

Ringvorlesung at the Institut für Kunstkritik (Frankfurt, 22 Jun – 12 Jul 16)

Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste - Städelschule, Jun 22–23, 2016

Line Ebert

Ringvorlesung at the Institut für Kunstkritik:

Do it yourself. Deskilling and Reskilling in the Digital Techno Age.

This lecture-series (conceptualized by Isabelle Graw) revolves around the question of artistic skills in a digital world. What do they actually consist of? While it always mattered how an artist performs herself since the Modern Age, it seems that the „Auftritt des Künstlers“ (Beatrice von Bismarck), namely, her public staging of herself, has become increasingly important in a Media Society. Has the modeling of her „personality“ turned into a skill that is required from her? Or should one rather argue that artistic practices still represent other competences, attitudes and ways of life that question the ideal of an entrepreneurial self? What have traditional skills been replaced by?

It seems that the deskilling of the arts that is usually associated with the „Duchamp-effect“ and post war practices allowed for a reskilling that is currently quite popular in the artworld. Is it a historical necessity that deskilling entails reskilling? Historically speaking, „deskilling“ was a male privilege in the 1950's and 1960's. Many male artists opted for anti-subjective aleatory procedures that rejected skills, whereas women artists practiced another form of deskilling in the 1970's by reintroducing formerly devaluated, „female skills“ into their work. Could one argue, at least in retrospect, that it is precisely these lower or soft skills associated with the sphere of reproduction that have risen to the status of a valuable resource in our New Economy?

Die Ringvorlesung findet im Sommersemester 2016 statt:

Lucy McKenzie, 12. April.

Benjamin Buchloh, 22. Juni.

Beatrice von Bismarck, 23. Juni.

Julia Gelshorn, 12. Juli.

Benjamin Buchloh: Looking Back at Books

Mittwoch, 22. Juni 2016, 19 Uhr, Aula, Städelschule

Just when the cultural tendencies at large have declared the end of the print media in general and the disappearance of the book in particular it seems appropriate to look back once more in slight wonder and bewilderment at the euphoria with which books had been celebrated at the onset of Conceptual Art in the early to the mid 1960s, celebrated as an event of a revolutionary revision of all previously existing forms of artistic production and distribution.

The lecture attempts to clarify that historical moment, its blind enthusiasm and its hypertrophic delusions resulting from a deep investment in a belief that technological changes in book form would actually contribute inevitably to progressive forms of perception and overall processes of socio-political enlightenment.

At the same time, the lecture attempts also to invert the traditionally optimistic reading of these Conceptual books from Ed Ruscha in 1962 to Lawrence Weiner, and from Bernd and Hilla Becher to Marcel Broodthaers in 1968. And we will try to historicize the strangely antiquated utopian belief of these artists in the power of books, as a peculiar misreading. Rather than being endowed with an emerging radicality of the transformations of readerly and writerly forms of experience, the printing and photographic technologies of these books were by that time actually threatened with disappearance and extinction, as we now know.

Beatrice von Bismarck: Efficiency and Wastefulness. Paradoxes of the artist's image in the 21st century

Donnerstag, 23. Juni 2016, 19 Uhr, Aula, Städtelschule

For the last almost two decades artists have become role-models within contemporary society, a development which is largely due to the characteristics ascribed to them: freedom, creativity and self-determination. The appropriation of these qualities within social contexts, however, is taking place with contradictory signs: While on the one what is asked for is the use of self-organisational skills in working contexts, synergetic exchanges between different forms of knowledge production and innovative potentials of economic or ecological development processes, what is overlooked on the other hand is that these qualities precisely elude demands of utility or efficiency. In times of the newly reheated debates on the Bologna process, the precarious working conditions in a post-fordist economy and the continuing instrumentalization of the so called creative class how does this affect the image of the artist? Instead of being economically appropriated how can the assigned qualities - as parts of this image - become culturally, socially and politically operative again?

Beatrice von Bismarck is professor for art history and visual studies at the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst (HGB) Leipzig and program director of the academy's own gallery. She lives in Berlin and Leipzig.

Die Veranstaltungen finden in englischer Sprache statt.

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