actually designed as a travel guide to the district.

133 By souvenir-like objects I mean different small objects that one was given during the *Dwaallicht* events, such as green candies, green-black armbands and green stickers. Meanings behind the colours were explained by Van Heeswijk, e-mail to the author, January 11, 2008.

134 To make this point clearer it could be interesting to consider another approach to the same issue in the example of Danish group SUPERFLEX. They are quite famous for projects they have developed together with people as collaborators or participants, often regarded as “users” (e.g., Guaraná Power, SUPERCHANNEL). SUPERFLEX mostly uses specific fonts, colors (white, orange, black), but also elements of playful humor and self-irony, all of which get incorporated into the graphic or visual materials produced for their different projects. Additionally, many of their projects – which they mostly understand as tools - are baptized with the prefix SUPER-, as in SUPERCHANNEL, SUPERMUSIC, SUPERSAUNA etc. As a result, already the projects’ names and design refer back to the group’s artistic identity. In this way, a finger points directly at those who take responsibility for whatever takes place. Additionally, the performative humor and playfulness often found in their work operate as self-reflection, as well as a reminder that one should not take oneself too seriously. Probably, because the themes dealt with are serious enough as they are (e.g., the exploitation of farmers in the Amazon area by multinational corporations as in Guaraná Power) and the group remains but external agent to them. So contrary to Van Heeswijk’s own identity dissolving in the graphic design, SUPERFLEX are bringing themselves to the fore. As vanity-feeding as it might be seeing one’s brand in exhibitions all over art shows, the same design brand that renders SUPERFLEX recognizable, “reduces” them also to a kind of identity: a 1990s group of young artists, with Scandinavian social and postcolonial sensitivities and a taste for plain design.

135 See here also Judith Butler’s analysis of her disagreement with the viewpoint underlying some

- of Susan Sontag's texts. According to the latter photographs cannot in themselves provide adequate interpretation, but need captions and text as they lack narrative coherence. Judith Butler, "Photography, War, Outrage," *PMLA* 120, no. 3 (2005): 823.
- 136 See also the work of Alicia Framis or Rikrit Tiravanjia to mention only two very famous examples.
- 137 For instance see how art, public space, politics, political theory, cultural theory and philosophy merge in the following: Wallis, *If You Lived Here*; Deutsche, *Evictions; New Commitment in Architecture, Art and Design* (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2003); Basualdo, "Introduction. Face It"; *Open 8. (On)zichtbaarheid. Voorbij het beeld in kunst, cultuur, en het publieke domein* (Amsterdam: SKOR, 2004); *Kunst im Stadtraum. Hegemonie und Öffentlichkeit*, Tagungsband zum Symposium im Rahmen der DRESDENPostplatz (Dresden & Berlin: DRESDENPostplatz, b_books, 2004); www.eipcp.net; <http://republicart.net>.
- 138 Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*; Weibel, *Kontext Kunst*.
- 139 This metaphor relates also to the educational role that art is regarded as having for the public, a role rooted in the ideas of the Enlightenment and expressed in the establishment of public art museums in Europe after the French Revolution. According to those ideas education emancipates the individual. However, one should go beyond the educational role of art to grasp the phenomenon of the metaphor of space in Dutch art and spatial planning, especially after the 1939-1945 war.
- 140 See, for instance, Wilma Jansen, *Kunstopdrachten Van De Rijksgebouwendienst na 1945* (Rotterdam: 010 Uitgeverij, 1995); James C. Kennedy, *Nieuw Babylon in Aanbouw: Nederland in de Jaren Zestig* (Amsterdam: Beeldrecht, 1995); Camiel van Winkel, "Authentic Places. Lunetten and the demise of environmental art," *Archis*, 8: 1999, 22-33; Liesbeth Melis, ed., *Kunst als Medicijn / Volksgezondheid*, Skor Kunstprojecten Deel 2, (Amsterdam: SKOR, 2005); *Public Work 1995-2000: Five Years Praktijkbureau Beeldende Kunstopdrachten* (Amsterdam: SKOR, 2001).
- 141 See, e.g., the debates in *Grootstedelijke Reflecties*, or the working groups organized by the group Architecture of Interaction at the Veenvloer, Amsterdam, in 2005.
- 142 See introduction of this book.
- 143 The interest in relations is integral to the interest in interactive art projects. The popularity of interactivity among artists in the Netherlands is evident in the reasons leading to the establishment of the artists' group initiative called Architecture of Interaction. The group was not formed to produce art. Diagnosing a problem of language and communication in the field, they aimed at creating a toolkit that could be used by artists and theorists from various disciplines (mainly theatre, visual arts, performance, new media) to describe the process and outcomes of interactive work. The toolkit includes a vocabulary and models of working methods. See Anna Best, Yvonne Dröge Wendel and Nikolaus Gansterer et. al., *An Architecture of Interaction*, published under the Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial s.5 License, see also www.architectureofinteraction.net.
- 144 Van Heeswijk, interview by the author. Van Heeswijk was referring to ideas in Carlos Basualdo's introduction to the book *Face Your World*. Basualdo was Chief Curator of the Wexner Center for the Arts who commissioned Van Heeswijk. See Basualdo, "Introduction. Face it."
- 145 De Certeau, "Making do: Uses and tactics" and "Walking in the City," in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 29-42 and 91-114.
- 146 *Ibid*, 34.
- 147 For examples of paying attention to the quantity rather than the content of individual contributions in the remaining narrations of art projects see specially NEStWORK, *State of Mind*, Hotel New York P.S.1, *A Christmas Pudding for Henry*, *Krachschiagen* (Bremen, 2000), *The Strip*, *Dwaallicht*.
- 148 This point of view recalls also Kwon's critique about community art projects, see chaps. 4 and 5. "Sittings of public art: integration versus intervention," "From site to community in new genre public art: the case of Culture in Action," in *One Place after Another*, 56-99, 100-147.

- 149 See, for instance, Camiel van Winkel, "Publicness and Recognizability," in *Conventions in Contemporary Culture*, 19-28; Bishop, "Antagonism and relational aesthetics"; "On Art, Politics and Relational Aesthetics," *Inventory*, 5 no. 2&3 (2004) 166-181; Anthony Downey, "Towards a politics of (relational) aesthetics," *Third Text*, 21, no.3 (2007): 267 – 275; Stewart Martin, "Critique of relational aesthetics," *Third Text*, 21 no.4, (2007): 369 – 386.
- 150 Crimson are relevant to this case study also as they have contributed a text to The Strip's book. Besides, their own project Wimby! bears similarities to Van Heeswijk's projects realized in conjunction with urban regeneration plans. For more see <http://www.wimby.nl/> and <http://www.crimsonweb.org/>.
- 151 Crimson, Orgwars, www.crimsonweb.org/projecten/orgwars/orgwars_fr.html.
- 152 Leidsche Rijn is a satellite town of Utrecht. The term Vinex-locations comes from the "Vierde Nota Ruimtelijke Ordening Extra" (1993), a notation of the Dutch Ministry for Housing, Spatial Scheduling and Environment Management (Ministry of VROM). Large outer city areas were identified in this notation for massive new housing development to accommodate the further increasing of population in the country.
- 153 Crimson, Orgwars.
- 154 De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, esp. "Part III: Spatial practices / vii. Walking in the City," 91-110.
- 155 An important consequence of what I maintained in the previous paragraph about the merging of de Certeau's paradigm of the practice of everyday life with professional practices (here, urban planning) is that de Certeau's theory of practice starts losing its currency as a theory exclusively of the practice of everyday life. If one accepts that professional politics do not function only in pursuing set targets, but also in reproducing their very process, and at that level official strategies meet tactical, day-to-day handling, then from this perspective as well one may need to revise de Certeau's idealism when he attributes the tactical practices he so fascinatingly analyzed only to the "ordinary man," the "anonymous hero" of the everyday. For the quotes see, de Certeau, v.
- 156 Here I prefer the more neutral term "groups" compared to the term "communities". The latter usually implies an a priori positive disposition towards the social or other relations and interests connecting members. Such implications of connections sometimes function in people's consciousness as surrogates for ideological matching points that in earlier days led to collective movements in art, from Russian Constructivism to Feminist art.
- Also, my interpretation here with regard to where "relational aesthetics would lead, if brought to their ultimate consequences" echoes Claire Bishop's reading of and respective criticism of Bourriaud's relational aesthetics, as "intrinsic democratic." Bishop bases her argumentation on Rosalyn Deutsche, who in turn takes her leads from Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's ideas about the necessity of conflict, division and instability for a democratic public sphere, and their theoretical approach to subjectivity that goes back to Lacan. In principle I agree with Bishop's skepticism about relational aesthetics. My only reservation would be that the genealogy she draws from becomes almost an excessively theoretical detour for the discussion of Bourriaud's relational aesthetics and artists (Rikrit Tiravanja, Liam Gillick). See, Bishop, "Antagonism and relational aesthetics."
- 157 For this discussion of networking and manoeuvring see, mainly, Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society, The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996); see also, Peter R. Monge & Noshir S. Contractor, *Theories of Communication Networks* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). In relation to urban (spatial) planning see here Part II, chapter three, section four.
- 158 From Jean Baudrillard's writings see "The Mirror of Production" (1973), "Symbolic Exchange and Death" (1976), "On Seduction" (1979), "Simulacra and Simulations" (1983), reprinted English

- translations in *Jean Baudrillard. Selected Writings*, Mark Poster, ed., sec. ed. (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2001), 101-187.
- 159 See here “One could say that my work is merely an investigation of the conditions under which images could be regenerated. I believe that today’s aesthetics has isolated art by separating the image from reality, while shifting presentation to representation. Because of that, isolated images have emerged without any connection to reality,” in “Fleeting images of community,” 178.
- 160 It is extremely interesting here to consider how the editor of Baudrillard’s *Selected Writings*, Mark Poster, in commenting on what Baudrillard had suggested as a way out of his own theoretical hyper-reality model from the 1970s, refers especially to de Certeau’s as a counter-alternative to Baudrillard: “This simulated reality has no referent, no ground, no source. It operates outside the logic of representation. But the masses have found a way of subverting it: the strategy of passivity. ... Baudrillard proposes a new way out: silence. Critical theorists will certainly not remain silent about Baudrillard’s paradoxical revolutionary strategy. In fact, more suggestive approaches to the question of resistance have been offered by Pierre Bourdieu and Michel de Certeau in France and In the *Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), for example, de Certeau argues that the masses resignify meanings that are presented to them in the media, in consumer objects, in the layout of city streets. To many, de Certeau’s position on resistance seems more heuristic and more sensible than Baudrillard’s.” Poster, “Introduction,” in *Jean Baudrillard. Selected Writings*, 6. For Baudrillard’s proposal, see Baudrillard, “The Masses: The Implosion of the Social in the Media,” from 1985.
- 161 Van Heeswijk, “Fleeting Images of community.”
- 162 Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2nd, rev. ed. (London and New York: Continuum, 1989).
- 163 <http://www.aknowles.com/hannah.html> and Hannah Higgins, *Fluxus Experience* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 51-52.
- 164 There is no one definition of Fluxus events that art historians and theorists would agree upon. This relates to the complexity of Fluxus altogether. See, for example, Eстера Milman, “Road shows, street events and Fluxus people: A conversation with Alison Knowles,” in “FLUXUS: A Conceptual Country,” ed. Eстера Milman, special issue, *Visible Language*, 26 no. 1/2 (1992): 97-108; Ina Blom, “Boredom and Oblivion,” in *The Fluxus Reader*, ed. Ken Friedman (Chichester: Academy Editions, 1998), 63-90; Higgins, *Fluxus Experience*, 49-59; “1962 / Fluxus,” in *Art Since 1900. Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism*, ed. by Hal Foster et al. (London: Thames & Hudson, 2003), 456-463. However all above authors see important origins of Fluxus events, for instance, in Dada, in the music classes of John Cage, his ideas about chance and time, and influences of Zen philosophy. Furthermore, sensory experience (e.g., smell, taste, touch) and, especially in George Brecht’s work, aspects of chance expressed by modern science, also played an important role in Fluxus events. One could really not trace these either as origins or as priorities in contemporary events organized as part of engaged, participatory/collaborative art projects.
- 165 One could add here also how Allan Kaprow saw the deliberate ambiguity of the use of events’ scores, which stands in contrast to the rather precise time-place-situation coordinates of most planned events in contemporary participatory/collaborative projects: “But in any case, most of the cards were ambiguous about how they were to be used. It was clear to some of us then that this was their point: to be applicable to various requirements. Those wishing to conventionalize the brief scores (as Brecht called them) into a new-Dada theatre could do so. Those who wanted to project their tiny forms into daily activity, or into contemplation were also free to follow that route...”. Allan Kaprow, “Nontheatrical performance,” in *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, Allan Kaprow ed. by Jeff Kelley (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1993, expanded edition 2003), 163-180, (169).
- 166 For this relation between the project as a space and the particular, for instance, neighborhood or

group of people as a place see also de Certeau: "In short, space is a practiced place," in De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 117.

167 Kester, *Conversation Pieces*.

168 Ibid., 11. Kester sets a second goal for himself right afterwards, namely to find "appropriate criteria for the evaluation of this work that are relevant and appropriate to this specificity." On the basis of the quality of the dialogical process produced by the works, one can thus judge them as successful or not.

169 Ibid.

170 Kester indeed acknowledges that: "By concentrating so intensively on a single dimension of these projects (dialogical exchange) I neglect other important aspects. In particular I give little attention to the significance of visual or sensory experience in many of these projects..." (12). However, throughout the book, it becomes evident that what he acknowledges as further important aspects neglected in his book, are connected either to the moments of performative dialogical interaction, or to the projects' documentation, or to the social and political themes handled within the projects. Kester recognizes that especially the social and political themes are what surfaces in most discussions, due to their urgent and sensitive character.

In Kester's eyes, his approach of considering the dialogical exchange as the central form of the projects is an original approach that has never before been reflected upon in its historical depth and genealogy. To my understanding, Kester does not really move too far away from the artists' own perspectives, intentions and statements with regard to what is the art project, namely what here I called "events" and what is significant about them.

171 The central activity of the first phase of Face Your World in Slotervaart, was the implementation of a "design by the children involved in collaboration mainly with architect Dennis Kaspori and the artist. After the implementation of that phase, the so-called "Stedelijklab" that till then was housed in an old gym in Slotervaart and supported by the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, moved into the museum's educational activities room. A number of experts meetings, round-table discussions, pupils workshops and project presentations took place there. See also <http://www.faceyourworld.nl/index.php?id=20>

172 As already explained, the events function also as the "official" public moments of the projects, while the projects provide the events with their narrative framework.

173 Provoost, "Where exactly are we? Post-war neighbourhoods: unexplored territory," 270.

174 Interestingly, one could trace connections between this blurring of categories in public art events of a performative character and significant structural changes that the theatrical play as staged event has undergone in recent decades. For instance, the so-called "Post-dramatic theatre," after the book by Hans-Thies Lehmann, offers useful perspectives. It deals with the phenomenon of theatre and the theatre play in particular, moving away from the category of "drama," with the latter's structure as a coherent whole and as a mimesis of life in the form of a theatre play. A play presented by actors on stage and in front of an audience that gets absorbed by the dramatic representation of reality that the play constitutes at the moment of its performance. This coherence towards a meaningful, narrative whole breaks up into its components in post-dramatic theatre, which is born the moment that the theatrical means [Theatermittel] are granted their autonomy, get free from their subordination to imperatives of a play's dramatic representation. See, Hans-Thies Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre*, transl. and with an introd. by Karen Jürs-Munby (London and New York: Routledge, 2006).

Many questions deriving from these structural changes are close to prominent issues I see raised in the moments of staged activity within participatory, ephemeral, socio-politically engaged art projects. For instance, the experience and interpretation of the performative act, or the political and ethical implications of the relations between those staged, those staging and the issues put on stage. A study of parallels between (post-dramatic) theatre and participatory, public art events could offer

- worthwhile insights for an analysis of the artwork's structure and operation of re-presentation as act. While in art theory it has only been since the establishment of performances, events and happenings as art forms during the 1960s that some common interpretational ground was created amongst theorists for the understanding of (re-)presentation in the visual arts as anything but matter.
- 175 For the "transfer" as "metaphor" (translating from the Greek *metaphora*=transfer; transport) see de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 115.
- 176 For the ancient meaning of the word "theoros" referred to here and the notion of spectator as participant see Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 121-122.
- 177 As starting point for the understanding of "play" and its relation to culture as applied in this paragraph, see Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens. A Study of The Play Element In Culture* (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1950), 13: "Summing up the formal characteristics of play we might call it a free activity standing quite consciously outside 'ordinary' life as being 'not serious,' but at the same time absorbing the player intensely and utterly. It is a activity connected with no material interest, and no profit can be gained by it. It proceeds with its own proper boundaries of time and space according to fixed rules and in an orderly manner." In his book Huizinga sets out to show how play relates to the most diverse areas of culture: to contest, law, war, poetry, knowledge, philosophy, art. By and large, most authors writing on play and games later than Huizinga have been taking him as a starting point to expand further upon, or to dispute. The ones taken into consideration here are Roger Caillois, *Man, Play and Games*, transl. by Meyer Barash (London: Thames and Hudson, 1962); Umberto Eco, "'Homo ludens' oggi," foreword to the 1973 Italian edition of Huizinga's *Homo Ludens* (Torino: Einaudi, 1973), VII-XXVII; Steven Connor, "Playstations. Or Playing in Earnest," keynote talk given at the opening of the European School Playtime! The Cultures of Play, Gaming and Sport, ICA, London, 26-30/07/2005, published in "Play and Violence," *Static*, no.1, http://static.londonconsortium.com/issue01/connor_playstations.pdf, available also on <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/english/skc/playstations/playstations.pdf>.
- 178 For play in relation to art, the main resources used here are Gadamer, *Truth and Method*; Joel C. Weinsheimer, *Gadamer's Hermeneutics: A Reading of Truth and Method* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1985); Nike Bätzner, ed., *Faites vos jeux! Kunst und Spiel seit Dada*, ex. cat., Vaduz, Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein (Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2005). For further sources relating also to the approach and concept of play found, for instance, in the Situationists and Constant (Nieuwenhuis), see here, Part II, chapter three.
- 179 Expanding Huizinga's theory further, Umberto Eco points to differences between the terms "game" and "play." "Game" refers to the matrix of combinations constituted by rules that offer the players a certain number of options to act and makes it possible for someone to win the game. While "play" refers to the role one plays, to a representation, a performance of competence in relation to a situation at stake. Huizinga himself did not make this distinction. This could be because the language in which he wrote, his native Dutch, contains only one term, *spel* < *spelen*. Léon H. M. Hanssen, e-mail message to the author, September 15, 2006. In our case, both concepts as explained by Eco are relevant. Though in practice, it becomes often hard to distinguish between the two.
- 180 At the time of writing this chapter Jeanne van Heeswijk has already presented an exhibition called Games People Play at the Ludwig Museum in Budapest, in 2004. That project is not considered here, as there was very limited information available. An abstract from the website reads: "The Dutch artist Jeanne van Heeswijk has opted for the latter solution when she based her presentation of videos – all dealing with games both in their actual and in a structural sense – on the understanding of human relations as social games. In her work, social roles function as frames which each of us 'fill in' while taking a particular role. We also mould these frames according to the particular interactions and relations we participate in, so the mutable aspect of the social roles is of high importance. Her

piece *In the Field* [of Players] offers the best example for this performative nature of social roles. The participants are given various roles and no matter how strictly they intend to follow the rules that go with that particular role, every now and then they make lapses which sometimes entail expulsion from the game. In a certain sense, these videos are documentaries of the laboratory experiments Jeanne van Heeswijk astutely constructs.” http://www.c3.hu/~ludwig/ludwig_h_e/oldal_2004/heeswijk_e.htm.

181 In fact it was not only children who participated in the design process, but neighborhood’s inhabitants in general. Nonetheless, both versions of *Face Your World* were principally aimed at children, the first one in conjunction with the program *Children of The Future*, while the second one with a local (HBO) school.

182 In his book Gadamer takes into account earlier theories and definitions of play (e.g., Huizinga, Callois). Developed as part of his aesthetic theory, Gadamer’s concept of play is more congruent here, even if in what follows I will suggest that his theory of play in relation to art has to be revised if it is to maintain relevancy for art forms that emerged since the 1960s.

183 To be more precise, for Gadamer the experience of the work of art is the mode of being of the work of art and it constitutes an event: the event that is taking place every time a person encounters (experiences) an artwork. Gadamer used a concept of play to explain the mode of being of this event. He describes the structure of the experience as a play back-and-fro between artwork and spectator; as a kind of hermeneutic cycle that is simultaneously constitutive of the mode of being of the work itself, as much as of the way in which the spectator is transformed him/herself by means of the experience of art. Gadamer had in mind traditional forms of visual and performative arts (painting, sculpture, drama theatre, music) as people widely knew them before the early 1960s, when his book was published.

184 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 107.

185 *Ibid.*, 108

186 See, for instance, the project *Until we meet again* as in Mirjam Westen’s text.

187 One could see, for instance, the 1% for-the-arts regulation concerning every public construction budget as an excess of spending with regard to the constructions per se. But “spending” and “excess” does not refer here only to money. Excessive time and energy are also spent on setting up only one event or project.

For another approach to play as excess, see also Caillois on gambling as significant category of play in Western societies: “Play is an occasion of pure waste: waste of time, energy, ingenuity, skill and often of money for the purchase of gambling equipment or eventually to pay for the establishment.” In Caillois, *Man, Play and Games*, 5.

188 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 108

189 For the repetitive character of play see Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*, and Gadamer, *Truth and Method*.

190 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 108-109.

191 The terms “identity” and “orientation” are repeatedly met in official cultural policy documents and their critique. In particular with regard to the Netherlands during the 1970s, the time of public art’s thriving, see, e.g.: *Omschrijving van Taken, Werkterreinen, Criteria, Werkwijze en Samenwerkingsverbanden van De Rijksadviescommissie voor De Beeldende Vormgeving in Relatie tot Architectuur en Ruimtelijke Ordening*, Adviescommissie voor de beeldende vormgeving in relatie tot architectuur en ruimtelijke ordening, z. Pl., 1977; *De Zorg voor de Vormgeving*, Ministeries van Cultuur, Recreatie en Maatschappelijk Werk (s’ Gravenhage: Staatsuitgeverij, 1980); Jansen, *Kunstopdrachten Van De Rijksgebouwendienst na 1945*; Van Winkel, “Authentic Places.” For the 1990s see, e.g., Jeroen Boomgaard, An injection of planlessness, in *One Year in the Wild*, ed. Jeroen Boomgaard (Amsterdam: Lectoraat Kunst en Publieke Ruimte, Gerrit Rietveld Academie and

- Universiteit van Amsterdam, 2004), 9-18. Originally published in Dutch, in *Jong Holland*, 20, no.2 (2004): 4-7.
- 192 The only interesting book that stands out here, but which focuses exclusively on the Netherlands, is Camiel van Winkel's *Moderne Leegte*. His analysis illuminates the relations between art and the public sphere in the Netherlands from the 1950s to the 1970s, but his comments reach up to the 1990s. There is an extensive discussion of the Environmental Art of the 1970s, including also connections with the resurrection of its ideology in the rhetoric of public art advocates during the 1990s. I could name only one other exception to this weakness of contemporary art theory and critique, albeit this example refers to the public institutions of art. Namely Carol Duncan's *Civilising Rituals. Inside Public Art Museums* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995) that is based on the older article by Duncan and Alan Wallach, "The Museum of Modern Art as Late Capitalist Ritual. An iconographic analysis," *Marxist Perspectives*, winter 1978, 28-51.
- 193 Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*; Gadamer, *Truth and Method*.
- 194 These observations could indeed generate a lot of further (art-)sociological and cultural analyses and discussions, which exceed the ambitions of the investigation of play forms and modes in contemporary engaged, participatory/collaborative art that I propose in this book.
- 195 It should be noted that in this chapter I have chosen practices that lean towards activist art, rather than merely political art, if one takes into consideration the following distinction made by Lucy Lippard in 1984: "Although 'political' and 'activist' artists are often the same people, 'political' art tends to be socially concerned and 'activist' art tends to be socially involved... The former's work is a commentary or analysis, while the latter's art works within its context, with its audience." Lucy Lippard, "Trojan horses: Activist art and power," in *Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation*, ed. Brian Wallis (New York: New Museum, 1984), 341-358. However, considering here as examples the work of Martin Krenn and Oliver Ressler, as well as the artistic work by the activists of maiz, the boundaries are often blurred.
- 196 Even though waves of immigrants have been arriving to Europe from other continents, a prominent reason for stricter regulations was the opening of East Europe's borders after 1989. The new, stricter laws affected also people who have been living in West European countries already for many years, including second generation migrants. For immigration laws in Austria see LEFÖ (Lateinamerikanische Emigrierte Frauen in Österreich), "Rechtliche Situation der Migrantinnen," in "Staatsarchitektur," eds. Gabriele Marth and Jo Schmeiser, special issue, *Vor der Information*, 7/8 (1998): 130-149; Karin König, "Das Österreichische Migrationsregime von 1945 bis heute" in *ibid.*: 150-161. For the case of Germany see, e.g., Klaus J. Bade and Jochen Oltmer, "Einwanderung in Deutschland seit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg," in *Projekt Migration* (Köln: Dumont, 2005), 72-81. For the case of France see, e.g., Mireille Rosello, *Postcolonial Hospitality. The Migrant as Guest* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2001), esp. "Introduction: Immigration and Hospitality," 1-22. Further, see also "Erklärung der Gesellschaft für Legalisierung. Wir sind unter Euch: Recht auf Legalisierung," in *Allianzenbildung. Zwischen Kunst und Antirassismusbearbeitung: Annäherungen, Überschneidungen, Strategien, Reflexion*, eds. Ljubomir Bratic, Daniela Koweindl, Ula Schneider (Vienna: Soho in Ottakring, 2004), 42-43 and "Legalisierung für alle! Forderung und Diskussion im Living Room-Soho," in *ibid.*, 44-48.
- 197 The French movement of the sans-papiers started in Paris in the summer of 1996 with what became known in the media as the "affaire de sans-papiers de Saint-Bernard" (the affair of the undocumented immigrants of the Church of Saint Bernard). See, e.g., Rosello, *Postcolonial Hospitality*, "Introduction". While the French movement started from migrants without papers, the German Kein Mensch ist illegal (KMii) was established foremost by German citizens. It began in Kassel in 1997 during Documenta X, as an initiative of various antiracist and christian groups who followed the

- example of the French sans papiers. See, e.g., texts by some of the groups of KMii in dialogue with the editors a.o. in *Vor der Information*, 187-203.
- 198 A most interesting discussion about the state of “stateless” people, which touches among other issues upon the conditions of being il-legal, il-legal-ized, without papers or a perpetual foreigner without full citizen rights can be found in Judith Butler and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Who Sings the Nation-State? Language, Politics, Belonging* (London, New York and Calcutta: Seagull, 2007).
- 199 In this chapter I will be using English translations of the German titles of projects, citations etc. wherever published by the artists or other authors. My translations of citations can be found in appendix 3.
- 200 <http://www.martinkrenn.net/fluchthilfe/english/Projekttext.htm> or <http://www.ressler.at/fluchthilfe/english/Projekttext.htm>.
- 201 For instance, in a detention center for people pending deportation, on which one of WochenKlausur’s projects was focused, 85% of the inmates had no criminal records. WochenKlausur, *Eine konkrete Intervention zur Schubhaft* (Salzburg: Salzburger Kunstverein, 1996), 10.
- 202 Martine Reuter (WochenKlausur member), Interview by the author, tape recording, Vienna, 25 October 2004; Zinggl, Interview by the author, 2004.
- 203 Especially on the issue of language, see, Helmut Draxler, “Über jemand reden. Ein Gespräch mit Hito Steyerl,” *Springer*, III, 2/97 (1997):34-38; Schmeiser, “Editorial – Staatsarchitektur,” *Vor Der Information*, 1998; “Einführung,” in *Dürfen Die Das?* eds. Rollig and Sturm, 13-25; Hito Steyerl, “The articulation of protest“, in *From Tomorrow On. Art, Activism, Technology and the Future of Independent Media*, compiled by Will Bradley (Manchester: Manchester Metropolitan University & Cornerhouse, 2005), 26-35.
- 204 In this text I retain the form of the name WochenKlausur as one word with a capital “K” for “Klausur,” as this is the form established by the group in their publications and website. Only in texts about their very early projects it appears as two separate words (Wochen Klausur).
- 205 See, e.g., Christian Kravagna, “Willkommen in Wien, Servus in Österreich. Über einige Beziehungen zwischen Kunst und Politik,” *Du* , 1 (1995).
- 206 Martin Beck, “Bemerkungen zu zwei Kuratorenprojekten in Wien. ‘11 Wochen Klausur,’” *Texte zur Kunst*, 1993, no 3/2: 139-141.
- 207 Wolfgang Zinggl, “From the object to the concrete intervention,” in *WochenKlausur. Sociopolitical Activism in Art*, ed. by Wolfgang Zinggl (Vienna: Springer, 2001), 11-17 (17).
- 208 The term “concrete intervention” gets established later by WochenKlausur. In the first project there was reference to “konkrete Maßnahmen” (“concrete measures,” my translation) and “konkrete Lösungsansätze” (“concrete resolution methods,” my translation). See, e.g., Martina Chmelarz, ed., *In Erwägung, daß... es in Wien jährlich dreitausend Delogierungen gibt. 11 Wochen Klausur in der Wiener Secession* (Vienna: Wiener Secession, 1993) 5, 19, 20.
- 209 The participating artists’ second training varied between medicine, social work, psychology, journalism and archaeology. Chmelarz, “11 Wochen Klausur,” in Chmelarz, *In Erwägung daß...* , 19-26. When I interviewed Wolfgang Zinggl in 2004, almost all of the first project’s participants were professionally involved in fields other than art. Three of them including Zinggl himself were actively involved in Austrian politics. Wolfgang Zinggl, interview by the author, tape recording, Vienna, November 1, 2004.
- 210 The bus was called Louise and it served hundred of patients per month for five years. In 1998 it was considered inadequate and Caritas bought a larger one, Louise II. Back in 1993 WochenKlausur had secured the sustainability of the project, for instance through sponsoring of the doctors’ payment, of medication and volunteer medical assistants and drivers. As for the lockers, the success of the idea later led more institutions to make additional ones available. Erich Steurer, “Intervention to provide

- healthcare to homeless people,” in Zinggl, *WochenKlausur*, 21-26 (26).
- 211 See, e.g., Beck, “Bemerkungen zu zwei Kuratorenprojekten” and “Kunst in Klausur,” debate, Birgit Flos and Dieter Schrage, *Der Falter*, 25 August 2008.
- 212 It has usually been Wolfgang Zinggl writing texts about WochenKlausur. For book contributions see, e.g., Wolfgang Zinggl, “WochenKlausur,” in Babias, *Im Zentrum der Peripherie*, 298-306; Wolfgang Zinggl, “Der Aktivismus der WochenKlausur“, in Rollig and Sturm, *Dürfen Die Das?*; Wolfgang Zinggl, “Wochenklausur – Arbeitsweise“, in *Was Tun? Aktuelle Beispiele zu Interventionskunst und Aktivismus*, VHS (Vienna: Depot Kunst und Diskussion).
- 213 Pascale Jeannée, “WochenKlausur“, in Zinggl, *WochenKlausur*, 2001, 7-8.
- 214 *Ibid.*, 8
- 215 See, e.g., Zinggl, “Im Rahmen der Kunst“, in *In Erwägung daß ...*, 9-17 (9); “F.A.Q.” on http://www.wochenklausur.at/texte/faq_en.html#faq1 and in Zinggl, *WochenKlausur*, 129-136.
- 216 For information and citations in this paragraph, see Jeannée, “WochenKlausur,” in Zinggl, *WochenKlausur*, 2001, unless otherwise indicated.
- 217 *Ibid.*
- 218 *Ibid.* For “loopholes” in laws see Stefania Pitscheider, “Intervention in immigrant labour issues,” in *WochenKlausur*, 45-52, (46).
- 219 The sustainability of results is one of the reasons why WochenKlausur as an association opened an office in Vienna. See, Jeannée, “WochenKlausur,” 2001.
- 220 Zinggl, “From the object to the concrete intervention,” in *WochenKlausur*, 11-17, and <http://www.wochenklausur.at/kunst.php?lang=de> (in German).
- 221 *Ibid.*, 16.
- 222 The other participants to the 1999 Venice Biennial were Ecke Bonk, Peter Friedl, Rainer Ganahl and the groups Christine and Irene Hohenbüchler, and Knowbotic Research. They were curated by Peter Weibel under the theme “Open field of action.” See, “Open field of action,” in *48 Esposizione Internazionale d’ Arte*, ex. cat. (Venice: Edizioni Marsilio & La Biennale di Venezia, 1999). 10-15. In addition to references already given in previous footnotes, for WochenKlausur in the art press see, e.g., “Sozialarbeit als Kunst. Wolfgang Zinggl im Gespräch über die ‚9WochenKlausur‘,” in *Neue Bildende Kunst Chronik*, 1/96, (1996), 96; “Es gibt viel zu tun” and “Am politischen Spiel teilnehmen. Ein Gespräch mit TeilnehmerInnen der ‚8WochenKlausur‘ über Kunstpraxis, Drogenpolitik und den Fortgang einer ‚konkreten Intervention‘,” in *Kunstforum*, no. 132, (Nov/Jan 1995-96), 317-32. For books except exhibition catalogues, see, Wolfgang Zinggl, “WochenKlausuren.....,” in Babias, *Im Zentrum der Peripherie*, 298-306; various references in Grant H. Kester, *Conversation Pieces*.
- 223 Charlesworth, “Art’s Agency,” 10.
- 224 Later in 2006 they worked again on a project that related to immigrants in Limerick, Ireland.
- 225 *9 WochenKlausur. Eine konkrete Intervention zur Integration von Ausländern* (Graz: Steirischer Herbst, 1996); *WochenKlausur. Eine Konkrete Intervention zur Schubhaft*.
- 226 WochenKlausur was to develop a project on the basis of a sociological study called “‘Echt Gries!’”. The study was about the living conditions in Graz’s district of Gries. It was commissioned by the festival Steirischer Herbst and implemented under the guidance of a sociologist from the Institut für Rechts- und Kriminalsoziologie, Vienna. WochenKlausur was to make an intervention following the end of the study, with the aim of improving the coexistence of different groups of foreigners living in Gries. Monika Pessler (Steirischer Herbst) and Univ. Doz. Dr. Günther Burkert, correspondence, Graz, 9.5.1995, unpublished data, archive Steirischer Herbst.
- 227 Zinggl, *WochenKlausur*, 2001, p. 45 and http://www.wochenklausur.at/projekte/04p_kurz_en.htm.
- 228 For information and quotations in this paragraph see Pitscheider, “Intervention in Immigration

- Labour Issues,” in Zinggl, *WochenKlausur*, 45-46.
- 229 Ibid., 47. It was significant to demonstrate that the foreigner would not take jobs wanted by locals and the choice of unskilled workers’ jobs for which there was shortage in the market contributed to that. Besides, a couple of Austrians would need to be hired to run the agency.
- 230 Ibid., 48.
- 231 The original text of the law reads: “Keine Bewilligung brauchen Fremde, wenn sie Künstler sind, deren Tätigkeit überwiegend durch Aufgaben der künstlerischen Gestaltung bestimmt ist, sofern ihr Unterhalt durch das Einkommen gedeckt wird, das sie aus ihrer künstlerischen Tätigkeit beziehen und sie in Österreich keine andere Erwerbstätigkeit ausüben., (Aufenthaltsgesetz § 1 Abs. 3 in der Fassung vom 19.5.1995). In Katharina Lenz, “Projektverlauf,” in *9 WochenKlausur*, 1996, 28-49, (30). On the same law see also LEFÖ, “Rechtliche Situation von Migrantinnen,” in *Vor der Information*.
- 232 For the citation and all information about the project see (unless otherwise noted) Andreas Leikauf, “Intervention to improve conditions in deportation detention,” in Zinggl, *WochenKlausur*, 2001, 63-69, (63). I use past tense in the text also with reference to Austrian laws that may still be valid, in order to emphasize that I refer to the situation in 1996.
- 233 “The Alien Law’s ‘third country clause’ states that refugees who were already safe from persecution in another country are barred from being granted asylum in Austria.” Ibid., p.64. The same law applies in various countries. For Germany see, e.g., Bade & Oltmer, “Einwanderung in Deutschland seit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg.”
- 234 Initiative Hoffnung Konkret was an umbrella organization including Amnesty International, Caritas, the association Brücke, pastoral workers and attorneys.
- 235 Collaborative projects by Martin Krenn and Oliver Ressler: *The New Right: Materials for the Dismantling* (1995), *Learned Homeland* (1996), *Institutional Racisms* (1997), *War Zones* (1999), *Border Crossing Services* (2001), *European Corrections Corporation* (2003-04), *Posters for Aarhus Festival Copenhagen* (2004).
- 236 Ressler has as many as twenty two interviews on his website, http://www.ressler.at/content/blogcategory/2/6/lang,en_GB/.
- 237 *The New Right: Materials for the Dismantling* was a bill poster series in public spaces containing exclusively text. *Learned Homeland*, was a poster object in public space, reproducing two school book pages expanded with blocks of text and an announcement of the exhibition. The exhibition included a video with reactions from people passing by the installation, a video with interviews with theorists from Austria and Germany on racism and homeland, various materials providing further information on schoolbooks. *Institutional Racisms*, an installation in public space, providing extensive information for remand pending deportation in Austria. It was printed against a background of the façade of a detention centre. *War Zones* were five montages of photographs and text. For Border Crossing Services see details in the main text here. The public installation *European Corrections Corporation* and the *Posters for Aarhus Festival Copenhagen* were primarily text-based. For the primacy of text in Ressler’s work, see, e.g., “Counter-globalization manuals. Interview by Marina Grzanic”, http://www.ressler.at/content/view/48/lang,en_GB/.
- 238 For information about the project used in this text see <http://www.martinkrenn.net/fluchthilfe/english/indexengl.html> or <http://www.ressler.at/fluchthilfe/> (project website), unless otherwise indicated.
- 239 Ibid.
- 240 Contributors: Platform “Für eine Welt ohne Rassismus” (“For a World without Racism”), Forschungsgesellschaft “Flucht und Migration” (Research Group: “Flight and Migration”), TATblatt, Zebra, Maiz, The Voice, Kanak Attak, TschuschenPower.

- <http://www.ressler.at/fluchthilfe/english/grenzblatt/index.htm>
- 241 In the video the basic theme is separated into four sections. Fragments from most interviews are distributed throughout the sections. The sections are: “Who is allowed to migrate?,” “Celebrating and excluding,” “About border crossing services,” “Against racism.”
- 242 Project group Lüneburg: Tina Dust, Uta Gielke, Maja Grafe, Nina Heinlein, Patricia Holder, Mara Horstmann, Sarah Kaeberich, Nina Koch, Susanne Neubronner, Astrid Robbers, Stig Oeveraas, Sabine Zaeske
- 243 Students were interviewed in Frankfurt an der Oder, the organizations’ representatives were from the migrant group Kanak Attak in Hamburg and Netzwerk gegen Rechts in Lüneburg.
- 244 See, e.g., Martin Krenn’s photographic projects *Demonstrate* and *City Views*, and Oliver Ressler’s video projects *Venezuela From Below* (with Dario Azzellini, 2004) and *Alternative Economics, Alternative Societies* (video installation, 2003-2008 ongoing)
- 245 <http://www.lislponger.com/>. Martin Krenn and Oliver Ressler, Interview by the author, tape recording, Vienna, October 26, 2004.
- 246 <http://www.klubzwei.at/>. See also Kravagna, “Willkommen in Wien, Servus in Österreich.”
- 247 <http://www.gangart.org>.
- 248 “We made it legally possible to arrest and deport J. Jafarzadeh! (In Iran he is threatened with execution).” “Thank you for your trust” (my translation). The project was originally planned by Pusch in early 1994 as a “Plakataktion,” but lacked adequate funding. The realized version took the form of the photographic presentation in public space described here in the main text. Kravagna, *Ibid.*
- 249 *Ibid.* There are more examples than the ones I give in the text for reasons of space. During the 1990s, as the social relevancy of art was also increasingly high on artists,⁹ as well as on cultural policy agendas, participatory and collaborative methods were booming. The following quote by Eva Sturm is revealing - taking into account also that she had herself co-edited with Stella Rollig the book *Dürfen Die Das? Kunst als sozialer Raum*, published in 2002, following a symposium (Tagung) in 1999. Opening an 2001 essay she writes: “The project about which I’d like to report appears, at first glance, as if it were just another one of those hands-on art projects, the sort which have sprouted abundantly since the beginning of the nineties, even in German-speaking regions. Their means and methods are classic: young people collaborating with artists produce videos and present them eagerly to the public.” Eva Sturm, “In Collaboration with gangart. Representations in and reproductions of artistic-educational projects,” 2001. On http://www.eipcp.net/diskurs/d07/text/sturm_en.html#f1.
- 250 For instance see Holger Kube Ventura’s published dissertation *Politische Kunst Begriffe in den 1990er Jahren im Deutschsprachigen Raum*. It offers a documentation of several people, tendencies and events. Here I will limit myself to some examples from the German engaged art scene that were mentioned as influential for the Austrian scene in interviews I made for this study. For instance, BüroBert in Germany and their edited volume *Copyshop: Kunstpraxis & Politische Öffentlichkeit* (Berlin & Amsterdam: Edition ID-Archiv, 1993). See also, Marius Babias, “Mit Theorie hat man die Praxis noch nicht in der Tasche. Interview mit BüroBert, minimal club und Juliane Rebentisch,” *Kunstbulletin*, May 1994, 27-31. The so-called Freie Klasse, a self-organized program of studies at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna, initiated by students. Similar “free classes” had appeared in German academies as well. The Viennese Freie Klasse was supported by Wolfgang Zinggl, teacher there and around that time also Federal Curator. Ute Meta Bauer was later involved. Zinggl, Interview by the author; Eva Dertschei, Carlos Toledo and Petja Dimitrova (members of Dezentrale Medien), Interview by the author, tape recording, Vienna, October 28th, 2004; Susanne Habbitzel, *Das Bundeskuratorenmodell und die staatliche Kulturpolitik Österreichs in den 90er Jahren*, (Universität für angewandte Kunst, Lehrkanzel für Kunstgeschichte) <http://members.chello>.

- at/susanne.habitzel/Titel.html.
- 251 Farida Heuck, Ralf Homann and Manuela Unverdorben, "Our goal is mobility: X- The federal trade association Schleppen & Schleusen," in Billing et al., *Taking the Matter into Common Hands*, 97-101, (97). See also Schleuser.net, "Mobilität ist unser Ziel: Was ist zu tun?," in Bratic et al., *Allianzenbildung*, 87-90.
- 252 Probably the largest mixed cultural, artistic, research and discursive project on migration in Germany in recent years was the Projekt Migration, supported by the Federal Culture Foundation [Kulturstiftung des Bundes], 2002-06. An exhibition, film programme, conference and further parallel events took place in Cologne in 2005-06. See Kölnischer Kunstverein, Projekt Migration (Köln: Dumont Verlag, 2005).
- 253 <http://netbase.org/t0/intro> (<http://www.t0.or.at/>), <http://www.igkultur.at/>, <http://www.basis-wien.at/>, <http://eipcp.net/>, e.g., Martin Krenn's project City Views and Oliver Ressler's project Alternative Economics, Alternative Societies are connected to the activities of republicart, a project by eipcp.
- 254 Dertschei, Toledo, Dimitrova, Interview by the author. Eva Dertschei and Ulrike Müller were also in WochenKlausur's team for the 1996 Salzburg project. See also <http://www.sohoinottakring.at>.
- 255 The most known campaign was get to attack. In the context of reactions to the Austrian election results, see, Martin Krenn's project *Demonstrate!*, 2000. Participants at the so-called Thursday demos in Vienna were invited by the artist to determine how they should be portrayed in their photograph and to comment on the political situation in Austria in the form of statements. The photo portraits were shot in the summer of 2000 during the demos. Further see also, "Wahlpartie," Vienna, 2002. Poster-production, cooperation and actions by ANAR (Austrian Network Against Racism), BEIGEWUM, eipcp, getto-attack, IG Kultur Österreich, Klub Zwei, maiz and many activists - Martin Krenn was quite involved. According to their self-presentation: "The 'Wahlpartie' was no party, no group and no association, it was a campaign during the Austrian national election. Its aim is to set requests against discrimination in public and media space, that is devoted to this election." <http://www.martinkrenn.net/projects/64.htm>.
- For a discussion of political resistance in a cultural context see, e.g., "'get to attack', Meike Schmidt Gleim für get to attack, "Die Demonstration der Demokratie. Get to attack now!," in *Springerin*, 5/4, (1999-2000): 34-37; Christian Kravagna, "Österreichische (Anti-)Rassismen 1999-2004. Anmerkungen zum agitatorischen Schreiben / Austrian (Anti-)Racisms 1999-2004. Remarks on politically agitating writing," in *Erlaufferinnert sich ... / Erlaufremembers ...* Hedwig Saxenhuber ed. (Frankfurt am Main: Revolver, 2004).
- 256 http://maiz.at/cms/front_content.php?client=1&idcat=0&idart=0&lang=1&error=1 as in 2/01/2005. I keep an old version of the document, so that it corresponds approximately to the time of my research and to other materials from online resources used here.
- 257 *Vor der Information*, 329.
- 258 http://maiz.at/cms/front_content.php as in 19/11/2004. Further see also Rubia Salgado, "Zusammenarbeit: wenn Migrantinnen Vorraussetzungen nennen," in Bratic et al., *Allianzenbildung*, 10-13, and Luzenir Caixeta, "Haushalt, caretaking, Grenzen...," in *ibid.*, 30-34.
- 259 Luzenir Caixeta, "Migrantische Öffentlichkeitsarbeit als Kulturarbeit," 2002 on <http://igkultur.at/igkultur/transversal/1019389728>, for English translation see app. III.2. As language is particularly important in this chapter and especially with regard to maiz, I leave the German citations in the original, followed by (my) English translations in brackets, notes or in appendix III, depending on the length of the citation.
- 260 For the concept of "anthropophagischer Protagonismus" and its origins in Brazilian artistic and cultural movements, see further down, "The articulation of participation."
- 261 At the door of a peep-show cabin visitors were instructed: "Zieh dich aus! (Zieh deinen Rassismus,

- Sexismus und ökonomische Ausbeutung aus!)” [“Undress yourself! (Take off your racism, sexism and financial exploitation!)” my translation]. Inside the cabin was a room made of red textiles. Behind three small windows, an actress was narrating the story of a third world woman who was deceived into leaving her country on the promise of a job as babysitter, waitress or dancer, only to be led to prostitution. The story was narrated not with words, but with the help of music and various utensils. On their way out, visitors were again instructed: “Zieh dich an! (Zieh die multikulturelle Gesellschaft, die Gleichstellung für Frauen und Männer, die gerechte Wirtschaftsstruktur an!) [“Dress yourself! (Put on the multicultural society, the equality of women and men, the justly structured economy!)” my translation]. http://maiz.at/cms/front_content.php. See also Marty Huber, “MAIZ. Wir lieben dich!,” on <http://igkultur.at/igkultur/kulturrisse/1088492475/1091003087>.
- 262 Visitors to MAIZ AIRLINES would receive an informational brochure in the form of a flight ticket, with which they entered a love tour through five information stations. 1. Clichés about tourism (sun, sand, “girls;” 2. The other side of reality in the so-called “Third World”. Feminization of poverty, the price of globalization for women; 3. Sex-tourism and migration of women; 4. The role of migrants in the reception countries – wife/housewife, cleaner and sex worker; 5. The work of maiz and of other organizations of migrant women in Europe. http://maiz.at/cms/front_content.php.
- 263 See, e.g., Draxler, “Über jemand reden,” Springer; Boris Buden, “Die leere Mitte und ihre einsame BewohnerInnen,” *Springerin*, V, 4/99 (1999): 37; Liubomir Bratic, “Soziopolitische Organisationen der MigrantInnen in Österreich,” on http://www.beigewum.at/_TCgi_Images/beigewum/20050131205620_KW%201-00%20Bratic.pdf; Schmeiser, “Editorial,” Vor der Information.
- 264 For instance, by introducing as example for community art WochenKlausur’s work in general and Thomas Hirschhorn’s Bataille Monnument, Sylvia Riedmann by and large poses these questions in her text “Community art oder Gesellschaftliche Veränderung?” However Riedman avoids making specific connections between the examples she gives and her rather general conclusions/propositions to artists that she finishes with. In *Allianzenbildung*, 67-70.
- 265 Ibid.; this is the case, e.g., in many of the texts by various authors published on eicpc.net (and its sub-projects/platforms).
- 266 Zinggl, Interview by the author; Reuter, Interview by the author; Ulrike Müller, “Was heißt hier menschenwürdig?” in *Vor der Information*, 162-165. For F.A.Q. see http://www.wochenklausur.at/texte/faq_dt.html; Zinggl, *WochenKlausur*, 2001, 135; “Concrete Social Interventions: Interview with Pascale Jeannée of the Artists’ Group WochenKlausur,” Variant, 16, 2002, 24-25, http://www.variant.randomstate.org/pdfs/issue16/Variant_16.pdf.
- 267 If there seems to be an oxymoron here, in moving towards concrete socio-political interventions all the while one is still discussing art, this is not entirely so. As Carrie Lambert-Beatty maintained using WochenKlausur and “Women on Waves” as examples: “[C]onsider a corollary: the possibility that the category of activist art is not defined against, but actively requires its nonactivist counterpart - it needs borders around art so that it might sail through them; or, so that, as Rancière puts it, ‘the border are always there yet already crossed.’ Lambert-Beatty, “Twelve Miles: Boundaries of the new Art/Activism,” in *Sings. Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 33/2 (2008) 309-327: 323. For Jacques Rancière’s citation see “Problems and transformations in Critical Art,” in Bishop, *Participation*, 83-93 (85).
- 268 Actually one might even see members of WochenKlausur not challenging at all stereotypes about the social groups they work for. E.g. in an interview for Kunstforum, responding to a comment that the drug addicted women prostitutes in WochenKlausur’s second project in Zürich did not at all come actively to the foreground in the project’s events, Matthias Schellenberg from WochenKlausur said: “Ich kenne nicht so viele Junkies, und ich denke, die, die da waren, hätten

das Medienbild Junkies, der so verwehrlos ist, und einem die falsche Antwort gibt, hier bestätigt. Das schießt am Ziel vorbei.” [“I have not met many junkies and I think, the ones who were there, would only had confirmed the media-image of a junkie - somebody shabby, giving wrong answers. It would lead to missing the target” (my translation)]. It is interesting to consider this example in juxtaposition to the approach of, e.g., female sex-workers in maiz. “Am politischen Spiel teilnehmen,” *Kunstforum*, 317-322.

269 The following quotation from a text referring to WochenKlausur’s first project in Vienna (Intervention to aid homeless people) written by Norbert Partl, Caritas coordinator for the homeless, is indicative of what is meant here by institutions and organizations of established status: “The body responsible for the project is the Caritas of the archdiocese of Vienna - one of the biggest social welfare organisations in Austria - founded by the Catholic church at the beginning of the last century. The doctor’s fees are covered by the municipal authority and the costs of medicines by the Vienna health scheme (Wiener Gebietskrankenkasse). Drivers and assistants are volunteers from Caritas.” It should be noted that Partl points out the important service that has been provided by the medical bus for years: “The demand has remained constant over the past 11 years: 600 to 700 medical treatments a month for over 2000 patients a year.” Norbert Partl, “Who is healing the homeless?,” *The Journal of Men’s Health & Gender* 2/2: 270 – 272 (270).

270 See, e.g., “Sozialarbeit als Kunst,” in *Neue Bildende Kunst Chronik*; Charlesworth, “Art’s Agency.” Scepticism has been publicly expressed also by individual members of WochenKlausur’s projects, as for instance by Ulrike Müller about the Salzburg project. Müller wrote her reflections that followed an event organized by the Christian organization efdö for the first anniversary of the project’s implementation. Efdö (Evangelische Flüchtlingsdienst) had undertaken the sustainability of the project’s outcomes in the long term. Müller’s scepticism touched upon questions of whether the political interests and structures supporting the practices of detention and deportation were anyhow challenged by the WochenKlausur’s project. Her case evolved around WochenKlausur’s strategy of employing a humanitarian argumentation to promote the project goals, circumventing the political questions of deportation detention. Müller, “Was heißt hier menschenwürdig?”

271 http://www.wochenklausur.at/texte/faq_dt.html; Zinggl, *WochenKlausur*, 2001, 135.

272 For critical and self-critical voices in the discourse of engagement and especially of the issue of migrants being represented and spoken on behalf of by Austrian or German citizens instead of presenting themselves, one could mention Ljubomir Bratic and Hito Steyerl. For example, in his text “Soziopolitische Organisationen der MigrantInnen in Österreich” Bratic discusses the balance of power positions of migrants and Austrian citizens in NGOs since the 1980s, and their different opinions on whether lobbying for migrants rights is something that governmental or non-governmental (but mostly run by Austrians) organizations should be responsible for. Ljubomir Bratic on http://www.beigewum.at/_TCgi_Images/beigewum/20050131205620_KW%201-00%20Bratic.pdf. Hito Steyerl refers more specifically to art, see, Draxler, “Über jemand reden.” Further, see, Schmeiser, “Editorial – Staatsarchitektur.”

273 It is interesting to read the following extracts from a discussion with Martin Krenn, keeping in mind the points of criticism on WochenKlausur’s work that I referred to earlier in the main text: “In any kind of socio-critical work it is definitely important to aspire to not reproduce the same relationships of power which one is actually criticising.” And further down: “for me, the danger exists when the ‘political’ aspect is forgotten or, even worse, put into parenthesis, whereby members of dominant society serve the problems of the minorities without even wanting to bring about a change in the relations and the associated consequences which these relationships have even for them. I see a similar phenomenon in the production of art.” See, “Art and Anti-Racism. Areas of Conflict,” discussion between Martin Krenn and Rubia Salgado, in *Moving On. Border Activism - Strategies*

- for *Anti-Racist Actions* (Berlin: Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst, 2005), 102-105 (101-102, 104). Yet as contradictory as the approaches of WochenKlausur and Martin Krenn appear to be, it is worth mentioning that in the acknowledgements in the colophon of Neues Grenzblatt the only individual person named is Wolfgang Zinggl.
- 274 Krenn and Ressler, Interview by the author - I cannot help commenting here that to my understanding there is a certain uniformity in the forms and methods of many projects. E.g., as numerous videos made by Ressler (alone or in collaborations) repeat a pattern of featuring interviews or conversations with individuals expressing their views on the chosen topic. Individuals are usually involved in some form of public action, very often as members of activist organizations, authors, journalists etc. This pattern is found in the videos of the projects *Sustainable Propaganda* (2000), *Border Crossing Services* (2001), *Disobbedienti*, with Dario Azzellini (2002), *Venezuela from Below*, with Dario Azzellini (2004), *Alternative Economics*, *Alternative Societies* (2003).
- 275 See, e.g., Krenn and Ressler's collaborative projects *The New Right - Materials for the Dismantling*, 1995; *Learned Homeland*, 1996; *Institutional Racism*, 1997. Ressler's projects, *The Global 500*, 1999; *Alternative Economics*, *Alternative Societies*, 2003-ongoing.
- 276 For Krenn see, *ibid.* For Ressler see, e.g., his explanation of how activists are staged as speakers in his videos *This is What Democracy Looks Like (Liberalitas Bavariae)* and *Disobbedienti*, and in Oliver Ressler, "Protesting Capitalist Globalization," on www.republicart.net.
- 277 In Neues Grenzblatt Krenn and Ressler sign only the editorial and in the colophon it is written that the direct-mailing is part of an art project by artists Martin Krenn and Oliver Ressler.
- 278 It should be needless to say that, whether acknowledged or not, this operates mainly as symbolic expression. Since hardly any form of organization can be sustained completely without the 'system'. Not least, because the basic condition for the emergence of an alternative is the existence of an established order or system, in opposition to which the "alternative" realizes itself and forms the articulations of its self-conceptualization and -organization. See here, Ernesto Laclau, *Emancipations* (London: Verso, 1996). Laclau is one of the political theorists referred to in the Austrian engaged art scene. See, e.g., "Die unabschliessbaren Widerspruchsketten des Sozialen," Christian Höller im Interview mit Ernesto Laclau und Chantal Mouffe, *Springerin*, 2/1, (1996), 42-48.
- 279 Eventually, nurturing prejudice and racism in society is a problem of the majority. Minorities are forced to be concerned by it, because they are the ones directly affected.
- 280 It is worth giving here the extract where Hans Heim, the taxi driver, explains the absurdity of the authorities instructions: "This whole language thing with these 'covert smuggling rings' distorts reality. And this formulation: 'Do not take any person in your taxi who has obviously entered the country illegally.' There was this huge discussion after that, sure, what is a 'person who has obviously entered illegally?' The taxi driver is not allowed at all to check personal data. He isn't an official. He is not even allowed to ask for an ID. So actually, he can't really know if someone has entered illegally or not. How can it be noticed? In court there were statements such as: "sure, by the clothing, by the wet clothes. You must notice that people have marched across the mountains or something.' Okay, fine, what if I told you about all of the different types of people that I have taken with me here in the middle of Berlin?" <http://www.t0.or.at/fluchthilfe/english/indexengl.html>".
- 281 See, e.g., Gerard Raunig, "The Monster Precariat," on <http://translate.eipcp.net/strands/02/raunig-strands02en>. Raunig does not agree with the definition of Precariat "as a dissociated lower class ("abgehängte Unterschicht"), a definition used by mainstream German-speaking press.
- 282 These were interests of political ideology, since during the cold war smuggling people from DDR into BRD was considered by the latter as a liberating act. While especially during the 1950s and 1960s the massive migration of Gastarbeitern from East and South was facilitated, for as long as it

- served economic development.
- 283 See here also the project *Institutional Racisms* by Krenn and Ressler that focuses on remand pending deportation
- 284 Kravagna does not use the term “Ausländerfrage” regarding the discussion’s theme. He speaks of “Ausländerquoten, Asylrecht, Flüchtlingstatus,” which I sum up here in “Ausländerfrage” as umbrella term. Kravagna, “Willkommen in Wien, Servus in Österreich,” 72.
- 285 Caixeta and Salgado, “Anthropophagischer Protagonismus,” 2000, <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0101/cs/de>. In putting this text together Caixeta and Salgado have cited and/or processed extracts from earlier texts by them, namely, “Über das Menschenwerden... Notizen über Affen, Migrantinnen und Kulturarbeit,” *Kupf Zeitung*, 86/2, 2000; “Anthopofagie und Akkulturation: eine Begegnung beim Ficken,” *Kupf Zeitung*, 80/1, 1999; “MAIZ: eine Praxis zwischen Vernunft und Lachen,” *Kulturrise* 6/00; “Aus dem Punkt wollen wir einen Beistrich machen,” *Der Apfel Zeitschrift*, 55/00. It is interesting to juxtapose the anthropophagic laughter of Salgado and Caixeta’s feminism as rendered in the above texts with the the concept of women’s laughter in the book of Jo Anna Isaak, *Feminism and Contermporary Art: TheRevolutionary Power of Women’s Laughter* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996).
- 286 Caixeta, “Migrantische Öffentlichkeitsarbeit als Kulturarbeit,” 2002. <http://igkultur.at/igkultur/transversal/1019389728>
- 287 Ibid.
- 288 <http://www.maiz.at/index.php?id=66&L=1>.
- 289 Huber, “MAIZ. Wir lieben dich!”
- 290 See, Hito Steyerl, “Europa’s Traum. Ein Dokumentarfilmprojekt“, *Springerin*, 2/01 (2001), <http://www.springerin.at/dyn/heft.php?id=8&pos=1&textid=176&lang=de>.
- 291 Transpublic is a project space in the city of Linz that brings together theorie, art and interdisciplinary work. <http://www.transpublic.at/>.
- 292 http://maiz.at/cms/front_content.php.
- 293 Salgado and Caixeta, “Anthropophagischer Protagonismus,” One should add here that since a significant number of the women of maiz work in the sex industry and/or may have no full residence or working permit for Austria, public exposure may place them in real danger of persecution and exposure to harassment whether by authorities or civilians.
- 294 “Art and Anti-Racism,” p. 103.
- 295 The terms “members of the dominant society” and “Austrians of the majority” (Mehrheitsösterreiche rInnen) are used repeatedly by MAIZ. For their origins see Salgado in “Art and Anti-Racism.”
- 296 Salgado and Caixeta, “Anthropophagischer Protagonismus.” All citations in the following pages are from this text, unless otherwise noted.
- 297 Michael Korfmann and Marcelo Nogueira, “Avant-Garde in Brazil,” *Dialectical Anthropology*, 28/1, 2004, 125-145, (129).
- 298 *Hans Richter, DADA – Kunst und Antikunst* (Köln: DuMont, 1978), 21. Cited in Korfman and Nogueira, “Avant-Garde in Brazil,” 131. For a more sceptical post-colonial approach to the anthropophagic movement and its ideas about cultural appropriations not only of modernist European art, but also of technology, see Henryk Siewierski, “Utopia and Anthropophagy,” *Third Text*, 21/5, (2007) 499-508.
- 299 It is interesting to note here that the concept of anthropophagy was used as a link for a series of shows comprising the XXIV Sao Paulo Biennial in 1998, curated by Paulo Herkenhoff and Andriano Pedrosa. In 2006 the concept is met again in the exhibition of Brazilian art and culture “Tropicalia: A Revolution in Brazilian Culture” at the Barbican Art Gallery, London, curated by Carlos Basualdo. See here also Michael Abury, “Made in Brazil,” exhibition review, *Art History*, 31/1, 2008, 103-113.

- 300 Salgado and Caixeta, "Anthropophagischer Protagonismus;" Caixeta, "Migrantische Öffentlichkeitsarbeit als Kulturarbeit."
- 301 Franz Kafka, "Ein Bericht für eine Akademie," in *Die Erzählungen Und Andere Ausgewählte Prosa* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1998).
- 302 For this interpretation see Kafka's biography by Nicholas Murray, *Kafka* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).
- 303 Walter Herbert Sokel, *The Myth of Power and the Self: Essays on Franz Kafka* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002).
- 304 Richter, *DADA – Kunst und Antikunst*.
- 305 Here I refer to illocutionary and perlocutionary speech acts as used by Judith Butler drawing herself from J.L. Austin. See Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech*, 2-3; J.L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), 52.
- 306 This is a delicate distinction. As in the distinction between illocutionary and perlocutionary speech acts and how they act on the addressee I draw from Austin through Judith Butler. Butler herself is careful with what she considers as speech and, for her particular interests, as hate speech. For instance, Butler examines the position of Catharina McKinnon that pornography is hate speech. Butler calls this position into question. Part of Butler's argument is based on an analysis of why pornography can not be characterized as speech. She questions a basic presumption in MacKinnon's position (drawing from Matsuda) that being depicted in pornography is the same as being addressed by it. See, Judith Butler, "Sovereign Performatives in the contemporary scene of utterance," in *Critical Inquiry*, 23/2, (1997), 350-377. Reprinted in Butler, *Excitable Speech*, chapter 2, 71-102.
- 307 The use of important information coming from informal and unrecorded discussions with individuals involved in the projects or the art scenes in question has been a headache when I was trying to decide how to write this chapter. It is important to say that for both Greek and Egyptian art there is considerably less art critique published – even though in private criticism thrives – compared, for instance, to the Dutch or Austrian contexts of other case studies in this dissertation. The completion and publication, despite a lack of published references and the use of information from sources that cannot always be named, of the Ph.D thesis of Jessica Winegar about the field of contemporary art production in Egypt, was a great relief. Because it comprises a concrete precedent - closely related also to my object of study here - of what may or may not be accepted in a Ph.D research. Jessica Winegar, *Creative Reckonings: The Politics of Art and Culture in Contemporary Egypt* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2006).
- 308 Lacy, *Mapping the Terrain*.
- 309 For instance, according to social anthropologist Nadjie Sadig Al-Ali, Egyptian women activists emphatically differentiate their activism from Western feminism: "The resistance of many Egyptian women to identify themselves with feminism is not only related to its negative image in society, but is also linked to the conviction that it detracts from such larger issues such as imperialism, class struggle and Zionism." Nadjie Sadig Al-Ali, "A mirror of political culture in contemporary Egypt: Divisions and debates among women activists," in "Discourses in Contemporary Egypt: Politics and Social Issues," ed. Enid Hill, special issue, *Cairo Papers in Social Change*, 22, no. 4 (2000): 118-143, (119). It is interesting to add the above perspective of Al-Ali to what Okwui Enwezor identified as the third issue deriving from Documenta XI-Platform 4, "Under Siege: Four African Cities. Freetown, Johannesburg, Kinshasa, Lagos." Namely, Enwezor's third issue "is the expanded role of women in the production of new types of subjective practices that have consolidated their role as important players in the shaping of urban imaginaries." Okwui Enwezor, "The Black Box," *Documenta 11 Platform 5: Exhibition*, Catalogue (Stuttgart: Hatje Cantz, 2002) 42-55 (52).
- 310 Foster, "The Artist as Ethnographer."

- 311 For the citation see, *ibid.*, 171-172.
- 312 Kwon, *One Place after Another*.
- 313 For Kwon's criticism on community-specific art and especially on Lacy's category of "new genre public art", see *ibid.*, chaps. 4 and 5, 100-155
- 314 For the genealogy of site-specificity see *ibid.*, chap. 1, 11-31.
- 315 E.g., Gerardo Mosquera, "Notes on globalization, art and cultural difference," in *Silent Zones* (Rijksakademie van Beelbende Kunsten and RAIN, 2001), 26-36; Mosquera and Jean Fischer, eds., *Over Here. International Perspectives on Art and Culture* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2005); Reinaldo Laddaga, "Art and Organization" and Charles Esche, "In the belly of the monster," in *Shifting Map. Artists Strategies for Cultural Diversity*, eds. Gertrude Flentge et al. (Rotterdam and Amsterdam: NAI Publishers & Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, 2004), 15-21 and 26- 32; Claudia Fontes et al., eds., *TRAMA 2000. Mirada y Contexto: Confrontación de Discursos, Debates, y Otros Intentos de Dialogo en el Arte Argentino Contemporaneo / TRAMA 2000 Insights and Context: Confrontation of Speeches, Debates and Other Attempts at Dialogue in Argentine Contemporary Art* [with contributions by Esche and Laddaga] (Buenos Aires: Proyecto Trama: Fundación Espigas, 2000).
- 316 By "artists' initiatives" I refer here both to initiatives for a single site-specific, socially-oriented and collectively authored art project, as well as to artists-run organizations that initiate or host various activities. However sometimes the project is the organization, as in Gudran's case.
- 317 It would be interesting here to quote Niru Ratnam about the content of the term "globalization" that has permeated art debates at the end of the 20th century: "What is globalisation? Globalisation is a term ... that emerged in the late 20th century and has rapidly entered common currency without achieving any widely accepted theoretical definition. ... One important characteristic of the contemporary situation is the blurring of the boundaries between the once apparently distinct spheres of economics and culture. ... Although it is analytically useful to distinguish 'economic' and 'cultural' globalisation, it is far too simplistic to regard the former as a cause. Cultural and economic moments are almost always intertwined and interdependent..." Niru Ratnam, "Art and Globalisation," in *Themes in Contemporary Art*, eds. Gill Perry and Paul Wood (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 277-314, (286-287).
- 318 See here particularly Esche, "In the belly of the monster."
- 319 One could name several examples. For instance, the artists' initiatives from Brazil, Mali, Mexico, India, South Africa, Indonesia and Argentina, which form the RAIN network of ex-residents of Amsterdam's Rijksakademie, and which constitute Esche and Laddaga's point of departure in their texts referred to earlier. Furthermore, the groups STALKER and Cantieri Isola in Rome, the Danish group SUPERFLEX for some of their projects, Colectivo Cambalache in Colombia and many more.
- 320 For instance, many artists tend to regard as tool, rather than as an indicator of complicity, the support and circulation of their work by mainstream art world institutions, or by large international NGOs active in the developing world, as I will explain in this chapter.
- 321 Rancière, "The Distribution of the Sensible," 13.
- 322 *Ibid.*
- 323 To make the point about the distribution of occupations clearer, it is useful to cite Rancière: "The aesthetic regime of the arts disrupts this apportionment of spaces ... it brings to light, once again, the distribution of occupations that upholds the apportionment of domains of activity. This theoretical and political operation is at the heart of Schiller's *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*. Behind the Kantian definition of aesthetic judgment as a judgment without concepts – without submission of the intuitive given to conceptual determination. Schiller indicates the political distribution that is the matter at stake: the division between those who act and those who are acted upon, between the

- cultivated classes that have access to totalization of lived experience and the uncivilized classes immersed in the parceling out of work and of sensory experience. Schiller's "aesthetic" state, by suspending the opposition between active understanding and passive sensibility, aims at breaking down – with an idea of art – an idea of society and those who are doomed to material tasks." Rancière, "The Distribution of the Sensible," 43-44.
- 324 "The Janus-Face of Politicized Art: Jacques Rancière in Interview with Gabriel Rockhill," in *The Politics of Aesthetics*, 49-66, (50).
- 325 See, e.g., Rancière's discussion of art's adaptation of non-art objects and practices, from the modern collage to the postmodern archive. "Problems and Transformations in Critical Art," in *Participation*, Bishop, 83-93. It could be noted here that what I called here the re-production by artists of non-art objects and practices as art is relevant though not identical to Nicolas Bourriaud's concept of "post-production." Only again, as already mentioned in Part I "Relations" about Bourriaud's "relational aesthetics," the sharpness and relevancy of his ideas are usually in reverse proportion to the quality of the organization of his analysis. Which is why I believe it has been easier for his ideas to become a target, rather than a tool for art critics. Bourriaud, *Postproduction*.
- 326 Rancière, "The Distribution of the Sensible," 43.
- 327 Maria Papadimitriou, *TAMA* (Athens, Hellenic Ministry of Culture, 2002), 13. Republished by Futura, Athens: 2004. See also www.tama.gr.
- 328 Maria Papadimitriou, interview by the author, tape recording, Athens, November 4, 2003.
- 329 Ibid.
- 330 Regarding the artist's fascination with the "images" of Avliza, it is interesting to read the article "Psychoscapes. Landscape's psychosis in contemporary Greek culture" by Yorghos Tzirtzilakis. The author discusses collective representations contained in the Greek landscape and their functions. He starts with connections of the Greek landscape with traditional ideological constructions and mythologies of the "Greek peculiarity." Tzirtzilakis sees a turning point in the 1960s and 1970s, when changes in the landscape (including city-scapes, touristic infrastructure etc.) do not coincide anymore with previous collective identifications. Thus conflicts are created between "history and present, between the past and the future, between tradition and tourism, ... between 'authentic' and contemporary life." Conflicts, which "are essentially projections onto the landscape of our schismatic picture of what we are, with the tendency to postpone for as long as possible final decisions." Eventually "the landscape becomes an 'Other' acquiring the unrealistic character of the imaginary or the place of the symbolic Other, i.e. alterity. So the landscape, although a material entity, is above all meaning." In Bartolomeo Pietromarchi, ed., *The Uncommon Place. Art, Public Space and Urban Aesthetics in Europe* (Barcelona & Rome: Actar & Fondazione Adriano Olivetti), 150-153 (150, 153).
- 331 The lack of a modern and/or contemporary art museum in the Greek capital has been a debated question in the Greek art world for decades. It was finally answered in 2000 with the establishment of the National Museum of Contemporary Art. Three years earlier, in 1997, the State Museum of Contemporary Art had already been founded in Thessaloniki. Before these state initiatives, there have been initiatives by private foundations or individuals. Most notably, the Museum of Contemporary Art on the island of Andros (established in 1979 by the Basil and Elise Goulandris Foundation) and the Macedonian Museum for Contemporary Art (established in 1978 initially as art center by private individuals). For the history of the matter see, e.g., Giannoula Chormova, "The Museum of Contemporary Art in Athens. Forty Years of Debate 1959-1998" (computer printout, MA thesis, Department of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, 1999).
- 332 For all information in the paragraph see Papadimitriou, interview by the author.
- 333 In this text I will use the term "Roma" instead of the broadly applied "Gypsy," because in Greek

- vernacular the latter (γύφτος) is metaphorically used also as a derogatory term and term of abuse.
- 334 Fotiadi, Interview with M. Papadimitriou. The living conditions at the Avliza Romani settlement as described by Papadimitriou (half-finished houses, often without electricity and water, poor conditions of hygiene) are not exaggerated. In reports by NGOs advocating Roma rights and occasionally also in the general press, the same conditions are described in addition to high rates of illiteracy and criminality, marriages during childhood or adolescence, drug trafficking, negative reactions by neighboring populations and the Roma's uneven treatment by the police. These additional issues are not handled in TAMA's formal narrations. For the impingement of Roma's rights the European Roma Rights Center has appealed against the Greek state at the European Social Charter. See, e.g., <http://www.klimaka.org.gr/newsite/Downloads/apologismos%202006%20teliko.pdf>, <http://www.xenophilia.gr/docs/3.htm>; <http://www.greekhelsinki.gr/bhr/greek/index.htm>; Anthi Georgiou, «Προκατασκευασμένες...μονιμες λύσεις» [Temporary ... permanent solutions], *Rizospastis*, Oct. 1, 2000; Panagiotis Bouganis, «Το χΡΟΜΑ της ψηφοθηρίας» [The color of canvass], *Eleftherotypia*, Sept. 29, 2002; Dina Karatziou, «Η άλλη Ελλάδα των Ρομά» [The other Greece of Romani people], *Eleftherotypia*, Sept. 26, 2004; «Με φόντο το πρόβλημα» [With the problem in the background] http://www.local-news.gr/full_article. All above English translations of Greek titles are mine.
- 335 TAMA, 13.
- 336 The proposed infrastructure included models for: (1) a family house, (2) a multiple functions building, transformable to accommodate professional training workshops, first aid station, counseling services, open-air cinema, toilets etc., (3) a market building, (4) a classroom for children with problems at school to have extra lessons, (5) a dormitory for large groups of relatives visiting Avliza, (6) a restaurant as legal profit making enterprise, (7) public baths.
- 337 For a study of interventions in space in postwar Greek art see Areti Adamopoulou, *Ελληνική Μεταπολεμική Τέχνη. Εικαστικές Παρεμβάσεις στο Χώρο* [Greek Post-war Art. Interventions in Space] (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 2000). Already from the 1970s artists such as Dimitris Alithinos or Niki Kanagini have made participatory projects in public spaces. But only the recently produced project *Egnatia: A Path of Displaced Memories* could be juxtaposed to TAMA as an interdisciplinary approach, close to activism, and socially and geographically specific to a certain group – refugees and migrants living along the axis of what once used to be the Roman Via Egnatia. The project involved direct participation of the people it was about, had a long duration and was organized in collaboration with the Italian group Stalker. See Marina Fokidis, “Hijacking cultural policies. Art as a healthy virus within social strategies of resistance,” *Social Analysis*, 51/1 (2007): 58–67. For contemporary initiatives by architects and artists see, e.g., the group Urban Void (Αστικό Κενό) that has organized various events in public spaces. *Αστικό Κενό - Δράσεις 1998-2006/Urban Void – Actions 1998-2006* (Athens: Futura, 2007). For the relations between art history and theory with architecture history and theory see, e.g., Zacharopoulos' reference to the architects Aris Konstantinidis, Takis Zenetos, Aristomenis Proveggios, Iannis Xenakis and Tsigos. Denys Zacharopoulos, «Οι Πρωτοπόροι. Μια άποψη της τέχνης στην Ελλάδα στο δεύτερο μισό του 20ού αιώνα. Ένα Δοκίμιο, μια συλλογή, μια έκθεση», *Οι Πρωτοπόροι. Συλλογή Μπέλτσιου. Μια άποψη της τέχνης στην Ελλάδα στο δεύτερο μισό του 20ού αιώνα* [The Pioneers. Beltsios Collection. An Aspect of Art in Greece during the Second Half of the Twentieth Century] (Athens: Futura, 2003), 493.
- 338 For public art in the Netherlands see Part I and especially Part II, chapter three. For activist community art as theorized initially for the United States see, e.g., Felshin, *But is it Art?*; Lacy, *Mapping the Terrain*; Finkelppearl, *Dialogues in Public Art*; Foster, “The Artist as Ethnographer;” Kwon, *One Place After Another*.

- 339 To be more precise: 1st Tirana Biennial, 2001; 25th Sao Paulo Biennial, 2002; Manifesta 4, Frankfurt, 2002; In Search of Balkania, Graz, 2002; Going Public. Politics, Subjects and Places, Modena, 2003; In the Gorges of the Balkans, Kassel, 2003. The DESTE prize was awarded for the artist's entire oeuvre, but it came right after TAMA's international success.
- 340 Following the official process for national participations in the Sao Paulo and the Venice Biennials, curators may propose artists to the Ministry of Culture. The ministry selects and subsequently covers participation costs. For the role of Efi Strousa in the Greek field of contemporary art since the late 1970s see, e.g., Zacharopoulos, «Οι Πρωτοπόροι», 488-489.
- 341 The first article by Yorghos Tzirtzilakis about TAMA was published in *Camera Austria*, 74/01, 2001, under the title "Reality as a strategy. Observation as destiny." The same article was reprinted in the project's publication TAMA, 24-27 and in Scotini et al., *Going Public*, 48-57. In his text, Tzirtzilakis discusses the mix of ethnographic, artistic and urban elements and the reconsideration of their institutions within a post-modern world. In her text for the project Efi Strousa parallels the autonomy of the artist with that of Roma people, "A tribute to TAMA," in Papadimitriou, *TAMA*, 16-23. When I use the term "formal narrations" of TAMA I refer to narrations of the project in its book, exhibition displays and published interviews.
- 342 Strousa, "A tribute to TAMA," 16; Tzirtzilakis, "Reality as a strategy," 26.
- 343 For instance at the Sao Paulo Biennial Papadimitriou installed a hut complete with household stuff, as a replica of Avliza dwellings. One could enter, lie down on blankets, listen to Roma music. For the exhibition Transformers in Berlin she presented six of her photographs from Avliza that represented what she saw there upon her first visit. For Manifesta 4 in Frankfurt a large screen was installed at the train station, on which the video *TAMA Sentimental* was projected. In front of the screen a few plastic, white chairs were placed – known also as the "Gypsy's chairs" in Greece, because they are often sold by Romani chapmen. The installation referred to the Roma people's temporary appropriations of any place, while it also offered train travelers a place to rest. Already earlier works by Papadimitriou in photography, painting, public installations or post-art had revolved around issues of public space, the landscape, collective authorship and parody, but never at the scale of TAMA, nor with the activation of non-art communities. See e.g.: *Small Roman Bridge*, Athens (1991); *Two Towers*, public installation, Thessaloniki, (1992); *Living Spaces I & II*, exhibition in Venice and Athens (1996); *Kiss from Greece* (1998-2000).
- 344 For the offers by collectors see Papadimitriou, Interview by the author, and Strousa, "A tribute to TAMA," 16-23. For the condition that the state should allot the land see, Papadimitriou, Interview by the author. The artist added that she offered other works of her to collectors as return for their expected contribution.
- 345 Papadimitriou, Interview by the author; Andrea Gilbert, "The artist as advocate," Papadimitriou, *TAMA*, 100.
- 346 Papadimitriou, Interview by the author. I have no further information on details or outcomes of the suspended legal case that Papadimitriou referred to. The Olympic premises did not eventually expand over Avliza, but elsewhere within the same municipality of Menidi.
- 347 Yorgos Karousakis, «Με TAMA στο Σάο Πάουλο» ["To Sao Paulo with TAMA"], *Eleftherotypia*, March 9, 2002.
- 348 Karatziou, « Η άλλη Ελλάδα των Ρομά».
- 349 Papadimitriou, Interview by the author.
- 350 Ibid.
- 351 Papadimitriou also mentioned that she delivered a proposal for Avliza to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, but without receiving any response. Ibid.
- 352 For instance, any art critic involved as contributor in the project could potentially also, as

- independent art critic, review the project in the local or foreign art press.
- 353 <http://www.klimaka.org.gr/newsite/Downloads/apologismos%202006%20teliko.pdf>. Evaluation report of Klimaka. Klimaka is “a Greek NGO specializing in projects concerning mental health, the development of human potential and the fight against social exclusion of underprivileged groups of people,” www.klimaka-cosmos.net.
- 354 Ibid.
- 355 Prejudices are manifested already in derogatory uses of the term “Gypsy” in Greek vernacular. Applied as mild term of abuse, it means filthy, mean or ill-mannered.
- 356 Ibid.; Bouganis, «Το χΡΟΜΑ της ψηφοθηρίας»; Georgiou, «Προκατασκευασμένες...μόνιμες λύσεις»; Karatziou, «Η άλλη Ελλάδα των Ρομά».
- 357 To be more precise, Papadimitriou describes the residents of Avliza as itinerant populations such as Gypsies and Vlach Romanians from the North of Greece, while Strousa describes them as “a community of Vlach-Rumanian Gypsies – Vlach-Rumanian Greeks according to themselves,” Papadimitriou, *TAMA*, 13; Strousa, “A tribute to TAMA,” 16. In her discussion about certain site-specific community-based art projects in *One Place After Another*, Miwon Kwon has been quite critical about inaccuracies and appropriations of the notions of “community” and of the criteria with which certain groups are considered as communities by artists or curators. Kwon’s critique is valid beyond her particular examples. However, here I will not investigate the question of whether the characterization “community” applies to the populations of Avliza and El Max. That analysis would divert attention to the immense issue of identity formation and representation, which here is relevant only to the extent that it influences the formation of relations, their operations and representations. Indeed the two questions are interconnected, but for analytical clarity they will here be kept apart.
- 358 See quote at the beginning of this case study: “what I saw there is the concept of a makeshift settlement...The observation of the place and the people became my foremost duty...The nomadic way of living and the particularities of the community gave me the idea of setting up a system of communication and exchange...” Papadimitriou, 13.
- 359 Strousa, “A tribute to TAMA,” 39.
- 360 Ibid., 16.
- 361 The same I had heard also from people working for a documentary film in another Roma settlement in the area of Ahens, i.e., that walking around there as a stranger was not very safe.
- 362 See e.g., displays in Sao Paulo Biennial (documentation), Manifesta Frankfurt (documentation, interview) etc.
- 363 For the quote Papadimitriou, *TAMA*, 13.
- 364 For the exoticization of the Roma in the eyes of the beholder is acknowledged also by Tzirtzilakis. see “Reality as a strategy,” in Papadimitriou, *TAMA*, 26.
- 365 To be more precise, when during the late 1960s and the 1970s in the United States and certain Western European countries artists were protesting against social, political and cultural exclusions by public art institutions and in favor of art taking to the streets, Greek artists were struggling for public institutions of contemporary art to be established in the first place. The request for public institutional structures has been expressed in multiple ways. An important period was 1976-77 (two years after the end of the 1967-1974 dictatorship) when the issue was addressed with debates, publications etc., undertaken by initiatives from three separate sides: the political-cultural journal *Anti*, the Σύνδεσμος Καλλιτεχνών [Artists’ Association, my translation] and the Desmos Art Gallery. See, “Critical views on the institution and handling of art” (collection of sources), in *The Years of Defiance. The Art of the '70s in Greece*, ex. cat., ed. Bia Papadopoulou (Athens: National Museum of Contemporary Art, 2006), 240-263; Chormova, *The Museum of Contemporary Art in Athens*. It is interesting to add here that amongst prominent motives that brought together artists’ group

- initiatives active from the 1970s to the early 1990s was a collectively felt necessity for organized and independent from the market initiatives for the presentation and discourse of contemporary art, as well as for art and art theory education. Such collectives included, for instance, Κέντρο Εικαστικών Τεχνών/KET [Visual Arts Center, my translation] 1974-76, Η Ομάδα των Έξι [The Group of Six, my translation] 1975, Ομάδα Επικοινωνίας και Εκπαίδευσης στην Τέχνη [Group for Art Communication and Education, my translation] 1976-83, Ομάδα Τέχνης 4+ [Art Group 4+ , my translation] 1976-94 and Art Association/SYST 1976-77, 1981, a collective that declared the campaign for the establishment of a museum amongst its first priorities. See Peggy Kounenaki, “Collectivity in art. Artists’ groups at work 1969-1981,” in *Ibid.*, 224-227; Kounenaki, «Καλλιτεχνικές Ομάδες από τη μεταπολίτευση μέχρι σήμερα» [Artists’ groups from the change-over (1974) to the present], lecture, Visual Arts Month, Gazi, Athens, October 2001.
- Important consequences of the prolonged absence of both museum and academic structures for contemporary art have been the lack of systematic modern art collections that were neither private, nor donation-based (as, e.g., the Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art), as well as the lack of systematic and publicly accessible archives and libraries. As a result, art practices and discourses have not been systematically documented and processed up until the late 1990s.
- 366 Papadimitriou, *TAMA*, 13.
- 367 Strousa, “A tribute to TAMA,” 18.
- 368 *Ibid.*
- 369 Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, ed. by Randal Johnson (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993).
- 370 Randal Johnson, “Editor’s introduction: Pierre Bourdieu on Art, Literature and Culture,” in Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, 1-28 (6).
- 371 *Ibid.*, 9. Bourdieu’s theory was a response to the two main modes of analysis of artistic and literary works, both of which he considered inadequate: firstly internal modes of analysis, which isolated the works and approached them, for instance, in formalist or hermeneutics terms; secondly, external explication, met in most sociological approaches, which saw works as determined by external circumstances. Randal, “Editor’s introduction,” 10-12; Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, 34-37.
- 372 Bourdieu’s “field of artistic production” is not a field where everyone is professionally engaged. However, here I will mostly be discussing it as a professional field, because the transition from the artist’s initial informal relations to a professional art project, and TAMA’s subsequent legitimization and career as such, played a crucial role in the presentation and representation of relations in TAMA.
- 373 Papadimitriou, *TAMA*, 14-15.
- 374 The narrative and theoretical framework provided by the project’s book is by and large followed in any further published reviews and articles about TAMA that I am aware of, and which I have included in the sources for this chapter. In the lack of an institutional framework for public art commissions in Greece, the artist did not need to write down statements of motives, intentions and programs. See Papadimitriou, interview by the author. This might appear inconceivable for large-scale, community-based projects, for instance, in the Netherlands.
- 375 For the importance of one’s recognition of expertise and prestige amongst peers see Bourdieu’s much more complex analysis of the notions of “symbolic power” (e.g., “academic capital”) and symbolic capital (e.g., “degree of accumulated prestige, celebrity, consecration or honor”) of individual agents within what he calls “subfields of restricted production.” By the term restricted production Bourdieu refers to “production not aimed at a large-scale market.” The production of contemporary critical art and theory could be considered here such a sub-field. See, Johnson, “Editor’s introduction,” 7; Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, 37-39.

- 376 Exhibitions were supported occasionally also by foreign cultural institutions, such as the Goethe Institut, the Greek-American Union, the British Council etc..
- 377 Significant documentation work on remaining materials has been underway since the late 1990s in the new national and the old private museums of modern and contemporary art. There have been artists whose public interventions were only marginally recorded, processed and recognized as such. In my opinion the character of such practices did not match perceptions about art dominating in the local market or the private patrons. Such cases were the collective artists' initiatives mentioned earlier, artists with a Fluxus character such as the couple Chondros-Katsiani in whose projects, project space "Alli Poli" ["Other City," my translation], publications, events and happenings several others have also participated, or the cases of artists' public interventions that did not fall into categories of sculpture or monument. For instance the only published research on artists' collectives was made by the journalist Peggy Kounenaki, *Νέοι Έλληνες Ρεαλιστές 1971-1973. Η Εικαστική και Πολιτική Παρέμβαση μιας Ομάδας* [New Greek Realists 1971-1973. The Visual and Political intervention of a Group] (Athens: Exantas, 1988); Peggy Kounenaki, "Collectivity in art."
- 378 At least some art historians such as Niki Loizidi consider Greek art from the 1950s onwards to have unfolded simultaneously within and outside of Greece. See, e.g., Niki Loizidi, "The Years of Defiance or the Greek paradox," in *The Years of Defiance*, 206-212.
- 379 See, e.g., the following extract in which Tzirtzilakis encapsulates the choice of positions available to artists in the local art landscape: "The recurring hint here is a vague sense of déjà vu, in certain works - a standard refrain in all discussions about art in Greece for many decades. Indeed there is a time when every artist must sever a Gordian knot. Will he remain shut in the incubator of 'Greekness'? Will he stand as the local representative of some safe, 'international', 'recognized' trend? Or will he rigorously stir his contradictory references and experiences and remain true to his irrepressible demon of combinations? One might say that Greek art keeps posing these questions again and again. A spectre of inferiority and a guilty consciousness have been haunting the 'contemporary camp' all these years: there are several artists who did not enjoy what they were as much as they wanted to, tormented by their resentment for the things they were not. And this often causes contemporary creations to hesitate, to retreat in view of the 'indisputable foreign superiority': I am what I am because someone else is better and, more importantly, ahead of me." The extract is taken from an essay about the art gallery Desmos, which between 1971-1993 managed to exceptionally maintain an atmosphere free from the reigning mentality described above. Yorgos Tzirtzilakis ed., *P + P = D. New Art From the 70's and 80's. Selections from "Desmos,"* (Athens: DESTE Foundation & Futura Publications, 1999).
- 380 "Sponsors of the Avliza TAMA: Hellenic Ministry of Culture, ALPHA BANK, Dakis Joannou, Anny Costopoulou, Constantinos Papagheorghiou, Prodromos Emfietzoglou," TAMA, 15.
- 381 To give an example, the DESTE Foundation that awarded Papadimitriou the DESTE Prize in 2004 belongs to the collector Dakis Ioannou. From the mid 1980s Joannou has turned from collecting Greek to international contemporary artists. However, amongst the activities of the DESTE Foundation is also the establishment of the "Contemporary Greek Artists Archive" that according to the DESTE website, "serves as a research tool for local and international curators and helps facilitate Greek artists' efforts to participate in exhibitions worldwide." <http://www.deste.gr/en/index.html>. Photographs of TAMA can be found also in the collection of Leonidas Beltsios, one of the most comprehensive, published and recently exhibited collections of contemporary Greek art. The deficiencies of a systematic historical and theoretical process of modern and contemporary Greek art makes it possible for agents involved in the younger scene both to present themselves as pioneers, as well as to play a role in the documentation and discursive reconstruction of the past, which have recently acquired a more systematic character within the museum and academy sectors.

- For the model of a group of artists from a young generation and local art scene, who are promoted internationally by a collector, see the widely known case of Saatchi and the “Young British Artists.”
- 382 The case in hand could be an example of Maria Lind’s general statement that “...the various collaborations also tend to constitute a response to specific, at times local, situations and they constantly run the risk of being swallowed up and incorporated into the very systems against which they are reacting.” Maria Lind, “The collaborative turn,” in Billing et al., *Taking the Matter into Common Hands*, 15-31 (16-17).
- 383 <http://www.gudran.com/Gudran1.htm>, Fig. 30-31.
- 384 As already noted in the introduction, this text is written in past tense to emphasize that it refers to Gudran in 2004-05.
- 385 Rancière, “The Distribution of the Sensible.”
- 386 I should note here that in June 3, 2002, a law was passed in Egypt (Law 84 of 2002) that placed a number of political controls and restrictions on the operation of Egyptian NGOs, including control over financial management and foreign funding, over nominees to the boards of directors of associations etc. Known as the “NGO Law,” it had as predecessor Law 153 of 1999 and major reason behind them was the fear that terrorist or other illegal groupings could organize themselves under the guise of NGO status. These laws had an impact on cultural NGOs registered in Egypt, forcing some to change their official status, e.g., to cultural centers or limited responsibility companies. For the change see, e.g., “Demarcating between Democracy and Chaos,” interview with Mervat Tellawi, in *Al Ahram Weekly*, 434, June 24-30, 1999, or on <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/1999/435/intrvw.htm>.
- 387 The guest was the artist Sue Williamson who participated to the first of Gudran’s international workcamps in El Max, Boustachy 01. She has her diary available online <http://www.artthrob.co.za/04nov/diary.html>. See extracts on Table VI.
- 388 Gudran actually means “walls.”
- 389 <http://www.gudran.com/Gudran1.htm>
- 390 In her book *Creative Reckonings. The Politics of Art and Culture in Egypt*, Jessica Winegar analyzes from a sociologist’s point of view the field of contemporary art production in Egypt. Here I will rely only partly on her insightful analysis, because Winegar had no specific interest in art of a social-activist character that I am focusing on. Consequently, she does not analyze the specific constellation of cultural institutions and humanitarian and development NGOs supporting this kind of, often hybrid, artistic practices. See also Jessica Winegar, “Cultural Sovereignty in a Global Art Economy: Egyptian Cultural Policy and the New Western Interest in Art from the Middle East,” *Cultural Anthropology* 211, no. 2: 173-204.
- 391 The Fine Arts Sector was up until 2000 known as “National Center for Fine Arts.” I use present tense when I discuss structures, institutions etc. that existed still while I was writing this text, but later to 2003-04 that is the period discussed.
- 392 See Winegar, *Creative Reckonings*, chaps. 1 and 2, 44-131. See also Marianne Brouwer, “Zwijgen is Zilver – Hedendaags Caïro,” *Metropolis M*, 2006/5: 73 – 77 for Brouwer’s reference to a group of “staatskunstenaars” in Egypt who have access to governmentally supported art institutions, even if there can be no discussion of an “officiële staatskunst” [official art of the state, my translation].
- 393 Mona Zakaria, “The Old Cairo Development Project: For the People with the People,” in *Tamáss 2. Contemporary Arab Representations. Cairo* (Rotterdam & Barcelona: Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art & Fundació Antoni Tàpies, 2004), 70-75.
- 394 For private galleries/project spaces see, e.g., Mashrabia Gallery, the Townhouse Gallery. For artists-run spaces see, e.g., CIC (Cairo Image Collective), ACAF (Alexandria Contemporary Arts Forum). For autonomous projects see, e.g., In a Furnished Flat in Cairo (2004), project initiated by artist Hala Elkoussy, *Going Places* (2004), public art project by curator Mai Abu El Dahab. For exhibitions in

European art centers I have in mind the booming phenomenon of shows presenting non-Western artists, which followed the exhibition *Magiciens de la Terre* in Paris (Centre George Pompidou and Parc de la Villette, 1989) and the Documenta X and XI in Kassel (1997, 2002). Especially for Egypt see, e.g., *Cairo Modern Art* in Holland, den Haag, 2001, Tamáss 2; *The Present Out of the Past Millennia. Contemporary Art from Egypt*, eds. Karin Adrian von Roques, Dieter Ronte (Köln: Wienand, 2007).

395 Winegar, *Creative Reckonings*, 145. Regarding the question of autonomy, one should add, following Winegar, that after decades of state protectionism and a mix of nationalism and socialism in the state's cultural policy rhetoric, many people in the arts had continued well after the private sector's emergence in the 1990s to regard "the state as patron, promoter and protector of fine arts" and "the conceptual frame of the nation" as arbiter "for artistic practice and policy." The private sector provided an alternative either for art that did not fit into the state-supported institutional framework, or for contacts with abroad. Winegar connects the reproduction of these views regarding the role of the state and the importance of the nation in art practices and policies, with socialist legacies dating from the Nasser era (1956-1970) and still reproduced in variations under the Mubarak administration (1981-present).

396 For instance, Gudran's literacy classes for children and adults were inspired, amongst else, by the Caritas Literacy Program. <http://www.gudran.com/Gudran1.htm>. For the activities and roles of NGOs in the Middle East see the entire issue of "Critiquing NGOs. Assessing the Last Decade," *Middle East Report*, spring 2000/214. Especially for reasons that led to the NGOs growth of power and an overview of some main categories and functions in the field see Sheila Carapico, "NGOs, INGOs, GO-NGOs and DO-NGOs: Making Sense of Non-Governmental Organizations," *Middle East Report*, 214, 12-15.

397 Here I refer to NGOs that function as umbrella structures, running various programs of their own, within which or next to which they can support site-specific initiatives that might also have an NGO status too, like Gudran had at first.

398 To the best of my knowledge Gudran has not been receiving funding from the E.U.. What I mean to demonstrate here, is that there are characteristics of organizational profiles that fit into the programs open to applicants by, in this case, the E.U., and Gudran matches these profiles.

399 The link with the E.U. economic and political interests is quite obvious, as E.U. development programs of any type for the Mediterranean region do not claim to be independent of the Union's economic-political goals. With the Ford Foundation things appear more complicated, as the Ford is officially "an independent, nonprofit, nongovernmental organization" <http://www.fordfound.org/about/mission2.cfm>. However, as Frances Stonor Saunders has demonstrated in detail, the funding strategies overseas of major American philanthropic foundations including the Ford have been intertwined with U.S. foreign policies and especially with CIA's "cultural" cold war activities since the early 1950s. Saunders focuses on CIA activities and networks in Europe, but Egypt was also heavily influenced by the Cold War, while simultaneously also by the turbulent political history of the Middle East. Frances Stonor Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Granta Books, 1999).

The Ford's Cairo office opened in 1957, at the time when foreign (colonial) economic activities were already frozen following Egypt's 1952 revolution. Just one year earlier, in 1956, President Nasser had declared the nationalization of the Suez canal, which caused a crisis in Egypt's relations with the West and eventually led Nasser to align Egyptian economic interests and the state's organization and administration system with the Soviet Union.

400 From the 1970s onwards, and after the disastrous experience of the Six Days War with Israel in 1967, the Egyptian government opened up to support from the United States, gradually becoming the

- largest recipient of aid from the U.S. after Israel. "In recognition of Egypt's pre-eminent leadership role in the Middle East," USAID channeled funding for instance for the restoration and reopening of the Suez Canal, for clean water distribution, the expansion of infrastructure for electric power generation, small business investments etc. <http://egypt.usaid.gov/Default.aspx?pageid=6>. The Ford Foundation's activities expanded since the 1970s. See also *Discourses in Contemporary Egypt: Politics and Social Issues*.
- To make the connection here with the arts sector, Jessica Winegar also characterizes Egypt during the period of her study (1996-2004) as a post-socialist state in a process of transformation towards post-modern capitalism. That was due to pressures by the I.M.F. and the U.S. for market liberalization. According to Winegar, it was under these conditions that the official goals and rhetoric of the Ministry of Culture, previously dominated by the spirit of socialist protectionism legacies, started emphasizing in the late 1990s "creativity, opening, and democracy," reverberating the "kind of rhetoric that still dominates U.S. foreign policy discourse about Egypt (and the Middle East more generally), and it is the rhetoric of neoliberal capitalism." Winegar, *Creative Reckonings*, 156.
- 401 "Demarcating between Democracy and Chaos," interview with Mervat Tellawi.
- 402 "From the editor," *Middle East Report*, 214: 1.
- 403 Krista Masonis El-Gawhary, "Advocacy NGOs. Catalysts for Social and Political Change?," *Middle East Report*, 214: 38-41, (38).
- 404 See <http://www.bagfactoryart.org.za/html/resident/residents/jc/jchris.htm> , <http://www.gudran.com/en/Boustashies/boustashy1/about.shtml> as in 29/11/2007.
- 405 According to its mission statement, the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) "is one of the leading independent organizations devoted to cultural development, and is a passionate advocate of cultural cooperation." ECF coordinates also the Dutch network of the Maria Lindh Foundation, which is a "Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the dialogue between cultures" based in Alexandria, Egypt. <http://www.eurocult.org/we-support-cultural-cooperation/about-us/partners-networks/anna-lindh-foundation/>.
- 406 Claudia Zanfi, ed. *Going Public '06. Atlante Mediterraneo'* (Milano Silvana Editoriale, 2007).
- 407 The program PPC_T in Farkadona started after I had finished my research on TAMA and Gudran. It came as surprise to discover that individuals involved in my two case studies were not only acquainted with one another, but had also participated in an event organized by one of them. For PPC_T see <http://www.cittadellarte.it/citta2005/eng/more/farkadona.htm>, <http://www.lovedifference.org/eng/network/projects/farkadona.htm#>. For the organization of the workshop called "Free Culture and Free Knowledge in Farkadona" the ECF was also a partner.
- 408 http://www.tcw.utwente.nl/theorieenoverzicht/Theory%20clusters/Communication%20Processes/Network%20Theory%20and%20analysis_also_within_organizations-1.doc/. For networks see also Monge and Contractor, *Theories of Communication Networks and Manuel Castells' three volumes of The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers , vol. i 1996, vol. ii 1997, vol. iii 1998).
- 409 As curator Gerardo Mosquera has noted: "...globalization does not consist of an effective interconnection of the whole planet... . Rather, it is a radial system extending from diverse centres of power of varying sizes into multiple and highly diversified economic zones. In the years I was travelling through Africa I found in practice that frequently the best way to get from one country to another bordering country was via Europe. This axial structure of globalization and regions of silence, constitute the economic, political and cultural networks of the planet... ." Mosquera, "Notes on globalization, art and cultural difference," 32.
- 410 Mosquera, 34.
- 411 *Ibid.*, 31.

- 412 See quotation at the beginning of this section (Part II, cha. 2.2. Gudran).
- 413 For critical voices about NGO art see, e.g., Stine Høxbroe, “The New Curator,” in *Peripheral Insider. Perspectives ion Contemporary International Visual Culture* ed. Khaled Ramadan (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, University of Copenhagen, 2007) 56-69 (60); BAVO, “Always choose the Worse Option. Artistic Resistance and the Strategy of Over-Identification” in *Cultural Activism Today. The Art of Over-Identification*, eds. BAVO (Episode Publishers, Rotterdam, 2007), 18-39 (23-27). BAVO’s text is revealing of how NGO art has become a synonym of good intention-poor results. They use the term with reference to socially engaged art in Europe, which is not necessarily related to NGOs.
- 414 Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, 3.
- 415 Ibid.
- 416 Bureau Venhuizen, © 2003. Also online <http://www.bureauvenhuizen.com>.
- 417 Koos Bosma, “The Netherlands as structural work of art,” exhibition review, *ARCHIS*, 7 (1995): 6-7, (5).
- 418 Ibid., 6. The characterization of the Netherlands as a work of art due to the engineering achievements of creating land is not Toon Lauwen’s innovation. See, for instance, Adriaan Geuze, “Nederland als Gesamtkunstwerk,” in Oosterling and Thissen, *Grootstedelijke Reflecties*, 185-189.
- 419 According to Hans Venhuizen he started the Bureau when in 1999 he needed to enrol with the chamber of commerce for the requirements of a project in Gouda. Practically the difference thereafter was that he stopped working informally with people and started hiring them. Hans Venhuizen and Francien van Westrenen, interview by the author, tape recording, Rotterdam, January 19, 2005.
- 420 Francien van Westrenen studied art and cultural studies. Mariette Maaskant is an artist and object designer.
- 421 In this chapter wherever the word “Game” is written with capital “G,” it refers specifically to Bureau Venhuizen’s game The Making of.
- 422 The original titles in Dutch are *De Uitvinding van het Uiterwaardenmodel* and *The Making of H1 / Nieuw Erfgoed* respectively.
- 423 Connor, “Playstations. Or Playing in Earnest.”
- 424 Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media. The Extensions of Man* (London: Routledge, 2001, first published 1964), 254-266. Giorgio Agamben, “In Playland. Reflections on History and Play,” in *Infancy and History. On the Destruction of Experience* (London & New York: Verso, 1993, first published in Italian, 1978).
- 425 Cultuur Als Confrontatie. Uitgangspunten voor het cultuurbeleid 2001-2004, <http://www.minocw.nl/documenten/cultuurconfrontatie.pdf>.
- 426 Hans Venhuizen “The term formerly known as culture-based planning,” www.bureauvenhuizen.com.
- 427 Hans Venhuizen defines “opportimism” as follows: “Opportunities usually hide behind situations that are commonly considered as problematic. Instead of analyzing problems, we should turn our attention to and analyze opportunities. Instead of speaking about problematic situations, we should speak about opportunities in situations that could lead to specific information and propositions. This approach is opportunistic, reconciliatory, because it regards the present as an ideal condition. And this approach is optimistic, because it speaks not of problems, but of opportunities. This mixture of opportunism and optimism can be best called opportimism. Representatives of this view are called opportimists.” [My translation, original in German, app. II. 5] Hans Venhuizen, *Der Opportimist* (Berlin: 1995), 17. See also Meurs, Paul, “Opportimisme en verpetparking: kunst en ruimtelijke ordening,” www.bureauvenhuizen.com.
- 428 About the place of Venhuizen’s practice in processes of planning and for details of the Game

- see Venhuizen and Van Westrenen, interview by the author; Bureau Venhuizen, brochure; Hans Venhuizen, “Uiterwaardenmodel: blijven bewegen,” www.bureauvenhuizen.com.
- 429 Bureau Venhuizen, brochure.
- 430 Venhuizen and Van Westrenen, interview by the author.
- 431 Hans Venhuizen, interview by the author, tape recording, Rotterdam, August 19, 2005.
- 432 For the history of the Beeldende Kunstplan Beuningen before Venhuizen entered the stage see Lon Pennock and Roos Theuws, “Beeldende Kunstplan Beuningen,” Beuningen, 1996; “Van Weurt tot Ewijk. Schaduw van Steenfabriek over Landschap,” workshop report, 1999.
- 433 In 1998 Eveline Vermeulen as curator organized a one-day workshop with art students, as well as an exhibition, both oriented towards the brick industry’s history and buildings. Van Weurt tot Ewijk. Schaduw van Steenfabriek over Landschap. Wouter Weijers interview by the author, tape recording, Nijmegen, February 15, 2005.
- 434 The term “poldermodel” refers to the Dutch model of consensus policy. It is used in economics and politics.
- 435 Hans Venhuizen, “The Washlandmodel,” www.bureauvenhuizen.com.
- 436 Phase one included: Grounding (Peiling) 6-12/2000; Students’ project 1-2/2001; Heintor Frugoli Jr. 3/2001; Street interviews with Beuningen young residents, process of all research results 4-5/2001. See: Hans Venhuizen, ed., *De Uitvinding van het Uiterwaardenmodel* (Beuningen: Stichting van Weurt tot Deest, 2002)
- 437 Venhuizen, interview by the author; De Uitvinding van het Uiterwaardenmodel, project report until August 2001.
- 438 For the awarded prizes see, *De Uitvinding van het Uiterwaardenmodel*, project report.
- 439 Weijers, interview by the author.
- 440 The projects of the student groups had the titles: i. identity; ii. innovative life; iii. dogshit; iv. the game (i. identiteit; ii. innovatief leven; iii. Hondenpoep; iv. het spel, my translation). See, Van Weurt tot Deest, brochure produced by students about their work for the Bureau Venhuizen project in Beuningen.
- 441 I. innovatief leven of versterking door verschraling; ii. van Dirt tot Waste; iii. identiteit versus imago, my translation.
- 442 For a full list of the participants and each one’s field of expertise, see: Hans Venhuizen, *De Uitvinding Van Het Uiterwaardenmodel*, colophon, 62-64.
- 443 “In de breedte ideeën te genereren voor een veelheid aan bestaande situaties en toekomstige ontwikkelingen in de gemeente Beuningen,” my translation.
- 444 At the time of writing this chapter the sand extraction has not taken place yet, due to political issues. Eventually it will have to happen though, as the Municipality of Beuningen is obliged to supply the Province of Gelderland with a certain amount of sand that the Province must subsequently deliver for country-wide construction works. For information on the sand mining see, Piet Snellaars, interview by the author, tape recording, Beuningen September 12, 2005.
- 445 See “The making of H1,” www.bureauvenhuizen.com; “Bewonerskrant Zandwinning Winssen (Beuningen : Gemeente Beuningen, 2001). Local newspaper published to announce the project New Heritage after the Game was played for Winssen under the title The Making of H1, 29/10-2/11/2001. Venhuizen, interview by the author; Snellaars, interview by the author.
- 446 Snellaars, Interview by the author. Snellaars’ expectations regarding the professional planners’ output and Venhuizen’s contribution brings to mind a reaction by artist Jan van Grunsven during a symposium in 1997 in Pijnacker, documented in a review by Camiel van Winkel. “The artist Jan van Grunsven rightly wondered, moreover, how much confidence the council really has in its urban planners and architects if it wants to allocate the job of supplying identity to a third discipline. ...

- Panel members expressed serious doubts and reservations about the use of the notion of identity and the role that art can play in a residential area. ... As it was, the symposium made clear just how different the views and interests of the various parties are in this matter and how different their expectations of art." in Van Winkel, "Art and life-after-Vinex. Symposium Pijnacker," *Archis*, 7, 1997, 30-31
- 447 Snellaars, interview by the author.
- 448 Architects connected to the Amsterdam School, whatever their differences might have been, were generally influenced by the prominent figures of architects Hendrik P. Berlage and Eduard Cuypers. For the Amsterdam School of Architecture see, for instance, Suzanne Frank, *Michel de Klerk, 1884-1923. An Architect of the Amsterdam School* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1970); Maristella Casciato, *De Amsterdamse School, Serie Architectuur/6* (Rotterdam: Uitgeverij 010, 1991); Wim de Wit, "The Amsterdam School: definition and delineation," in *The Amsterdam School. Dutch Expressionist Architecture, 1915-1930* (Cambridge, Mass. etc: The MIT Press, Cooper Hewitt Museum, 1983) 29-66.
- 449 Not all examples of Amsterdam School architecture are equally elaborate. From 1920 the state cut back on financing for housing-construction, while construction increased. Consequently, the designs of Amsterdam School architects became more sober, standardized and production oriented. Architects were often hired only for the facades, so that the designs would be approved by the Schoonheidscommissie [Commission of Beauty, my translation]. The death of Michel de Klerk in 1932, the strong creative figure of the Amsterdam School, also played a role. Casciato, *De Amsterdamse School*, 31.
- 450 Compare, Frank, *Michel de Klerk, 1884-1923*, 6-7.
- 451 Compare also to the roles of ornamentation in interior design, see Petra Timmer, "The Amsterdam School and interior design. Architects and craftsmen against the rationalists," in de Wit, "The Amsterdam School: definition and delineation," 121-144.
- 452 For the need of massive housing construction in urban centers in the time of the Amsterdam School, see, Casciato, *De Amsterdamse School*; Particularly for Rotterdam, where the population had increased 50% between 1900-1915, see, Hans Esser, "J.J.P. Oud," in Carel Blotkamp, *De Stijl. The Formative Years 1917-1922* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1986), 123-152 (133).
- 453 It should be noted that the Situationists International (SI) resented the idea of becoming categorized and historified as a movement, even worse as art movement. This point attests to them being conscious that their ideas and visions were conceived and shaped at the verges of existing fields, not only as art or literature. Even if this meant that the latter would "simply" have to expand their borders, in order to include the SI. For SI see Elizabeth Sussman, ed., *On the Passage of a Few People Through a Rather Brief Moment in Time: The Situationist International. 1957-1972*, ex. cat. (Cambridge Mass. and London: The MIT Press, 1989); "Guy Debord and the Internationale Situationiste," special issue October 79, (1997); Guy Debord, "Towards a Situationist International," in *Guy Debord and the Situationist International: Texts and Documents*, ed. Tom McDonough (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2002), 44-55, translated from the French original 1957, reprinted in Bishop, *Participation*, 96-101. Simon Ford, *The Situationist International. A User's Guide* (London: Black Dog Publishers, 2005).
- 454 Sussman, *On the Passage of a Few People*, 4.
- 455 For Constant and New Babylon see, Mark Wigley, *Constant's New Babylon: The Hyper-Architecture of Desire* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers and Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, 1998); Constant (Nieuwenhuys), *De Opstand van de Homo Ludens* (Bussum: Paul Brand, 1969), Wilma Jansen, "Omgevingsvormgeving als nieuwe discipline," in *Kunstopdrachten Van De Rijksgebouwendienst na 1945*, 65-73.

- 456 Constant, "New Babylon," in *Theory of the Dérive*, Andreotti and Costa, 154-169. Here taken from Wigley, *Constant's New Babylon*, 14.
- 457 Jansen, 67.
- 458 The first performances of Robert Jasper Grootveld, the central figure of Provo performances, were in the early 1960s. But it was only in 1965 that the more theoretical co-founder, Roel van Duyn, produced a leaflet handed out during a performance in the Spui square in Amsterdam, announcing the birth of the Provo movement. The Provos officially dissolved in June 1967. For the Provos see Virginia D. Mamadouh, *De Stad in Eigen Hand. Provo's, Kabouters en Krakkers als Stedelijke Sociale Beweging*, Ph.D dissertation (Amsterdam: Sua, 1992); Willem Ellenbroek, "Het magisch centrum" and Harry Ruhé, "Acties en performances in Amsterdam. Een overzicht van 20 jaar branche-vervaging," in *20 Jaar Beeldende Kunst, Amsterdam 60/80*, ed. Frank Gribling (Amsterdam: Museum Fodor, 1982), 35-49 and 63-79.
- 459 Between seriousness and joke, the White Plans had a clearly social agenda. They included the most known "White Bike Plan" for bikes to be made available by the city council to everyone without charge, the "White Victim Plan" for careless drivers, "White Chimney Plans" for atmospheric pollution, "White Kids Plan" (free day-care centres), the "White Housing Plan" (stop real estate speculation) and the "White Wife Plan" (free medical care for women). There were some more obviously ludicrous ones, such as the "White Chicken Plan," according to which policemen - known amongst Provos as "blue chickens" - would turn to disarmed white chickens, cycling around the city carrying first aid, fried chicken and free contraceptives. http://www.marijunalibrary.org/HT_provos_0190.html.
- 460 See for instance, Guy Debord: "The parodic-serious expresses the contradictions of an era in which we find ourselves confronted with the urgent necessity and the near impossibility of bringing together and carrying out a totally innovative collective action." in "Detournement as negation and prelude," originally published in French, *Internationale Situationiste*, no. 3. December 1959, for the English translation see, *Art in Theory 1900-2000. An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, eds. Charles Harrison and Paul Wood (Blackwell, 2nd ed., 2002), 704-705.
- Furthermore, on the leaflets that Roel van Duyn distributed during the happening in May 1965 announcing the birth of the Provo movement he wrote "Provo's choice is between desperate resistance and apathetic perishing... Provo realizes eventually it will be the loser, but won't let that last chance slip away to annoy and provoke this society to its depths..." http://www.marijunalibrary.org/HT_provos_0190.html.
- For Constant see further down here, end of section three, "Play forms in art."
- 461 For the 1950ies see, e.g., Jansen, "De totstandkoming van de percentageregeling voor rijksgebouwen," "De percentageregeling in de praktijk tot 1970" and "Het naoorlogse debat over de verhouding tussen architectuur en beeldende kunst in 1945-1968," in *Kunstopdrachten Van De Rijksgebouwendienst na 1945*, 11-32, 33-40, 57-64. In fact one should probably look back as far as 1901, when a Woningwet (Netherlands Housing Act) was introduced, according to which every city of more than 10,000 inhabitants should submit an expansion plan, while the construction of low-cost housing was encouraged and supported by governmental finances. Standards for safety, durability and hygiene for all new housing were established. Additionally, the special Schoonheidscommissie (Comission of Beauty) was set up. It advised the mayor for the maintenance of aesthetic quality of all new housing projects in Amsterdam. Frank, *Michel de Klerk 1884-1923*, 5. A few years later the need to speed up the projects and to tighten up the finances resulted in less attendance to artistic detail, as it is made evident when one compares, e.g., the Amsterdam School's architecture around the Spaarndammerplantsoen, Spaarndammerbuurt district, with the unnuanced seriality of later residential blocks at the north side of Minervaplein (1932) by C. J. Blaauw. *Ibid.*, 11.

- 462 For bibliographical references to historical and sociological research for the Netherlands and how it can be linked to art, see van Winkel, *Moderne Leegte*, chaps. 1 and 3, “Leegte als Landschap” and “Kunst als Omgeving,” 11-60, 115-168.
- 463 For the post-war years in the Netherlands see, e.e., Geuze, “Nederland als Gesamtkunstwerk,” 185-186.
- 464 Ibid., 185-189.
- 465 Ibid., 187.
- 466 Ibid.; Van Winkel, “Authentic places,” 23; Jansen, *Kunstopdrachten Van De Rijksgebouwendienst na 1945*, 62-63. For a historical overview of Dutch social, political and economic life in the 1960s see Kennedy, *Nieuw Babylon in Aanbouw*.
- 467 Van Winkel, “Authentic Places.” The secularization (ontzuiling) of the Dutch society that started in the late 1950s signalled the end of the period during which the country’s population was divided into four communities, the so-called pillars (zuilen): Protestants, Catholics, Social Democrats and Liberals.
- 468 Van Winkel, “Authentic places,” 33.
- 469 Jansen, *Kunstopdrachten Van De Rijksgebouwendienst na 1945*, 57.
- 470 Ibid.
- 471 It is interesting that an important contribution to the promotion of art in Dutch post-war society was played by Gerardus van der Leeuw, a Theology Professor and first Minister for Education, Arts and Sciences between 1945-1946. His moral and educational ideals and proposals about art’s social role were never applied as such while he was in office. Yet they are echoed in the argumentation behind the introduction of the 1%-for-the-arts law (percentageregeling). Ibid., 11-12.
- 472 Ibid.
- 473 The historian James C. Kennedy shows in his book, *Nieuw Babylon in Aanbouw*, that already in the 1950s the ground was prepared for the acceptance of innovation. According to Kennedy, “renewal” was the motto driving developments at an economic, social and political level with the support - or at least the tolerance - of the financial, political and religious elites already in the 1950s. They saw this to be in the best interests of their country and thus in their own interests too. It is not a coincidence that the revolutionary movements of the 1960s met with significantly milder reaction on the side of the Dutch authorities, in comparison to other countries. Even more, some of the social rights that those movements were propagating for were soon adopted in official social policies. Kennedy, *Nieuw Babylon in Aanbouw*, 18-19. Accordingly, art historian Camiel van Winkel explains in *Moderne Leegte* that the phenomenological approach in the rhetoric backing artist’s recruitment into environmental planning processes in the late 1960s and mainly the 1970s was also not completely new. A loose grouping of psychologists, pedagogic scientists, legal practitioners and criminologists had been publishing extensively on related ideas between 1945-1955. Their views were taken seriously into consideration by some contemporary politicians. Van Winkel, *Moderne Leegte*, 40-48.
- 474 See, e.g., Van Winkel, “Authentic places,” 25; Van Winkel, *Moderne Leegte*, esp. chap. III. “Kunst als omgeving,” 115-168; Jansen, *Kunstopdrachten van de Rijksgebouwendienst na 1945*, esp. chap. 6 “Herbezinning op het kunstopdrachtenbeleid van de Rijksgebouwendienst na 1970,” 117-122.
- 475 *Kunst in Relaties. Een Analyse van Onderzoek en Beleid met Betrekking tot tien POBK- en vier RAC-projecten, Warna Oosterbaan Martinus* (Ministerie van Welzijn, Volksgezondheid en Cultuur, Rijswijk, 1983), 3. My translation, original in Dutch, app. II.6.
- 476 My translation of the Dutch terms “vervreemding,” “identificatie,” “orientatie,” “gebruik” and “believing.” For their use as umbrella concepts see, *Omschrijving van Taken, Werkerreinen, Criteria, Werkwijze en Samenwerkingsverbanden van de Rijksadviescommissie voor de Beeldende Vormgeving in Relatie tot Architectuur en Ruimtelijke Ordening*.

- 477 Van Winkel, "Authentic places," 24.
- 478 Ibid., 30. Van Winkel refers to the vague position of the artists taking as specific case study their involvement in the ambitious 1970s plan for Lunetten, back then a new suburb of Utrecht.
- 479 *De Zorg voor de Vormgeving*, iii. My translation, original in Dutch, app. II.7.
- 480 This commission, formed in 1977, was named "Kleine Commissie" (K.C.) and had received from the Minister "the widely formulated assignment of bringing to the table 'conditions for the optimization of environmental design results'" [My translation, original in Dutch, app. II.8 of all translated Dutch quotations in this note]. In August 1978 K.C. produced the report *De Zorg voor de Vormgeving*, in which it was explained that the lack of clarity was derived from the different interpretations of the same terms in the uses of different agents. The report attempted to bring about some clarity: "From that perspective the impression is created that there has not been the necessary attention lent to the analysis of the meanings attributed to words such as alienation, identification, orientation, use and experience. Rarely, at least according to the Minister's judgement not often enough, has there been an inventory provided of the possible content of the terms. For instance a sociologist has a different definition for the word alienation compared to a psychologist." *De Zorg voor de Vormgeving*, iii.
- 481 My translation from the Dutch: "vorm en kleur, ruimte en beweging, material en textuur." Van Winkel, *Moderne Leegte*, 119.
- 482 Ibid., 116-119.
- 483 Ibid., 119 and Cees de Boer, "Vormgeving van het engagement; artistieke, sociale en ideologische thema's 1966-1991," in *De Arnhemse School. 25 Jaar Monumentale Kunstpraktijk*, eds. Ineke Middag en Jonneke Fritz-Jobse (Arnhem: Hogeschool van de Kunsten, 1994) 65-66, referred also in Van Winkel, "Authentic places," 23.
- 484 For instance Joep van Lieshout appears not to care what he is called, see *Grootstedelijke Reflecties*, 72. Esther Didden or Ronald van Tienhoven are examples of artists who have also worked as intermediaries.
- 485 See also, Jeroen Boomgaard, "Unfeasibility as an ideal," in Boomgaard, *One Year in the Wild*, originally published in Dutch, in *OPEN*, no. 5 (2003) 26-31.
- 486 Constant, "New Babylon – Ten years on," lecture at the University of Technology, Delft, Faculty of Architecture, May 23, 1980, published in Wigley, *Constant's New Babylon*, 232-236, (236).
- 487 Here one could even include the current city promotion campaign of **IA**msterdam, launched in 2001, the title of which implies that Amsterdam is everyone's city, or the city that incorporates the character of each single person. <http://www.iamsterdam.nl/>.
- 488 See also, Boomgaard, "Unfeasibility as an ideal," 35-36.
- 489 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, Part I.2. The ontology of the work of art and its hermeneutic significance. - I.2.1. Play as the clue to ontological explanation, 102-129.
- 490 For the notion of play in Kant as presented here see principally Connor, "Playstations," secondarily also Monroe C. Beardsley, *Ιστορία των Αισθητικών Θεωριών. Απο την Κλασική Αρχαιότητα Μέχρι Σήμερα* [Aesthetics from Classical Greece to the Present], trans. Dimosthenis Kurtovic and Pavlos Christodoulidis (Athens: Nefeli, 1989, first published in English, 1975), 200-220.
- 491 Connor, "Playstations," 62.
- 492 McLuhan, *Understanding Media*; Agamben, "In Playland."
- 493 Connor, "Playstations," 1.
- 494 Ibid., 3.
- 495 Ibid., 3.
- 496 Ibid. Kant's conception of play in relation to non-conceptual thought is evoked also in Huzinga, see, e.g., *Homo Ludens*, 7.
- 497 Ibid., 4.

498 Ibid.

499 Huizinga sums up the characteristics of play as follows: “We might call it a free activity standing quite consciously outside ‘ordinary’ life as being ‘not serious’, but at the same time absorbing the player intensely and utterly. It is an activity connected with no material interest, and no profit can be gained by it. It proceeds within its own proper boundaries of time and space according to fixed rules and in an orderly manner. It promotes the formation of social groupings which tend to surround themselves with secrecy and to stress their difference from the common world by disguise or other means.” Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*, 13.

500 Ibid., 8.

501 The sociologist Roger Caillois published in 1958 in French a book proposing a classification of games, in which he was the first to criticize Huizinga’s reluctance to acknowledge that profit-making games and gambling in particular were met in many different cultures and often played an important role there. Roger Caillois, *Man, Play and Games*.

502 For the beauty of play in Huizinga, see, *Homo Ludens*, 7, 10.

503 For the 20th century Connor mentions further Max Weber, Herbert Spencer, Karl Groos, Jean Paul Sartre, Michel Serres, Konrad Lorenz, Dorothy Einon, Friedrich Nietzsche, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer.

504 For Claude Lévi-Strauss see, e.g., *The Savage Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972, first published in French, 1962).

505 McLuhan, *Understanding Media*.

506 Ibid., 258.

507 “The games of a people reveal a great deal about them. Games are a sort of artificial paradise like Disneyland, or some Utopian vision by which we interpret and complete the meaning of our daily lives.” Ibid., 259.

508 Ibid., 258.

509 Ibid., 259.

510 Agamben, “In Playland.”

511 Ibid., 75-76.

512 Ibid., 76.

513 Agamben, 79-80.

514 Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*, 30-33.

515 Agamben, 77.

516 Ibid.

517 Ibid., 79.

518 Ibid., 83, see also 88-89. It is important to say here that both my references to McLuhan and to Agamben featuring Lévi-Strauss (or Lévi-Strauss through my reading of Agamben) are not meant to lead this text to a structuralist way of approaching society, culture and art as rigid systems. And then move on interpreting our cases on the basis of that. What we wish to keep from these theorists is a kind of essence of the notions of play and games that go part and parcel with the conceptions of the special place and function that, according to Connor, play appears to have had in modern Western thought.

519 For the Amsterdam School of Architecture see Frank, *Michel de Klerk, 1884-1923*; Casciato, *De Amsterdamse School*; de Wit, *The Amsterdam School*.

520 Compare, e.g., to Maristella Casciato, “Utopia built, Michel de Klerk,” in de Wit, *The Amsterdam School*, 93-120.

521 See de Wit, “Definition and delineation,” 32-38.

522 Ibid., particularly for De Stijl see Carel Blotkamp, “Introduction,” in *De Stijl. The Formative Years*

1917-1922, viii-xi (ix).

523 Compare, Casciato, "Utopia built, Michel de Klerk," 118.

524 Frank, *Michel de Klerk*, 1884-1923, 6-7.

525 Already from the Lettrists International, a predecessor of Situationism established by Asger Jorn who later joined the Situationists, one sees play and games having a prominent role. This was expressed, e.g., in the name of their journal, Potlatch. Huizinga dedicates several pages on the example of the festive, ceremonious event of the potlatch, by which he demonstrates the play element in religion/culture. Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: a Study of the Play-element in Culture* (London & New York: Routledge, 1999), 58-62. For Potlatch and Asger Jorn's interest in play, festivities, waste and excess see Peter Wollen "Bitter victory. The art and politics of the Situationiste Internationale," in Sussman, *On the Passage of a Few People*, 20-61, (46).

526 Both citations in Debord, "Detournement as Negation and Prelude," 705.

527 Asger Jorn, "Detourned painting," 1959, as cited in Debord, "Detournement as Negation and Prelude," 705. The logic with which the Situationists wanted to use games as means or media for transition bears interesting resemblance to the ethnologists theories of the role of play and games across various cultures. Religious, economic or social practices descend, ascend or just pass through a state related to forms of play and games when they either fall into disuse, or undergo a transformation. Agamben's example of the toy is pertinent here for objects relating to such transitions

528 Guy Debord, "Report on the construction of situations," 1957, reprinted in *Art in Theory*, 701-703, (702).

529 Constant was influenced by Huizinga's notion of the Homo Ludens. Yet the fundamental differentiation he saw himself having from Huizinga was that Huizinga considered the domain of play as set-apart from real life. While Constant turned play into everyday life for the Homo Ludens in New Babylon. Constant (Nieuwenhuys), "Het Lied van de arbeid," in *De Opstand van de Homo Ludens*, 71-72.

It should come as no surprise that Constant had collaborated with Aldo van Eyck on designs for playgrounds, that were the latter's specialization. Wigley, *Constant's New Babylon*, 26.

530 Constant, "Het Lied van de arbeid," 71-72.

531 McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, 258.

532 Ibid., 62. Wigley describes extensively a lecture by Constant emphasizing how Constant used background sounds, dim lights, a well directed sequence of slides etc. to create a dramatic evocative atmosphere. Wigley, *Constant's New Babylon*, 9.

533 For provo events and actions in public spaces of Amsterdam, see, Mamadouh, *De Stad in Eigen Hand*; Ellenbroek, "Het magisch centrum;" Ruhé, "Acties en performances in Amsterdam;" "http://www.marijuanalibrary.org/HT_provos_0190.html."

534 http://www.marijuanalibrary.org/HT_provos_0190.html.

535 Van Winkel. *Moderne Leegte*, 119.

536 Ibid., 82-83. Agamben actually dedicated the text "In Playland" to Lévi-Strauss for his seventieth birthday, 73.

537 Debord expelled numerous people involved in Situationism, because he considered them not fully complying with his conditions. Amongst those expelled ones were Constant and Henri Lefebvre.

538 For the Stedelijk exhibition proposal see, Jeroen Boomgaard, "The platform of commitment," in Boomgaard, *One Year in the Wild*, 39-53, (41-42), it includes references to: "Die Welt als Labyrinth," *Internationale Situationniste*, no. 4, 1960, 5-7; Roberto Ohrt, *Phantom Avantgarde* (Hamburg: Nautilus, 1990); Thomas Y. Levin, "Geopolitics of Hibernation. The Drift of Situationist Urbanism," in *Situationist Art, Politics, Urbanism*, eds. Libero Andreotti and Xavier Costa (Barcelona: Museu

- D'Art Contemporani, ACTAR, 1996), 111-139.
- 539 Connor, "Playstations," 6.
- 540 Ibid., 83.
- 541 Ibid., 83.
- 542 Ibid., 11-12.
- 543 For the characterization of the transition from artist to concept manager as "transition to dirty realism" see Venhuizen and van Westrenen, Interview by the author.
- 544 Ibid.
- 545 My translation from the Dutch: "Het meedoen aan The Making of H1 was voor mij belangrijker dan het winnen van het spel." Annie van Gelder, "Meedoen is belangrijker dan Winnen," in *Bewonerskrant Zandwinning Winssen*.
- 546 Ibid.
- 547 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 104-105, quoted also in Connor, "Playstations," 12.
- 548 McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, 259.
- 549 For forms of play in philosophy see Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*, 147-157.
- 550 Venhuizen and van Westrenen, Interview by the author.
- 551 De Uitvinding van het Uiterwaardenmodel, 2001, report until August 2001.
- 552 Maarten A. Hajer and Wil Zonneveld, "Spatial Planning in the network society – Rethinking the principles of planning in the Netherlands," *European Planning Studies*, 8:3 (2000): 337-355.
- 553 Ibid., 337.
- 554 Ibid., 338.
- 555 Ibid., 339.
- 556 Ibid., 340.
- 557 Ibid.
- 558 Ibid. 337-355. A variety of agents involved in the decision-making and implementation of spatial plans are mentioned Hajer and Zonneveld. They include the National Planning Agency, National Spatial Planning Commission, the Ministry of Housing, the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Traffic and Transport, a number of further (more or less formal) entities connected to the central government or to local authorities, citizen committees and various independent bodies (e.g., environmental NGOs).
- 559 Ibid., 343.
- 560 Ibid., 344.
- 561 Ibid.
- 562 Ibid., 345.
- 563 Ibid.
- 564 Ibid., 349.
- 565 Crimson, "Orgwars."
- 566 Ibid.
- 567 Ibid.
- 568 The Nota Belvédère can be downloaded from <http://www.belvedere.nu/page.php?section=06&pID=7&mID=2&wID=6&PHPSESSID=fe82e918b71f2884b468a6c49b87dc5e>.
- 569 EHS is defined as follows: "The EHS comprises a network of interconnected areas in the Netherlands where nature is priority number one. It aims to prevent extinction of wildlife and plants and promote biodiversity by connecting isolated nature reserves. The EHS constitutes nature's infrastructure. The EHS comprises three types of areas: 1. The currently existing natural areas and those recently acquired; also included are agricultural areas with a nature reserve status. 2. Agricultural areas where farmers are accountable for nature management and conservation. These areas are not

- purchased. 3. Certain wet areas, like the Wadden Sea, the IJsselmeer and the coastal region of the North Sea. The projected completion of the EHS is planned in 2018.” http://www.cbs.nl/en-GB/menu/_unique/_concept/default.htm?postinguid=%7BE7E73F59-F26B-4C35-9655-DA9C84752337%7D&concept=Ecological+Main+Structure.
- 570 Maarten A. Hajer, “A frame in the fields: policymaking and the reinvention of politics,” in *Deliberative Policy Analysis. Understanding Governance in the Network Society*, eds. Hajer and Hendrik Wagenaar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 88-103, (89).
- 571 Jeroen Boomgaard, “Authenticity and construction,” in *One Year in the Wild*, 19-28 (19). First published in Dutch in *OPEN*, in an issue on “Art in the changing landscape” (“Kunst in het veranderende landschap,” my translation). The entire issue is interesting for that matter. *OPEN*, no. 4 (2003).
- 572 Paul Meurs, “Opportimism and amusement-parkification: art and urbanism,” in Venhuizen Concept Management / Art and Urbanism, unpublished brochure, 24-35.
- 573 As also in Connor, “Playstations,” 12.
- 574 Meurs, “Opportimism and amusement–parkification.”
- 575 Rancière, “Distribution of the sensible (Le Partage du Sensible)” entry in “Appendix I. Glossary of technical terms,” and “The distribution of the sensible” in *The Politics of Aesthetics*, 85 and 22 respectively.

ENGLISH SUMMARY

This dissertation examines practices of participatory art, in which visual artists work on present-day, socio-political issues. The artists engage with issues such as urban regeneration or migration, and invite residents of districts undergoing regeneration or migrants to participate in the art projects. The central question of the thesis is two-fold. It asks what kind of art forms do these engaged, process-based, participatory and/or collaborative art practices produce, and how do these forms present or represent the socio-political issues at stake.

In the dissertation I propose a division between forms of narrations, of relations and of events produced by artistic projects. First I analyze the production process and structure of these forms. Afterwards I discuss how the presentations and representations of the socio-political issues and target groups produced by the projects sometimes support and sometimes contradict the artists' stated intentions and agendas. Methodologically I employ a number of case studies to present various practices and forms of engaged, participatory or collaborative art, and to develop a theoretical framework for their analysis.

Certain important parameters that have determined the selection of the case-studies are present throughout the entire dissertation. Namely, I see the artists drawing non-art practices of participation or collaboration into the field of art. In my examples, these non-art practices include Michel de Certeau's "practice of everyday life" (Part I), practices of political activism (Part II, chapter one), of community development work (Part II, chapter two), and of professional urban planning (Part II, chapter three). To examine this phenomenon I juxtapose case-studies of art projects to projects from the aforementioned fields, for which artistic creativity is used as a tool. Furthermore, while the selected projects have a local, site-specific focus, their initiators are mostly active and visible in international networks of art, activism, NGOs or urban planners. Thus, at varying degrees and depending on the socio-political issue at stake, the analysis of each case-study takes into consideration local conditions, institutional structures and discourses, set against structural and discursive articulations of globalization.

The dissertation consists of two parts. In Part I, one artist is taken as case study. In the subsections I introduce all the themes of the dissertation: the production of forms of narrations, relations and events. In Part II, I take the approach of each theme as presented in Part I and by using numerous case-studies I apply and expand further on one theme per chapter.

Part I

An everyday practice of art

The Dutch artist Jeanne van Heeswijk is the case-study of Part I. Since the early 1990s she has been developing participatory and/or collaborative projects with both art-world peers and various other communities (e.g., residents of a neighbourhood, exhibition visitors). The first section describes her art projects and practices. The second section refers to all verbal and visual narrations of what a project is about or what has taken place during its process, as rendered in publications, interviews, websites,

flyers, art reviews etc.. They all communicate a project's story, or the project as a story, during and after its implementation. Considering a project as a set of narrations means here regarding it as a kind of narrative space, within which the project is acted out and forever re-enacted, re-written and re-born. Michel de Certeau's theory of space as a practiced place is employed, considering the project's narrative space as a practiced place. In the third section the production of forms of relations is discussed. I maintain that in the case of socio-politically engaged, collaborative and/or participatory art projects, relations of art production and relations produced as art get fused and confused. Thus the relations discussed in this section encompass all different stakeholders, ranging from target groups to local authorities, organizational partners, sponsors, art institutions, art-world peers and many more. Again drawing from de Certeau, the artist's practice employs both the tactics of the practice of every-day life and the strategies of institutions in setting up her projects. Thus drawing the negotiations of real life relations to the domain of art. The fourth section deals with events organized during van Heeswijk's projects, such as meetings, workshops, festivals, performances, dinners and so on. The section considers what kind of category do these "events" constitute in terms of their taking place in time and in space, and what kind of role do they play in the course of process-based art projects that may last a few days or a few years. The form and mode of the taking place of "events" is discussed extensively. Initially in terms of Grant Kester's "dialogical" model, in which conversation and discursive communication are prominent. Afterwards in terms of the performative parameters of their staging, and finally, but most importantly, in their relation to forms of play and games. Johan Huizinga, and mainly Georg Gadamer's philosophical concepts of "play" are turned into analytical tools. Significantly, while I use Gadamer's concept of play, I simultaneously revise his theory of play as the form and mode of the encounter between viewer and artwork. Instead I demonstrate, how Gadamer's concept of play may describe the form and mode of the events organized as part of the contemporary artworks proper.

Part II - Chapter 1

Doing language: Narratives from an activist world in the artworld of the 1990s

This chapter brings two projects of art-activism by the artists' group *Wochenklausur* and a joint one by Martin Krenn and Oliver Ressler in juxtaposition to artistic work developed by the women migrants' organization *Maiz* as part of their political activism. All three examples engage with issues of immigration in Austria during the 1990s and touch also upon official immigration policies and practices in the European Union after 1989. Issues of language and speech have been prominent in the debates over immigration during this period in Austria. On the one hand, to be accepted as a "legal" non-EU immigrant one needed to obtain the correct official definition as "asylum seeker" or "refugee." On the other hand, in the increasingly frequent political and media debates about immigration, migrants were hardly ever presenting their positions themselves. Instead, they were represented by Austrian citizens. In the case-studies the artists transfer political activism practices (giving people a voice) to art practices by means of participatory, public art projects, where, for instance, migrants are interviewed. While the activists transfer artistic practices (eg. performance) to their political activism practices.

In the above examples I analyze how the narrations of projects as in videos,

publications or websites operate in terms of content (articulated intentions) and form (the articulation of intentions). There are two central analytical questions. The first one refers to the constitution of the subject of the narrations (narrating subject) and in the narrations (narrated subject). The subject at stake is the migrant as subject. The second question asks whether and how the social and political power structures that lead people to marginalization and speechlessness are challenged or confirmed in the narrative constructions of the artistic projects. With these two questions as guides, and against a background of Austria's contemporary art-activism scene, I analyze aesthetically the projects' narrative forms and constructions, and from that analysis I return to the content of the artists' and activists' political statements. The initial inspiration for this chapter came from Judith Butler's approach to linguistic vulnerability, according to which, when we speak, we *do* language and we do it *on others*. While at the same time, language is also the thing that we do.

Part II - Chapter 2

A universe of relations: (un)doing practice. Community practices as art

Two case-studies are presented here. The first is the community-based, public art project TAMA (*Temporary Autonomous Museum for All*) by the Greek artist Maria Papadimitriou. TAMA was developed in Avliza, a location outside Athens, occupied by Roma and Vlach-Romanian Greeks. It aimed at setting up relations between artists, architects, theorists and residents of Avliza, as well as at developing a flexible infrastructural model for the Avliza settlement. TAMA attracted considerable interest in the international art world of Biennials and art-architecture exhibitions. The second case-study is the ongoing (since 2001) initiative Gudran for Art and Development in a small fishing village called El-Max, outside the city of Alexandria in Egypt. Although initiated by artists, Gudran is a project where they use art for the social, infrastructural and economic development of the village. It has gained considerable visibility within networks of development NGOs, (social) art initiatives and cultural institutions in the Middle East region. In both the cases of TAMA and Gudran there is a merging of relations of production and relations produced as part of the projects.

In this chapter I apply the theoretical approach introduced in Part I. Instead of Michel de Certeau's theory of "the practice of everyday life," I take as starting point Pierre Bourdieu's model of relations and practices in the field of cultural production. I adjust Bourdieu's model to contemporary conditions within an expanded and international field of networks that affect the local fields, within which the artists' projects of my case-studies emerge. Practices of community development and of professional networking are re-produced by artists sometimes as art (TAMA) and sometimes not (Gudran). Demonstrating important parallels between the two projects, I maintain that in essence they both exemplify contemporary site-specific, community-based artistic practices. From this perspective, I investigate for both cases the aesthetic parameters of the formation and operation of relations produced by the projects. The critical aesthetical analysis of community-based artistic practices leads eventually to a critical analysis of both the changing landscapes of "peripheral" cultural fields (Greece, Egypt), as well as the changing horizons of their relations to the traditional centres of the Western (art) canon.

Part II – Chapter 3**In the Event: Play. A “jeux sans frontières” between art and life**

The last chapter returns to the Dutch context of Part I through the example of the so-called Bureau Venhuizen. The Bureau was established in 2001 by artist Hans Venhuizen who officially abandoned his artistic professional status and career to step into the field of professional spatial (urban) planning. Venhuizen has developed a methodology for collective decision-making, applicable when multiple stakeholders need to reach consensus over specific spatial planning projects. Bureau Venhuizen's methodology is based on a group game played by representatives of various groups of stakeholders. Stakeholders include policy makers, local authorities, urban planners, local residents and so on. Bureau Venhuizen's ideas have met with interest in the Netherlands, a country where almost every single square meter is planned, and an important percentage of the land is artificially constructed by man (polder land).

In this chapter I place Bureau Venhuizen's game-based methodology within a wider historical context of exchanges and collaborations between artists and urban planners in the Netherlands. Throughout the 20th century a hybrid field of art and art-related practices in public spaces seems to have existed there. Urban planners have been keen on seasoning the rationality of their plans and blueprints by inviting artists to apply creative ideas and practices. Here I analyze how various forms of play and games are very often met in the historical course of these collaborations and exchanges. I explain that these forms have functioned as interfaces bridging artistic concepts and practices with “real” life spatial (urban) planning situations. The analysis of forms brings to the surface the social ideas and political priorities that eventually determine final decision-making in spatial planning.

NEDERLANDSE SAMENVATTING

In deze dissertatie bespreek ik participatie en samenwerking in hedendaagse kunst en kijk ik naar beeldende kunstenaars die zich richten op sociaal-politieke vraagstukken. Goede voorbeelden hiervan zijn kunstenaars die zich bezig houden met stedelijke vernieuwing of migratie en die de hierbij betrokken groepen uitnodigen om deel uit te maken van hun projecten. De vraagstelling van mijn dissertatie is tweezijdig. Ten eerste onderzoek ik de verschillende kunstvormen die door dit soort geëngageerde, “process-based” projecten geproduceerd worden. Ten tweede onderzoek ik op welke manier deze kunstvormen de sociaal-politieke vraagstukken in kwestie naar voren brengen en verbeelden.

In mijn dissertatie maak ik een onderscheid tussen drie belangrijke elementen die in kunstprojecten tot stand komen: vertelvormen, relaties en “events”. Ik analyseer eerst hoe deze verschillende elementen geproduceerd worden en welke structuur zij hebben. Vervolgens kijk ik hoe sociaal-politieke vraagstukken en de specifieke doelgroepen waarop deze betrekking hebben in de projecten verbeeld worden en hoe dit de bedoeling van de kunstenaar(s) soms bekrachtigt maar soms ook tegenspreekt. Ik gebruik een aantal case-studies om verschillende praktijken en vormen van geëngageerde kunst, waarin participatie en samenwerking steeds van groot belang zijn, te onderzoeken. Door middel van deze case-studies ontwikkel ik een theoretisch kader voor het analyseren van dergelijke kunstpraktijken.

In mijn dissertatie hanteer ik bepaalde parameters die ook de selectie van de case-studies hebben bepaald. Ik stel vast dat kunstenaars vormen van participatie en samenwerking gebruiken die van buiten de kunstwereld afkomstig zijn, namelijk Michel de Certeau’s “practice of everyday life” (deel I), politiek activisme (deel II, hoofdstuk 1), “community work” (deel II, hoofdstuk 2) en stedelijke vernieuwing (deel II, hoofdstuk 3). Om deze ontwikkeling te bestuderen bekijk ik de kunstprojecten in relatie tot “niet-kunst” projecten waarin kunst gebruikt wordt als instrument voor verschillende doeleinden (activisme, “community work” etc.). Al heeft het lokale en specifieke aandachtsgebied prioriteit binnen deze projecten, zijn hun initiatiefnemers actief binnen internationale netwerken op het gebied van kunst, activisme, ontwikkelingswerk (door NGO’s) of stedelijke vernieuwing. In mijn analyses van de case-studies betrek ik daarom (in verschillende mate en afhankelijk van de sociaal-politieke kwesties die spelen) zowel lokale als globale institutionele structuren en discoursen.

De dissertatie bestaat uit twee delen. In deel I introduceer ik aan de hand van één kunstenaar de onderwerpen die in de rest van de dissertatie aan bod zullen komen: de totstandkoming van vertelvormen, relaties en “events”. In deel II analyseer ik specifieke case-studies om zo per hoofdstuk nader op deze onderwerpen in te gaan.

Deel I

An everyday practice of art

In dit deel bestudeer ik de Nederlandse kunstenaar Jeanne van Heeswijk. Sinds begin jaren negentig houdt zij zich bezig met het ontwikkelen van projecten waarin kunstenaars, maar ook andere groepen mensen—zoals bewoners van een bepaalde wijk of

bezoekers van een tentoonstelling—participeren en/of samenwerken. In onderdeel 1 beschrijf ik haar kunstpraktijk en projecten. Onderdeel 2 richt zich vervolgens op alle verbale en visuele vertelvormen die deel uit kunnen maken van een kunstproject, zoals publicaties, interviews, websites, flyers en recensies. Al deze uitingen geven vorm aan het verhaal van een project, of vertellen het project als verhaal, zowel tijdens de uitvoering als daarna. Een kunstproject bestaat daarom uit een verzameling van vertelvormen, een “narratieve ruimte” waarbinnen het project niet eenmalig maar oneindig tot uiting komt, waarbinnen het onophoudelijk herschreven en herboren kan worden. Ik maak gebruik van Michel de Certeau’s idee van “space as a practiced place” en beschouw de “narratieve ruimte” van een project als een “practiced place.” In onderdeel 3 ga ik nader in op de totstandkoming van relaties. Ik betoog dat politiek geëngageerde kunstprojecten die uitgaan van participatie en/of samenwerking worden gekenmerkt doordat zij relaties van productie zelf tot kunst maken. Het betreft hier relaties tussen alle betrokkenen, van specifieke doelgroepen tot lokale autoriteiten, van partners in de organisatie tot sponsoren, van kunstinstellingen tot de internationale kunstwereld en zo verder. Met De Certeau als uitgangspunt, stel ik dat kunstenaars er in slagen om zowel de “practice of everyday life” als institutionele strategieën als kunst te reproduceren. In onderdeel 4 kijk ik naar de verschillende “events” die tijdens Van Heeswijk’s projecten georganiseerd werden, zoals bijeenkomsten, workshops, festivals, voorstellingen en diners. Ik probeer een antwoord te formuleren op de vraag wat voor soort “events” dit zijn, gezien de plek en de tijd van hun totstandkoming. Ook onderzoek ik wat voor rol deze “events” spelen in kunstprojecten die als proces zijn opgezet en die als zodanig dagen of zelfs jaren in beslag kunnen nemen. Ik bekijk in welke vormen en op welke manieren “events” plaats kunnen vinden. Daarbij maak ik allereerst gebruik van Grant Kester’s “dialogical model”, dat uitgaat van dialoog en andere vormen van discursieve communicatie. Ook kijk ik naar de performatieve elementen die een rol spelen in het “op toneel brengen” van “events.” Ik analyseer daarnaast vooral hoe deze “events” zich verhouden tot vormen van spel. Hierbij maak ik gebruik van verschillende conceptualisaties van “spel”, ontwikkeld door Johan Huizinga en—voor mijn onderzoek het meest relevant—Georg Gadamer. Gadamer beschrijft de manier waarop de ontmoeting waarop tussen beschouwer en kunstwerk plaatsvindt als een spel. Ik herzie zijn concept door aan te tonen dat “spel” daarnaast ook gebruikt kan worden om de manier waarop “events” plaatsvinden te beschrijven.

Deel II - Hoofdstuk 1

Doing language: Narratives from an activist world in the artworld of the 1990s

In dit hoofdstuk onderzoek ik projecten waarin kunst en activisme samenkomen. De eerste is van de hand van het kunstenaarscollectief WochenKlausur, de tweede het resultaat van een samenwerking tussen de kunstenaars Martin Krenn en Oliver Ressler. Ik bekijk deze twee case-studies in relatie tot het creatieve werk van Maiz, een activistische organisatie voor en door vrouwelijke migranten. Alle drie de projecten houden zich bezig met immigratie in Oostenrijk in de jaren negentig en, in meer algemene zin, met het immigratiebeleid van de Europese Unie sinds 1989. In de immigratiedebatten in Oostenrijk zijn taal en spraak steeds belangrijke onderwerpen van gesprek geweest. Om als “legale” niet-EU immigrant beschouwd te worden was

het nodig om de officiële definitie “asielzoeker” of “vluchteling” te krijgen. Tegelijkertijd zijn migranten zelf vaak nauwelijks aanwezig in de politieke en publieke immigratiedebatten en zijn het meestal Oostenrijks burgers die naar voren treden als hun vertegenwoordigers. Ik bekijk een aantal case-studies waarin kunstenaars, door middel van projecten waarin participatie en samenwerking een voorname rol spelen, vormen van politiek-activisme naar de kunstwereld overhevelen en waarin activisten op hun beurt kunstzinnige vormen zoals performance overbrengen naar een politiek-activistische context.

Ik gebruik deze voorbeelden om te analyseren hoe de verschillende vertelvormen van projecten opereren in bijvoorbeeld video's, publicaties of websites, zowel wat betreft inhoud (de boodschap die overgebracht wordt) als vorm (de manier waarop de boodschap overgebracht wordt). Hierbij stel ik ten eerste de vraag hoe zowel het narratieve subject van deze vertelvormen als het narratieve subject in deze vertelvormen geconstrueerd wordt. Het gaat hierbij specifiek om de migrant als subject. Ten tweede stel ik de vraag of en hoe de betreffende kunstprojecten er in slagen om de sociaal-politieke machtsstructuren die mensen marginaliseren en een stem ontnemen te ondermijnen, of dat ze deze structuren juist bevestigen. Met deze twee vragen als leidraad bestudeer ik de vertelvormen en narratieve structuren van de projecten, steeds vanuit een esthetische invalshoek maar ook met het oog op de context van de hedendaagse activistische kunstscene in Oostenrijk. Vervolgens kom ik terug op de inhoud van de politieke statements van de kunstenaars en activisten in kwestie. Ik maak in dit hoofdstuk gebruik van een aangepaste vorm van Judith Butler's concept van “linguistic vulnerability” (linguïstische kwetsbaarheid) dat gaat over de manier waarop we taal ‘doen’ en dus ook ‘tegen anderen’ doen.

Deel II - Hoofdstuk 2

A universe of relations: (un)doing practice. Community practices as art

In dit deel presenter ik twee case-studies. De eerste is het “community-based” kunstproject TAMA (*Temporary Autonomous Museum for All*) van de Griekse kunstenaar Maria Papadimitriou. TAMA werd ontwikkeld in Avliza, wat even buiten Athene ligt en bewoond wordt door Roma en Vlach-Roemeense Grieken. Het project had als doel om relaties te leggen tussen kunstenaars, architecten, theoretici en inwoners van Avliza en om een flexibel, infrastructureel model te ontwikkelen voor de gemeenschap van Avliza. In de internationale kunstwereld van de Biënnales en kunst- en architectuurtentoonstellingen ontstond aanzienlijke interesse voor het TAMA-project. De tweede casestudie is het project Gudran for Art and Development dat in 2001 werd gestart in het kleine vissersdorpje El-Max, dichtbij Alexandrië in Egypte. Dit project duurt nog steeds voort. Gudran werd geïnitieerd door kunstenaars, maar gebruikt kunst als middel voor de sociale, infrastructurele en economische ontwikkeling van het dorp. Het project werd bekend binnen niet-gouvernementele ontwikkelingsorganisaties, (sociale) kunstprojecten en culturele instellingen in het Midden Oosten. In zowel TAMA als Gudran worden relaties van productie zelf tot kunst gemaakt.

In dit hoofdstuk gebruik ik de theoretische benadering die ik in deel I heb geïntroduceerd. In plaats van Michel de Certeau's theorie van “the practice of everyday life” neem ik hier Pierre Bourdieu's model van relaties en praktijken binnen de culturele productie als uitgangspunt. Ik herzie Bourdieu's model om het vervolgens toe te

passen op hedendaagse, steeds internationaler wordende netwerken, die veel invloed hebben op de lokale netwerken waarbinnen mijn bestudeerde kunstprojecten ontstaan. Kunstenaars reproduceren vormen van gemeenschapsontwikkeling en professioneel netwerken en presenteren deze soms als kunst, zoals in het geval van *TAMA*, en soms als “niet-kunst”, zoals in het geval van Gudran. Ik leg de nadruk op de parallellen tussen de twee projecten en laat zien dat beiden exemplarische voorbeelden zijn van hedendaagse, lokale, “site-specific” en “community-based” kunstpraktijken. Vanuit deze invalshoek analyseer ik de esthetische parameters van de totstandkoming en werking van de gevormde relaties. Deze kritische en esthetische analyse van “community-based” kunstpraktijken leidt uiteindelijk tot een kritische analyse van het veranderende landschap van de zogenaamde “culturele periferie” (Griekenland, Egypte) en hun veranderende verhouding tot het traditionele centrum van de Westerse (kunst) canon.

Deel II - Hoofdstuk 3

In the Event: Play. A “jeux sans frontières” between art and life

In dit laatste hoofdstuk keer ik terug naar de Nederlandse context van deel I. Ik onderzoek het werk van Bureau Venhuizen, dat in 2001 werd opgericht door Hans Venhuizen die hiermee zijn status als kunstenaar achter zich liet en zich vervolgens profileerde op het gebied van culturele planologie. Venhuizen ontwikkelde een methodologie voor gezamenlijke besluitvorming die gebruikt kan worden als verschillende belanghebbende partijen in planologische projecten een consensus moeten bereiken. Venhuizen’s methodologie is gebaseerd op een groepsspel dat de belanghebbende partijen, zoals beleidsmakers, lokale autoriteiten, planologen en bewoners, samen moeten spelen. De ideeën van Bureau Venhuizen hebben in Nederland, een land waar voor bijna elke vierkante meter een bestemming is en waar een groot percentage van het landschap geconstrueerd is, veel belangstelling gewekt.

In dit hoofdstuk plaats ik Bureau Venhuizen’s methodologie, dat gebaseerd is op het idee van “spel”, in de bredere historische context van uitwisselingen en samenwerkingsverbanden tussen kunstenaars en planologen in Nederland. Ik betoog dat er gedurende de 20e eeuw een hybride mix lijkt te zijn ontstaan tussen kunst en kunstgerelateerde praktijken in de openbare ruimte, waarbij planologen in hun plannen en projecten gebruik hebben gemaakt van de creativiteit van kunstenaars. Ik kijk hoe verschillende spelvormen elkaar in zulke uitwisselingen en samenwerkingsverbanden vinden en laat zien dat deze spelvormen gefunctioneerd hebben als een soort koppeling (interface) die een brug slaat tussen kunst en ruimtelijke (stedelijke) planning. Deze analyse legt de maatschappelijke ideeën en politieke prioriteiten bloot die een beslissende rol spelen in ruimtelijke planning.

TABLES

I Martin Krenn & Oliver Ressler: artists' statements

Krenn examines and discusses in his work sociopolitical topics. He uses different media such as photography, video and internet to develop projects that are realized in exhibitions, the web and in public space

(<http://www.martinkrenn.net/>)

Oliver Ressler is an artist who is doing projects on various socio-political themes. Since 1994 he has been concerned with theme specific exhibitions, projects in public space, and videos on issues of racism, migration, genetic engineering, economics, forms of resistance and social alternatives. Many of Ressler's works are produced as collaborations: The ongoing project "Boom!" with the US-artist David Thorne, the films "Venezuela from Below" and "5 Factories–Worker Control in Venezuela" with the political analyst Dario Azzellini, and numerous of projects on racism and migration with artist Martin Krenn. Recently the film "What Would It Mean To Win?" in collaboration with the Australian artist Zanny Begg has been finished.

(http://www.ressler.at/content/view/2/3/lang,en_GB/)

II Maiz: mission statement, fields of activities, target groups

maiz is an organisation by and for migrant women and was created out of the necessity for changes with regards to migrants' living and work situation in Austria as well as in accordance with the strengthening of political and cultural participation.

In the knowledge of the legitimacy of our role as protagonists we attempt, through working in various fields, to provide answers to the issues surrounding work migration of women. In the process, we explore and adapt theory and practice while developing a variety of new forms, methods and strategies.

Our **fields of activities** include:

- Education (German, computer, job orientation and video courses for migrant women and a preparatory program for the high school leaving exams for migrant youth)
- Legal and social counselling; family counselling
- Counselling, streetwork and training for migrant women working in the sex trade
- Cultural work
- Public relations activities
- Research

Zielgruppen

Unsere Angebote richten sich an Migrantinnen, Flüchtlinge, Asylwerberinnen sowie an Migrantinnen, die in der Sexarbeit tätig sind. Darüber hinaus ist die Teilnahme von männlichen Jugendlichen am Lehrgang zur Vorbereitung für den Hauptschulabschluss möglich. (German in the original, English translation by the author app. III.1, (http://maiz.at/cms/front_content.php?client=1&idcat=0&idart=0&lang=1&error=1))

**III Unesco Middle East Region Workcamps Directory 2005: Egypt
(extract: Gudran)**

MIDDLE EAST REGION WORKCAMPs DIRECTORY 2005

-- Egypt --

ME 01/2005: 6th June - 26th June 2005, Alexandria, Egypt

ME 07/2005: 12th - 26th September 2005, Alexandria, Egypt

N.B. Info Sheets and Arrival Notes will be produced and sent 4-6 weeks
before the start of the camp

Code: ME 01/2005

Date: 06/06 - 20/06

Place: El Max Alexandria / Egypt

Hosting Organization: Gudran (walls)

Work Type: Environmental / Artistic

Number of Volunteers: 20 Local and International

Participation Fee: 80 USD

Accommodation: The participants will be accommodated in apartment in Alexandria Local Community and Project Description: Gudran is a group of artists, filmmakers, graphic designers, musicians and fishermen from the El-Max. Gudran is interested in using arts as a method for community development. The aim is to improve the aesthetic tastes and quality of marginalized communities, while retaining their own individuality and uniqueness.

El-Max is a suburb of Alexandria, located between El-Werdeyan district and El-Agami. Its a fishing community that overlooks one of Alexandria's harbor gates, and looks as if it were the Venice of the East. The houses are built on the banks of a canal, and the fishing boats are all docked in front of the houses and move from there to the sea.

The uniqueness of the place reflects the uniqueness of the local community. It is a closed community with its own history, culture and heritage. However, it has seen hard times, for food is scarce and depends on the weather and whatever the sea brings. There are lots of other problems too; mainly, sewage, rubbish, healthcare, education, poverty, work and play hazards because of the rough nature of the area.

Gudran works with the local population in many different aspects, mainly using the Arts as a tool rather than as an aim.

Work: The volunteers of this camp will be working with Gudran to spread the ideas and values of preserving a clean environment among the local community. This will be done through planting trees in the village and painting some surrounding walls of the different neighborhoods.

Cultural program: The afternoon program will be full of cultural and Artistic activities.

(<http://youth.unesco.or.kr/volunteer/nation/2005/MEEGY2005.htm> as in 10/02/2006)

IV Unesco Mission of the Culture Sector 2006-2007 (extract: Strategic Objectives)

UNESCO Mission of the Culture Sector 2006-2007

04005 - Strategic objectives for 2002-2007 (31 C/4)

- Strategic objective 7: Promoting the drafting and implementation of standardsetting instruments in the cultural field;
- Strategic objective 8: Safeguarding cultural diversity and encouraging dialogue among cultures and civilizations;
- Strategic objective 9: Enhancing the linkages between culture and development, through capacity-building and sharing of knowledge.

(http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=11498&URL_DO=DOOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html as in 10/02/2006)

V Ford Foundation's mission statement (extract)

FORD FOUNDATION Who We Are. Our Mission

The Ford Foundation is a resource for innovative people and institutions worldwide.

Our goals are to:

- Strengthen democratic values,
- Reduce poverty and injustice,
- Promote international cooperation and
- Advance human achievement

This has been our purpose for more than half a century.

(<http://www.fordfound.org/about/mission2.cfm> as in 10/02/2006)

VI Ford Foundation annual report 2003 (extract, www.fordfoundation.com)

MEDIA, ARTS AND CULTURE 141

National University of Singapore (Singapore)
\$25,000

For workshops on how to widen the audience for language-based performance arts by making them communicative across language barriers.

People, Resources and Conservation Foundation Indonesia
\$89,000

To train Dayak women in traditional weaving techniques and to develop managerial capacity for a weaving cooperative.

Radio France Internationale (France)
\$93,000

To train broadcasting professionals in live radio coverage of traditional music events.

TheatreWorks Limited (Singapore)
\$400,000

For Arts Network Asia to promote artistic exchange and sharing of knowledge among Asian artists.

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia
\$107,000

For faculty development enabling the establishment of a new Master's degree program in Arts Education.

Yayasan Badan Penyelenggara Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta
\$350,000

For arts instruction in Islamic schools and to promote pluralistic approaches in institutional Islam.

Yayasan Badan Penyelenggara Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta
\$108,000

For research and learning activities to promote multiculturalism in the Muhammadiyah religious community.

Yayasan Cudamani
\$32,000

For teaching, repertoire expansion and audience building for Balinese traditional and modern music, dance and puppetry.

Yayasan Indonesia
\$146,000

For authors to read works of Indonesian literature in schools in eastern provinces of Indonesia and conduct discussions with students.

Yayasan Masyarakat Mandiri Film Indonesia
\$205,000

For screenings, discussions and educational programs to promote documentary film in Indonesia.

Yayasan Puskat
\$379,000

To promote broadcasting of traditional Indonesian music and performance on radio and television.

Mexico and Central America

Arts and culture

U.S.–Mexico Foundation for Culture, Inc. (New York, NY)
\$150,000

For "Mexico: Gateway to the Americas, A Performing Arts Encounter" to create a continental network for the performing arts of the Americas and encourage expansion of arts markets across Latin America.

Media

National Video Resources, Inc. (New York, NY)
\$200,000

To expand Mexican participation in an international multimedia fellowship program.

Middle East and North Africa Arts and culture

Association of Protection of the Image of the Arab Tradition (Lebanon)
\$120,000

For a research program on Arab photography and a program of photography exhibitions and publications in the Arab world.

Cultural Association Sweden–Egypt (Sweden)
\$210,000

For a resource center and a production unit for independent filmmakers.

Cultural Association Sweden–Egypt (Sweden)
\$180,000

For a group of folk musicians and singers and a music archive for the Suez Canal region in Egypt.

Cultural Association Sweden–Egypt (Sweden)
\$120,000

For the Gudran project to integrate the arts in environmental upgrading efforts in Egypt.

Cultural Association Sweden–Egypt (Sweden)
\$80,000

To provide technical assistance on management, governance and funding to independent cultural groups in Egypt.

Cultural Association Sweden–Egypt (Sweden)
\$75,000

For a cultural program encouraging new and young women artists in Egypt.

Cultural Association Sweden–Egypt (Sweden)
\$60,000

For a training and consultancy program on institutional capacity building and governance for independent cultural organizations in Egypt.

Cultural Association Sweden–Egypt (Sweden)
\$50,000

For research and training programs on Egyptian architectural and photographic heritage and folk music.

Cultural Co-Operative for Film and Audio-Visual Production (Lebanon)
\$40,000

For a video production program of alternative films by young filmmakers.

Difaf For Publishing (Lebanon)
\$140,000

To publish Zawayia, a regional cultural magazine for young readers in the Arab world.

El Hamra (Tunisia)
\$110,000

For a cross-regional Arab African theater training program for young theatre practitioners.

Friends of the Khalidi Library, Inc. (Cambridge, MA)
\$76,000

To catalogue, microfilm and bind rare manuscripts and books on Islamic law and the Muslim history of Jerusalem.

VII Ford Foundation annual report 2005 (extract, www.fordfoundation.com)

II KNOWLEDGE, CREATIVITY & FREEDOM

MEDIA, ARTS & CULTURE

Middle East and North Africa

ARTS AND CULTURE

Arab Image Foundation (Lebanon)

For a research program on Arab photography and a program of photography exhibitions and publications in the Arab world. \$130,000

Assabil Association (Lebanon)

To develop a strategic plan, communications tools and a fund-raising plan to coordinate and maintain Lebanon's network of public libraries. \$25,000

Cultural Association Sweden-Egypt (Sweden)

To collaborate with Cairo's Town House Gallery on expanding activities, exhibitions and programs for emerging Egyptian artists. \$100,000

Cultural Association Sweden-Egypt (Sweden)

To provide technical assistance on management, governance and funding to independent cultural groups in Egypt. \$40,000

Culture Resource (Belgium)

For independent production, dialogue and cultural exchange between different art forms and across the Arab region. \$185,000

Difaf for Publishing (Lebanon)

To publish Zawaya, a regional cultural magazine for young readers in the Arab world. \$150,000

El Hamra (Tunisia)

For a cross-regional Arab/African theater training program for young theater practitioners. \$120,000

Gudran for Art and Development Association (Egypt)

To expand and replicate a community-based artistic and cultural program increasing social-environmental awareness in fishing villages. \$200,000

Khalil Alsakakini Cultural Center (West Bank)

For visual arts programs, including training activities, exhibitions and publications. \$120,000

Lebanese Association for Plastic Arts (Lebanon)

For a regional forum on contemporary art and cultural practices in the Middle East and North Africa region. \$90,000

Riwaq: Centre for Architectural Conservation (West Bank)

For research, publications and a preservation program on Palestine's architectural heritage. \$400,000

Society of Jesus, Near East Province (Lebanon)

For an art center and training program for young people in Minia, Southern Egypt. \$50,000

Society of Jesus, Near East Province (Lebanon)

To enable the Jesuits Cultural Center in Alexandria, Egypt to provide arts training in music, cinema and theater to young artists, school teachers and children. \$50,000

Spirit of Fes, Inc. (New York, NY)

For the 2006 U.S. tour of the Spirit of Fes Festival, which identifies and celebrates the common ground and human dimension of the world's various spiritual and belief traditions. \$50,000

Stiftelsen Studio Emad Eddin (Sweden)

For rehearsal studios and a resource center in Cairo for the Independent Theatre Movement. \$70,000

MEDIA

Arab Press Freedom Watch (England)

To monitor and advocate for the freedom of the press in the Arab world. \$150,000

Aspen Institute, Inc. (Washington, DC)

For four meetings of U.S. and Arab media practitioners, to be organized by the Communications and Society Program. \$300,000

BBC World Service Trust (England)

To enable "Lifeline" radio programming to provide information on humanitarian issues and political developments to communities displaced and isolated by the conflict in Darfur, Western Sudan. \$200,000

International Media Support (Denmark)

For an expert mission to Darfur to assess and identify the humanitarian information needs in the region. \$80,000

Russia

ARTS AND CULTURE

Moscow Guild of Theater and Screen Actors

For provincial screenings of the Stalker human rights film festival, including the Youth Film Forum Cinema against AIDS, and to collaborate with local cinema clubs. \$163,000

National Centre for Contemporary Art

To enable the Nizhny Novgorod branch to exhibit in the Russian pavilion at the 51st Venice Biennale. \$133,000

National Centre for Contemporary Art

For the center's Kaliningrad branch to develop its new premises, hold an international art forum and produce a multimedia guide to the city through the eyes of artists in both print and electronic form. \$38,000

Noncommercial Partnership "Dance Theatres Network"

To strengthen the infrastructure for contemporary dance in Russia and hold dance festivals and workshops throughout the country. \$168,000

Non-Profit Partnership "Professional Association of Cultural Managers"

To build the capacity of and facilitate networking among the managers of arts organization through a seminar series. \$30,000

Objective Reality Foundation

To promote documentary and art photography and maintain photographer.ru, its online information resource. \$164,000

Regional Public Organization "Creative Art House" (DOM)

For a series of ethnic and contemporary music festivals and to publish albums by its children's design studio. \$60,000

VIII EU funding community programme (extracts)

<http://www.welcomeurope.com/default.asp?id=1130&idpgm=11767>

EU FUNDING COMMUNITY PROGRAMME

Support to projects bringing people and organizations from both shores of the Mediterranean closer to each other and to help bridging the gap between them

BUDGET

Annual budget : 3 million euro

DOMAINS CONCERNED

Culture – Media – Information – Education- Training – Environment – Youth – Human Rights
– Co-op & Development – Telecommunications

WHO CAN APPLY

Research centres – Local and Regional Authorities – Schools – Training centres –
Development NGOs – Universities – Associations

REGIONS

European Union – Mediterranean countries

FINANCED ACTIVITIES

Transnational cooperation – Creation of networks – Dissemination of information – Mobility
actions – Teaching, Training – Organisation of events – Pilot project – Creation of tool
– Exchange of know-how

**Grants to social and economic development actions in the Developing countries
undertaken by European NGOs**

BUDGET

Annual budget : 185 million euro

DOMAINS CONCERNED

Employment – Social affairs - Culture – Media – Humanitarian – Education- Training – Co-op
& Development – Health

WHO CAN APPLY

Development NGOs

REGIONS

European Union – Africa-Caribbean-Pacific-Latin America-Mediterranean countries
Developing countries - Asia

FINANCED ACTIVITIES

Development aid - Transnational cooperation – Teaching, Training – Humanitarian assistance
– Technical assistance

Grants to support operations and initiatives undertaken by centralised co-operation agents of the EU and the developing countries centred on poverty reduction and sustainable development

BUDGET

DOMAINS CONCERNED

Social Affairs - Culture – Media – Local development – Humanitarian - Education- Training
–Co-op & Development – Health

WHO CAN APPLY

Research centres – Local and Regional Authorities – Schools – Training centres –
Development NGOs – Universities – Associations

REGIONS

European Union – Mediterranean countries

FINANCED ACTIVITIES

Transnational cooperation – Creation of networks – Dissemination of information – Mobility actions – Teaching, Training – Organisation of events – Pilot project – Creation of tool
– Exchange of know-how

Grants for the establishment of administrative structures in the environment sector in Third countries (Mediterranean and Baltic Sea)

BUDGET

Global budget : 38 million euro

DOMAINS CONCERNED

Public policies - Environment

WHO CAN APPLY

Local and Regional authorities – Corporations - Training centres – Federations, Unions
– Administrations, States, Chambers – Development NGOs – SMEs – Universities
– Associations.

REGIONS

European Union – Africa-Caribbean-Pacific-Latin America-Mediterranean countries
Developing countries - Asia

FINANCED ACTIVITIES

Transnational cooperation –Dissemination of knowledge – Pilot Project - Technical assistance

IX Aly El Guindy, “Channels of communication” (extracts)

Gudran for Art and Development, an Egyptian NGO, has been working in the Alexandrian fishing village of Al-Max since 2001. Aly El-Guindy speaks with two of the organisations 15 volunteers -- Damien, a Belgian who teaches photography in the village, and Rami Fawzi, an Egyptian/Jordanian who acts as Social Affairs Manager -- about village life, and the role of the project in its development

Damien [a] First of all we would like to represent, because they are not present at this interview, Sameh El-Halawani and Aliaa El-Greadi, the founders of Gudran. Their experience began four years ago, in Minya, where they collaborated on a project that aimed at incorporating artistic expression within the development experience. They worked mainly with children, and after a year they decided to initiate a project of their own.

The site chosen was Al-Max, a small, poor, fishing community near Alexandria. They felt the village had something different, a particular character, an atmosphere encapsulated in the architecture, in the traditions of the fishermen and perhaps by the canal that flowed through the village.

But Al-Max also suffered problems. There were high levels of poverty, alongside drug abuse and crime. They went to the village every day for six months, spending as much time as possible with the inhabitants. They started to share their ideas with the villagers and eventually convinced them about the project.

They rented a house in the main street and opened it as a centre providing workshops and literacy classes for the women of the village. This first step was very important, not least in establishing a network of relations.

Ramy [a] We painted the houses on one side of the canal but before we painted we tried to find a solution to the problems caused by humidity, which had a detrimental effect on the houses next to the salt water canal. After the renovation we started to decorate and paint the houses. The villagers, mostly youngsters, painted them. There are customs and traditions within any community, and art, in Al-Max, had not featured among them. So there was a certain resistance, a feeling that art was not of any practical use. So it was the children who provided a means to combat that idea. They became an entry point for the project into the community. [...]

Damien [b] It is important to stress that we are part of the village and we learn from them. It is not that we interfere with their way of life and impose our views. What we do is help in offering the villagers ways of expressing themselves. But it is the self that is being expressed. [...]

Ramy [b] We have also developed the connections between the villagers and the outside world. A lot of international volunteers come to Al-Max to work. The villagers interacted with them and made friendships. An Internet café eventually opened in the village so that the communication continues even after the volunteers had left. So a once isolated and insular village community was suddenly communicating with people from different cultures, and they were communicating with a community to which they would not, before the project, have had access.

Damien [c] In 2002 we began to host international work camps in Al-Max, developing intercultural exchanges with other international NGOs. We had about 10 volunteers coming to Al-Max from all over the world. [...]

Ramy [c] Before this centre was opened there was no place for the women to gather so they had little interaction with each other. They consider the centre as a social club. Most of them meet there. The centre added a sense of community.[...]

Damien [d] There is a big event coming up, when we will host an international exhibition in the village. There will be 14 artists, mostly from Africa and Europe, exhibiting their work. Also a scenographer from Lebanon will create an open air theatre. The audiences will sit on the banks of the canal and the stage will be on the boats in the water. The event we plan to film and then exhibit internationally. Audiences from all over the world will be able to see what is happening in Al-Max

Ramy [d] The artists in the festival will work alongside the villager, and the aim is that the whole thing should be an interactive experience, a collaboration. [...]

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X Sue Williamson's online diary (extracts)

- **Wed, Sept. 15** Some ground rules are laid down by Gudran. We have already been advised by email ahead of the project that certain topics should not be broached in the El Max community - sex, politics and religion - for fear of causing offence. This may seem unnecessarily restrictive and sweeping but we must understand that this is an extremely conservative community. [...]
- **Sat, Sept 18** This is not an arena for sophisticated conceptual work. Hicham Benohoud, currently showing on 'Afrika Remix' in Düsseldorf, will hand disposable cameras to 10 pairs of children, instructing each to direct his or her partner to pose. [...]. Jean Christophe is searching for a flat roof on which he will erect a structure using local materials in which he will do an installation. Photographer Antoine d'Agata wants to photograph everyone in the village, but is up against the problem that nearly all the men will not allow their wives to be photographed. Most of us are still casting around for what we will do. [...]
- **Sun, Sept 19** [...] It is eight days into Boustashy 01, and the artists projects are going slowly. JC cannot get permission for a roof for his structure. Hicham has not yet received the disposable cameras he needs ... and he has to leave in a few days time. There is a heated general meeting with the organisers, after which Hicham decides to leave the project.
- **Mon, Sept 20** After the day's work in El Max, some of us meet Hicham in the city for supper. He hands each of us an envelope stamped MADE MAX which lists his problems with the project and the way that it has been organised.
- **Wed, Sept 22** [...] JC has finally got permission for his roof, and will start erecting his structure soon. Antoine has decided to set up a studio in a vacant shop, and will photograph as many people as he can persuade to be photographed. Gilles will make a monument of wire rings and helium balloons [...] Each balloon will carry the name of the sweetheart of someone in El Max.
- **Fri, Sept 24** [...] JC is told that the father of the man who gave permission for his structure to be erected on the roof facing the Gudran Centre has withdrawn permission, because the structure is against the Koran.
- **Sat, Sept 25** The Islamic Judicial Council is to be called in to give a ruling on JC's structure. [...]
- **Sun, Sept 26** Apparently the ruling is that JC's structure is not against the Koran, but now we hear that the man who made the complaint has been picked up by the police for complaining. 'He may be detained for two to five months', says someone. Without trial?
- **Mon, Sept 27** The man has been released from police custody. The way seems clear for JC to finish his structure after all. [...]
- **Tue, Sept 28** This morning the nets which formed the walls of JC's structure have disappeared in the night. Gilles realises that the names of the sweethearts he wished people to write on the balloons for his piece will not be written on - here, one keeps the name of one's sweetheart a secret, to be known only by close friends and family.
- **Wed, Sept. 29** Today is the opening, but there is not all that much to see. [...]. There is

a farewell supper ... The mood is subdued. It has been a very difficult project from many points of view - but perhaps the fact that on the whole the residents of El Max really seemed to enjoy having the artists amongst them and that a few things did get done was enough. One cannot expect everything to go forwards as it would in Europe or the States, or even South Africa. I know that it has been an important experience for me.

<http://www.artthrob.co.za/04nov/diary.html>

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http://www.wochenklausur.at/texte/faq_en.html#faq1
<http://www.xenophilia.gr/docs/3.htm>

Audiovisual

Martin Krenn and Oliver Ressler, *Border Crossing Services*, video.

Wochenklausur, *Was Tun? Aktuelle Beispiele zu Inetrventionskunst und Aktivismus*. VHS
Vienna: Depot Kunst und Diskussion.

APPENDIX I. PROJECTS BY JEANNE VAN HEESWIJK 1993-2005

www.jeanneworks.net old website version)

The Dinner, 1993

The project *Het avondeten* (The Dinner) (1993) springs from Jeanne van Heeswijk's fascination for how other people's stories and histories come into being. She came up with it so she could be present as a spectator and facilitator at the exact moment that these histories were made. She invited the artists Q.S. Serafijn, Suchan Kinoshita and Marcel Wanders as her guests because their work fascinated her and she wanted a deeper understanding of how it came about. She wrote each of them, offering them the opportunity to do a project for one evening in her house, as well as the use of her dining table with twelve chairs and her services as butler, but also stating that this would give her the position of a voyeur into the way they would respond to her invitation

The invitations led to heavy discussions with the artists on the concept, Van Heeswijk's dual role and why they would participate. Things brought to the table included 'organising your private theatre', 'the involved spectator', 'over-organising something that should be as natural as having dinner' and 'why don't you just follow me for a day?' The discussions eventually led to three proposals for an evening, a specially prepared dinner for each of the artists and his or her personal guests. The evenings took place on 12 March 1993 (Q.S. Serafijn), 26 June 1993 (Suchan Kinoshita) and 1 October 1993 (Marcel Wanders) and focused on the prominent use of language in today's society and the more minor position of the visual arts, as well as how to create a collective history and portrait session showing what colleagues really think about one another.

As a voyeur, Van Heeswijk was able to observe how the artists and their guests responded to her invitation and the evening. From this she learned what it means to literally give 'shape' to space by creating space, but also by breaking open spaces, and the energy that is released when other people contribute and listen to each other. All the material of the evening became part of her private archive and would only be made public in her lectures about her experiences.

The Office, 1993

As part of European economic and political union, national borders, including those separating Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium, were opened, and many border patrol offices were shut down as of January 1993. In the summer of the same year artist Suchan Kinoshita proposed reopening several of these as part of her project *Grenspost* ('Border Post') (1993). Dutch, Belgian and German artists, musicians, architects and theatre makers developed projects centred round their countries' abandoned border crossings. The premise of this project was based on the actual locations, the artificial concept of a border, the typical architecture of the posts and their obsolete function. Jeanne Van Heeswijk's contribution, *Het Bureau* (The Office)(1993), consisted of offering Suchan a service, that of her administrative skills in organizing and realizing the entire project. This also involved creating an information booth for press and visitors. From 21 to 29 August 1993 Van Heeswijk set up shop in the abandoned border post at Heurne (The Netherlands) - Hemden (Germany). She spoke to passers-by and to press people visiting the re-opened crossing-point and also compiled an archive about the notion of 'border', by posting letters, inviting recipients to send back their thoughts on borders, as well as having a press-clipping service

send her a daily packet of all information published about borders in Dutch, Belgian and German newspapers. All this information was on display alongside that of the project and its participating artists.

Room with a view, 1993-1998

Between 1993-1998 'Room with a View' was a continuing collective project between Jeanne van Heeswijk and various artists. Key interest in the project was the exploration of the boundaries defining the art world. The definitions of sculpture, performance, theory and text, as well as the difference between art and life were investigated. 'Room with a View' is a space consisting of four walls, a door and wheels. As a physical space it surrounded and protected that which takes place within these walls. The room invited, enclosed and excluded. As a conceptual space it was provocative. The room created a place for action. 'Room with a View' was an event as well as an invitation to participate: it was a constantly changing space.

Participants: [Anke van der Pluijm](#), [Claus van Bebber](#), [Irene Hohenbüchler](#), [Joke Tjalsma](#), [Mevis & van Deursen](#), [Renée van de Vall](#), [Susan Kozel](#), [the sailor Plu](#), [Wapke Feenstra](#).

Room with a view (Private), 1993-1998

In 1993 the 'Room' was set up in Jeanne van Heeswijk's studio and covered with diary-like illustrations, drawings and objects that could be cause for a conversation. Twenty-five people, including artists, curators and critics from her circle of friends, came to exchange thoughts with Van Heeswijk on 'public and private spaces' and to examine the concept of the 'Room'. These conversations were not recorded or documented. The only tangible remainder of 'Private' is a poster with the text: 'Private faces in public places are wiser and nicer than public faces in private places.'

Room with a view (Dependance), 1993-1998

KunstRAI 1994. The Flatland Galerie had reserved a stand for Jeanne van Heeswijk, which she decided not to take. Instead, she placed the 'Room' in the entrance hall of the KunstRAI, where she hung works from the collection of the Flatland Galerie. The 'Room' contained works by a/o Erwin Olaf, Korrie Besems, A.M. Kopper, Bob Negrijn and Bea Visser. A desk with on it a vase of flowers, a typewriter, a radio and piles of paper was put in the 'Room'. Just like in a normal gallery there were price lists and the opportunity for the interested audience to acquire works. Behind the desk Mrs de la Plume sat, a stand-in gallerist, played by Anke van der Pluijm. She played the part of an actress playing the role of a stand-in gallerist. Her script consisted of tens of preconceived one-liners that she could use as she saw fit from behind her desk as conversation with the stream of visitors. The responses from the visitors were recorded and later adapted for a play with the title: 'A conversation on an Art Fair'.

Participants: [Anke van der Pluijm](#)

Room with a view (Longing), 1993-1998

In 1994 the 'Room' was set up in de Rheinische Landklinik in Kleef, Germany, a nineteenth century psychiatric institute in the woody surroundings of Bedburg-Hau. In the period August and September the 'Room' was installed in the former female dormitory of the closed department where female schizophrenics and psychotics had in the past been chained

to their beds. The interior of the 'Room' was designed as a bedroom for one of them. The door did not close. Four female guests were invited to spend time there in turns and were asked to complete the walls with stories and their thoughts on fate, intimacy and the impossibility to escape your own mind.

Participants: [Wapke Feenstra](#), [Irene Hohenbüchler](#), [Renée van de Vall](#), [Maja Zomer](#)

Room with a view (The Neighbour), 1993-1998

The 'Room' in 1994. Jeanne van Heeswijk's neighbour was an older man named Plu. He was a seaman for forty years until he was in an accident with a minesweeper. During his travels as a seaman, he put together a maritime archive of almost unprecedented size. In over a hundred categories, and on more than a hundred thousand cards, information and photos has been archived of motorised ships that sailed the oceans. His biggest wish was for his life work to be exhibited in the Maritime museum Prins Hendrik in Rotterdam. The 'Room' was the 'art' context needed to fulfil Plu's wish. The walls were filled with hand-written cards with the data of all the Dutch ships that no longer sail. A monitor was placed in the 'Room' on which Plu was shown telling his stories.

Participants: [Seaman Plu](#)

Room with a view (Positioning), 1995, 1996-repeatable, 1997

Jeanne van Heeswijk wrote to different art organisations asking to organise a performance with the 'Room' within an existing exhibition in their institute. Three institutions replied positively to her request: Witte de With in Rotterdam, the Museum voor Moderne Kunst in Arnhem and the Haags Gemeentemuseum in The Hague. The 'Room' travelled to these places on respectively 24 February, 25 August 1996 and 9 May 1998. The dancer Susan Kozel was invited to position the 'Room' within an art context. She pushed and pulled the 'Room' around for one day.

Participants: [Susan Kozel](#)

Room with a view (Real Stories from Life), 1995, 1996-repeatable, 1997

In the months June and July 1997 the 'Room' was part of a exhibition entitled 'Grensvervaging' in the new exhibition space of the Foundation for Visual Art, Architecture and Design in Amsterdam. On the walls of the exhibition space the documentation of work by various artists had been hung. The 'Room' was not set up, but was folded up and put aside against the wall. In front of the 'Room' there was a table, behind which an actress Joke Tjalsma sat. She sat there every Tuesday from ten to five for four weeks long, to talk to visitors about the 'Room' and the problem of documentation. Based on these conversations and all the material gathered through the journey of 'Room with a View' and the life of an artist, Jeanne van Heeswijk wrote a 20-minute monologue played by Joke Tjalsma. This video was shown among others in Aubase Gallery, New York; Museum voor Moderne Kunst, Arnhem; Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery and Museo Alejandro Otero in Caracas.

Participants: [Joke Tjalsma](#)

Outside Livingroom, 1994-1998

As part of 'Opzoomeren', an annual event in problematic neighbourhoods in Rotterdam, the Centrum voor Beeldende Kunst (Centre for Visual Arts) commissioned local artists to create a temporary work for one of the venues. Jeanne van Heeswijk created the project

‘Buitenshuiskamer’, which involved a plan for the passageway that connects two homes for the elderly on the Mookhoekplein in Overschie. In co-operation with the inhabitants, she furnished the passage way as a living room. The project that started on 28 May 1994 was planned to last for a month, but because of the efforts of all involved it ran until 1998.

I + the Other. Art and the Human Condition, 1994

‘Ik + de Ander. Art and the Human Condition’ was an exhibition in the Beurs van Berlage in Amsterdam from June until August 1994. This exhibition was put together by Jeanne van Heeswijk and Ine Gevers based on the following question: what is the state of human dignity and humanity in a time dominated by violence, intolerance, xenophobia, and even genetic manipulation? Work by thirty national and international artists and visual and archive material from the Red Cross and the media offered an overview of the different ideas and visions on this issue. The exhibition was accompanied by the magazine ‘Ik + de Ander’ as well as the book ‘Beyond Ethics and Aesthetics’ that was published in 1997 which examines the issues in greater detail.

Participants: [Andrea Fisher](#), [Adrian Piper](#), [Aernout Mik](#), [Andres Serrano](#), [Bas Czerwinski](#), [Bill Viola](#), [Boyan Stojanovitz](#), [Birgit Scheulen](#), [Christine Borland](#), [Chris Marker](#), [Cindy Sherman](#), [Clegg & Guttman](#), [Craig Bell](#), [David Wojnarowicz](#), [Derek Jarman](#), [Dirk Buwalda](#), [Eugenio Dittborn](#), [Frank Mandersloot](#), [Hanneke van Sambeek](#), [Hans Aarsman](#), [Ian Kerkhof](#), [Ine Gevers](#), [[come.to/nonsymbolic](#)], [Inez van Lamsweerde](#), [Jan van der Pavert](#), [Henry Dunant](#), [Hester Alberdingk Thijm](#), [Jeff Wall](#), [John Ahearn](#), [Joke Robaard](#), [Jouke Kleerebezem](#), [Karin Arink](#), [Karin Junger](#), [Lawrence Weiner](#), [Lizzy van Lawick van Pabst](#), [Marijke van Warmerda](#), [Marina Griznic & Aina Smid](#), [Marlene Dumas](#), [Martin Lucas](#), [m](#) [Martin Roemers](#), [Martin Zet](#), [Michael Haneke](#), [Michel François](#), [Mona Hatoum](#), [Nancy Spero](#), [Paul Serman](#), [Pauline Beelaerts van Blokland](#), [Pauline Greuell](#), [Peter Dautzenberg](#), [Roelof Mulder](#), [Ross McElwee](#), [Roy Villevoeye](#), [Sadie Benning](#), [Spike Lee](#), [Tiong Ang](#)

Until we meet again, 1995

In 1995 Jeanne van Heeswijk was commissioned to develop a project that centred on the redevelopment of the area Westwijk in the city of Vlaardingen. She chose to invite several artists over a period of ten years to organise ‘meetings’ in active co-operation with the inhabitants. To this end the artists created temporary sculptures, projects, installations and happenings. These meetings are to contribute to the involvement of the inhabitants with the changes that take place within the framework of the redevelopment.

Participants: [Bik van der Pol](#), [Buro Schie 2.0](#), [Crimson](#) , [Edwin Janssen](#), [Engelen & Engelen](#), [Jan Hein van Melis](#), [Kamiel Verschuren](#), [Lauran Schijvens](#), [Werkgroep Westwijk 2005](#)

NEsTWORK, 1996

On the occasion of Manifesta 1 (Rotterdam 1996) Jeanne van Heeswijk set up NEsTWORK. NEsTWORK is [Karin Arink](#), [Wapke Feenstra](#), [Jeanne van Heeswijk](#), [Edwin Janssen](#), [Menna Laura Meijer](#), [Kamiel Verschuren](#) and [Ruud Welten](#). NEsTWORK created eighty-seven daily programmes with activities, performances, concerts, films, lectures and debates that focused on the notion ‘local’.

Participants: [Edwin Janssen](#), [Kamiel Verschuren](#), [Karin Arink](#), [Menna Laura Meyer](#), [Ruud Welten](#), [Wapke Feenstra](#), [Marc Vleugels](#)

State of Mind, 1996

For the exhibition 'State of Mind' from 7 January until 4 February 1996, Jeanne van Heeswijk brought the galleries of Villa Alckmaer (Centrum voor Beeldende Kunst in Rotterdam) back to their original function. She moved all her belongings into the 'villa' to live there for four weeks. Only at weekends Villa Alckmaer was opened to the public, during which the friendship between artists and their work were exhibited by means of presentations, lectures and dinners.

Participants: Bart Gorter, Christine Hohenbüchler, Hervé Paraponaris, Honoré d'O, Hulya Yilmaz, Irene Hohenbüchler, Jan van der Pavert, Jean Fisher, Joke Robaard, Jouke Kleerebezem, Justin Bennet, Karin Arink, Karin Sloots, Marcel Wanders, Linda Pollack, Maja Zomer, Marian Breedveld, Mevis & van Deursen., Milou van Ham, Moritz Ebinger, Nelly Voorhuis, Ove Lucas, Paul Cox, Paul Hedge, Peter Fillingham, Regula Müller, Roy Villevoeye, Susan Kozel, Tacita Dean, Ute Meta Bauer, Wapke Feenstra, Wessel Holleman, Willem Oorebeek, Wim Salki

Break. Dance, 1997

Recordings of conversations between Jeanne van Heeswijk, artist friends, and students at the Goldsmith MA Curating Course on the silence between things and the necessity to take breaks were sampled by Jonny Clark into ambient dance music. This collaboration resulted in an installation, a CD and a 'live re-mix' event that could be seen in the Cleveland Gallery in London from 14 May until 31 May 1997. The conversation partners were: Lise Autogena, Andrew Bick, Jennifer Greitschus, Anna Harding, Paul Hedge, Siraj Izhar, Susan Kozel, Rachel Lowe, Mark Pimlott, Amy Plant, Caroline Reffay, Andrew Renton (& Laurence Crane, Robert Guterman, Louise Hayward, Michael Levi), David Sowerby, Bettina Wilhelm and Keith Wilson.

Participants: Anna Harding, Andrew Bick, Andrew Renton, Bettina Wilhelm, Caroline Reffay, David Sowerby, Danio Man, Jonny Clark, Keith Wilson, Jennifer Greitschus, Lise Autogena Louise Hayward, Paul Hedge, Rachel Lowe, Shirly Azimullah, Siraj Izhar, Susan Kozel

The Secret City, 1997

Together with Jeanne van Heeswijk and Maria Rosa Boezem, Lex ter Braak organised the project 'De verborgen stad' for De Vleeshal in Middelburg in September and October 1997. 'De verborgen stad' is the name for the dark world of alleys, fire exits and garden fences in the old city centre of Middelburg. It is not a closed circle but rather a torn apart web that lies between the main streets of the city. The project consists of an exploration of this unknown side of the city and artists, activists, writers and thinkers propose a spectrum of possible explorations. Jeanne van Heeswijk developed the catalogue for this 'secret city'. Ideas from all the participants, as well as a city map was available when entering the city to be fully prepared for the journey. The visitors to De Vleeshal were asked to record their own ideas during their walk through the city with the use of a disposable camera and a note pad. During the project, comments from visitors and invited guests were added to the already existing proposals.

Participants: Annemarie Aardewerk, Birthe Leemeijer, Calin Dan, Charlemagne Palestine, Christoph Fink, Fordacity, Ginette Verstraete, Hans van de Sande, Justin Bennet, Keith Wilson, Koo Jeong-a, Lex ter Braak, Lucas Verweij, Maria-Rosa Boezem, Marinus

Boezem, Mark Pimlott, Moniek Toebosch, Pieter Aarts, Raoul Bunschoten, [www.chora.co.uk], René Boomkens, Roza El-Hassan, Wim Hofman

The world is bigger than Schijndel, 1997

For the exhibition 'Bouwvak' that took place in the town of Uden during the Construction-industry holiday in the months June, July and August 1997, Jeanne van Heeswijk placed a video installation in a newly built housing estate. The video consisted of a projection of the view from her parents' house, which is a similar house. Audio recordings of conversations with her parents about leaving your home town were played simultaneously.

Participants: [Annemarie van Heeswijk](#), [Huub van Heeswijk](#)

Hotel New York P.S.1, 1998-1999

From 1998 to 1999 Jeanne van Heeswijk was invited to participate in the International Studio Program in P.S.1 Center for Contemporary Art in New York on behalf of the Netherlands. Seeing that Jeanne van Heeswijk always works together with others and her work often takes place outside art institutions, she was more in need of a hotel room to receive guests than a studio. The many travels and extensive emigration from the Netherlands to America in the past, gave her the idea to have Dorine de Vos convert her studio into a hotel room in the style of the rooms De Vos created for Hotel New York, the former headquarters of the Holland - America Line in Rotterdam. Over a period of one year Dutch artists, writers, curators and critics with whom she had previously worked together with were invited to stay in the hotel room for a minimum of three days and a maximum of three weeks. Her guests could use their stay to make new work, to explore New York, make contacts, et cetera. Important to their stay was the contemporary problems concerning migration. In exchange for their stay in the hotel room, the guest would organise a/o lectures, presentations, or an exhibition. Thus, the grant Jeanne van Heeswijk received to stay in P.S.1., was used for the benefit of her cultural network and presented New York with a wider overview of what is made and thought in the Netherlands.

Participants: [Alice Smits](#), [Antoinette te Paske](#), [Bibo](#), [Corry de Boer](#), [Dette Glashouwer](#), [Dorine de Vos](#), [Edwin Janssen](#), [Eveline Visser](#), [Florian Wüst](#), [Joke Tjalsma](#), [Kirk Woolford](#), [Lauran Schijvens](#), [Lex ter Braak](#), [Lisette Smits](#), [www.cascoprojects.org], [Lucas Verweij](#), [Lydia Schouten](#), [Madeleine Berkhemer](#), [Maria van Daalen](#), [Miriam Reeders](#), [Mirjam Westen](#), [Nathalie Houtermans](#), [Anke Schäfer](#), [Annabel Howland](#), [Rolf Engelen](#), [Sandra Smallenburg](#), [www.nrc.nl/W2/Nieuws/1999/08/02/Vp/07.html], [Susan Kozel](#), [Wapke Feenstra](#), [Tracy Mackenna.](#), [Hieke Compier](#)

Valley Vibes. The Vibe-Detector, 1998-2002

The Vibe-Detector has been active in London since 1998 and is a project made in collaboration with Amy Plant. The Vibe-Detector assists CHORA (The Institute for Architecture and Urbanism in London) with the mapping of London Sector A, which is a marked strip in East London where urban regeneration is to take place. The Vibe-Detector is not a work of art but an instrument, designed to investigate different kind of lives connected to the area. The Vibe-Detector is a combination between a big ghetto-blaster and an ice cream trolley. The machine is filled with sound equipment and can serve as a karaoke machine, conference set, a DJ booth, a recording studio, and a radio station. The 'detector' automatically makes a D.A.T. copy of the sounds that it produces. Because people in the

local councils can borrow the Vibe-Detector for free, they are encouraged to map how they experience their neighbourhood and what they think is important. They only have to call and the detector is ready waiting for them. After two years the Vibes Detector will soon start its second phase. Edited versions of all the recorded material forms the basis for a radio play for local radio stations in the neighbourhood. The option of web-radio will also be investigated.

Participants: Amy Plant, [Petra Marguc](#), [Raoul Bunschoten](#), [www.chora.co.uk], [Simon Davies](#), [Tak Hoshino](#)

Water walker, 1998

On the occasion of the Kunstestafette 1998 'Mooi versus Mentaliteit', Jeanne van Heeswijk was asked to develop a project for the town of Alphen aan den Rijn. She proposed to connect parts of the city that are separated from each other by the river Rhine, by means of creating a temporary boulevard on pontoons. The river would thus no longer be seen as a dividing line, but more as a connection. For one weekend the project 'Waterwandelaar' would enable people to walk on the Old Rhine, from the 3rd Centrumbrug to the Swaenswijkbrug, with a total distance of seven hundred meters. This project was not realised.

Participants: [Lauran Schijvens](#)

Welcome Package Welcome Stranger, 1998

When a new housing estate was put into use in Amsterdam in 1998, the project 'Moving In' was organised in these new houses. Several artists were asked to create a work for these new homes. Jeanne van Heeswijk put together a welcoming package, that consisted of a box of art works and books that she thought might contribute to 'new living'. Twenty-five inhabitants received a box personally delivered by Jeanne van Heeswijk and she gave a detailed explanation of the contents. The welcoming package consisted of the catalogue *Welcome Stranger by Welcome Stranger*, the CD 'Break. Dance.' by Jeanne van Heeswijk vs. Jonny Clark, the book *Inlet* by Karin Arink, the magazine *Casco Issues* by Casco, the CD 'Noisy Neighbour Gift' by Jason Coburn, a subscription to *Dinsdaggedichtdag* by Engelen & Engelen, 'Memo' by Wapke Feenstra, the book *Do You Know Mr. Chauvin?* by Edwin Janssen, the map of the Randstad by Buro Schie, a photo of Plaza de la Merce by Albert van Westing and 2 b-bekers by Wanders Wonders.

Participants: [Albert van Westing](#), [Buro Schie 2.0](#), [Engelen & Engelen](#), [Marcel Wanders](#), [Wapke Feenstra](#)

A Christmas Pudding for Henry, 1999

By invitation of the Henry Moore Foundation External Programmes in Leeds, Jeanne van Heeswijk organised the project 'A Christmas Pudding for Henry' from 18 November to 18 December 1999. More than thirty artists and members of the public worked together on a daily basis on a portrait of all the aspects of the city of Leeds. The question into the nature of the cultural infrastructure of Leeds, which cultural relationships are present and how public space is designed and used, formed the basis for the workshops, fieldwork, presentations and discussions. The recipe for making a traditional 'Christmas pudding' was the essence of the project. The project was displayed on three podiums, none of which were in the Henry Moore Institute. The first podium was a work, presentation, and discussion space in Leeds Metropolitan University Gallery open seven days a week, where between six

and eight o'clock each day someone presented their vision on the city in a lecture, performance, work, or film screening. A website (www.henry-m.org) was the second podium, which gave a week to week update in the form of a cultural magazine. The third podium was the façade of the Henry Moore Institute. In their commission the Henry Moore Institute stated that during this project a relationship with the city should be formed. Jeanne van Heeswijk gave form to this by using the prestigious black marble façade as a blackboard to bring ideas about Leeds and activities in the city to the surface.

Participants: Ben Cain, Cel Crabeels, Chris Dorley-Brown, Christina Della Giustina, Hervé Paraponaris, Kevin Lycett, L.A. Raeven, Leeds 13, Lucas Verwey, Marcia Brown, Mark Webber, Max Vollmer, Nasrin Tabatabai, Otiose, Raoul Bunschoten, [www.chora.co.uk], Sarah Saunders, Sheila Gaffney, Stevan Vukovic, Tina Have Lauesen, Watson & Wakeman,

Under the Spell of the Ring, 1999

For 'De gedroomde toekomst van de metropool Eindhoven', a commission of the city of Eindhoven and Philips in 1999, Jeanne van Heeswijk developed an urban developmental view on this city. The basis of this project was the question: How can an image for the city be developed with which the inhabitants of Eindhoven can identify themselves and which can become part of the culture and the city's urban tradition? For this she envisioned the ring road, connecting the villages that make up the city of Eindhoven, as the new city centre. The ring road could offer opportunities for the use of new technologies such as soundcards and neon signs, for buildings over and along the road, and would become visible by layers of lighting and paving. What was to be crucial to the identity of the new centre was the establishing of an annual event, with an appeal reaching far beyond the city limits. Proposed is to have an annual 'drag race'. This project is not yet realised.

Participants: [Lauran Schijvens](#)

Subway to the Outside, 1999

'Subway to the Outside' was a project in 1999 for Artists Space in New York, when the non-profit exhibition space celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary. The 'subway' was chosen as a metaphorical guide to involve people in New York from both the general public and the cultural world in an empirical and ontological dialogue concerning the nature of art production and the place of cultural activity, and to explore the idea of 'artist space' in the context of a cultural capital. Armed with a camera, a microphone and the simple question 'Can you tell me the way to artists' space?' Jeanne van Heeswijk and Martin Lucas travelled through the streets of New York. In addition, they asked fellow artists to show their own way to 'artists' space'. The search resulted in three television documentaries that were broadcasted on the New York Neighborhood Network, a local cable network, three discussions in Artists Space and an installation in the Swiss Institute in New York. The latter is a collaboration with Hervé Paraponaris. During this project Jeanne van Heeswijk collaborated with Samantha Coerbell, Beth Coleman, Laura Cottingham, Chico Garcia, Kristin Lucas, Martin Lucas, Joseph Di Mattia, Maydayproductions, Hervé Paraponaris, Tom Poole, REPOhistory, Saskia Sassen, Gregory Sholette, Tere Spain, Carol Stakenas, Ellen Stewart, James de la Vega, World War III Illustrated, Martin Zet.

Participants: Beth Coleman, [www.soundlab.org], Carol Stakenas, [www.creativetime.org], Chico Garcia, Conny Purtill, Gregory Sholette, Ellen Stewart, Hervé Paraponaris,

James de la Vega, Joseph Di Mattia, Kristin Lucas, Laura Cottingham, Martin Lucas, Maydayproductions, REPOhistory, Samantha Coerbell, Saskia Sassen, Tere Spain, Tom Poole, World War III Illustrated,

Wish for a Coffee, 2000

During the retrospective exhibition of the work by the American artist Paul Thek in Camden Arts Centre in London, Jeanne van Heeswijk, Rolf Engelen and Mirjam Reeders in co-operation with Engelen & Engelen organised a one-day performance in homage to Paul on 16 January 2000.

Participants: Miriam Reeders, Rolf Engelen

Acte de Présence - Sans Valeur, 2000

'Acte de Présence - Sans Valeur' was Jeanne van Heeswijk's contribution to the exhibition 'Worthless' at the Moderna Galerija in Ljubljana (Slovenia). During the exhibition from 4 February until 5 March 2000 she stayed in Ljubljana where she was employed by the Moderna Galerija as a museum guard. Students mostly do this job. A sufficient amount of Slovenian is necessary to answer the visitor's questions and give full additional information. Jeanne van Heeswijk therefore studied Slovenian, which enabled her to do her job as a museum guard.

Participants: Carlos Basualdo, Draga Rinkema, Engelen & Engelen

Draw a line, 2000

By invitation of the Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery, Jeanne van Heeswijk participated in the exhibition 'Territory: Contemporary Art from the Netherlands' that took place from 2 August until 9 October 2000. Her contribution was the project 'Draw a Line', based on an old Dutch territorial game. In collaboration with Rolf Engelen an area of twenty-five square meters was filled with earth in the gallery which referred to the Dutch tradition of land reclamation. In the gallery the game 'landjepik' could be played, which centres on gaining and losing territory, land and space. By alternately throwing a knife in one of the parts of the area of land, the two players try to gain parts of each other's territory. The work was accompanied by a booklet with the rules of the game that can be played in three varieties 'Wanna play', 'Wanna fight' and 'Wanna act'. In the latter variation the assignment is to create space for the opposition instead of taking space away from them; an impossible assignment in a game of conquering.

Participants: Rolf Engelen, Liesbeth Levi

Krachschiagen / Raising a Ruckus, 2000, Urban Neighbourhoods, Kuenstlerhaus Bremen

The idea of this project was derived from the fairy tale The Musicians of Bremen. The old, redundant animals define themselves as musicians, as artists, thus together finding new energy, a new purpose in life. Their state of mind, that of being artists enables them to unite; the artistic act, a kind of performance, becomes the catalyst for a utopian form of life, a place to be functionless. For this project, a wide range of music made in Bremen was collected semi-professional and professional music as well as the music of choirs and bands who make music just for fun. All of these musicians were asked to submit tapes and CDs to the Kuenstlerhaus, Am Deich 68/69 on November 10, 2000. The productions were re-recorded simultaneously and further processed in a professional sound studio. The (entire)

music of Bremen is the sound tapestry of the installation at play in the gallery beginning on November 26. Raising a ruckus thus becomes an act of common strength. The city resounds in a sculpture of music in which art reclaims its space, beyond functionality. The voice of Bremen swings in poetic superimpositions as in a great conversation. Long, melodious passages, now delicate, now adamant, Arabic song, nursery rhymes and Beat blend to become a noise sculpture, reproducing in a complex layering of tones the sound actually sung, played and produced in Bremen in November 2000.

Casco-Mobile, 2001-2002

As of 16 May 2001, the Casco-mobile set off from its home base at Casco to promote Coffee and Communication in Utrecht. At various locations around the city, the Casco-mobile gave citizens and passers-by information on Casco's activities. The Casco-mobile, imported from New York, is a platform for ideas on contemporary art, served to you by the artist with a cup of coffee. While enjoying your coffee, you can exchange thoughts with the person in charge of the Casco-mobile. Each month a different cultural entrepreneur served you his/her ideas on democratic design for living in today's cities over a cup of coffee. At the end of each day, the Casco-mobile returned to its service station at Oudegracht 366 in Utrecht to deliver the collected materials and to be refuelled.

Participants: Apolonija Sustersits, [Cindy van den Bremen](http://www.capsters.com), [www.capsters.com], [Lisette Smits](http://www.cascoprojects.org), [www.cascoprojects.org], [Hella Jongerius](http://www.jongeriustlab.com), [www.jongeriustlab.com], [Marianne Maasland](http://www.socialfiction.org), [Martin Lucas](http://www.socialfiction.org), [Rolf Engelen](http://www.socialfiction.org), [Thomas Sackel](http://www.socialfiction.org), [Wilfried hou je bek](http://www.socialfiction.org), [www.socialfiction.org]

Z.T. (Duurzame Versterkingskunst), 2001

This internet site is the result of the project 'Z.T, duurzame versterkingskunst' that Jeanne van Heeswijk realised for the art manifestation Waterproof, Fort Asperen. The point of departure of the project 'Z.T, duurzame versterkingskunst' was to bring the Nieuwe Hollandse Waterlinie (Dutch Inundation Line) – as a whole – into people's imagination as a unique spot, by creating a virtual Line. During the manifestation Waterproof, Jeanne van Heeswijk has been mapping the Nieuwe Hollandse Waterlinie, with emphasis on its past, its present as well as reflections on its future. Now, www.dehollandsewaterlinie.nl offers the possibility to visit the Nieuwe Hollandse Waterlinie as a virtual monument.

Whilst navigating over the Line, one can visit its forts, batteries and works. On these virtual visits, the visitor is presented with visual material from the past and present, information on its past functions, how it is used today and when one can visit.

Several forts no longer exist and some are no longer accessible to the public. During the manifestation Waterproof small groups of visitors made excursions to seven of these inaccessible forts, where at each occasion a different speaker was invited to give a view on the 'shelf life' of a monument and the relation between defence and imagination. Their stories – both in text and image – can be found on www.dehollandsewaterlinie.nl.

A paper house, 2001

When Witte de With invited Jeanne van Heeswijk to participate in an exhibition called Squatters, she initially reacted with some scepticism. She wondered what it meant for an institution such as Witte de With to choose what she viewed as a politically laden theme for an exhibition. The poster that she designed for Squatters symbolically illustrates her own standpoint as well as that of Witte de With. In addition to the name and date of the

exhibition, the poster has a big white area with the text: ‘plakken mag binnen de lijnen’ (‘posting permitted in the marked area’). The ‘wild posting’ of posters in Rotterdam was recently subjected to restrictions. As an alternative the city council has allotted so-called ‘A-0’ billboards, which are available for rent. Van Heeswijk regards this regulation of something that was previously a free-for-all as a sign for the limitation of civil freedoms in general. Within the institutionalized framework, Van Heeswijk uses the posters to provide space for anyone who wants to publicize his or her activities in the city.

The collaborative project by Jeanne van Heeswijk/Rolf Engelen/Siebe Thissen/Frans Vermeer that is included in the exhibition is a collage of documents, posters, pictures and photographs relating to old and more contemporary groupings, movements and individuals who squat in Rotterdam. The sculpture for the presentation, made by Rolf Engelen, is built up from panels that were sawn out of the thick layers of posters that were illegally pasted up, year on year, on a recently demolished kiosk in Rotterdam city center. The collage shows the varied stories of activists, artists and young people who fought against capitalism and housing shortages, establishing their own communes, initiating campaigns, and searching for a different, perhaps better world, one which they had at least organized for themselves. Van Heeswijk/ Engelen/Thissen/ Vermeer are also publishing a Fanzine with texts, documents and visual material about squatting to hand out to visitors to Witte de With and they organize two evening events during the exhibition: one with Socialfiction.org & Urban Explorations, and the other with Arjen Mulder and Saskia Poldervaart.

Exhibition: ACTIE krant uit Rotterdam, Als moeder sterft, Anarcrust, B.a.d., Baroeg, Blauwe Botervlieg, Bospolder Beerput, Buikloop, De Bunker, Carboic Acid, Childeren of the Fluor Forest, Het Dagblad, DHZ 23, Debiele Eenheid, Duende, Dull Schicksal, De Fabriek, De Fietsenfabriek, Galerie Slaphanger, Gerard Scholtenstraat, Hal 4/ Stichting Utopia, Hard Liegen, Haverlandstraat, HOKKENperiodiek, Jota, De Kade, Krakend het Oude Noorden, Knock Out, Het kraakspreekuur, Kunst & Complex, De Nieuwe Blauwen, Nigredo, De Omslag, De Peteroliehaven, Phoenix Nieuwsflits, Het Poortgebouw, S35, Sientje, Stichting Quarantaine, Radio Oranje, Raket, Redrat, De Rondos, Sterk Verhaal, TDK, Urban Exploration, Verveeld & Razend, Villa Krakelbond, Volmarijnstraat, Zoid, De Zwarte Ster

Face your world, 2002

Face your world explored the critical dimensions of public art by setting up a multifaceted collaboration between The Wexner Center for the arts, COTA (Central Ohio Transport Authority) and the Greater Columbus Arts council’s Children of the future program. For Face Your world a COTA Bus was specially designed to transport children aged 6-12 between three community centers in downtown Columbus, Blackburn Center, Boys and Girls club and Sawyer Community Center. Outfitted with computers and digital cameras, the bus provided participating children a change to photograph and explore different downtown neighbourhoods. The children could download their photographs they took on the road into the Interactor, a computer program that allowed them to reconfigure their environment using images as material. The Interactor program was created in collaboration with philosopher Maaike Engelen en V2_lab, International lab for unstable media. The children’s views of the city were accessible on the site and on ‘Bus Stop’, interactive kiosks at the three community centers. Atelier van Lieshout fabricated the kiosks.

Participants: Carlos Basualdo, Maaike Engelen, V2_lab, Marco Christis, Enric Gili, Lenno

Verhoog, Bram Perry, Dave Hemmingway, Atelier van Lieshout, Roger Teeuwen, Rolf Engelen, Cynthia Collins, Steve Hunt, Kelly Merryman, Wexner Center Education staff, Children of the future staff, Cota Staff

De Strip, 2002-2003

'Until we meet again' critically monitors and questions, since 1995, in close collaborations with the community the changes the Westwijk is undergoing and react by means of temporary, sculptures, projects, installations and happenings [Until we meet again](#). Due to the dismantling of the shopping strips, one particular strip, located at the Floris de Vijfdelaan, was vacant and boarded up awaited a new use. Because of the long-term critical involvement of 'Until we meet again' with the changes the district is undergoing 'Stichting Waterweg Wonen' (the district largest housing association and the owner of the 15 vacant shops each measuring 300 m²) approached 'Until we meet again' to think about a new use for the area as they were clueless. They commissioned me to conceive of a new, temporary, function for this strip. Until recently it housed neighbourhood shops, including a supermarket, a bakery, a flower shop and a drugstore, but at that moment in time the shopping strip was no longer tied to direct economic production. However, cultural production is also of importance in the maintenance of our society. The idea of having a site switch or transform from one mode of production to another is analogous to the process of giving form and content to the environment one lives in and analogous to the transformation which underlies the creation of art objectives. Setting up places where this cultural production can occur is essential to the development of a breeding ground for culture in the broadest sense of the word, so it became clear that the shopping strip could be used as a location for a shift in modes of production to occur. Thus transformed, the space could continue to contribute to life and community in the Westwijk.

As a result, the shopping strip at the Floris de Vijfdelaan has become a cultural zone in the Westwijk, which opened its doors May 23, 2002, and lasting for a year and a half. 'De Strip', as this project has been titled, consists of an exhibition program, an artist's program and a community program. Priority is given to the presentation of the diverse cultural identities that make up the area, and space is offered for the various residents to meet each other. Part of the program for 'De Strip' consists of the opening of a branch of Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum in three of the former shops. Using selections from their collections of applied art and modern art, the museum has committed itself to set up five exhibitions, alongside which they opened a museum cafe and a bookshop. In the former 'Volume' supermarket: 'MAMA' [Showroom for media and moving art], hosts a series of workshops on youth culture. Besides these large efforts, studios and small workplaces are created in the strip where artists and craftsmen can work for a period of 3 months. Instead of paying rent they must agree to open their workspaces twice a week for interested visitors or to give workshops. Nearby to this, the 'Uit + Thuis' ['going out and staying home'] video-magazine offers the people of the area the possibility to watch and to create videos. In the video magazine, the artists' studios and the museum café spaces are available for a lecture and performance program organized by the inhabitants of the Westwijk themselves. The project publishes a bi-monthly newsletter in the style of a comic strip. In this 'strip', the project's agenda is announced and the ups and downs of 'De Strip' and the Westwijk will be discussed.

Participants: [Boijmans Van Beuningen](#), [Peter Westenberg](#), [MAMA](#), [Shirley Azimullah](#),

Niels Smits van Burgst, Paul Cox, Stichting Map, Noëlle Cuppens, Reinaard Vanhoe, Kirstin Leenaars, Erik van Straaten, Waterweg Wonen, [www.wawo.nl], Roger Teeuwen, [www.rogerteeuwen.nl], Han Hoogerbrugge, [www.hoogerbrugge.com/], Bik van der Pol, Crimson, Engelen & Engelen, Kamiel Verschuren, Laurant Schijvens

Freehouse, 1999-2005

Freehouse, started by Jeanne van Heeswijk and Hervé Paraponaris is the name of a model for developing and transforming the public space mostly on the base of and with the help of this public space itself. Freehouse, aims to research the possibilities for transforming ways of working in and with public spaces. To enable this it shifts the focus from the art object to the art objective. It sees art as a tool in a process of communication making visible and enhancing cultural production. As far as Freehouse, sees it, cultural production is the whole of activities with which people express their identity and with which they attempt to come to grips with their environment, as well as with the ways in which they express the relation between their identity and their environment.

Participants: Hervé Paraponaris, Andries Botha, Soundlab Beth Coleman & Howard Goldkrand, Catja Edens, Rick Lowe, Johanna Luhmann, Femke Snelting, Maartje Berendsen, Roger Teeuwen, Raoul Bunschoten, Charles Landry, Siebe Thissen, Olav Velthuis, Kameleon Drive Consultancy, Rotterdam, Fred de Vries

From the Sidelines

The cultural project 'Langs de Lijn' (From the Sidelines) took place in Gorinchem between February and June 2003 as part of 'Kleurrijke Wijken 2002 - 2004' (Colourful Neighbourhoods). With this project visual artist Jeanne van Heeswijk looked into the place of the game within different (sub) cultures in the city of Gorinchem.

The former playing field 'De Toekomst' (The Future) together with the characteristic changing rooms was be the central location for this project.

Participants: Wendel ten Arve, Frank de Bruijn, Maurits de Bruijn, Teun Castelein, Rolf Engelen., Klaas van Gorkum, Tanneke de Groot, Iratxe Jaio, Henk Loorbach, Ram—n Mosterd, Kjell van Norel, Sonya Schšnberger, Jo van der Spek, Roger Teeuwen, Siebe Thissen, Martien Wijers

APPENDIX II. GERMAN AND DUTCH CITATIONS IN THE ORIGINAL Part I, Part II – Chapters 2-3. Translated in English by the author

II.1 Zentrale Kulturarbeit wird heute an der Peripherie verrichtet. Das Auslagern des ästhetischen Mandats in ehemals periphere Bereiche wie Philosophie, Kunstkritik und Kunstmanagement kennzeichnet die Situation seit Beginn der neunziger Jahre. Die Peripherie beginnt das Zentrum – die autonome künstlerische Behauptung – auszuhöhlen. Kunst heute entsteht im Bewusstsein, dass sie auf ein Fachpublikum und eine Kennerschaft hin produziert und in einer gleichbleibenden Hierarchie rezipiert wird, wonach soziale, ökonomische und ökologische Kriterien die ästhetischen dominieren. (Marius Babias, “Vorwort,” in *Im Zentrum der Peripherie. Kunstvermittlung und Vermittlungskunst in den 90er Jahren*, ed. Babias [Vienna: Fundus, 1995] 17.)

II.2 Daar heeft het heel veel mee te maken. Daarom wil ik dat er in de discussie steeds achter de komma ‘in Nederland’ staat en niet alleen ‘over kunst’ of ‘over openbare ruimte’. Ja, openbare ruimte in Nederland, engagement in Nederland, context in Nederland, stadsvernieuwing in Rotterdam in Nederland. Het gaat maar over een heel klein, echt een ontzettend klein gebiedje. (Adriaan Geuze in Henk Oosterling and Siebe Thissen, eds., *Interakta 5. Grootstedelijke Reflecties. Over Kunst en Openbare Ruimte*, Rotterdam: Faculteit der Wijsbegeerte, 2002, 50.)

II.3 Na de Jan van Eyck heb ik in 1993 een installatie bij Flatland in Utrecht geëxposeerd. Het was een soort dagboek van voorwerpen. Maar toen ik na de opening de tentoonstelling bezocht, merkte ik ineens dat ik hartstikke verveeld van mijn eigen werk was. Ik wist toen heel sterk dat dit het niet was en had een vaag idee dat kunst ergens anders over zou moeten gaan... Ik ben gewoon een onderzoek begonnen. Ben veel gaan lezen, veel gaan zien en heb veel met mensen gesproken. ... [Suchan Kinoshita] kreeg het idee om iets op grensposten te doen, in het kader van Schengen. Ik ben nogal goed in organisatorische dingen en zij vroeg of ik haar kon helpen. ... In mijn huisje begon ik een perscentrum, een archief van alle correspondentie met kunstenaars, perscommunicatie en adresbestanden. Een faxbureau faxte elke dag alles wat de dag daarvoor over grenzen in de krant had gestaan. Dit was de eerste keer dat ik was wie ik ben, de dingen deed zoals ik ze deed en dacht dat dat dan ook voldoende kon zijn. Dat was absoluut een verademing. Want één ding moet ik je wel zeggen: ik heb altijd veel moeite met de vorm, dat heb ik altijd gehad. Ik wou altijd heel veel dingen vertellen en vind narrativiteit belangrijk, maar altijd was er een vraag hoe ik al die dingen die ik wou zeggen kwijt moest in een object. (Dominiek Ruyters, “De Ander en Ik,” Interview with Jeanne van Heeswijk, *Metropolis M*, 1998/5: 33-34.)

II.4 De werkgroep kunst heft op taak om door middle van beeldende kunst een bijdrage te leveren aan het leefklimaat in de Westwijk... In de komende jaren zal de gehele Westwijk een grondige opknapbeurt ondergaan. Door de Gemeente Vlaardingen is aan Jeanne van Heeswijk (beeldende kunstenaar te Rotterdam) opdracht verstrekt te bezien hoe beeldende kunst hierbij kan worden betrokken. (Letter signed by J.J. de Kramer, director of Dienst Welzijn, Municipality of Vlaardingen, to Jeanne van Heeswijk, 27 October 1995; *Nieuwsbrief beeldende kunst*, Vlaardingen, 1, 1996.)

II.5 Chancen verstoppen sich meist hinter Situationen, die gemeinhin als Probleme bezeichnet werden. Statt Probleme zu analysieren, sollten wir das Augenmerk auf Chancen richten, um diese zu analysieren. Statt von Problemstellungen sollten wir von Chancenstellung reden, die zu bestimmten Auskünften und Vorschlägen führen können. Diese Herangehensweise ist versöhnlich, opportunistisch, denn sie betrachtet die Gegenwart als Idealzustand. Und diese Herangehensweise ist optimistisch, denn sie redet nicht von Problemen, sondern von Chancen. Diese Mischung von Opportunismus und Optimismus läßt sich am besten als Opportimismus bezeichnen, Vertreter dieser Ansicht heißen daher Opportimisten. (Hans Venhuizen, *Der Opportimist* [Berlin: 1995] 17.)

II.6 Het POBK [“Stuurgroep Praktijkonderzoek Beeldende Kunsten”] was in vergelijking met de RAC [Rijksadviescommissie voor de beeldende vormgeving in relatie tot architectuur en ruimtelijke ordening”] veelzijdiger van opzet. Ook hier was een commissie (“Stuurgroep” geheten en geïnstalleerd op 23 mei 1976) die adviseerde over het opzetten van projecten. Het verschil met de RAC was dat er naar gestreefd werd kunstenaars niet alleen in het bouwproces, maar ook nog in zes andere “werkvelden” een plaats te bezorgen. De in totaal zeven werkvelden waren: 1. architectuur en ruimtelijke ordening, 2. beeldende overdrachtstechnieken, 3. culturele werkvormen ten behoeve van binnen- en buitenschoolse vorming en de begeleiding daarvan, 4. recreatieve voorzieningen, 5. activiteiten betreffende de werksituatie, 6. vormen van dienstverlening en 7. advisering en begeleiding. (Kunst in Relaties. Een Analyse van Onderzoek en Beleid met Betrekking tot tien POBK- en vier RAC-projecten, *Warna Oosterbaan Martinius*. Ministerie van Welzijn, Volksgezondheid en Cultuur, Rijswijk, 1983, 3.)

II.7 Vanuit de behoefte om een grotere samenhang in het beleid op dit terrein te bewerkstelligen, heeft de Minister van CRM in 1977 een overleg ingesteld om te bezien op welke manier de taken van een aantal voorzieningen die zich houden met de beeldende kunst in relatie tot de gebouwde omgeving beter op elkaar afgestemd zouden kunnen worden.

Aan dit overleg namen deel vertegenwoordigers van de Stichting Wonen, de Commissie Kunstwerken aan Scholen, het Nationaal Overleg Gewestelijke Cultuur, de Rijkscommissie voor de Beeldende Vormgeving in relatie tot architectuur en ruimtelijke ordening, de Stuurgroep Praktijkonderzoek Beeldende Kunsten, de Dienst Esthetische omgeving van de PTT, de Rijkgebouwdienst, de Directie Kunsten van CRM en de Stafafdeling Beleidsvoorbereiding Culturele Zaken van het Ministerie van CRM. (De Zorg voor de Vormgeving, Ministeries van Cultuur, Recreatie en Maatschappelijk Werk, S' Gravenhage: Staatsuitgeverij, 1980, iii.)

II.8 De ruim geformuleerde opdracht ‘de voorwaarden voor het optimaliseren van de resultaten van de omgevingsvormgeving’ in kaart te brengen. ... Van deze zijde bestaat de indruk dat bij het analyseren van de betekenissen die aan woorden als vervreemding, identificatie, oriëntatie, gebruik en beleving wordt gegeven niet de noodzakelijke zorgvuldigheid in acht genomen is. Zelden, althans naar het oordeel van de Minister niet vaak genoeg, wordt een inventarisatie gegeven van de mogelijke inhouden van de begrippen. Een socioloog bijvoorbeeld hanteert een andere definitie van het woord ‘vervreemding’ dan een psycholoog. (Ibid.)

APPENDIX III. ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF GERMAN CITATIONS

Part II – Chapter 1. Translated by the author

III.1 Target groups: Our activities are generally oriented towards migrant women, women refugees and asylum seekers, as well as migrant women working in prostitution. In the context of our work as a family planning centre for migrant women in Austria we also approach male family members. In addition, the participation of male teenagers in the seminars for CSE is also possible. (http://maiz.at/cms/front_content.php?client=1&idcat=0&idart=0&lang=1&error=1)

III.2 Our experiments pursue anti-racist and anti-sexist effects and aims: political educational work is closely linked to our activities in the cultural sector. Our ultimate will is to change political as well as cultural-political frameworks: equality in front of the law, self-presentation instead of representation. The political education work is closely linked to our cultural work, because within the former's framework we develop concepts and processes that we realize in turn as cultural projects. (Luzenir Caixeta, "Migrantische Öffentlichkeitsarbeit als Kulturarbeit," 2002, <http://igkultur.at/igkultur/transversal/1019389728>)

III.3 Yes. And we occupy more and more space. Between reason and an anthropophagic, laughing position, we create for ourselves spaces for movement and emancipation. While the system takes our voice and separates the aesthetics (form) from the ethics (content) and from strategies expressed in the content, we integrate and make visible the connections between the aesthetics, the ethics and the strategies. We break through the stereotypes, we introduce elements of the grotesque, the provocative, the disobedient, of that what-falls-outside-the-frame, of the constant break. We use performance, irony, parody, satire and fiction as our media. It is aesthetics and a language constantly placed outside of frames and guidelines. (Luzenir Caixeta, "Migrantische Öffentlichkeitsarbeit als Kulturarbeit," 2002 on <http://igkultur.at/igkultur/transversal/1019389728>)

III.4 Is this case about art anyway? Is it not rather about the penetration of the artistic domain? (Marty Huber, "MAIZ. Wir lieben dich!," <http://igkultur.at/igkultur/kulturrisse/1088492475/1091003087>)

III.5 Austria, we love you! We will never leave you! (Hito Steyerl, "Europa's Traum. Ein Dokumentarfilmprojekt", *Springerin*, 2/01 (2001), <http://www.springerin.at/dyn/heft.php?id=8&pos=1&textid=176&lang=de>)

III.6 The outcomes [i.e. of maiz' cultural work] are not seen as end-products but as part of a process, and they can afterwards be presented in public. Here we can also appear ourselves. Not as individual persons, but as figures, as "Personae" of a fictional representation. Here we can thematize our wishes... . It is public relations work that is realized as cultural activity and derives from the political education work. It is a work that makes us visible, without exposing us personally. (Caixeta, Luzenir and Rubia Salgado, "Anthropophagischer Protagonismus," 2000, <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0101/cs/de>)

III.7 We have been eating you for a long time now. Now it is your turn. Already my Indian ancestors have been eating you, not many of you, just some: those admirable, brave fighters among you. Anthropophagy. Yes, the eating of humans. ... In order to appropriate what one admires. (Ibid.)

III.8 However this time we have taken the role of the protagonists: we assimilate you, we threaten you, we eat you up.
Migrant women as protagonists means an ethical positioning that expresses an appropriate, but dissonant ethic. (Ibid.)

III.9 Zoo or vaudeville. Exotic animal or admirably assimilated and adapted animal.
My past life as an ape.
Adaptation and the predetermination to meet stereotypes... Racism und Exoticism ...
Degradation und Fascination ... exotic animal or admirably assimilated and adapted animal.
The labeling changes according to the situation. The subject remains nonetheless the same: a being of not human nature.
Two imperatives rule here: adaptation and the predetermination to meet stereotypes. (Ibid.)

III.10 A bordello, nothing particular, just a bordello. In the bordello a few women. A few men, guests. (Ibid.)

III.11 They all try to impress the customer. Nothing exceptional: competition exists everywhere. ... However after the (probably) exhausting running about, he takes the woman that he had called Äffin* along with him to the private room. A black woman. The embodiment of the seemingly contradictory connection between degradation and fascination is continued. (Ibid.)

III.12 I A free ape.
Bowed to this yoke.
The woman that he had called Äffin*.
Racism and Exoticism. Possibilities. Surprise!

III.13 Observations, Strategies
The pains, the rapes, the pretended orgasms, ...
and the ground under my feet, all the grounds that they have touched, all the roads and torrents, curves and mountains.
We/you. (Ibid.)

III.14 Militant End
As protagonists of our own story.
The ethical necessity to be revolt against unfair structures. (Ibid.)

* Äffin = female ape. In the English translation I keep the German word Äffin, (-nen), because the English word ape does not define gender.

APPENDIX IV “ANTHROPOPHAGISCHER PROTAGONISMUS”[1]

Luzenir Caixeta, Rubia Salgado

10_2000

Die Äffin

Ein Bordell, nichts Besonderes, ein Bordell eben. Im Bordell einige Frauen. Einige Männer, Gäste. Und Gäste sind Gäste, weil sie besonders empfangen werden. Nicht wie die Menschen, die mit uns mehr oder weniger intim sind und die uns gut oder mindestens so gut kennen, dass wir in ihnen keine Gäste sehen. Gäste werden meistens bedient. In Bordellen werden Gäste bedient. Aber nicht wie bei uns zu Hause, wo sie höflich das annehmen, was wir ihnen anbieten und sich dafür bedanken, wobei ihr Dank allein die Bezahlung dafür ist, dass sie bedient werden. In Bordellen bezahlen die Gäste Geld für das Erfüllen ihrer Wünsche, manchmal viel davon, manchmal etwas weniger, aber doch meistens bereits soviel, dass wir es als viel bezeichnen können. Und wenn ein Gast sich wünscht, mit einer Äffin Sex zu haben und bereit ist, dafür zu bezahlen, dann kann er, vorausgesetzt, dass eine Äffin “verfügbar” ist, Sex mit einer haben. Wir müssen, wie die LeserInnen bereits erwarten werden, zugeben, dass solche Wünsche oft als antithetische Formulierungen zum Ausdruck gebracht werden. Und so passierte der Fall, den ich hier mit fester Absicht und ohne weitere Ausschmückungen zu schildern versuche, denn der Fall ist an und für sich so interessant und der Fiktion so nahe, dass jegliche Art von Zusatz unnötig wäre.

Ein Bordell, nichts Besonderes, ein Bordell eben. Im Bordell einige Frauen. Ein Mann, auch nichts Besonderes, ein Mann eben, dessen Eigenschaften nicht beschrieben werden müssen, weil sie uns hier nicht aufschlussreich erscheinen würden. Ein Mann ohne besondere oder extravagante oder erwähnenswerte Eigenschaften. Dieser Mann sucht sich unter fünf Frauen eine, mit der er Sex machen will. Alle versuchen, den Kunden zu beeindrucken. Nichts Besonderes: Wettbewerb ist überall. Eine unter ihnen wird von ihm zurückgewiesen: er schlafe nicht mit Äffinnen. Doch nach dem (wahrscheinlich) anstrengenden Umherrennen, geht er mit der von ihm als Äffin bezeichneten Frau ins Separee. Eine Schwarze Frau. Die Verkörperung der nur scheinbar widersprüchlichen Verbindung zwischen Degradation und Faszination wird fortgesetzt.

ich, freier Affe, fügte mich diesem Joch

“Hohe Herren von der Akademie!

Sie erweisen mir die Ehre, mich aufzufordern, der Akademie einen Bericht über mein äffisches Vorleben einzureichen. In diesem Sinne kann ich leider der Aufforderung nicht nachkommen.

Nahezu fünf Jahre trennen mich vom Affentum, eine Zeit, kurz vielleicht am Kalender ermessen, unendlich lang aber durchzugaloppieren (...) Diese Leistung wäre unmöglich gewesen, wenn ich eigensinnig hätte an meinem Ursprung, an den Erinnerungen der Jugend festhalten wollen. Gerade Verzicht auf jeden Eigensinn war das oberste Gebot, das ich mir auferlegt hatte; ich, freier Affe, fügte mich diesem Joch.” [2]

Rassismus und Exotismus

Die Parallele zwischen der sarkastischen Parabel und der Situation von MigrantInnen, die sich der Aufgabe hingeben, sich auf dem europäischen österreichischen Territorium

Anerkennung zu verschaffen, erscheint uns unerlässlich. Hier herrschen zwei Maximen: Anpassung und Prädestinierung, Stereotypen zu entsprechen. Zwei Maximen, die auf den ersten Blick als widersprüchlich gesehen werden könnten, die jedoch in der Logik der Dominanzkultur eine ergänzende Funktion besitzen und den Zusammenhang zwischen Rassismus und Exotismus beispielhaft darstellen. Die nur scheinbar widersprüchliche Verbindung zwischen Degradation und Faszination wird fortgesetzt.

Möglichkeiten

“Als ich in Hamburg dem ersten Dresseur übergeben wurde, erkannte ich bald die zwei Möglichkeiten, die mir offen standen: Zoologischer Garten oder Varieté.” [3]

Zwei Möglichkeiten: exotisches Tier oder bewundernswert assimiliertes und angepasstes Tier. Das Prädikat ändert sich je nach Situation. Das Subjekt bleibt jedoch gleich: ein Wesen nicht menschlicher Natur.

Überraschung!

Du wirst mich jetzt schlucken!

Denn

“Nur die Anthropophagie verbindet uns.

Soziologisch.

Wirtschaftlich.

Philosophisch”. [4]

Feststellung

Wir fressen euch schon seit sehr langer Zeit. Jetzt bist du dran. Schon meine indianischen Vorfahren haben euch verspeist, nicht viele von euch, aber doch einige: die braven kämpferischen bewundernswerten unter euch. Anthropophagie. Ja, das Fressen von Menschen. Der bewundernswerten Eigenschaften wegen. Um sich das Bewunderte anzueignen. Nun fehlen die Beine, aber vorher schlucke noch die Sonne in meiner Vagina, die brennt. Schlucke das Sperma deiner Gleichen. Die Schmerzen, die Vergewaltigungen, die vorgespielten Orgasmen, die Narben. Und dann meine unermüdlichen Beine, meine Füße, die Füße meiner Leute schmutzig gerissen hart. Und der Boden unter meinen Füßen, alle Böden, die sie schon berührt haben, alle Wege und Stürze, Kurven und Berge. Komm, trinke aus den Flüssen, die sie schon überquert haben, und vom salzigen Wasser, das brennt und heilt. Und steh auf. Ich bin schon fertig. Was du machen sollst? Nimm dir, was du willst, magst, brauchst, bewunderst. Oder rufe die Fremdenpolizei...

Strategien

Selbstverständlich werden wir euch weiterhin fressen.

Um unter der Herrschaft einer Dominanzkultur etwas zu produzieren, das keine gemäß den von den Machhabern vorgeschriebenen Regeln “erlaubte” Wiedergabe ist, muss zuerst der Andere wie eine Beute assimiliert werden.

Ich benutze absichtlich das Verb assimilieren, um es im Einklang mit der dargestellten Strategie gleichzeitig als Beispiel einzusetzen. Die Assimilation ist eine sehr bekannte Aufforderung der breiten Öffentlichkeit an die MigrantInnen. Eine Aufforderung, die sich die meisten inzwischen politisch korrekt gewordenen Menschen, aus welchem Grund auch immer, nicht mehr auszusprechen erlauben. Ich nehme dieses Wort und benutze es in meinem Sinn, aus meiner Perspektive, und erinnere euch gleichzeitig an die Perspektive der Angehörigen der Dominanzkultur. Diesmal haben wir jedoch die Rolle der Protagonistinnen

übernommen: wir assimilieren euch, wir drohen euch, wir fressen euch. Die Machtgefälle werden wieder an die Oberfläche gerückt, aber die frühere Ordnung und die Zuteilungen sind gestört. Das Verhältnis ist verkehrt.

... um einmal ein anderes Tier zu erwähnen ...

Von den Schlangen, die ihr jetzt im Hinterhof versteckt, haben wir längst welche verschluckt, und sie springen aus unserem Mund hinaus, wann immer wir sie benötigen. Ja, wir mussten sie schlucken. Um überleben zu können. Um euch ein Zeichen der Unterwürfigkeit zu geben. Um euch besser zu kennen. Um eure Waffen besser bedienen zu können. Um uns zu entfalten.

Nochmals Anthropophagie

Die Anthropophagie ist unsere Antwort. Eine wirklich nicht vorsichtige Antwort. Im Gegenteil: der Weg, den wir ausprobieren, führt uns in Richtung Störung, Provokation. Eine andere Ästhetik, die mit einer antirassistischen und feministischen Ethik im Zusammenhang steht. In Stolz und Wut stellen wir hier keine Urheberrechte. Es ist nicht neu, dass Unterdrückte sich dieser Strategien bedienen. Das Neue daran ist die antirassistische und feministische Ethik.

Topos

Unsere Herkunft und die Erfahrung der Kolonisierung bestimmen unausweichlich unsere Praxis als Migrantinnen in der alten Welt. Wir sprechen als Frauen aus Ländern, die unter der Herrschaft europäischer Dominanzkulturen gelebt haben. Wir sprechen als Frauen, die das anthropophagische Lachen entdeckt haben. Frauen, die sich zwischen der christlich-jüdischen Tradition und dem Ethos der Karnevalisierung einen Platz geschaffen haben. Zwischen der Vernunft und einem dionysischen und kämpferischen Stil, dessen wichtiges Merkmal die Kritik durch das offene Lachen über die Machthaber ist. Ein anthropophagisches Lachen, das den Machthaber vom Thron verjagt.

Entwicklungen, Entfaltungen und dergleichen

Als Migrantinnen haben wir uns zuerst auf der Ebene des Sozialen organisiert, weil es um den Kampf um unsere primären Rechte geht. Folge der Organisation und des Zusammenseins war und ist die Auseinandersetzung mit unserer Rolle in verschiedenen gesellschaftlichen Bereichen, darunter besonders im Kulturbereich. Es ist uns bewusst, dass auch dieser ein bereits eingeteiltes Territorium ist. Unser Bewegungsraum wird im Einklang mit Regeln und Bestimmungen, die innerhalb der Dominanzkultur entstehen, markiert: Grenzen. Orte. Formen.

Grenzen und Überschreitungen

Nur: Regeln und Vorschriften sind dazu da, umgangen zu werden, haben wir als kleine Mädchen gelernt. Und wieder macht sich unsere Herkunft bemerkbar. Ungehorsam. Wir wissen, dass wir als Migrantinnen auch im Kulturbereich Grenzen verschieben können. Wir haben in den letzten Jahren einige Projekte durchgeführt, die sich im Grenzraum zwischen dem sozialen Feld und dem Kulturbereich bewegen und entfalten. Wir führen gerade Projekte dieser Art durch, und wir werden nächstes Jahr ein Projekt im Rahmen des Festivals der Regionen realisieren können. Es ist ein wichtiger Schritt. Ein Schritt, der uns "den Nachweis" über den Boden, über das Territorium unserer Bewegungen gibt. Auch die Kooperation mit der Stadtwerkstatt an einem Projekt für das Ars Electronica Festival in Linz.[5] Auch die Zusammenarbeit mit Künstlerinnen, wie z.B. die kontinuierliche Arbeit, die wir mit den Künstlerinnen von Klub Zwei entwickeln.[6] Auch die verschiedenen

Einladungen für das Projekt Kartografische Eingriffe[7] und die Verleihung des Großen Landespreises des Landes Oberösterreich für Initiative Kulturarbeit an MAIZ.

Wie

Ja, wir bewegen uns bereits im Kulturbereich und machen hier eine Arbeit, die vielfältig an ihren Entstehungs- und Durchführungsprozessen ist. Die Arbeit im Kulturbereich beginnt bei MAIZ im Bildungsbereich. Hier werden Konzepte entworfen, diskutiert, entwickelt. Hier werden sie vorbereitet, durchgeführt, evaluiert. Hier befinden sich die Protagonistinnen der Projekte: wir, Migrantinnen, Sexarbeiterinnen, schwarze Frauen, Putzfrauen, Babysitterinnen, Ehefrauen, Asylwerberinnen, Mütter, Akademikerinnen, Töchter. Wir: Vielfalt. Wir. Auch Mehrheitsösterreicherinnen, im Dialog mit uns. Die Ergebnisse, die nicht als Endprodukte, sondern als Teil eines Prozesses gesehen werden, können dann in der Öffentlichkeit präsentiert werden. Hier können auch wir auftreten. Nicht als einzelne Personen, sondern als Figuren, als "Personae" einer fiktionalen Darstellung. Hier können wir unsere Anliegen thematisieren, und - nicht als Phantasien, sondern als Entfaltung der Wirklichkeit - Alternativen und Perspektiven unseres Da-Seins in diesem Land, auf diesem Kontinent, entwerfen und entdecken.

Eine Öffentlichkeitsarbeit, die als kulturelle Betätigung realisiert wird. Eine Arbeit, die uns sichtbar macht, ohne uns persönlich zu exponieren. Wir machen ungerechte und menschenverachtende Strukturen sichtbar und fordern die Anerkennung unserer Rechte. Und nicht erst seit der Bildung der inzwischen nicht mehr neuen Regierung! Der Hintergrund unserer Handlung als organisierte Migrantinnen ist politischer Natur. Und im Hintergrund steht die Überzeugung, dass es ethisch notwendig ist, sich gegenüber ungerechten, ausbeuterischen und diskriminierenden Strukturen zu positionieren und Strategien zu entwickeln und zu verfolgen, die diesen entgegenwirken können.

Wenn wir uns ausbreiten, bringt uns niemand mehr zusammen! [8]

(...)

Ja. Und wir nehmen immer mehr Platz in Anspruch. Wir bewegen uns und versuchen, Veränderungen in Bewegung zu setzen. Zwischen Vernunft und einer anthropophagischen, lachenden Haltung schaffen wir uns Räume der Bewegung und des Widerstandes. Räume, die aus Verschiebungen von Grenzen entstehen. Unsere neue Vereinsräumlichkeit ist mit 8 Schaufenstern (jeweils ca. 2 x 2 m) ausgerüstet. Im Herzen der Linzer Altstadt. Damit setzen wir ein Zeichen: Wir lassen uns nicht einschüchtern und gehen noch intensiver in die Öffentlichkeit. Die Schaufenster bieten uns eine enorme Möglichkeit von Intervention in das Leben dieser Stadt. (...)

Kämpferischer Schluss

Wir machen weiter. Und weiter. In der Überzeugung, dass es möglich und notwendig ist, als Protagonistinnen unserer eigenen Geschichte zu handeln, kämpfen wir weiter für die Besserstellung der Migrantinnen in dieser Gesellschaft, für den Abbau von Vorurteilen, Rassismus und Ausbeutungsstrukturen; und vor allem lassen wir in der Öffentlichkeit einen Schrei erklingen: einen Schrei nach der ethischen Notwendigkeit, sich gegenüber ungerechten Strukturen zu empören.

Fussnoten

[1] Dieser Text wurde von Luzenir Caixeta und Rubia Salgado erstellt. Passagen aus folgenden

Texten von Rubia Salgado wurden hier teilweise zitiert und/oder bearbeitet: Über das Menschenwerden... Notizen über Affen, Migrantinnen und Kulturarbeit. In: Kupf Zeitung 86/2/00 Anthopofagie und Akkulturation: eine Begegnung beim Ficken. In: Kupf Zeitung 80/1/99 MAIZ: eine Praxis zwischen Vernunft und Lachen. In: Kulturrisse 6/00 Aus dem Punkt wollen wir einen Beistrich machen. In: Der Apfel Zeitschrift 55/00

[2] Franz Kafka. Bericht für eine Akademie. In: Die Erzählungen und andere ausgewählte Prosa. Fischer Verlag (1998).

[3] Franz Kafka. Bericht für eine Akademie. In: Die Erzählungen und andere ausgewählte Prosa. Fischer Verlag (1998).

[4] Es handelt sich hier um ein Manifest, das der brasilianische Schriftsteller Oswald de Andrade 1928 im Zuge der kulturellen Bewegungen um den Modernismus geschrieben hat. S. dazu: Schwartz. Vanguardas Latino-Americanas. Sao Paulo, 1995.

[5] siehe: www.servus.at/stwst

[6] Ein interessantes Beispiel bildet hier die gemeinsame Produktion von großen Plakaten, die bereits in verschiedenen Städten im öffentlichen Raum präsentiert werden.

[7] Im Rahmen eines Workshops machen Migrantinnen Interventionen in die Stadtpläne der Städte, in denen sie wohnen. Hier geht es um eine Auseinandersetzung mit der Thematik Anwesenheit und Bewegungsmöglichkeiten von Migrantinnen im öffentlichen Raum. Das Projekt Kartografische Eingriffe wurde bereits in Linz und in Innsbruck durchgeführt. Die bearbeiteten Stadtpläne wurden in Galerien präsentiert.

[8] Geläufige Redewendung in Brasilien, die ich im Sinn einer interkulturellen Intervention in die deutsche Sprache benutze.

<http://www.eicpcp.net/diskurs/d02/text/maiz01.html>

