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Nur Sender kann man orten

Ausgelöst durch Fluxusaktivitäten entwickelt sich seit den 70er Jahren Mail-Art-Networking als globale – per Post funktionierende – Dialog-Strategie von Künstlern, welche bewusst ausserhalb des Kunstbetriebes in offenen, d. h. allen zugänglichen und nicht kontrollierten, Beziehungssystemen agieren wollen.

Vernetzung ist also nicht nur eine technische Möglichkeit, wie sie durch Internet angeboten wird. Seit langem ist der direkte kommunikative Austausch und die Zusammenarbeit ein Anliegen von Künstlern und wurde schon von den Dadaisten – Dada Global – als befreiende gegengesellschaftliche Strategie propagiert.

Mail-Art-Networking basiert auf der direkten, dialogisch-diskursiv praktizierten Verbindung von Person zu Person, in wechselnden Kontexten, auch erweitert zu Tourism. Voraussetzung dabei ist die Rollenflexibilität. Der Networker muss auch ändern den Zugang zum Netz ermöglichen, in dem er Projekte wie Assemblings, Shows und Kongresse organisiert.

Networker-Kongresse

Der erste «weltweite dezentralisierte Mailart-Kongress» wurde 1986 von H.R. Fricker aus Trogen und Günther Ruch aus Genf ins Leben gerufen. «Wo sich zwei oder mehrere Mail-Artisten treffen, findet der Kongress statt», hiess es im Aufruf. Weil sich das «Network» weltweit erstreckt, vielen aber das grenzüberschreitende Reisen versagt war und sich nicht jeder ein Flugticket leisten konnte, drängte sich die Dezentralisation auf. Im Laufe des Jahres 1986 organisierten «Mail-Artists» in ungefähr 20 Ländern etwa 80 Kongresse, an denen «Networking»-Aspekte diskutiert wurden.

Der «weltweite dezentralisierte Networker-Kongress 1992» wurde ebenfalls von H.R. Fricker initiiert und zusammen mit Peter Kaufmann aus Ebmatingen und Networkern aus den USA, aus Italien, Japan und Uruguay lanciert. Er hatte zum Ziel, über das «Mailart-Network» hinaus die verschiedensten in «Networks» operierenden Künstlerinnen und Künstler mittels «realer Treffen» zu vernetzen und eine Diskussion über den «Künstler als Networker» in Gang zu bringen. Chuck Welch nutzte den Rahmen des «Network-Kongress '92» und organisierte viele «On-line-Sessions» im virtuellen Raum über das Internet.

Die nachfolgenden Artikel wurden von verschiedenen Künstlerinnen und Künstlern 1991/1992 verfasst. Diese Networker-Statements dienten zur Diskussionsanregung im «weltweiten dezentralisierten Networker-Kongress 1992».

DECENTRALIZED WORLD-WIDE NETWORKER CONGRESS 1992

Where two or more artists/networkers meet in the course of 1992, there a congress will take place.

New artistic behaviors and strategies have developed world-wide within the last 20 years. Based upon a dialectical and mutual understanding of respective cultures, open relation systems have developed for interchange and cooperation on a communal, regional and international level. The basis of all this is the personal contact. As foreseen by Dadaists, Futurists, Situationists, Fluxus and others, a new kind of artist has developed – the networker.

In total independence and autonomy from art and cultural institutions, the networker is manifested through the international networks of mail art, copy art, computer bulletin boards, fax art, cassette labels, bands, underground press, etc.

The decentralized world-wide networker congress serves as a meeting point for all kinds of networkers. The meaning of the common role as networkers should be the focus of the discussion. The congress will also give the opportunity to spread these ideas through public discussion and possible media coverage.

You are invited to organize your own congress session according to your needs and possibilities (the decentralized world-wide mail art congress 1986 consisted of approximately 80 meetings with 500 participants from more than 25 countries).

H.R. Fricker:
aus Aufruf zum «Networker-
Kongress 1992»



Piermario Ciani:
«NC-'92-Sticker»

Il trasmettitore viaggia da una parte all'altra del globo creando il suo lavoro in collaborazione con altri e non si preoccupa del fatto che i suoi viaggi possano essere realtà o virtualità, poichè oggi, egli può attivare reti di comunicazione per scambio senza lasciare la sua scrivania, trasmettendo il suo lavoro via fax, modem, o altri mezzi, e i limiti maggiori sono quelli imposti dalle istituzioni che, salvo rare eccezioni, ancora propongono pareti bianche e quadri appesi. Il messaggio ancora non può essere separato dai mezzi di comunicazione che lo portano, ma nemmeno dai meccanismi di produzione o dalle modalità dei processi di comunicazione. Nella società post-industriale, nella quale viviamo, il pianeta è costantemente attraversato da miliardi di informazioni intercollegate nelle diverse reti di comunicazione e in questo scenario agisce il trasmettitore, divenendo in effetti l'interprete del suo tempo.
Piermario Ciani, via Latisana 6, 33032 Bertolo (UD), Italia.

Il trasmettitore è qualcuno che sa che tutte le isole si uniscono in fondo al mare. Ogni trasmettitore è al centro della sua rete di comunicazioni. Tutte le reti si intersecano e incrociano altre reti a vari livelli. In una rete di comunicazioni aperta, tutti i ruoli sono intercambiabili; l'autore diventa spettatore e viceversa. Il trasmettitore è una nuova figura sociale, diversa dall'«artista», dal «poeta», dal «musicista» di ieri. La strategia del sistema di comunicazioni non contempla «un'opera finita»: tutto è flusso, tutto è modulare. Le autorità costituite temono il libero accesso all'informazione più delle bombe. Il trasmettitore non ha timore di appropriarsi di informazioni derivandole dalle banche-dati collettive e di ridistribuirle alle persone. Il trasmettitore è colui che non teme alcuna distanza, culturale o geografica.
Vittore Baroni, Via C. Battisti 339, 55049 Viareggio, Italia.

L'arte è rapidamente mutata e con lei, alla fine, anche i suoi mezzi di produzione: oggi possiamo parlare di una nuova figura di artista o di operatore di crea-

tività estetica, una sorta di «stratega culturale» che utilizza, giocandoci, gli strumenti attuali di comunicazione elettronici e/o telematici, una figura che sempre più abbraccia, come una rete di comunicazioni tutto il mondo. Ogni punto e momento di collegamento della rete di comunicazioni diventa nello stesso istante centro e periferia del sistema. «Locale» e «Universale» sono quindi estremi dialogici ai quali l'artista – trasmettitore si rivolge con responsabilità; sono luoghi in cui egli può agire simultaneamente. Per comprendere tali ruoli e inserirli nella nuova filosofia, vale a dire la richiesta per una nuova etica, possiamo ridisegnare una nuova geografia dell'arte, una nuova topografia che includa il territorio dell'ecologia e dell'arte, verso una definizione dialettica di eco-arte.
Bruno Chiarlone, Via Bertolotti 58, 17014 Cairo Montenotte, Savona, Italia.

Ich will nicht neuen Raum schaffen, sondern mit bereits bestehendem Raum eine neue Gleichheit erzielen und mehr Substanz gewinnen, ohne mich auf Künstlichkeiten einzulassen. Ich will mich auch nicht am neu entstandenen Raum festklammern, sondern diesen gleich wieder loslassen, damit er im nächsten Moment oder morgen wiederum eine neue Form annehmen kann. Was bleibt, ist das Bewusstsein, das Verspüren eines ganz bestimmten Momentes – das tiefe Empfinden für den besonderen Augenblick. Der Raum ist fruchtbar geworden und hat sich reproduziert. Und geht wieder in den fließenden Prozess über.
Franz Müller, Kleinmattstrasse 16, CH-6003 Luzern, Schweiz.

It's really a huge electronic universe of communication, way larger than paper already, but it's still very much a proprietary universe. Common standards and intercommunications are still at an infant level. Also, I would add some basic Tofflerian observations that an information culture fundamentally supports decentralized, personalized, and noncommercial interchanges, i.e., a fragmented world. (Whereas an industrial culture supports centralized, institutionalized commercial interchanges etc.) So what is happening online is that we are creating, from scratch, an entirely new "art world". One that is very organic. There is a real sense of "collective unconscious", an individual can have an effect, but not without the others. So I don't think we need leaders, but we certainly need netweavers, those who will facilitate the integration and dispersal of this process. Telecomm culture is based on interaction and participation.
Bob Gale, USA, Well!bgale@apple.com

Rechts:
H. R. Fricker:
«Artistamp-Bogen»,
perforiert.
Farbfotokopie eines
Briefumschlages
an Günther Ruch.

**NUR
SENDER
KANN MAN
ORTEN**
NETLAND...9...

H. R. Fricker

Electronic data is a virtual reality. And through the applications of telecommunication technology, electronic data can be translated into electronic mail, electronic bulletin boards, electronic databases, and intentional electronic communities, complete with virtual cafés, art galleries, shopping malls, colleges and universities, and more. One unique aspect of these communities is their virtual location. They exist in the ether, and yet their members can be listed, and maps can be created, indicating the streets and avenues of branching systems, file locations, and the routes taken by long range telecommunications carriers – rivers of exploration for this era. **Carl Loeffler**, *ArtCom, P.O. Box 193123, Rincon, San Francisco CA 94119-3123, USA.*

A united front in opposition to the commodity arts can be very useful. Mainstream art critics think the alternative arts have nothing to say to them; that we have taken ourselves out of the system. I feel this is self-deluding. There is a lot the mainstream artist can learn from the alternative artist, and that we have taken ourselves out of the system to partake in the network, because we view art as a cooperative rather than a competitive process. **John Held Jr.**, *7919 Goforth Rd., Dallas TX 75238, USA.*

I still find the interplay between distant net-workers the most fascinating aspect of Mail Art. If is, after all, an aspect which anticipated working patterns made possible by new technology. Yet, not only is the solitude of mailartists uncelebrated, unexplored and undocumented, there is also an historicist assumption that the Personal Contact is the natural or logical development for Mail Art. **Keith Bates**, *2 Ferngate Drive, Manchester, M20 9AX, UK.*

For me, it's not enough to make works of art, literature, music, etc. It's also necessary to provide an environment, a context, in which they can function. This is especially true in Australia where the cultural structures that exist in Europe (and which often harm European art) do not exist, or are not so well developed here. Hence, the networker, who draws together the threads that might otherwise remain unconnected so that people might have a few creative opportunities they might not otherwise have. **Warren Burt**, *Flat 18/102 Park St., St. Kilda West, Victoria 3182, Australia.*

Rechts:
H. R. Fricker,
«Artistamp-Bogen»,
perforiert, für Sendungen
im Mail-Art-Kontext.

Mail Art: Only for the lonely.

Networkers: *People who work the net but rarely net the work.* **Networking:** *The McDonald's of the information age.* **Networking Zines:** *Every page a leaf from a tree that could still be standing.* **Networking Shows:** *Send us the work and we'll make up the theme.* **Networking Developing Countries:** *Don't bother with the pictures just send us the paper.* **Networking Central Europe:** *Consumerism's avant garde.* **Networking Politics:** *Whatever fits into the envelope.* **Networking via Modem:** *Penetration without the pleasure.* **Networking via Fax:** *Copy culture's one-night stand.* **Women & Networking:** *Needles in a haystack.* **Networking Tourism:** *Send me the ticket and I'll be there.* **Networking & Sex:** *Sex without secretions.* **Networking Histories:** *You can be in mine if you'll let me be in yours.* **Networking Archives:** *Give us the space and we'll fill it up.* **The Networking Message:** *The medium is the message because so often there's no message to the message.* **The Future of Mail Art:** *One postal strike and it's all over.* **The Future of Networking:** *The tyranny of communication.* **Stephen Perkins**, *221 West Benton St., Iowa City IA 52246, USA.*

For networking to be creatively useful, it must be guerrilla networking. Log on. Damage expectations/be creative. Log off. Networking is safe, as the London kids say – it's as easy as logging off. **Harry Musgrave**, *14 Cambridge Mansions, Cambridge Rd., London SW11, UK.*

The alliance of net-workers is more momentous than the structure of the network. It is not the art that is important, it is the artist. The man or woman behind the work, that has precedence. The art is not the aim, it is the consequence of certain communication processes. That's all. **Guy Bleus**, *P.O. Box 43, 3830 Wellen, Belgium.*

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CAN BE
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NETLAND 9

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Si può localizzare
solamente il trasmettitore

Provocato dalle attività di «flusso», il networking della Mail-Art si è sviluppato fin dagli anni '70 – sotto forma di «arte postale» – come strategia di dialogo globale per quegli artisti che intendevano consapevolmente agire al di fuori della sfera del commercio dell'arte, nell'ambito di sistemi di relazioni aperti, cioè accessibili a tutti e non controllati.

Il collegamento in rete non rappresenta solamente una possibilità tecnica, quale viene offerta attraverso Internet. Lo scambio diretto di comunicazioni, insieme con la necessità di collaborazione, costituisce già da molto tempo una delle aspirazioni degli artisti ed è stata già proposta a suo tempo dai dadaisti – Dada Global – come strategia comune liberatrice.

Il networking della Mail-Art si basa sul collegamento diretto, discorsivo e dialogico, da persona a persona, allargato a tutti in un contesto mutevole. In questo caso, il presupposto essenziale è la flessibilità dei ruoli. Colui che opera in rete deve rendere possibile anche ad altri l'accesso alla rete nella quale egli organizza progetti come assemblings, shows e congressi.

Ins po localisar be
emetturs

A basa d'activitats fluctuantas è sa sviluppa dapi ils onns 70 il Mail-Art-Networking, ina strategia globala da dialog – per via postal – tranter artists che vulan agir conscientamain ordaifer la scena artistica en sistems da relaziun averts, qvd. accessibels a tuts e betg controllads.

La rait na sa restrenscha pia mo a la pussaivladad tecnica, sco quai ch'ella vegn purschida dad Internet. Il barat communicativ direct e la collavuraziun èn dapi ditg in basegn dals artists ed èn vegnids propagads già dals dadaists – Dada Global – sco strategia antisociala deliberanta. Il Mail-Art-Networking sa basa sin la colliaziun directa discursiv-dialogala pratigada da persona a persona en contexts variabls, er en furma cumplexiva a Tourism. La flexibilitad da las rollas è la cundiziun da basa. Il networker sto pussibilitar l'access a la rait er ad auters cun organisar projects sco assemblings, shows e congress.

Only senders can be
located

Since the 1970s, triggered off by flux activities, Mail Art networking, has developed as a global dialogue strategy, operating by post, for artists who consciously wish to operate outside the art business in relationship systems which are open, that is to say accessible to all and uncontrolled.

Networking is not therefore merely a technical opportunity such as is offered by the Internet. The direct communicative exchange and collaboration has long been an interest of artists and was already propagated by the Dadaists – Dada Global – as a liberating anti-society strategy. Mail Art networking is based on direct, verbal conversation as carried out from person to person, in changing contexts, also extended to tourism. The precondition for this is the flexibility of rôles. The networker must also make network access possible for others by organising projects such as assemblings, shows and congresses.

As a woman, I feel that I have little choice but to be a networker, networking with other women, though cautiously. Because the world we inhabit is and always has been a built environment, the systems of access and dissemination are manmade, which means "made by humans who generally tend to be biologically men". We have to network now to be heard and seen. The official arts are too controlled to be of any use to free artists. So now we are all like the samizdat artists in the USSR a few years ago, smuggling our works to each other in our private networks to beat the system. *Lillian Ward, UK.*

It is very apparent to me that the mail artists, performance artists, rubberstamp artists, eraser carvers, cassette culture, artist stamp, anarchists, computer hackers, scientists, and other cultural workers share a common idea, although not a common language. I propose that this congress allow as many different networkers to meet and exchange ideas as possible. I believe that individuals from each discipline should investigate and exchange ideas with networkers from other disciplines to allow the "underground" or "non-money artists" to take a giant step forward in the progression of the networker. *Mark Corroto, P.O. Box 1382, Youngstown, OH 44501, USA.*

