

THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ARTIST. INVESTIGATING THE RELATION/ROLE OF THE ARTIST/ART IN THE ECONOMICAL SOCIETY.

BRUSSELS 5TH>10TH MAY 2008

REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP

Participants: Ine Claes, Juliane von Crailsheim, Erika Faccini, Gawan Fagard, Sofie Haesaerts, Mark Mangion, Elisa Marchesini, Lieven Paelinck, Chiara Ribera d'Alcalà, Kristin Rogghe, Christoph Schwarz, Marthe Van Dessel, Emmy Van Lamoen
Coordinators: Love Difference team (Emanuela Baldi, Filippo Fabbrica, Marga Vazquez Ponte)
Representatives of the Partners: Cristiana Bottigella for Cittadellarte, Dorian van der Brempt for de Buren

First day

All the participants, coordinators and representatives of the partners are present.

Presentation of the Workshop [WS]: its objectives, the area of study, the finalities, the outcome. The team and its methods. The timing schedule.

In order to work out the subjects of the WS and to start analysing art for social responsible transformation first from the individual and then starting to build up an operative nucleus, several exercises and practices are lead, both individually and in group starting since the very beginning: the presentation to the others. The aim is to trigger a change of the suggestive perspective

Presentation of the participants through the neighbour (each one tells about him/herself to another person, that will refer it to the group). Physical practice to release body tension. Drawing with blind eyes following the music, then collecting the drawings in small groups and exercise to put the different lines of the designs together in a composition *dialogue of images and perceptions*.

After lunch the video "Chi sei tu?" from Pistoletto from 1976 is shown. This work becomes the starting point for the discussion about cultural identity and the subject of the first ASTIDE WS, the social responsibility of the single one, is introduced. Collection of people's impressions and explaining the meaning of the spoken part of the video.

Theoretical explanation of Gurdjieff's analyse of the 4 parts of the self: intellectual, emotional, instinctive-kinetic, energetic. Exercises of reflection to create dialogues within the different sides of the self. Reflective moment: production of a written short story by each of the participants, who will eventually donate it to another person.

Desert game: a playful experience that shows the importance of the group and the enrichment of collective dynamics.

Feedbacks.

Second day.

Everybody present but Sofie Haesaerts.

The day is organized by Marthe Van Dessel and Lieven Paelinck, Unidee residents in 2007. They lead the group all around Brussels. The idea is to investigate the context, following history and social thematic offered by the journey, observe from different points of view.

The key for understanding is given to the group:

"Art should neither create symbols nor messages any more, but relational environment.

Making art means "giving space to individual expression within the collective".

Creative process allows the individual to express him/herself through a dialogue with the differences of others (cultural, professional, religious...)"

Kolonie des Vacances - guided tour

Both non-residents of the Capital of Europe, they prepared an exploration of known and unknown places in Brussels relating to initiatives, artists, experts, ... who are actively rethinking the city. In this historical and up to the minute tour through public spaces (squares, parks, public transport) community buildings, official institutions, and private stories, ... notions as illegality (sans papiers), legality (les citoyens), super legality (diplomats) are addressed from a tourist perspective. This meta perspective of the other, stranger, tourist gives us the space to deal with the precarity of existence in this postcolonial society.

During lunch time in Europese Wijk - Parc Luxembourg people are asked to describe the object which is meaningful of social responsible transformation they brought with them (after requested by the coordinators the day before).

While using public transports participants are asked not to talk and to write on postcards a word, a sentence, an impression received from the last experience they lived.

Exercises to change personal rhythms of movement in the street following the one person in front of him/her.

Programme:

Royal square

walking travel tour through colonial traces in urban history by Lieven Paelinck

Royal Library of Belgium

screening of **Little Figures (2003)**

experimental documentary by Sarah Vanagt

Three statues on the Mont des Arts in Brussels: a king, a queen and a medieval knight. Three newcomers to Brussels: a Philippino boy, a Rwandan refugee girl and a Moroccan boy; an imaginary conversation.

Place Luxembourg

St-Air

There are many ways to look at a city, but usually, without knowing, we just do not look at all. Being new in a city, you consciously look around, look into things and look through it. And also when a city changes, we are temporarily aware of its context. St.-Air is an installation by Sannah Belzer and Dries Verbruggen, originally conceived as part of an exhibition in the HessenHuis, this time installed in front of the comity of regions, Europe. <http://www.st-air.eu/>

[okno](#) - quai de charbonnage 30/34

Welcome to Belgium

Charif Benhelima

Charif Benhelima currently lives and works in Berlin as well as in Antwerp. Consumed by a sense of incongruence, Benhelima embarked in a nine-year (1990-1999) photographic research on the feeling of being a foreigner, which later resulted in the tough yet poetic book *Welcome to Belgium* (2003).

Le laboureur - Micronomics

citymine(d)

City Mine(d) is a production house for urban interventions, committed to the development of new forms of urban citizenship, the re-appropriation of public space -roads, airwaves, stations, estates, parks, squares, virtual space- and the creation of cutting edge public artwork.

<http://www.citymined.be>

cuisine interne

The Cuisine Interne Keuken project was initiated in 2004 at [Jonctions/Verbindingen 7](#), a yearly festival around art, technology and ethics organised by [Constantvzw](#), Brussels. The selected 15 questions around the ingredients and recipes of cultural work. Some of these questions are quite straightforward, and some leave more space for interpretation or even evasion. The idea is to put practice, tools and conditions at the same level, so to question their interrelation. http://www.constantvzw.org/cn_core/cuisine/sessionindexEN.php

Closure of the tour in Le laboureur where all the cards are collected back and the writings are shared in a sort of feedback.

Third day and Fourth day

Everybody is present.

Meetings with experts.

Bart Debaere, Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp; Anselm Franke, Arthistorian and curator; Pascal Gielen, Sociologist and professor Leuven and Tilburg University; Frans Goetghebeur, President of the Buddhist Associations of Belgium; Elzemieke Scholte, Director of the Theatermaker; Barbara Vanderlinden, Arthistorian, teacher and artistic director of the first Brussels Biennial; Pin Van Klink, professor [Dept. of Management](#), Antwerpen University; Margriet Vonno, First Secretary of the Dutch Embassy in Brussels.

Feedbacks on the meetings with experts.

Outcome of the WS is presented in details.

The group is invited to answer the question “how to be an artist in a world of numbers”

The third day concludes with more descriptions of the objects which are meaningful of social responsible transformation, which was not completed the day before.

In the fourth day presentation of the project of CALC as example of “Methods” and of a project of social responsibility.

Meetings with experts.

Feedbacks on key words emerged during the day.

Fifth day.

Everybody is present but the de Buren representative.

The outcome of the WS is the aim of the day, to develop out the acquired tools and knowledge and be produced into a performative action after group dynamics of elaboration.

Explanation of the roles of the planning: the outside observer, the moderator.

The group reflects on the various possibilities of collective work. They establish to go all back and through the previous day’s emotions, feelings, reflections thought out an all day long brainstorming session, using post it to write down thoughts, then collecting them on a wall.

Visit during the morning of Sabine Frank from Rainbow Platform.

The group moves balancing inputs and energies within itself thanks to the well working roles of observer and moderator that change turns from one participant to the other.

The coordinators leave the group working autonomously, as this is the need emerged, but with the presence of a silent observant ready to answer doubts or needs when requested by the group.

Report of the day and proposal of outcome for the following day.

Feedbacks.

Sixth day.

Everybody is present, in addition Pedro Soler from Hangar and Luise Klos (partners of the project), Daniela Terrile, Sarah Vanhee.

The performative action starts in the street, in front of the Opera House, where the group moves with a big writing “WHY SHOULD ART CONTRIBUTE TO A RESPONSIBLE TRANSFORMATION OF SOCIETY?”

They do urge people to read the sentence, then observers are asked to walk in line, following the person in front of, and by this way people are directed to de Buren’s centre, up to the room where the WS was held and where the group has been working during the week.

The group explains the results of the brainstorming of the previous day and asks the present people to continue this practice to enrich and enlarge the post-it wall. There is a new observer and a new moderator....the work is a to be a continued one.

Responding to the question “WHY SHOULD ART CONTRIBUTE TO A RESPONSIBLE TRANSFORMATION OF SOCIETY?”, the group did not provide a statement, a manifest or a definitive response. The WS’s participants had elaborated an open discussion system, where every response functions as a starting point of comparison and analysis (positive aspects, negative aspect, innovative elements, conservative elements). Through a set of stickers placed on a wall, a board is created. Each participant writes his / her answer on a post-it which is placed on the board, creating a visible and participative discussion.

This system is meant to be implemented and developed during the ASTIDE project by the future participants.

Feedbacks and collective evaluation of all the present people: coordinators, participants, partners.