



Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany

Media Information: Transformations – Echoraum 14 October 2011 to 15 January 2012

ECHORAUM (Echo Room) is the result of a series of two-year cooperations between the Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany and a number of international Media Colleges. Students and graduates of these institutions are given the opportunity to present their current projects in the lower ground floor galleries which become a temporary experimental laboratory.

-1/MinusEins, the experimental media lab of the Academy of Media Arts in Cologne, grew out of the academy's holography lab under the aegis of professor Mischa Kuball. Conceived as an interdisciplinary workshop, a place of communication and teaching as well as the centre of a network within the academy, the lab is intended to help students realise their projects. And it is with this in mind that it enters into cooperations and exchanges with a wide range of non-university partners in Cologne and further afield.

The fifth exhibition in the Room of Echoes focuses on the phenomenon of transformation.

History is a process of constant change and transformation. What has been different about this process since the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st centuries is its speed, its dynamic and its multilateral consequences. Human beings today as the agents, but also as the objects, of change and constant development, have to preserve their identity by being cleverer and more mobile in this accelerating process if they do not want to be marginalised. The democratisation of information, which has made it possible to participate in this transformation process, suffers from a highly dialectic ambivalence: the possibility to learn more about the structures of the world that surrounds us by having access to more information always carries with it the danger of drowning in a wealth of information due to sensory overload, which limits rather than stimulates one's capacity to act or to experience original sentiments.

In this multitude of unchallengeable universes, the current exhibition invites you to pause, to decelerate and to reflect for a moment.

The exhibition starts with **Alfons Knogl's** *Hyperbolic areas*, a video in which abstract images of a supernova explosion are juxtaposed against pictures of an archaeological excavation site and a vase. In the eye of the beholder, various distinct images combine to create a perception and mind-altering new one.

Katharina Urbaniak's photos and **Daphné Keramidas' *Alphabetario – Archeology of a quotidien*** deal with the poetry of the impermanence of all existence. Katharina Urbaniak collects photo albums at flea markets. The photos are removed, only the handwritten captions remain. This blank space is captured in a photograph and thereby kept from falling into oblivion. In *Alphabetario – Archeology of a quotidien* Daphné Keramidas shows embossings of everyday objects. It is only under certain

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lighting conditions that the objects begin to take shape and can be seen, just like a certain state of mind is sometimes required to recall a memory. Apart from serving a utility purpose, they are also memorabilia and objects that define one's personal identity. The collective memory of these objects makes it possible for the viewer to travel back through space and time to other people's experiences.

Björn Drenkwitz visualises language. World-renowned quotes by famous people are depicted in graphic form. The conversion of acoustic signals into visual ones distorts the quotes. The visitor can then examine whether their meaning has been preserved or whether it has changed.

Language and translation are at the centre of **Pia Schauenburg's** work. A national anthem was translated into 10 languages and then sung by native speakers. This raises questions of identity and language, of social marginalisation and integration.

Jongwon Choi uses sound to trigger water movements, which in turn create kinetic sound patterns by means of a laser.

Céline Berger in *process map 01* and **Adrián Villa Dávila** with *Growing gap analogy* conduct social analysis. Céline Berger's contribution is a reference to the previous artwork *Values*, a shirt which she hand-wove in a long process using only shredded paper strips. It is not the artwork itself that can be seen, but a flow diagram showing the process of its production; a common description method in industrial production. In an analysis of a work process which is based on the division of labour, the conditions of industrial mass production are translated into a work of art. Adrián Villa Dávila uses an art-historical and geopolitical approach to the issue of transformation. In *Growing gap analogy* he combines Victor Grippo's *Analogy 1* with Vincent van Gogh's *Potato Eaters*. The artwork poses the hypothetical question of whether Victor Grippo and Vincent van Gogh would have been friends had they lived at the same time and the same place. Both artists focused on the symbolic value of the potato. In addition to juxtaposing the two works of art, Adrián Villa Dávila deals with the relationship between the Old World and the developing countries. Just like the potato made its way from South America to Europe and was converted from an ornamental to an agricultural plant there, other countries of the Third World today deliver fossil resources, which have become the very basis of our social system.

Lastly, the exhibition also includes sculptural work: in the centre of the room is the *Gewächshaus* by **Akiro Hellgardt**, a walk-in sculpture which can freely be modified and extended. A fragile and transparent construction in the room wraps around the body of the visitor that enters it.

Puncta inflata by **Steffi Lindner** puts our perceptual capacities to the test. The artist triggers our interest by inflating the central angle between three convergent spatial surfaces. Breaking-up and distorting everyday phenomena by changing one's levels of perception offers people the opportunity to rediscover them in a natural and empathetic way.